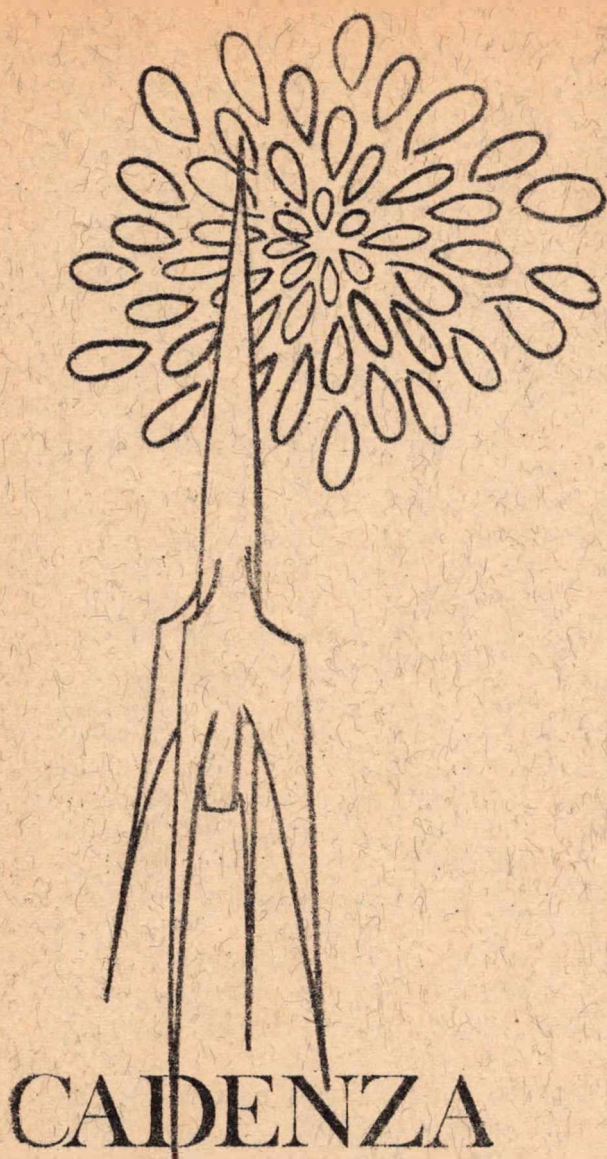




CADÉENZA



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This issue consists of four sections constituting a total of 33 pages.

mundus mea patria

CREDITS

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 Photos on front and back covers and page 4A by Ron Hardin, who is not to blame for the quality of the reproduction.
 Thanks are extended to Barbara Muller, who helped duplicate #4, and Don Thompson and Maggie Curtis, who helped assemble this issue.
 Apologies to Richard Bergeron for the reproduction of his cover drawing in the last issue; mea culpa, not him.
 Particular apologies to ATom; in one of his drawings last issue I left a stern untuned.

This is the first anniversary issue of Cadenza and marks the tenth anniversary of the editor's fan career.

This is the fifth issue and is edited and published by Charles Wells, 2495 Sherbrooke Drive NE, Atlanta 6, Georgia, USA. (Address until June 11: 190 Elm Street, Oberlin, Ohio, USA). Home telephone: 636-9323. Cadenza is available by trade, letter of comment, or by paying twenty cents an issue. The maximum subscription is one dollar. Code on the address label: t - trade; s - subscription (the number following it indicates the number of your last issue); no letter indicates you are getting it for some other reason. Outside written contributions, if accepted, will be given a guaranteed date of publication which will usually be three to six months off; the author will of course have the right to have his material returned if he does not like the guaranteed date. Artwork is desperately needed. Cadenza is an amateur publication distributed principally amongst science fiction fans; this issue is also being given to about twenty non-science-fiction fans. Total circulation of this issue: 190. The entire contents of this issue, except the letter column, is copyright © 1962 by Charles Frederick Wells. The next issue should be published about August, 1962.

ON DON AND MAGGIE THOMPSON

The people in those blurry pictures you find surrounding & infiltrating Cadenza are 2/3 of the other 3/4 of Oberlin fandom. Their names are Don Thompson and Maggie Curtis (Maggie is the girl, in case you hadn't guessed). But Maggie Curtis won't be Maggie Curtis for long, no sirree. On June 23, 1962, a miracle will come to pass, mountains will split and oceans heave, and all of a sudden she will be Maggie Thompson. Mark that well, by ghu; it's not every day that we have a fannish wedding, especially betwixt two such remarkable fans. Maggie is remarkable because she is a second generation fan (her mother is Betsy Curtis). That's a particularly remarkable thing to be, especially considering that Michael Evan Shaw hasn't started publishing yet.

Don is remarkable, too. At least, I suppose he is remarkable. At least, Maggie thinks he is remarkable. I wonder why?

I suppose it behooves me to give a Short Biographical Sketch of these two fans that Soon Will Be United Into One (how else the hell do people get united except into one, I wonder?) So I reckon I ought to be on my best behoovior and Sketch them.

Don is pretty well known. He publishes, with Maggie of course, Comic Art, which is not a fanzine but a comicfanzine, and Harbinger, which is a fanzine but is not as big as Comic Art, which is not a fanzine. Or did I say that already? Comic Art attracts all sorts of Big Name Comic Artists that I never heard of till I met Don and Maggie. Harbinger attracts flies. At least when you put jam on it.

Maggie is pretty well known, too. People write adolescent poems to her that Make Don Mad in capital letters. (But then other people get Don Thompson mixed up with Don Franson, so I guess the score is even).

As can be seen from the pictures, if you can see the pictures, they get along quite well, which is a Good Thing for anybody who is getting married, I always say. They are very jealous of each other, but that's all right because they trust each other, too; Maggie even lets Don rummage around in her pocketbook. She told me to get something out of it one time and I found an alarm clock in it. I find this highly unusual, but Don didn't bat an eyelash. Obviously he knows her pocketbook pretty darn well.

I was going to describe them physically but with three blurry pictures of them this seems unnecessary. They are actly the same height, which is unusual in a couple, and they both like strawberry milkshakes, which is just plain crazy. They have other interests in common, too; comic books, movies, and something else which I cannot think of at the moment. It begins with an S, I believe.

Every Sunday morning, practically, Don & Maggie & I have a Meeting. It is not a Meeting of a Club, for Oberlin has no Club. It is not a Meeting of an Organization, either, for even if Oberlin did have a Club it would be disorganized. We just sit and Meet. Just what it is we do is not germane, since we don't do much of anything, not even drink Beer because Oberlin is dry, and it would not do for fandom to think Oberlin is lazy already. Tomorrow,

I am told, we are (besides assembling Cadenza) going to Send a Tape to Buck Coulson. If we do, it will be the most we have done since Maggie carved a wooden spoon one day.

Maggie is a sophomore at Oberlin College, and I am a Senior, but I never lord it over her on that account; I think I tolerate her sophomoric actions quite well. She

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is an English major, which is about as far from being a math major as you can get, and I am a math major, which is about as far from an English major as you can get. Mathematicians call that kind of arrangement Symmetry, but let's not.

Don, on the other hand, is a college graduate, as I shall be when you read this, probably (June 12). It is the imminence of my egress from this perefamatory institution (note the fancy words I throw around, almost as good as an English major) which is undoubtedly the cause of the fact that Don has not chosen to lord it over me because of my Lesser Standing. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, affectionately known to its intimates as "The University". All he ever did there, apparently, was to be a radio announcer, not unlike Barbara Muller no less.

Right now, Don works for the Cleveland Press. He has a column in the business section. Harry Warner, take note! This is really Don's third fanzine, and by ghu there's nothing like getting paid to do a fanzine.

Now all these fannish traditions are being United in a Wedding. I am hopeful that someday when Maggie finishes college there will be the pitterpatter of little fannish feet amidst the chitterchatter of BNFish bull sessions and the clitterclatter of Monstrous Pimeos churning out hundreds of happy little fanzines in the Thompson household. Then, when the cute li'l fantypes get big enough to stay by themselves, we can give Don & Maggie a tenth anniversary wedding present and send them across the blue to London via TAFF. Thompsons for TAFF in '72, by ghu. --ed.

Well, if you see a scab, that's a sure sign you should picket...

---John Camigliano

ON HOW YOU ALMOST NEVER SAW THIS ISSUE AND OTHER THINGS

Cadenza #5 almost never saw the light of day. Because of the pressure of college work and other things, I foresaw that Cza couldn't come out more than two or three times a year, so I decided to turn it into a column in someone's fanzine where I would appear more often. Very nearly did, too. But the plot fell through and I found myself more than usually financially solvent so I went ahead, and here you are.

I still do not like publishing this way. For one thing, the pressure of time leads to a sloppy fanzine in someways. For instance, I would have liked to write another draft of the long article in this issue; what you read there represents in effect a second draft composed on stencil. For one, as I, unused to writing articles longer than a page or so, this is not enough. I am sure you will find many crudities of grammar, illogical sentence structures, and awkwardly expressed thoughts in the article which one more draft would have cured. There may even be major gaps in logic or construction, but I'm too close to it to tell right now.

Similarly, if I had had time, I would have written reviews of most of the fanzines I received, reviews like the few that do appear back there; I have always wanted Counterpoint to be the dominant feature of Cadenza and it never has been, except possibly for #4. I promise myself that I will write letters to the fanzines I don't review, but I never get them all done.

This is not by way of apology. One need not apologize for fafia; indeed, even gafia needs no apology, in most cases. It is more by way of an official statement of the circumstances under which Cadenza is published. This is the way it is; a hastily-put-together fanzine, medium in size, infrequent in appearance. I offer it to you on that basis. --ed.

The vagabond, when rich, is called a tourist.

---Paul Richard

MISCELLANEA

My plans for next year have produced a complicated problem involving my address. I shall be at Duke University from September on, doing graduate work in mathematics. I do not know what my address will be there yet. Everyone should take note of my

summer address, which takes effect June 11, 1962. Mail inadvertantly addressed to my Oberlin address will reach me, but it will be delayed about a week. / Gary Deindorfer's address in the letter column is incorrect: it should be, 121 Boudinot Street, Trenton 8, New Jersey. / I have given birth to a column, "Green Thoughts", which will appear in Richard Bergeron's Shadow-zine Serenade. I also am on the verge of admittance to OMPA. / Don & Maggie will live in Oberlin next year, where Maggie will continue school. Don will commute to Cleveland, thus joining the ranks of the grey flannel commuter, or whatever it is. / Barbara Muller will continue at Oberlin also. If I haven't said it ahead, she majors in piano at the conservatory. --ed.

Full fathom five the fattest lady lies...



Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days
Plans, credit, and
the Muse--
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope;
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wings unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path,
And the outlets of
the sky.

It was not for the
mean;
It requireth courage
stout,
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending;
Such 'twill reward
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

--R. W. Emerson

in defense of LIBERALISM

INTRODUCTION

It is currently fashionable to be "scientific" and start all formal articles off with a definition of the topic under discussion, although a large & vocal minority prefer to begin with a dramatic sigh and complain that you can't really define the subject unless you know all about it first. Herein, in line with Cadenza's traditional policy of breaking with tradition (you will notice that last issue I put "Counterpoint" in the middle of the page instead of at the top -- doesn't anyone ever notice these things?) I am not going to define liberalism at all; I am simply going to expound and defend it.

This article will be a defense of the domestic policies currently advocated by the American moderate left, which, it should be noted, is fairly well unrelated to the moderate left in Britain and elsewhere. Foreign policy will not be discussed. I do not claim that there is any political party or faction which will support all of the policies herein advocated without reservation, or that they will accept many of the arguments given in defense of them as the most important arguments. I do not claim that they are all supported by the so-called American Establishment (1),* although in fact most of them are. But they are not completely in line with Administration policy.

The moderate left is under attack both by the extreme (Marxist or anarchist) left, which regards it as failing to see the basic Evils in American society, and by the extreme right, which regards it as engaging in a dangerous flirtation with socialism when not downright disloyal. I think that neither of these beliefs are correct, and I am going to try to show cause why both of them are wrong. As might be apparent by my characterization of the extreme left, I do not believe that American society is marred by any fundamental Evil which can only be eradicated by revolutionary changes in the society or in the government. This belief is indefensible, since it depends on my own scale of values; hence I am open to the charge of being a slave to the current values of society, of being an organization man or a square or a revisionist, depending on your point of view. On the other hand, charging me with socialism or communism will simply be erroneous, if the accusation is intended to call into question my patriotism: I am an American. If the intention is merely to accuse me of advocating policies which are also advocated by socialists and communists, then I admit the charge; I do not intend to be bound to any sort of line, whether it be the communist one or the one which always takes a stance opposite that of the communists. Also I must confess here and now that I am guilty, if guilty it be, of not being afraid of the United States Government; indeed, I am so bold as to have confidence in it.

There are some fundamental ideas in my argument which I cannot provide reasons for. One has to start somewhere; I have chosen to use as a basis certain widely-held ideas which I shall simply have to depend on my reader's already having accepted. This is

*These numbers in parentheses refer to notes at the end of the article. This article looks like a research paper, but it is not; it was written first and then the notes were added to indicate the sources of some of the ideas (which were developed over a three-year period) and to provide an indication for further reading. In a few cases, specifically noted, the references are used as authority for facts mentioned.

not to be an axiomatic-systematic presentation; it is a pragmatic system and many of the arguments depend on observation as well as deduction. So, as a kindness to my opponents, I hereby point out that I am vulnerable on factual as well as theoretical grounds.

PART ONE REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

The United States is a democratic republic, by the definitions of those words in current use by political theorists. A democratic republic is simply a representative democracy which is not a monarchy, and a representative democracy is a political system in which the persons who make policy decisions for the country are chosen by the people of the country in regular and frequent elections in which the people have a real, free and equal choice, with the presumption that the decisions will be made by a majority of the representatives in some specified fashion. (2)

Representative democracy is an idea. Like any good ideal, it can only be approached in practice; it is the fundamental rule when dealing with any social science that NO method, NO rule, NO conceptual system can be applied always and completely. The ideal democracy described above must be modified to take into account tradition, peculiar local problems, and the need for stability. (The last-named, however, is in my opinion often overemphasized). Taking the necessity of modification into account, the liberal supports the ideal of representative democracy and wishes to change the structure of the United States government to conform more closely to the ideal when such changes will not result in consequences which run contrary to other ideals. (This necessity of compromising one principle in order to avoid violation of another is one of the most complex parts of politics, and explains why people who apparently hold to the same goals often differ so radically in policy).

Let us first examine why the liberal believes in representative democracy and then examine where the United States differs from it and what, if anything, the liberal thinks should be done.

Behind the definition of representative democracy given above is the presumption that the primary function of a government is to make policy for the country. (3) This is true of any government, and it is also true of any government that it has the power to enforce its decisions wherever enforcement is appropriate. We are leaving out of consideration for the moment what kind of policy the government makes, and in what areas (e.g., economics, defense, order-keeping, etc.) and are concentrating on the structure of the government only. This definition of democracy is functional, in other words; it fits equally well with socialism, capitalism, or any other economic and many another social ism. The only "democratic right" it says anything about, in this narrow view, is the right to a free, equal, and real choice at the polls. The liberal has numerous and strong opinions about what kind of policy a democratic government should make, of course, and this is discussed in part two. For the present, let us concentrate on the question, why does the liberal support the ideal of representative democracy?

First, the policy maker should be chosen by the people because only in that way can we be sure that the government will be responsible to the people.* Of course this brings up the question of whether the government should be responsible to the people. The liberal says yes; what follows is a partial argument for this answer.

In the first place, a person is much more likely to consent to a government over

*There are other logical possibilities, of course. One could advocate a self-perpetuating governing body whose policies were subject to veto by the people in a referendum, somewhat as in present-day France but without their infrequent elections. But such other systems are largely untested and ours is working, so why change?



which he has some control, however remote, than to one which can only be changed by revolution. This is known as the "democratic consent" (4) and the most telling argument for it is that it actually exists in some countries, including the United States. In the United States, it is a fact that an oligarchical government cannot gain the consent of the people not of the elite --example: the South. Hence the easiest way to maintain order is to extend the participation in government to everyone. This I call the principle of universality. (5) If any considerable segment of the population is excluded from the governmental process, it is a historical fact that that segment is going to cause trouble. "All the people" means all races, all intelligence levels (bowing to the necessity that the person must be intelligent enough to understand what it is to make a choice), all social classes, all income groups, both sexes.

The exclusion of children and mental incompetents has caused some theorists considerable concern (including me! see Andy Young's letter in the letter column), but it seems to me that the exclusion of these classes does not materially affect the principle of universality: everyone who is capable of making a choice should be allowed to make a choice. It is in support of this

principle that the liberal fights for Negro voting rights in the South. The much-misunderstood literacy test bill before Congress at this writing (May 1) is aimed at this: its main provision is that anyone with a sixth-grade education will be declared literate for purposes of voting. This substitutes an objective test for the oral tests commonly given voters in the south which depend on the discretion of the registrar. It is a demonstrated fact that the latter's discretion has been discriminatory against the Negro in a gross way. (6) The bill before Congress is simply an attempt at carrying out the provisions of the thirteenth amendment, which requires that Negroes be given the vote and gives Congress the power to enforce that requirement. (7)

An aside here to defend the principle of universality against one recurrent charge. This is that the vast majority of Americans who vote do not vote intelligently they do not vote in the best interests of the country, but narrowly, in the interests of their own little pressure groups (business, labor, agriculture, etc.) The opponents of the principle -- John W. Campbell, Jr., is a recent example (8) -- advocate restricting the vote in such a way that those voting will probably have the best interests of the country in mind and will be able to vote intelligently. (The two goals are usually coupled, but they do not need to be).

The liberal objects to this idea -- which is an example of what is called an elitist theory -- on several grounds. First, who is going to say what the best interests of the country are? The Campbellian answers: this restricted elite that I propose. But what do they have that the rest of the people do not have that will guarantee their interest in the country? For people who have high earnings (for

example) probably got that way from self-interest and acquisitiveness. People who score high on intelligence tests are no less likely to pursue their own ends because intelligent -- and they will have a problem keeping the unintelligent from grabbing their power away from them. Also, since intelligence tests' scores are heavily affected by education, the fact that people with good educations tend to be people from the upper and middle classes will produce a built-in bias in the results. And people who have served their country in some sufficiently tough way (as Heinlein proposed) are hardly likely to be any more interested in the country's welfare than anyone else -- that system would simply weed out people who are not sufficiently interested in personal power to run the gauntles of government service.

All these elitist theories (9) have a common misunderstanding of the way democracy works. Democracy works quite well in this country and even better in places like Britain and Scandinavia; yet in none of those countries is the average voter very well informed. (10) He votes, typically, the way the leaders of his group "suggest". What is wrong with this? It works* quite well in quite a few countries and the secret ballot and other provisions can ensure that the group leaders' "suggestions" don't turn into coercion; the only failing this system seems to have is that it does not correspond to the ideal of the "intelligent voter", an ideal, let it be noted, which is almost certainly unattainable.

Besides, why should we expect everyone to be interested in and informed about government? Specialization works well; we have physicians and auto-mechanics; why not governmental experts? For the group leader is as much as specialist as the auto-mechanic, after all. (12)

As for why democracy works, this is an interesting problem I can only outline here. Some points are, first, the group leaders tend to be intelligent (else they wouldn't be leaders!) and thus are able to see that they can't have the entire pie for themselves. Second, most of the countries where democracy works have a tradition of compromise and cooperation and a desire to adjust differences without violence. (13) Third, the natural desire of the group leaders to extend their influence beyond the narrow confines of their own groups leads them to attempt to justify their actions in terms of the national interest, and even to modify actions when they will seem overly acquisitive. And fourth, for various reasons the groups tend to balance each other out fairly well; in the United States since World War II neither business nor labor nor agriculture can be said to have dominated the government under any of the three administrations we have had. (This is not true of state and local governments, which are rarely so well balanced). The other interest groups can fairly be termed "minor", I think: the intelligentsia, consumer organizations, Negro groups, the medical profession, etc. It is my own wish -- a value judgment, let it be noted -- that agriculture be replaced by consumer interests as the third major interest group in the country, since agriculture is a special interest like the medical profession and should not wield the power it does.

The fourth point -- about groups balancing each other out -- has the result that whenever the Government performs an important action, nobody is hurt very much. This is even lagrely true of the "minor" groups I mentioned above. The recent steel action

*Under favorable conditions -- and that's a hitch! Democracy tends to fail in countries with very low standards of living, with large intransigent minorities or other social problems, and when introduced from the outside. There are counter-examples of all of these, of course: India (standard of living), Canda and Belgium (large minorities), the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Canada again (social problems), and Japan (introduced from the outside). Nevertheless, democracy needs favorable conditions. The experiement in Pakistan hopefully will show that democracy can be radically modified to meet some very difficult conditions and still work. (11)

by President Kennedy does stand out, because it was directed against one interest group, for one thing; but it is not an exception, for it resulted in a rather complex way from a labor-management settlement in which the government had stepped in to balance the interests of labor and management against the national interests -- without hurting either very much. Which only exemplifies my point.

Whether this result -- that nobody is ever hurt very much -- is good or not is a matter of values. It seems to me that it is obviously better than continuously taking away from one group for everyone else's benefit, or taking away from all except one group for the one group's benefit (the first exemplified by ancient Athens, with the slaves being the one suffering group, and the second by modern South Africa, with the Boers being the one benefiting group).

This situation, this balancing act, is certainly not very comfortable for those who want a radical solution to the world's problems, whether the solution be a return to nineteenth century American ideals or an uprising by the workers who should take over the factories. But it is part of a liberal's faith that what is wrong with the world cannot and should not be got rid of by revolutionary changes, but by evolutionary changes; that before everything else, the rights of individuals and groups should be protected; and that the actions of a few should never be allowed to bring harm to the country or any of its people. Given these ideals, the balancing act is the only possible solution.

The other points raised by the definition of representative democracy given above can be met more quickly. We have at length tried to justify the principle of universality; the arguments for it are in large part the arguments for the concomitant principle of equality. (14) In the narrow sense, this is voter equality; in the wider sense, social equality, which will be discussed in part two. The principle of voter equality is that each voter's vote should have the same weight. The same arguments about one group's being deprived of a vote also applies to a group's being deprived of part of its vote (by misapportionment or by vote-weighting). For if a group becomes aware of its partial loss of voice, it will resent it and cause trouble. This is happening right now, in Georgia and Tennessee and Michigan. And maybe a dozen other states by the time you read this. These states practice vote weighting on the basis of geography; they argue that a farmer, because he owns a large chunk of the state's land, should have more say in the state government. He has a larger "stake" in the government (there are other forms of this "stake" argument, including one based on income). (15) This is simply silly; the man who has the largest stake in the government is the city-dweller who depends on the actions of the government for his health and safety and security to a much larger extent than does the farmer. The liberal believes that people should be represented, not cows or dirt.

Probably there will be complete agreement amongst my readers that the voters' choice should be real (not handpicked from above) and free in regular and frequent elections. (By regular I don't mean to imply criticism of the British system -- the requirement there is simply in the form of an "at least" instead of an "every").

Now, it will be immediately obvious that the United States does not live up to the ideal of democracy in any complete fashion, nor does any other country. There are three rather sore points that always crop up when democracy in the United States is discussed: political parties, the President and the Administration, and the Supreme Court.

I will dismiss political parties quickly. (16) Their function in the United States is to serve as a channel for competing interest groups to make their wishes effective in Washington; as a point around which groups with different but not sharply contradictory desires can coalesce; and (in any two-party or few-party system) a way to simplify voter choice. And, in the United States particularly, the parties provide

a uniting influence in the Government (when the Presidency and Congress are held by the same parties) that helps avoid the complete immobility that the checks & balances system which is written into the Constitution tends to induce. The liberal is not afraid of political parties; he believes they are meant to be used, not to be fought in the name of nonpartisanship.*

How democratic is the office of the President? Is too much policy made by the bureaucrats of the administration instead of the Congress? (17)

The way in which the President is elected is nearly democratic in effect. The electoral college nowadays has a slight bias in favor of liberals and of city voters in contrast with the bias towards rural voters and conservatives in the House. Americans seem to prefer it that way, judging from the way they vote -- they tend to favor liberal Presidents and conservative Representatives and state officials. I personally would prefer a popularly-elected President, but not without also reforming the House districts to make them evenly balanced -- I won't stand for giving up the liberal bias in the Electoral College without also giving up the conservative bias in the House!

Hence the fact that the President is as important a policy-maker as the Congress is is not too important; similarly, since the Administration's bureaucrats are responsible to the President I'm not worried about them either. The President is quite effectively responsible to the people -- even more so, some think, than Congress, since Congress has many districts which return the same man year after year, in effect making him irresponsible (in the technical sense of "irresponsible", namely, not responsible to the people).

And it's a good thing that I'm not worried because it is absolutely unavoidable that the President and his administration make policy; the Congress as it is presently constituted could not possibly exercise the day-to-day control over the affairs of the country that the administration can, and which needs to be exercised.

Then there is That Issue: The Supreme Court. Let it be known here and now that the fact that the Supreme Court is currently liberal in composition has given many a liberal an acute attack of conscience. For the Court is, after all is said and done, irresponsible, and yet it is a policy-maker. (18)

Of course, the Court is not ultimately irresponsible. The Congress can remove most of its jurisdiction any time it wants to by a simple law -- the Judiciary Act of 1789 is what makes it the last court of appeals for state trials, not the Constitution. And Court-packing (the addition of judges amenable to the Congress and the President) is still possible, although the climate of opinion in the country is currently deadset against it.

And its policy-making powers are rather peculiar. It makes minor, nit-picking types of policy every week through its term, but very occasionally it turns the country upside down with an earth-shaking decision such the 1954 segregation decision or this year's reapportionment decision (unless the Court hedges the latter in with restrictions).

These major decisions literally change the framework of American life. There indeed probably should be some way of vetoing the actions of a governmental body which has that kind of power without resorting to the drastic remedy of removing the Court's

*I am referring to the national government here. There is much to be said for non-partisan local elections, although they too are in disfavor with many liberals.



jurisdiction or violating the principle of judicial independence by adding to the number of justices. Of course, there is the amending process, which is extremely difficult; perhaps simplifying that process could be the answer.

Finally, a liberal will point out that the last two major decisions -- the segregation and reapportionment decisions -- accomplished something which a clear majority of the people wanted accomplished, but which could not be done because of certain Congressional procedures which allow a minority to frustrate the desires of a definite majority in certain instances. It is obvious that the segregation decision was the will of the people in some sense; if it had not been, we would not have made the progress we have. This is, I am aware, a weak argument; the sensible arrangement would be one where the will of the people -- or at least of the people's representatives -- could be accomplished directly.

These then are the reasons the liberal supports the concept of representative democracy. My argument has been aimed at the manner in which the government makes policy; the next section will deal with the question of what policy the government should make.

PART TWO THE LIBERAL PROGRAM

One of the striking similarities between the left-wing radical and the right-wing radical is their common desire to use governmental power to wipe out what they consider deep-rooted evils in American society. This occurs simultaneously with their noisy support of freedom and seems to indicate a certain have-your-cake-and-eat-it-too philosophy which often leads to the accusation against both varieties of extremist that they are guilty of wishful thinking.

There are differences between them, of course. The left winger wants the government to take drastic action in an attempt to establish social justice by fiat; it is typical of the left-winger that he cannot understand why, after eight years, the 1954 Supreme Court decision on segregation has not resulted in complete integration of the public schools in the south. The reason he cannot understand this is that he does not understand the concept of the rule of law in a democracy, the foundation of both the moderate liberal and the moderate conservative viewpoints.

On the other hand, the radical right-winger is concerned about what seems to him to be a wholesale desertion of fundamental American values and the adoption of a form of welfare-statism to which he has violent objection on both philosophical and pragmatic grounds. He wants to root this evil out of American society -- an evil which, typically, he associates with Communism -- using any method he can command. It is more important for him that one Communist be caught, whether or not the reputations and livelihoods of six other people have been hurt, than that the principle of American law be preserved. His argument is simple: "The country is in danger -- principles be damned." The left winger, on the other hand, would say something like, "Injustice must be rooted out -- your 'principles' are merely diktatory tactics."

This pattern holds fairly generally, whether the right winger is fighting socialism or Playboy nudes or fluoridation, whether the left-winger is fighting segregation or the House Committee on Un-American Activities or atomic testing. Their aims differ widely, but their tactics are the same: direct action, and damn the consequences.*

*Well, their tactics are almost the same. The type of governmental action advocated by the right-winger tends to run to suppression: censorship, restrictions on radical political parties, and strike-breaking. The left-winger seems to prefer coercion, insofar as that can be distinguished from suppression; he is trying to force people to do things, whereas the right-winger is trying to keep them from doing things. But don't take this generalization too literally.



In this context the moderate liberal takes a much calmer stand. He is two things -- moderate, and liberal.

The Moderate, including under the capital M both liberals and conservatives, is interesting in preserving order, preserving liberty and defending his country -- usually in reverse order! He desires many and various changes in present policies, depending on his views; he is dissatisfied with the current situation in many ways; he has decidedly idealistic goals which he rarely expects to see accomplished in his own lifetime. He is not committed to preserving the status quo at all costs...a man who wishes to do that is not a moderate of any stripe; he is a fool. No, the reason the moderate calls himself "moderate" is that he wants his changes to take place in an orderly fashion, after full public debate, with the full realization that he will see many of his programs modified beyond recognition if not defeated entirely. He wants reforms introduced, but he wants the consent of the people when introducing them; to this end his main energies are devoted to publicly

arguing his views (he writes long articles in fanzines) instead of trying to get them adopted by power-plays and behind-the-scenes maneuvering. He abhors coercion and suppression as instruments suited only to extreme emergency. Given two ways to approach the same goal, he will prefer the way that preserves the rule of law to the way of fiat; he will prefer the way, if there is a choice, that provides the least dislocation and the least suffering. He is flexible, and tries very hard to support realistic solutions to real problems. (19)

He also does not exist.

Practically everyone is immoderate about something, even if it is only about not "rocking the boat". Moderation is an ideal just like democracy; it is rarely attained in most things, and never in all. You will probably find that in some of the ideas discussed in this article I occasionally take an immoderate position, but I think that in most areas I am, however liberal, also moderate. If you think not in some specific area, say so; if you do not touch too violently on some hidden prejudice of mine I might even back up a little and allow for a more reasonable approach to the problem.

Generally speaking, my ideas about moderation will appeal to a lot more people than my ideas about liberalism, which is why they only take up a page. In my dual function as writer and editor, I am twice over interested in stirring up controversy and not in putting my reader to sleep with agreeable words like unto honey or whatever. So what makes a liberal a liberal and not a conservative?

One dramatic difference -- probably the single most important difference -- is that between the two groups' attitudes towards civil and economic freedoms. To quote

from a letter which appeared recently in the Oberlin College student newspaper,

"...Civil libertarians always claim that any action with which they disagree is the first step towards suppression of ideas, and, hence, a totalitarian government (the Review says: 'the first step towards a formalized system of government thought control'). [This was in reference to an editorial on government censorship of the mails -- ed.] Similarly, economic conservatives view any government intervention in the economy as the first step towards complete government ownership and, from there, a totalitarian regime (for example, the linkage of Kennedy to Big Brother in some conservative comment on the steel controversy).

"Both these positions have the same basic assumption: 'Give'em an inch and they'll take a mile.' However, one rarely finds a person holding both views. My question is 'Why?'

"Is it, as I think likely, because these are essentially worthless arguments used to rationalize a position founded on other (perhaps less appealing) grounds; or are there legitimate justifications for holding the one position exclusively of the other?..." (20)

It is obviously true that liberals often do use as justification for opposing restrictions on civil liberties the idea that erosion of those liberties leads to more erosion, but I don't think that is a strong argument either for the liberals' point of view or for that of the conservatives on economic freedom. There are much stronger arguments for both.

As a matter of fact, the liberal is not implacably opposed to any and all restriction on personal freedom. The rather crude old saw, "One man's liberty ends where the other man's nose begins," actually illustrates fairly well the liberal's attitude toward liberty, of both the economic and civil varieties. The difference between the liberal and the conservative, when looked at more closely, becomes two things. First, the liberal is rather more inclusive about what he considers injury to the other fellow, and second, when there is a conflict between economic and civil liberties the liberal will usually choose the civil.*

The inclusiveness of the liberal is well illustrated by the steel crisis. If we admit for the moment that the rise in steel prices would have been inflationary, (21) which is actually an economic question, not a political one (and is agreed to by many conservatives as well as most liberals) -- if we admit that, was Kennedy justified in his actions? This depends for one thing on the attitude we have toward inflation. Is it a case of the other man's nose beginning? The liberal would answer yes. Inflation reduces the buying power of a large segment of the population, it misallocates resources, and it results in a loss of domestic and foreign confidence in the economy. A few people may gain extraordinary profits in an inflation but most people will suffer. So, the liberal believes inflation must emphatically be avoided.

Some people may point out that the President's action was illegal (but since most of his action was the bringing of moral pressure to bear I think this argument is weak) and perhaps that it was unwise. Instead of investigating these issues, which are not to the point of this article, let us discuss the question, does the government have the right to take action to avoid economic dislocation, if that action results in the loss by some people of certain economic freedoms?

The weightiest argument that the conservative brings to bear here is not that freedoms are being violated. Few people can get worked up if a \$100,000-a-year man is denied the right to set prices at his whim for the company he works for -- but does not own -- and, indirectly, for all the other companies in the industry.

*As an aside here, I should mention that to the liberal it often seems that the conservative is holding some sort of diluted version of the Catholic theory that "error has no rights". Most conservatives have the common sense to realize that that principle should not be carried out completely, but few realize that when held in any form it is in direct contradiction to the principles of democratic freedom. Error must have precisely the same rights as truth, even when the truth is held by all but one.

People get a lot more worked up about the little guy with no savings and six kids who loses his job in a recession -- which is why government intervention is usually popular, and government hands-off policy unpopular.

There is a much stronger argument for the conservative's view, one which has a very large element of truth in it. This is the argument from economic theory that a free market economy in a state of what is called "pure competition" tends to seek an equilibrium point at which profits and (if the labor market is free) wages are maximized and resources are allocated in the best manner possible. Practically every economist except a few Marxists and leftover greenbackers accept this principle, and the conservative's argument is clear: if the government intervenes, it can only make the situation worse than it is now. (22)

I cannot go into this argument here in detail; it involves the theory of supply and demand and is familiar to any beginning economics student in high school or college. It is often called the "unseen hand" theory, because it is supposed to work automatically, without any conscious manipulation. The important point here is to understand the conditions under which the theory will work.

In the first place, it applies equally to selling products and hiring workers. In either case, it is absolutely necessary that, first, no producer (in the case of products -- employer in the case of workers) can alone by any action he can perform affect the market appreciably. One single wheat farmer is an example. He may get irritated and take his wheat off the market, or go crazy and sell it for half-price, or demand double price; whatever he does, it will not noticeably affect the national market for wheat. Second, it is necessary that each producer be interested in maximizing his profits -- that he does not sell at a loss for some reason, or deliberately charge prices so high that few will buy what he makes. (In the worker market, the analogous situation is that each employer tries to hire as cheap as possible and each worker tries to get as high wages as possible). And third, full knowledge on the part of all parties and lack of prejudice on their part is presumed. The latter is violated in many different ways: if the consumer does not know his ham is watered, if the worker won't work for some company because its owners are of a different religion, if the employer won't hire Negroes, etc.

Of course, the most important of these because the most frequently violated is the requirement that action by an individual producer or employer not affect the market. There is hardly a market in the United States that fulfills that condition even approximately. Agriculture, outside of government supports, almost does. Steel certainly does not, and neither does any big labor market.

For if any group of producers -- or employers -- group together and agree to act in unison, they can, if big enough, control the market...at least until a rival group is formed. I am not accusing the steel industry of collusion -- the group that I am referring to is the group of owners of one steel company. They have done nothing illegal or immoral; they have simply grouped together to be able to compete more effectively (although of course that is not the motive many people have today when they buy steel stock). What US Steel does about prices affects the whole steel industry drastically -- not to mention the country as a whole.

And in steel the situation is no longer one of pure competition; it is often called "oligopoly". The results are not the results of pure competition; prices tend to be administered; whereas in the competitive market the producer sells his product for what he can get, in the steel industry -- and every other major American industry -- the producer sets his prices, within limits, more or less where he wants them. He is in a position of being able to increase his profit by increasing his price; in pure competition, which in theory maximizes profits automatically, if the producer raises his price he will cut his profit.* It is this situation in American industry which invalidates the conservative's argument that we should let the market alone and optimize results that way.

Obviously, in the presence of big unions, there is no pure competition in the

*Assuming demand remains the same, and supply has not fallen off.

major labor markets in the United States. What is not so generally realized is that there was no pure competition before the labor unions were organized, either. For a labor market to be purely competitive we would have to have a situation in which employers compete with each other to attract the best workers, and in which workers accepted fluctuations in their wages according to the vicissitudes of the market. Neither of these obtain (except, as someone here pointed out, in the case of professors in colleges and universities) or ever have obtained in any major labor market in the United States. In the absence of labor unions, manufacturers have historically tended to engage in a gentleman's agreement (at best!) not to bid each other up on wages; they hold sort of a collective line on wages. And workers strongly resist fluctuating salaries; they tend to be security-conscious. (23)

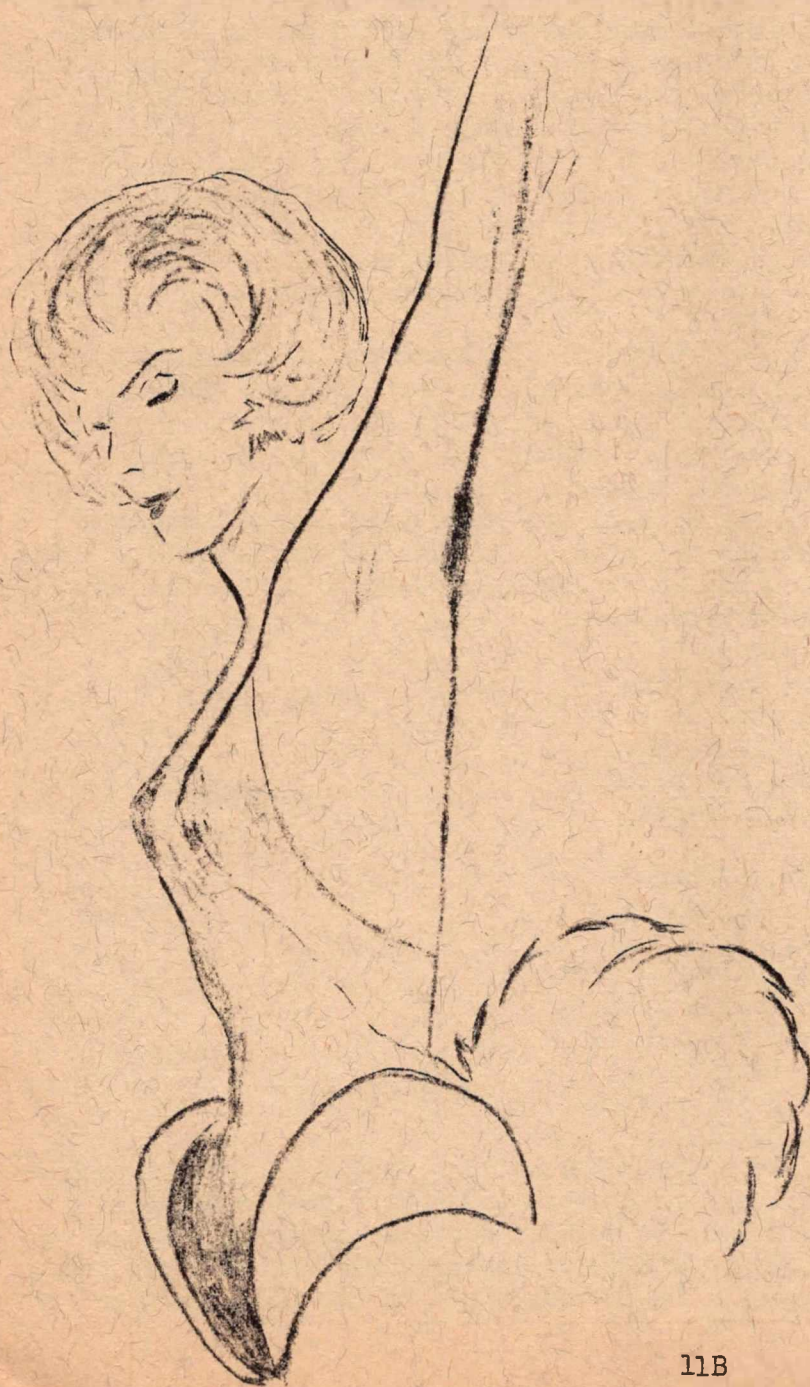
I think I have sufficiently shown that pure competition does not exist in most major United States industries and markets. It is a matter of fact that in these markets we do not always have optimum results. Prices and wages are abnormally resis-

tant to falling and tend to rise given the slightest excuse, with a resultant creeping inflation. There are many things wrong with the United States economy and many of them can be laid to the absence of pure competition.

So, you say, why not do something about it? Why not bust up all the big companies until they are small enough to be in pure competition?

The answer to that is, I think, obvious. The big companies can produce much more efficiently than the little companies could. (24) If we were to bust the big ones up, the inefficiency resulting would much, much more than cancel the gains we would get from pure competition; creeping inflation (for instance) would never cost as much as an action like that would.

Hence the liberal advocates a measure of government intervention in the economy to the extent necessary to control the evils resulting from oligopoly and monopolistic competition --and no more intervention than is necessary. His answer to the people who say you shouldn't tamper with the economy, you will only make it worse, is that the theory which says tampering will make it worse cannot be applied to the present-day United States, and that man should have no more fear of tampering with the eco-



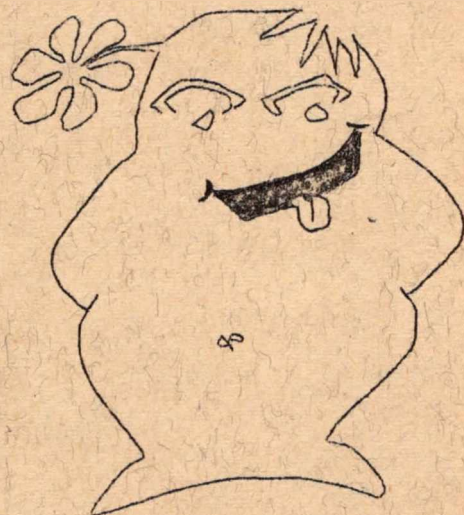
mony than he fears tampering with Nature -- and look at the riches doing the latter has brought him. (The latter, of course, is an analogy, and the analogy breaks down because in tampering with the economy you must of necessity tell people what to do to a certain extent -- which is a bitter pill. That is why the liberal believes in keeping government intervention to a minimum, whereas he has no objection to pursuing scientific investigations as far as possible.) (25)

The argument of the last few pages might be stated as a sort of fundamental principle of the liberal attitude in economics: Anything that affects the public is a proper object of public control, and nothing else is. That is, of course, not to be taken as a mandate that everything which affects the public must be controlled; only that it may be controlled if necessary. There are two principles which might be regarded as basic to the liberal's attitude to civil liberties: these are the principles of Maximization of Choice and of Uniformity of Governmental Effect.

"Maximization of Choice" means what it looks like it means: a proper object of government is to ensure that in all fields of endeavor every person has as free and complete a choice among as many alternatives as possible. The only restrictions that are allowed are those necessary to guarantee the public safety and welfare. (26) At first glance this seems to conflict with the first principle I named above, that anything which affects the public is a proper object of public control. But they are not contradictory as long as "control" is not taken to mean arbitrary restriction. For example, the government controls advertising; it does not allow a butcher to sell horsemeat advertised as beef. Is this a restriction on free speech (or press)? I think it is obvious that it is not, nor is it in the classic example of a man shouting "Fire!" in a crowded theater.

But although maximization of choice and public control are not fundamentally in conflict, they do produce problems in individual cases. In each question the conscientious lawmaker (or judge) must decide the question, "Will the controlling of this action further liberty and the public welfare or hinder it?" Clearly, one should stop people from shouting "Fire!" in crowded theaters, and just as clearly one should not stop people from proselytizing for some oddball religion...including Communism. But there are cases in the middle, like the question of whether the snakehandling cults should be allowed to handle snakes, which can be exceedingly nasty to decide one way or the other. Liberals will differ on such questions just as conservatives do. But the existence of borderline cases, far from invalidating the principles involved, simply illustrate the need of policymakers responsible to the people. And they exemplify the fact that no principle can be relied on exclusively; there must always be adjustments and compromises.

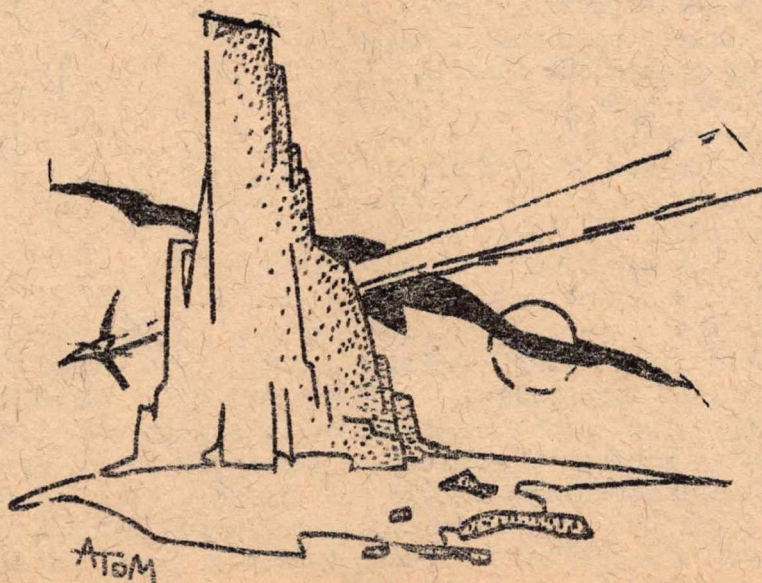
The third principle, the principle of Uniformity of Governmental Effect, is fundamental not only to liberalism, but to democracy itself. I find it difficult to state succinctly, but I am sure you will recognize it once I describe it. This is the principle that no governmental action should be discriminatory in its effect between people, or classes of people. Or to put it another way a governmental action should equally affect people in equal circumstances. This does not mean that the government's actions should affect all people identically. It is perfectly proper for the government to require people to be a certain age before they are allowed to drive, to be of a certain minimum intelligence before they can become policemen, to pay pensions to people over a certain age. Following this through, there are times when it is perfectly proper for the government to



distinguish between people on the basis of race -- as for instance if the US Army picks a select group of people to be a guerilla force in the Congo, it may properly allow only Negroes in because they would look more like the natives. This is based on the obvious physical differences between Negroes and whites. There are statistical differences in things like intelligence, too; the liberal answer to this is that if you need to distinguish between levels of intelligence for some proper governmental purpose, you should do it on the basis of intelligence tests given directly to the people concerned, not on the basis of some sort of statistical correlation between race and intelligence. (Some people point out that the statistical difference in intelligence is probably due to social class or environment or some such; this argument holds no water with me because even if Negroes were demonstrably less intelligent on the average than whites I would still retain the attitude that they should be treated just as other people -- since it is also demonstrably true, for instance, that some Negroes are more intelligent than most whites).

Carrying the principle of equality of governmental effect further, we see that it is improper to give people special privileges if they have high incomes or are born into certain families, it is improper to hang the Negro who rapes the white woman but only fine the white man who rapes the Negro woman, it is improper to cater to conscientious objectors who believe in God while forcing those who don't to serve in the military, and so on ad infinitum.

A very controversial attitude of the liberal is that these principles should, when practical, be extended to cover any action affecting the public, whether the action be performed by private individuals, private groups, or the government. The discussion above was limited to the government's actions. Now, the liberal says, if a private individual or group does something which substantially affects the public, he should follow the same principles of maximization of choice and uniformity of governmental effect. (27) It is on this basis that the liberals in state legislatures try to get fair employment practices laws passed, trying to outlaw discrimination in public restaurants, movie houses, etc., even though they are not governmentally run. Note that the liberal does not say that discrimination by a public restaur is



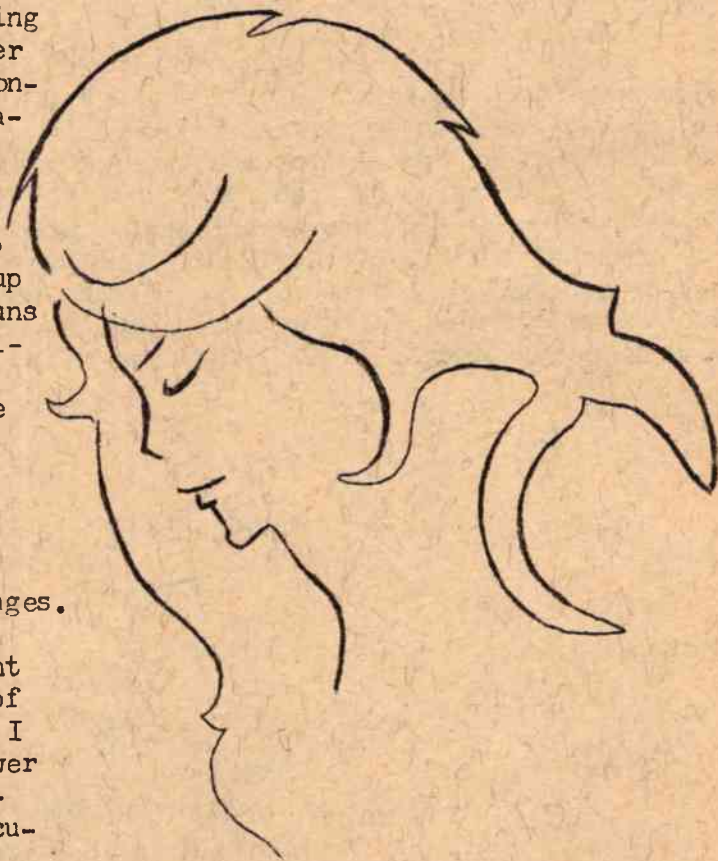
unconstitutional; he is merely advocating the passage of laws making it illegal.

The rationale behind this extension is clear: if no fair employment practices act (for instance) is passed, then it is a fact that Negroes will be discriminated against and will not be able to get many jobs that they would want. This conflicts with the principle of maximization of choice. The liberal believes that not only must the government refrain from doing things which restrict the choices available, it also had the duty to do positive things which widen the choice available to people. (The restaurant case is important, too, particularly when, as so often happens in the South, no restaurants at all are open to the Negro). To the objection that this restricts the employer's (or restaurateur's) right to do as he pleases, the liberal answers: the Negro's nose begins here! If you are going to serve the public, you must serve all the public. If your hiring practices can affect the livelihoods of a whole group of people, then your hiring practices are the proper object of government control.

Another area in which these principles operate is that of labor relations. The objection some conservatives raise (more in the past than lately) to the liberal support of unionism is that it is an illegitimate seizure of power by the workers from the employers. That is, unions reduce or eliminate the power the employers have to set wages as they please and determine working conditions as they wish; hence, so the argument goes, the employers' rights are being violated...in particular, their rights over their own property (the business). One wonders at this point what possible justification there is for saying that a group of people have the right to band together to form a corporation that will hire people, but that the people hired have no right to band together to try to get the first group to give them more wages. Any such idea runs directly counter the principle of uniformity of governmental effect. (28)

The conservatives sometimes raise the point that the free market will solve all the workers' problems. If the employer allows working conditions to get too bad, for example, or cuts wages too much, the workers will quit and go to work for some other company with better conditions or wages. But the liberal simply points out that in fact this did not happen; before the advent of unions and of governmental regulation of working conditions (which was brought on, I believe, largely through the electoral power of the unions) and minimum wage laws, conditions were terrible and wages were ridiculously low. The reason was that wage competition did not exist; the companies were few enough and big enough to resist wage increases and improvements in working conditions, much as the steel industry today can control the price level of its products. If you are going to hold to the principle of a free market economy, you cannot simultaneously say that it is proper for one group to control the market -- whether that group is business, labor, or government. (29)

It is clear what the government should do: it should try to control the excesses of both employers and unions. It should outlaw collusion amongst businessmen (which it does with vigor) and amongst labor leaders (which it does, not with anti-trust laws which are after all designed for business, not labor, but with laws that forbid sym-



pathy strikes, secondary boycotts, and the like.) It should ensure that both business and labor are run democratically and honestly* and that neither one has such a preponderance of power over the other that the competitive balance is destroyed. (30)

A special word about union shops. These are companies in which new employees must join the union within two weeks after being hired. They are not the same as closed shops, which require that a person must be a union member to be hired. The latter are outlawed everywhere in the United States, on the grounds that it gives the unions an illegitimate power over the livelihood of the people whose work is in unionized areas. In a union shop, the company hires anyone it wants to, and the employee must then join the union (usually after two weeks) or quit. In those states which have, under the Taft-Hartley Act, outlawed union shop, even this is forbidden; a company cannot require that its employees join the union.

The usual justification for the union shop is that without it, non-union workers would enjoy all the benefits of higher wages and better conditions that the unions have made considerable sacrifice to gain, without having to make the sacrifices the union members have made. On this basis, I would be quite content with a right-to-work law which stated that non-union employees must be paid at a rate equivalent to the rate paid employees in similar positions in the company before the company was unionized (adjusted for the falling value of the dollar). It seems to me that is the only fair way to have a mixed union and non-union shop. Free-loaders violate one's sense of fair play -- whether they are free-loading off the unions or the Government welfare programs. (31)

Now, that I have mentioned them, let me say a word about welfare. Social insurance is a perfectly valid way of stabilizing the economy and providing for people who are in need through no fault of their own. The Government can do it much more cheaply than private enterprise can (as Social Security proves) and more fairly. Anyone who has humane feelings must admit that we cannot simply let those people starve or die of TB or whatever trouble they are in; they are our responsibility. The only two ways it could be done are through government and through private insurance companies. Government is more efficient and fairer, and unless one has some sort of metaphysical reason for distrusting the government I see no reason for not letting the government do it and every reason for allowing it to do it.

But this does not mean I am in favor of welfare freeloaders, which is a problem that I am fully aware of. My stand is simply that their existence is no argument against welfare programs, it is merely an argument for improving the welfare programs.

Freedom of speech, press, and religion are less controversial. (32). The liberal stand on these matters is fairly well known and I suspect nearly everyone reading this will agree with it in general, if not in all specific cases. A point I would like to make is that the greatest danger to these freedoms today is not from the government, but from social pressure. It used to be that a person with unpopular opinions was simply burned at the stake or hanged or driven out of town. Nowadays, being more civilized (?) what usually happens is that he is ridiculed, that newspapers cannot refrain from reporting his views flippantly, that newscaster's voices rise querulously when discussing him; that his friends desert him (but they don't take any overt action

*Some liberals have a curious argument against the new laws requiring democratic procedures in the labor unions -- they say the effect will ultimately be inflationary because the rank and file members of the unions tend to be more demanding than their leaders, who are more experienced and realistic about what they can get. Hence, they say, the introduction of democracy will result in a more radical labor movement. All I can say is that this may be true, but it is beside the point. The members' rights are more important than the economic effect of their exercising their rights. It is very dangerous to advocate restricting rights in order to accomplish a goal -- whether the goal be controlling Communism in the United States or keeping the unions from making inflationary demands. If necessary, I would prefer the (nevertheless unpalatable) arrangement of wage-setting by a Government agency to any sort of arrangement which does not maximize the members' control of the labor movement.

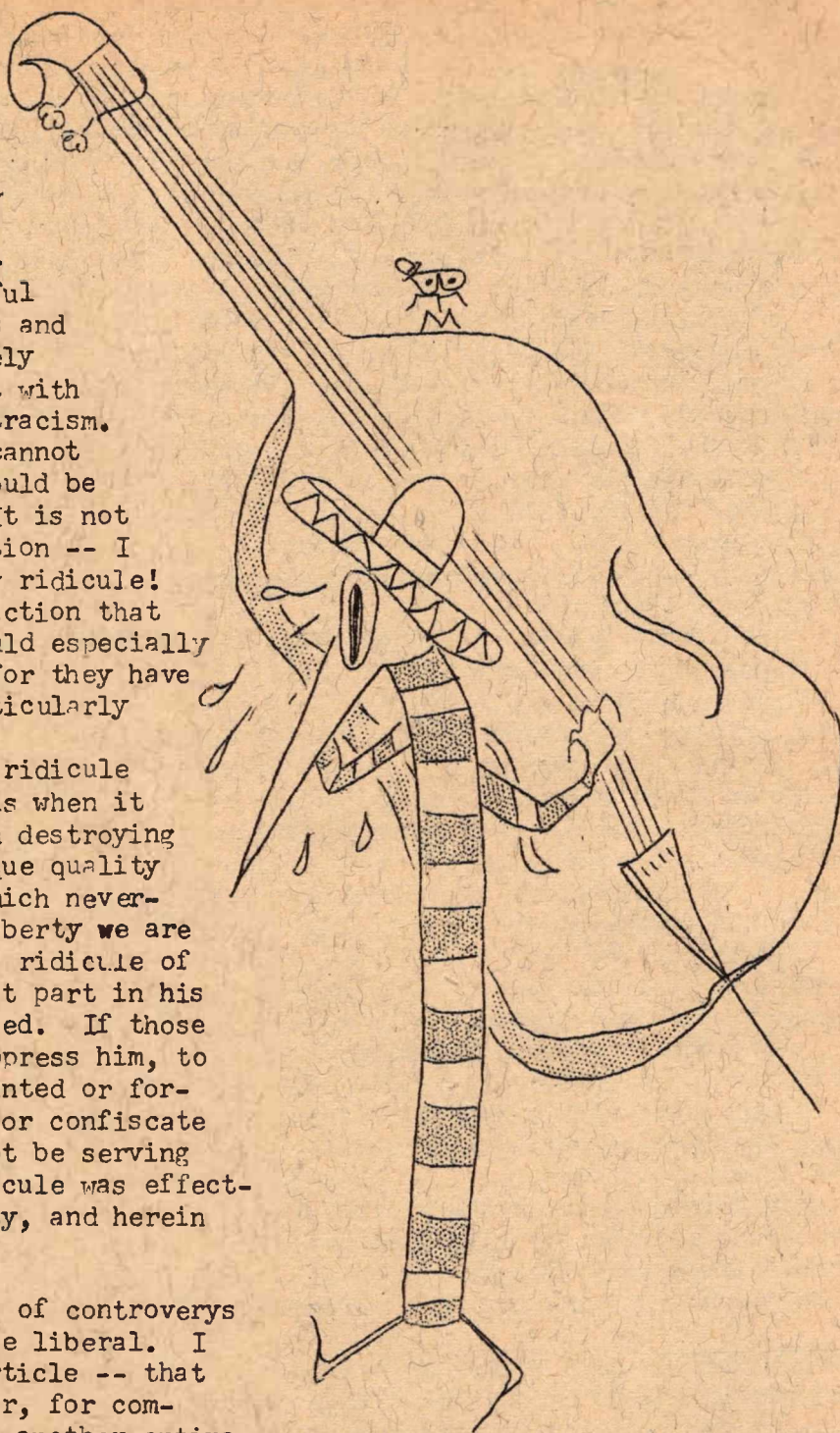
--oh no, that would be undemocratic) and everyone merely ignores him. Now, all this may be desirable -- in extreme cases. But it is part of the liberal faith to tolerate dissent in a radical way; the liberal should not ridicule any opinion he disagrees with, any more than he should try to suppress it; he must be a respectful listener to a person's opinions and enter his dissent dispassionately and in the light of reason, not with ridicule or name-calling or ostracism. This is the liberal ideal; it cannot of course be reached but it should be a goal kept clearly in mind. It is not in the area of governmental action -- I am not proposing that we outlaw ridicule! -- but in the area of private action that this ideal applies; but it should especially apply to those in government, for they have great power which warrants particularly judicious use.

Perhaps the area in which ridicule is most justified as a weapon is when it is used against someone bent on destroying our liberties. It has the unique quality of being an effective weapon which nevertheless does not pervert the liberty we are trying to defend. For example, ridicule of McCarthy -- which played a great part in his downfall -- was probably justified. If those opposed to him had tried to suppress him, to keep his remarks from being printed or forbid him to appear on the radio or confiscate his publications, they would not be serving the cause of liberty. But ridicule was effective without compromising liberty, and herein is its proper use.

There are many other areas of controversy between the conservative and the liberal. I cannot cover them all in one article -- that would take a book. In particular, for completeness' sake there should be another entire section to this article -- Part III, the liberal's attitude to foreign policy. But for reasons of space and lack of knowledge, I have not gone into that question at all.

I hope, nevertheless, that I have shown the bare bones, the skeleton, of the liberal position. Liberalism has a rationale; it is not a collection of softheaded opinions inherited from one's Depression-embittered ancestors. I most particularly hope that I have shown that the moderate liberal position is an honest one; that moderate liberals are neither communists nor hopelessly compromised squares. If I have shown that, then I am satisfied.

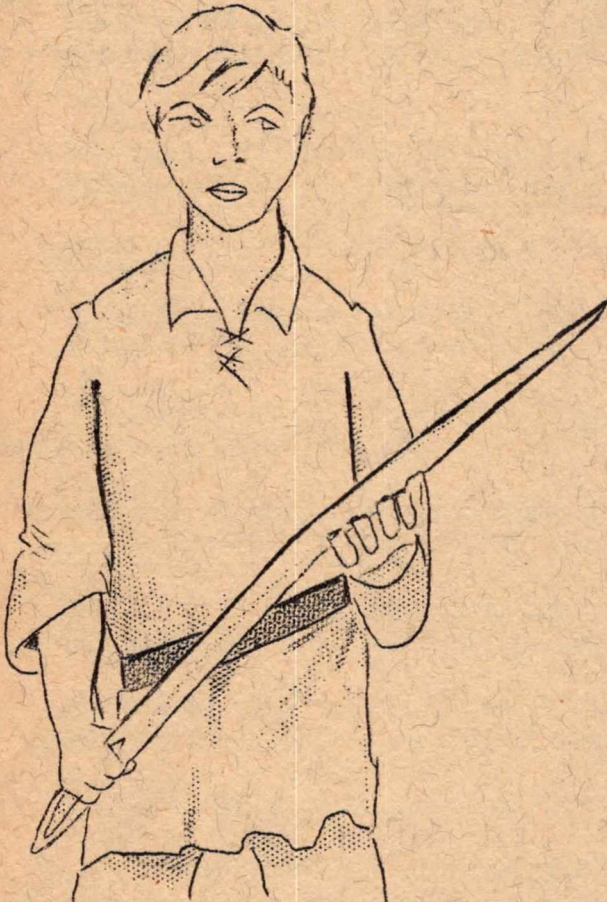
--Charles Wells



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7. The exact wording is, "Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation." Some Southerners seem to think that anything effective would be inappropriate.
8. John W. Campbell, Jr., "Utopian Voters", Analog February, 1962, p. 4ff.
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29. Bowen, op. cit., pp. 142-167
30. For an interesting exposition of the "theory of countervailing power" read Galbraith, J. K., American Capitalism, Houghton Mifflin, 1952.
31. I have found precious little to read on the subject of right-to-work in the way of theoretical development; anyone have any suggestions?
32. Walter Breen wrote an interesting and quite detailed article on censorship in BANE #6; it is worthwhile investigating for his distinction between the "moderate" stand on censorship and the "liberal".

ERRATA

3B, third whole paragraph: Read "Now that I have mentioned it" for "Now, that I have mentioned them." First line of following paragraph: Read "who constitute" for "which". Same page, fourth to last line of next text: Insert "people" between "Nowadays" and "being". Page 3B, end of second paragraph: Read "gently; that they..." for "...intelligently they...". There are undoubtedly numerous other errors; I will appreciate the readers calling my attention to any that I have missed.

--cw.

line of last whole paragraph: Read "...in the future" for "...in the past".

...an irrational passion for dispassionate rationality.

MEMO TO
G. WADSWORTH PAGEFELLOW...

Gunk. But
lest we forget to remember...
what strange beast lurches
on six legs? why, to be
perfectly
honest
speckled spine spikes

cause lurches, especially
in the mating season
(assuming you intend the female of the species
to be likewise. however,
since this beast also
rhymes with Grulzak, you
=may=
just be thinking of a poet.
heh.

--Rog Ebert

Counterpoint

The extended delay between last issue and this makes it impossible even to list all the fanzines I received, much less review them. Herewith are reviews of a few of the most recently received fanzines. One of these days maybe I'll solve the problem of How To Do a review column in a Small Irregular Fanzine. ...You will note that this time they are reviews, as well as comments. I have made no attempt to separate the two; I will simply say about each what I feel like saying, and no more.

XERO #8, May, 1962; contributors & limited trade; no subs; Pat & Dick Lupoff, 210 East 73rd Street, New York 21, NY: Eye-blinding cover that I must remember to use next time I want to hypnotize someone. That's on the Xero side; Xero comics is bound back-to-back with it. Xero is one of the great fanzines, with an unqualified "great" -- for any time, for any kind of fannish weltanschauung; it is thus in a class with Skyhook and Warhoon and the thirtieth issue of Oops!, and very few damn others. And yet, I cannot consider it a Very Great Pity that it has only two issues to go. Certainly I regret it; certainly one would like such fanzines to continue forever and forever -- just as one would like universal health, happiness & peace to descend on the world all of a sudden tomorrow. But it cannot be, and I believe the Lupoffs are wiser to announce a time for it to stop rather than letting us wait indefinitely for the last issue that never comes, as has happened with some of the other colossi. Perhaps it will result in more issues being published than otherwise: now, they have a goal to work for, rather than an indefinite series of purse- and back-breaking dazzlers to dread having to give birth to. ...At any rate, there will come along another fanzine to take its place. Indeed, we have been fortunate in having Xero and Warhoon simultaneously (whatever happened to Habakkuk?). Someday, some fanzine like Bane will grow into Xero's shoes, if the editor happens to retain his interest and find himself on the absolutely necessary sound financial footing for such projects. Meanwhile, Xero has two more issues to go, and who am I to complain?

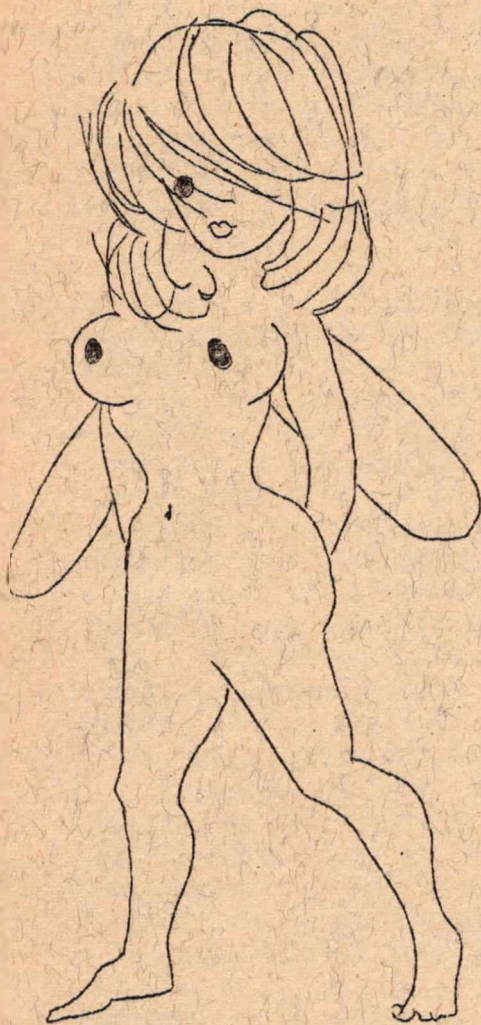
DISCORD #17, March, 1962; LOC, trade, or 15¢ each; Redd Boggs & Marion Z. Bradley, Boggs at 2209 Highland Place NE, Minneapolis 21, Minn.: Reviewers of late have not been pointing out, as they should, that Discord's letter column is one of the best around. The reasons are obvious: excellence attracts excellence, and regularity stimulates comment. In this issue, the letter column takes up exactly half of the fanzine, and yet the fanzine does not seem overbalanced as, for instance, last issue of Cadenza was (which also was about one half letter column). / In The Gossamer Thread, Redd presents his own philosophy of fanzine publishing. He has a great power with words; after reading this I went around for half the day feeling smug and byghod Right being a fanzine publisher: By Ghu, I'm Privileged, I said to myself, writing for fanzines is the Only way to write, the way to Health, Sanity & Happiness is to express yourself in fanzines, and to Hell With Everything Else. (I think in Capitals when I get worked up). Egad, I hope Boggs never decides to become dictator; if he speaks as well as he writes Kennedy'll be a pushover.

THE GOLDEN APPLY #5, Apr. 1962, which comes every once in a while with Discord, from Dean Grennell, 402 Maple Avenue, Fond du Lac, Wisc.: This issue is devoted to pointing out certain errors people are given to making in their feeble attempts at writing -- such errors as "assinine" for "asinine", "ect." and other variants for "etc.", and various kinds of confusion about "naive". To which I must add certain

frequent non-standard usages that I have noticed recently in fanzines. These include the use of "literally" to mean "figuratively" (they are in standard usage direct opposites), the use of "erstwhile" to mean something else besides "former" -- (just what, I've never been able to figure out) , the spelling "judgement" for "judgment" (and similarly for words like "abridgment"--although I should point out that the spelling with the "e" is the only correct one in the Commonwealth), and various errors involving commas. The worst one is the separation of the subject from the verb by one comma (such a separation by a clause set off by two commas is perfectly proper), as illustrated in the sentence, "The most soul-shattering blow to one's faith that a person can experience, is the discovery that many of one's beliefs are in the last analysis nonsense." The comma should be left out, and if all those modifiers bother you then you should rearrange the sentence so that they don't all weight down the subject to the point where it grabs desperately at a comma to keep from sinking beneath the waves (Another common fault is the use of silly metaphors). / In connection with this, although it is not germane to TGA, I recommend to everyone the article on the new Webster's dictionary which appears in the current Atlantic. It is one of the most devastating pieces of writing I have ever read. Apparently the numerous detractors of the dictionary -- in some very eminent journals -- lashed out in wild unscholarly attacks on the new dictionary without even bothering to look up the words they say should (or shouldn't) be in there. In many cases, they attack the dictionary for including a word which is included in the second edition (the new one is the third edition) -- although the second edition is the one which they claim should be retained as an authority. In one case, the third edition is criticized for including "irregardless" -- and the critic makes no mention of the fact that the word is clearly marked "nonstandard". People who would never dream of committing the fallacy in ethics which holds that ethical truths are objectively discoverable commit the same fallacy with regard to language norms. When pressed, they retreat behind something they call the usage of educated people, which is what the new dictionary bases its usage on by its own statement. It all makes a fascinating case study of the tenaciousness with which people hold to their pet prejudices.

THE BUG EYE #10, March-April, 1962; LOC, trade, etc; Helmut Klemm, 16 Uhland St., Utfort/Eick, (22a) Krs. Moers, West Germany: TBE is getting to be an extremely valuable connecting link between Gerfandom and English-speaking fandom. It is actually more international than that, even -- the letter column contains 18 letters from 8 different countries (Germany, USA, England, Argentina, Spain, Holland, Japan, and Sweden). This issue is given over to a long article giving a young West German's view of Naziism (by Rolf Gindorf). The letter column contains political discussion of a rather international sort, discussion of stf, and other subjects. A fascinating issue to read; one felt as if one were present at a meeting of a sort of United Nations of fandom. / Dave Locke makes a rather boorish comparison of German with Swahili which makes me wonder when Americans are going to learn that English isn't the only language in the world.

MIAFAN #6, March 1962; LOC, trade, or 15¢ each; Michael D. Kurman, 231 SW 51 Court, Miami 44, Florida: This is a not unimpressive not unfanzine which after six issues till has not lost its air of neofannishness. (I do not consider this any kind of devastating criticism; Fiendetta still was neofannish after six issues, too.) MIAFAN retains the overformal air ("Published by MIAMI PRESS PUBLICATIONS" it says, and "Our new policy provides you with an electronic cover each time") and occasional clumsy English ("Deadline...is set at April the 15th...") characteristic of the writing of neofans. But the magazine is well done (although the typewriter he uses either has dirty keys or is ill-adapted to stenciling) and contains some interesting material; I certainly do not regret receiving it, as I do many neofannish fanzines. There are two pieces of science fiction; one by R. Allison is very short in length and idea; the other, by Dave Locke, is a longer attempt which shows some talent at writing, but



which shows a very poor grasp of science. He has evolution suddenly speeding up in order to supply a new mutation of Man that will overcome an atomically-induced mutation that lacks imagination but has other powers. Now, a science-fiction author can do anything he wants to, but he is, in my view of things, obligated to explain or justify any such radical deviation from what we know about Nature as allowing it to act with purpose. / There is also an article about the effects of mescaline which is interesting but second-hand; see the review of Setebos, below. And there are fanzine reviews by Seth Johnson which tend too much to be mere listings-of-contents -- although there are occasional interesting comments which illustrate Seth's well-known political views. But the column is marred by an abundance of errors of fact and interpretation, some of which are unintentionally humorous ("House of Un-American Activities Committee" -- which may, of course, be Kurman's error). Some of these errors need public correction, I believe: (1) It is not true that most of the newspapers "belong to and are owned by four or five great newspaper chains". (2) Gregg Calkins is NOT! an elder fan, why, he's hardly older than I am... (3) Haverings is not a part of any "apa group". And (4) to call Art Rapp's article in Void #27 "not only informative but highly amusing" is highly misleading; any information anyone might gain from that article is, I am sure, purely a side issue as far as Art is concerned.

SETEBOS #2; trade, LOC; Owen Hannifen, 16 Lafayette Place, Burlington, Vt.: The main content of this issue consists of

two articles by James and John Lanctot (who are brothers) concerning their experiences upon eating mescaline. Both articles are absolutely fascinating and I heartily recommend them to anyone who is not of the opinion that fanzines should be concerned strictly with science fiction. Talk about sense of wonder!

CINDER #9, March, 1962; LOC, trade, 15¢; Larry Williams, 74 Maple Rd., Longmeadow 6, Massachusetts. In the issue of Bug Eye reviewed above Larry says he will fold Cinder with the next issue. This is a pity, as Cinder is just hitting its stride. He is folding it under pressure of school, so there is hope that he will stick around fandom for awhile and maybe someday start publishing again. / This issue contains McCombs and Warner and (ugh) Cascio, none of which are any sort of great stuff but the first two write interestingly about interesting subjects. Cinder has personality, elan vital, or whatever you want to call it, and that is the key to successful fanzine publishing

DYNATRON #10, March 1962; LOC, trade, 15¢; Roy & Chrystal Tackett, 915 Green Valley Rd. NW, Albuquerque, N.M.: I'm beginning to have a warm spot in my heart of gold or whatever it is for this fanzine. It's getting more & more similar to Yandro (not that there's any necessary causal connection between this sentence and the last!). It has a piece of fiction and news about Japanese fandom and a column by Len Moffatt and a long juicy letter column. The use of color this time is noteworthy. / Don Fitch mentions the idea of an annual or quarterly collection of fan writing, and answers Harry Warner's criticism (that most fans will have already read most of the material in it) by pointing to fringe-fans. Methinks he defends it wrongly. I would be very interested in getting and keeping such a fanzine, even if I had read most of the material already. Particularly if it also contained a brief historical-type summary of the happenings in fandom in the preceding period. It would provide some much-needed timebinding for fandom.

FADAWAY #14, n/d; trade, printed LOC, or 15¢ (whence all the 15¢ fanzines?--I'm beginning to feel guilty charging 20¢); Bob Jennings, Box 1462, Tenn. Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, Tennessee: A well-reproduced "science-fiction oriented" fanzine which I would probably find more interesting if I were more interested in science-fiction. (I like to read the stuff, but what the hell is there to talk about?) / The Star Article of this issue is a thing by the editor which attacks the Willis Fund (for the bulk of the article, that is, but the overt point of the article is a defense of Willick's awards). This is the most asinine, childish, and illogical article I have read this year. Or even last year. I was going to give a point-by-point refutation of this thing, but instead, I am going to quote a few sentences from it and let you refute it yourself.. I quote: "...NO prior discussion (short of an article presented in VOID) of the Willis Fund has ever been allowed." "The Willis Fund...strikes me as one of the most useless projects ever devised by fandom. Willis' visit will benefit only those persons who have the time and money to attendin /sic/ this one particularly /sic/ convention, and except for the possibility of a Willis written con report (which will, of course, have only a limited distribution, by necessity. Or perhaps it will be sold, thereby reaping more ready cash in retrospect), /sic, sic, sic/ there are no other results from the project." "The Willis Fund, /sic/ is beneficial to a minority of fans, is fabulously /you know/expensive, and was instigated /.../ by a few fans with no prior discussion in general fandom of the project..." ...Had enough? There's lots more like it in Fadaway #14.

Of the many other fanzines which I received since last issue, a few of the ones that were most enjoyed were HYPHEN #31, WARHOON #15, YANDRO #111, KIPPLE #24, SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES #60, THE PANIC BUTTON #7, VOID #28, INERTIA #1, and COMIC ART #3. I'm sorry I can't give you people any more egoboo than that; if I didn't have a Monstrous Article wallowing all over this issue I would have more space to devote to you. I hope, but I cannot promise, to send you all letters of comment, perhaps during the week between Oberlin finals and my graduation, although I don't promise this for sure, since I shall in part of that time be entertaining a particularly nice girl that I know...but that's neither here nor, ahem, there. --ed.

We think the feelings that are very serious in a man quite comical in a boy. --Dickens

"...The notion that a man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged; this I shall do by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.

If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern."

--Blake

LETTERS

The response this time was underwhelming. There were fewer letters of comment than for any previous issue, including #1, which went out to only 90 people. What are you people doing out there, anyway? Have you just discovered sex or something?

COLIN FREEMAN, Ward 3, Scotton Banks Hosp., Ripley Rd., Knaresborough, Yorks., England (...) Would just like to point out a slight discrepancy in your reasoning while commenting on Stefantasy.

I'll quote you: "The idea of protecting a person from himself is the only valid grounds I can think of for the anti-suicide laws."

Have you never considered the husband and father who decides to finish it all, leaving behind the wife and children to fend for themselves? I could give you such instances ad infinitum of course, for I doubt that many people commit suicide without leaving quite a mess behind them -- and I don't just mean a physical mess. Surely the anti-suicide laws aren't simply to protect a person from himself -- they are to protect those who are left behind to face the difficulties bequeathed to them, and also to protect the society as a whole. Committing suicide is anti-social, theological arguments excluded. I see no reason why a person should not "do away with himself" if his act results in no suffering for anybody else.

I think that Bill Danner was on an altogether different track when he supported an individual's right to jump over Niagara Falls without being fined for doing it. Such a person is obviously taking a calculated risk, but he surely has every intention and hope of achieving the feat unharmed. He is not deliberately going out of his way to do himself an injury. He is simply trying to perform a dangerous feat and Bill Danner objects to the Government's efforts to interfere with his freedom in this respect. I agree with Bill. Perhaps the State should abolish professional where the contestants are deliberately trying to injure each other. It's a question of where should the line be drawn -- it seems that occasionally it is drawn in the wrong place.

[Perhaps you could draw the line on a probability basis: if the probability that the individual will kill himself is greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ (50-50) he should be stopped. But that would let in Russian roulette, which as it is usually played gives a probability of death of $\frac{1}{6}$ (5 to 1). For the record, the comments on boxing were written several months before Benny Paret's death. --ed.]

ANDY YOUNG, 36 Gray St., Apt. 4, Cambridge 38, Mass: Maybe it's just my paranoid streak coming out, but I really feel that most people aren't competent to have any voice in their government -- especially in a world as tricky as the one we live in today. The Communist Party is Russia's 10%, and they seem to be doing pretty well. I do agree with C. P. Snow (cf. Science and Government) that the more people you have participating in making a decision, the safer you are -- but only if they are all really competent to judge the question. Adding lots of other people who have no intrinsic appreciation of the problem can only do harm, not good: for it allows the use of propagandistic techniques and other anti-rational means of influencing the final outcome. Even informed, rational people are subject to bias; but to include ignorant, easily-swayed noses in the count is just asking for trouble. One should seek a compromise between a maximum of participants and a maximum elimination of incompetents, it seems to me.

Or, in physical terms, adding a lot of bad data to a small set of good data can make the result less, not more, well determined.

Aren't we already getting close to the problem of finding people in an increasingly richer culture to do the menial tasks that cannot be turned over to machines (like garbage collecting)? And I think that we will find more and more, as we enter the age of automation, that there are a great many tasks that cannot be turned over to machines. For example, I have access to a large, fast electronic computer, but I find myself doing a great deal of numerical work by hand simply because it would take more time to program the problem than to do it myself. The new device (the computer) enables me to do things I would never have attempted in the past, but it does not relieve me of very much of my former handwork. The same effect is noticed in many aspects of modern technology: cars take us distances we could not have traveled on foot, but they take as much care (in time and money) as horses used to. A host of household appliances is as expensive to get and maintain as the old-fashioned housekeeper; but you cannot trade them in on a housekeeper because no one is willing to do such work these days without the modern appliances. The paradoxical result is that you have to be twice as rich these days to afford a housekeeper, as, say, a generation or two ago. It is this aspect of modern culture which the non-scientists protest against, and rightly, I think: that is, this claim that modern technology has lightened the housewife's load, etc., is largely phoney. It is true that the standard of living -- basic things like clothes, food, medical care -- has risen enormously as a result of technology. But by offering us so many choices, society now places us in a life that is more taxing on the psyche: the conflicts are subtler and more ambiguous, the decisions harder to make, the price of error higher than it used to be. We have, in brief, traded the physical strain of the sweatshop for the mental strain of the present world. The question to be raised is whether, in some transcending aesthetic sense, life is now "better" than it used to be.

Snow correctly points out that the starving peasants of any nonindustrial country would happily trade places with us; they judge the answer to be yes. But there is the counterexample that some intellectuals are having trouble standing the strain and would like to make the change the other way. Snow claims, and I think he is right, that these people do not realize that this means giving up parts of modern society that are taken for granted by these malcontents -- for, to put it the other way, not only does somebody have to collect the garbage, but somebody else has to make the antibiotics and the tranquilizers, and these require modern technology in toto, sine qua non.

The result, then, of easing our physical existence has been to make our psychological existence more difficult. Has the price been too high? I think it has been fairly high, but I think that society must also change in ways to reduce this price. I don't know what sort of changes these might be; perhaps television hypnosis is such a change that has already taken place. Very likely for the intellectual the equivalent electromagnetic soma takes the form of the classical-music station on FM (this seems to be true in my case). Perhaps this essentially solves the problem for the individual; but how is the problem to be solved for nations? Technology has provided them with the means of destroying themselves, and scholarly exchanges and good-will missions are not (at least at their present rather meager level) effectively treating the problem. Perhaps really widespread international travel might be the answer; surely if every owner of a TV set had spent six months in Russia the international situation would look very different.

Harry Warner: the name of Polly Adler's book is A House is not a Home. (...)

The artwork you publish is horrible -- especially your own. Why can't we have nice black print uninterrupted by these loathesome digressions?

[This page is especially laid out for you, Andy. ✱ I made approximately the same points against his electorate-restricting ideas as are made in the article in this issue, to which he replied: "You realize, I hope, that your argument contains a flaw? We already make a compromise between quantity and quality in choosing voters: there is an age limit, remember? And until rather recently, the vote was restricted to males. Of course, the outs were dissatisfied, and the women now achieve the illusion

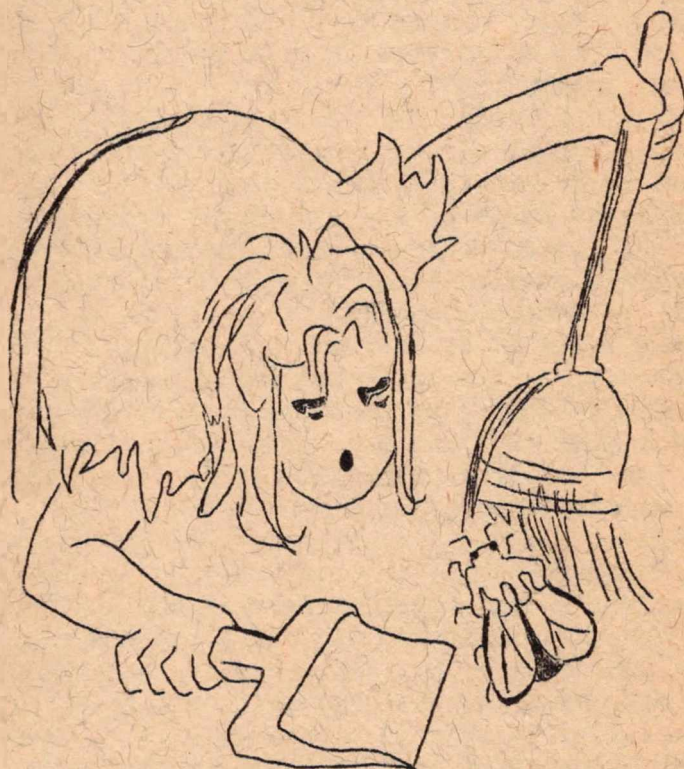
of governing themselves by asking their husbands whom to vote for. And most places require evidence of literacy in registering voters. So there are criteria for selecting voters; I merely suggest that we would be wise to draw the line a little higher." / The point about Russia is well-taken, but its example of efficiency does not tell us whether a restricted-electorate system is compatible with certain Anglo-Saxon ideals of liberty. --ed.]

THOMAS DILLEY, Box 3042, University Sta., Gainesville, Fla.: Your remarks about Oberlin's band were a bit puzzling; I had been led to believe that Oberlin was somewhat of a melodious school (just as Florida is a bit malodorous). But then my entire knowledge of Oberlin rests upon material found on the back of a Dave Brubeck record album. Of course, there is always one other possibility; any school musically enough inclined would tend not to consider a marching band anything other than an insult, I suppose. What is actually the view on this?

Your Miss Miller (...) sounds like the World's Most Busy Individual. I can see at least $4\frac{1}{2}$ full time occupations in your list: New Fan, of course, being one. Also, anyone who pursues hamming to any extent can use up an unbelievable amount of time (...). I don't know how much radio announcing she does, but that too consumes all manner of time (I... have a few friends who announce, and who go nearly mad keeping a couplet of stations on the air all-but-single-handed). "Student" goes without saying, and we'll give the $\frac{1}{2}$ to art. In the colloquial, not the literal, sense: "I ain't believin' it."

(...)According to Kinsey (whom, having read, I can't refrain from using*), it would be pointless to call prostitutes either frigid or overerotic. Without doubt, some of them are frigid, some overerotic (if there be such a thing; beyond the norm, anyhow), and some in the middle. Sexual response depends upon the individual as born and the sum of all experience to date, not upon the fact that the individual is or is not a prostitute.

[Not only that, but Barbara plays the bass fiddle -- and you know how much lugging around THAT takes. It's not chrome-plated, however. -- ed.]



JOHN M. BAXTER, Box 39, King Street PO, Sydney, N.S.W, Australia: Before I go onto the general loc on CADENZA 4, I'd like if I may to say something about your comments on my letter, because that happens to be what I am thinking about at the moment, and so I had best get it off my chest straight away. [John had accused fandom of following outside trends in choosing its topics of discussion, and said that many fans enter into a discussion merely because it's fashionable; he is therefore suspicious of fandom's attitudes on social questions. I answered by saying I regarded fandom as a sort of conversation-by-mail, and as in any conversation, some subjects are discussed and others are not, at the moment, and that it is only good manners to stick to the

subject under discussion. Now go on from there.--ed.7

Well, now, as to whether I think the fact that "fandom's topics of discussion follow trends on the outside" is a good thing or not, I feel my comment that "I treat the whole fannish attitude to social questions with suspicion" is at least an indication that I feel it is a bad thing. It seems that many fans discuss the "burning issues" of the day, e.g., segregation, draft-dodging, homosexuality as a "normal" way of life and so on, not because they have any real interest in them but because they feel it is required of them. Fans are supposed to be broad-minded, so let's see what there is around that we can be broad-minded about.

Yes, certainly I agree with you (in general anyway) that fandom is 'one big conversation-by-mail'. My beef is that fans confine themselves too often to the moral and social topics which are fashionable in mundane, and that their comments on these questions are often expressed more with an eye to what they should say than what they actually believe. Take segregation, for instance -- fandom is, I would say, 99.9% against segregation of whites and negroes in the US. Yet fans are drawn from all social groups in all states of the union. Their views on less contentious questions, especially those concerned with politics, are widely varied, as are their professions, incomes and interests. Yet they are all against segregation. To my mind, this is unreasonable. There must be a percentage of active fans who support segregation in at least some attenuated form -- the law of averages demands that. But where are they? Seems pretty obvious that they aren't prepared to state their views in public.

Another point I'll concede is that good manners require a person to stick with the subject under discussion, at least until he gets an indication that it has been worn out. But who starts these discussions? Who makes the first comment on the point which forms the basis of the argument? I don't know who cast the first stone in Les Nirenberg's current discussion on homosexuality, but he certainly touched off a flood of comment, most of it singularly uninformed (...). No doubt the original comment was made by somebody who knew what he was talking about, but you generally find that what comes after it is extremely uninformed. This is what bugs me. Discussions in fandom don't start between two or three people of equal knowledge and experience -- they generally spring up when one qualified person makes a comment and a dozen uninformed types jump on, just to appear sophisticated.

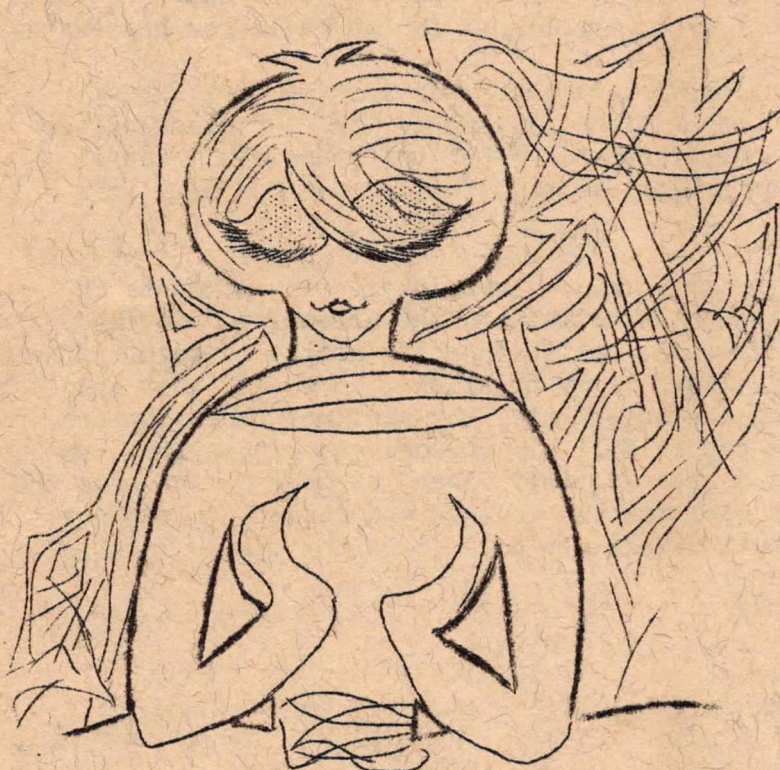
An example -- some time back, I was carrying on a fairly active correspondence with a certain US Fanned of some note. We got to talking about films, an especial interest of mine, and after a while we were discussing directorial styles, editing and cutting, "rhythm" (whatever that may be) and so on. After two or three letters of this, I detected a few errors in what he was saying. It turned out that he had never seen a major foreign film in his life, and his experience with the American cinema was sparse indeed. Most of his statements on the film were extracted from borrowed copies of FILM and ESQUIRE. I don't say that this is a regular occurrence, of course -- but it shows the extent to which a person will go to feign knowledge which he does not possess, and I doubt very much if there is one fan who does not subscribe to this particular system, at least in part.

(...) In re the SHAGGY review...all what talk about incorporating fandom as a religion???? It's certainly a new idea. Somehow though I can't see myself in a surplice. Can you imagine all good li'l fans kneeling down each evening while the loving parents hear them lisp passages from AH, SWEET IDIOCY? Touching.

(...) Was intrigued by your comment on Roy Tackett's letter, i.e., you "would like to rechannel the competitive spirit of mankind so that it would build and not destroy." A contradiction there, don't you think? Competition implies, nay demands damage and eventual defeat for the loser. How can you have competitive spirit when nobody is destroyed in the end? I've got no illusions about mankind. It's chewed its way through a dozen full-scale empires in the last few thousand years, and who knows how many before that? Fighting keeps man going -- it is, perhaps, a case of "only the phoenix lives forever", as somebody postulated (Brown's LETTER TO A PHOENIX

I believe) in the early 50's. And let's face it -- is there anything you enjoy more than a good fight? Preferably nonphysical, of course?

[Your point about fans and segregation is mistaken, I believe. Fans are definitely not drawn from all classes and occupations in anything like a random distribution. Most fans are from the middle class, and their work tends to be brain-work rather than hand-work. All this tends to increase the proportion against segregation. But it may very well be anyway that if you ran a survey and compared it with similar surveys taken of the general population, weighted the way fandom is weighted, you would get a significantly higher percentage of fans for integration. Whether that would prove fans follow the crowd, sheeplike, or that they are more "social conscious", I don't know. / Perhaps it is a good thing that uninformed people get into fannish discussions -- that's the way they will learn, isn't it? --ed.]



SETH JOHNSON, 339 Stiles Street, Vaux Hall, N.J.: (...) Seems to me that you are launching to make an intellectual institution out of Oberlin. Imagine people going to college merely to learn things? This is definitely not the American way.

(...) Often wonder why anyone reviews an apazine unless the thing is generally circulated or something. Most apazines are of interest only to the inhabitants of that particular ivory tower. Most of the discussions are of an ingroup nature and of course the mailing comments are of no interest to any but those who wrote the zines commented upon.

(...) Wonder if you'd mind explaining THE NATURE OF INFINITY by Blake. Sounds interesting or like it would be interesting if I hadn't got lost on the first parsec somewhere.

LEN MOFFATT, 10202 Belcher, Downey, Calif.: I'm sure others will take exception to your argument that creative persons are bound to react emotionally rather than rationally (or "scientifically") to rational arguments, the cold clear logic of mathematics, or wothavia. I trust you were speaking in general, and did not include all creative persons (artists, writers, sculptors, etc.) under this "rule". For instance, you say (or indicate) that scientists can be creative, and seems to me that when a scientist is acting in his creative capacity (painting, writing an article or even an s-f story, or whatever) he is a creative person. Quite often he is applying the scientific method or approach to his creations, though he may be emotionally involved too. Human beings -- no matter what they are doing, thinking, or saying -- cannot separate emotions from logic, or rationality, that easily and neatly. Some may be more capable of controlling their emotions than others -- and it seems to me that a really good artist, writer, designer, or composer must know how to control his emotions, as well as using some degree of rationality -- if he wants to communicate properly to others. In writing a story or a poem he may "pull out all the stops" and "flood the stage with tears", but unless he exerts some control his work is likely

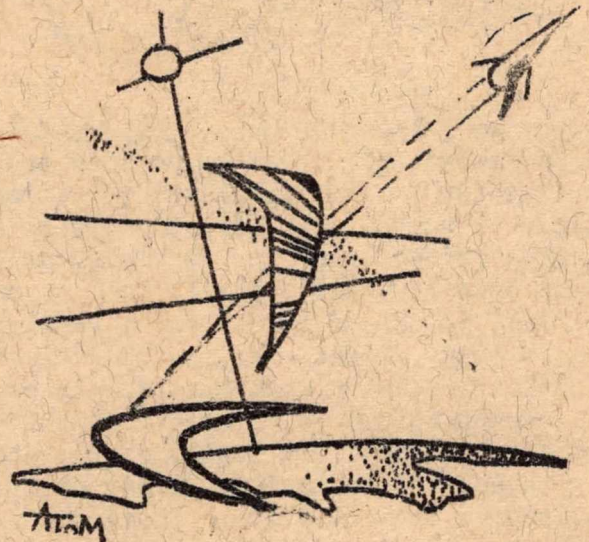
to appeal only to the emotionally unstable, and may seem like Too Much in the hearts & flowers line to those who -- though they like to have their emotions activated -- prefer their entertainment to have some relationship to reality. Even the wildest and most "way out" fantasy tale has to have some reader-identification -- or the average fantasy fan will consider it "interesting" (maybe) but not really a good story. And the writer, in order to make his protagonists and the other characters understandable and "believable" (at least for the duration of the reading), must apply some knowledge of real-life rationality.

I would think that the truly creative person would be happy in the knowledge that science is full of uncertainties -- that what is "fact" -- or a rational theory -- today, is disproven tomorrow -- for it should give him more room to move around. This should be particularly true of s-f writers. The "wet Venus" vs. "dry Venus" bit is a good example. S-f writers have used both theories (with some writers, no doubt, using both of them alternately, depending on the kind of story he wanted to write), and of course the really creative s-f writer might ignore both theories and think out one himself -- using what little is known about the planet as the basis for his extrapolation. (...)

[That science-vs.-humanities thing I wrote last issue was written in a fit of temper; in my calmer moments I make no such extreme statements. / Two other people wrote on the subject, one agreeing and one disagreeing; but unfortunately I cannot print either of their letters, for a particular reason. This is besides Gary Deindorfer's letter below.--ed.]

GARY DEINDORFER, 11 De Cou Drive, Morrisville, Pa.: Some interesting comments in the Habakkuk review. So there is a gap between the artist and the scientist. So the scientist is more cognizant of the world of the artist than the artist is cognizant of the world of the scientist. So what? That is my question: so what? Must the artist be made cognizant of the world of the scientist? Why must me? What matters it how he regards science as long as he can fulfill his purpose and create from the talent that courses within him if he is a great artist? Then, of course, there is the doubt to be expressed that most artists feel towards science and scientists the way you seem to think they do at all. I don't think they do. It is the parlor intellectual, the dilettante, the studied but personally noncreative man who feels this way all too frequently, not most true artists. Surely the artist is not interested in "tying up the world in a nice neat package." Think about that for a moment. The ambitious artist is interested in anything but that. He feels an organic need to pick and probe and delve into the Great Secrets of the Universe (whatever they are) just as the ambitious scientist does. The difference lies in the fact that the artist's method of approach is intuition, the scientist's, fact accumulation. Artists are Ego by the necessity of their make-up, being artists. Ego is the companion of Intuition in an artist. It shouldn't be held against the great artist that he is all too often completely worshipful of himself, that great vessel of talent which he is.

[At least, though, I can claim that the artist who knows nothing about science



ought to realize that he is making a fool of himself when he talks about science. /
A quibble: the scientist does not use "fact accumulation" as his approach to finding out things. He uses facts to test his theories, which generally originated in the intuition!--ed.7

HARRY WARNER, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland: (...)I think that everything was an anticlimax to that wonderful little item about the Oberlin band. Thunder, I just split a finger which was cracked from cold weather, and the following comments will hurt me more than they do you. (...) Another note on the gun-possession argument. I believe that this has imperceptibly swung from a discussion on the right to possess firearms to an argument about the right to carry them. The two are not at all identical matters; I don't know of anywhere in the nation that has laws making it difficult to own firearms, and it seems to me that this should satisfy almost everyone, since one's home is the place where the protection should normally be. (...)

DON FITCH, 3908 Frijo, Covina, Calif.: I wish I were able to discuss politics with you here; we have differences of opinion. I consider myself something of an anarchist, my Republican friends call me an extreme liberal, and my Democratic friends call me a Goldwater Republican, all of which rather confuses me. You mention Social Security doing for people what they don't want to do for themselves--fine, so the majority of the people want the government to save their money for them. But what about me? I want to save my own money, and feel that I can do with it what I please. As things stand now, the government takes 20% of it before I ever get hold of it, then, when I do live within my means and put a little into a bank account or into stocks, the government takes 20% of its earnings. Are you implying that the people have a free and real choice in elections in the U.S. today? I can detect only a small difference in degree, and none in kind, between the Democratic and Republican platforms.

This City vs. Suburbs discussion is a little beyond me because I didn't see the first of it, but Los Angeles and environs presents the same sort of problems as Chicago or (probably) any other big city. One of the reasons people move out of the city to places like Covina (40 miles away) is that property taxes in LA are almost twice as high as they are here. (...) If city, county, and state governments are going to be merged or abolished, we will naturally have to expect the growth of a larger, more powerful central government; there is nothing wrong with this in itself, but the possibility for abuse also increases, and frankly I do not trust politicians or the masses of people who elect them.

Federal aid to education--California hopes to get a great deal of money from the federal government for education, since, as someone put it, the people in the local school districts cannot afford to pay higher taxes. California already spends more per capita on education than almost any other state. Fortunately, the federal government seems to have devised a method for getting inexhaustible amounts of money from the future, by merely adding to the national debt, so there's no need to worry about where the dollars are going to come from. (...)

But then, I don't have a political orientation, and doubt with unshakable pessimism that interest in politics by an individual is going to do any good. And discussion such as this is quite useless, because, as Andy Young points out, most of us merely repeat the arguments we've heard and agreed with, and do no original thinking of our own. I'm sure that if we did turn our minds to these problems we could solve them quickly and with finality.

[The majority makes everybody save because it doesn't want to be forced to take care of the idiots, of which I am sure you are not one, who spend all their money and save none of it and have to go to the poorhouse when they get too old to work. / Of course the people in the school districts can afford to pay higher taxes. It seems to me things are in a sorry state when the richest country in the world can't afford the best schools in the world. --ed.7] [WAHF: Sally Kidd, Ruth Berman, Rog Ebert (see poem elsewhere this issue), George Willick, Betty Kujawa, Jean Young, and Michael D. Kurman. Found a whole batch of letters I had misplaced: guess you people haven't discovered sex after all.--ed.7]

