LES SPINGE

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sitdown

Which is rather an inappropriate title following the damp squib of the Aldermaston March 1963 style. The 'March Must Decide' Committee had hoped for a grand finale to this the sixth and last March, a fitting demonstration by the people of their contempt for the so called nuclear 'policy' of the present government. There was to be a massive sitdown in Whitehall instead of the usual tame rally in Hyde Park, but this plan faded out in a welter of childishness and near anarchy. Canon Collins was covered in flour and the London Anarchists lost half their number to Cannon Row police station for rioting.

The 'death factory' as it has been somewhat melodramatically dubbed, in the quiet little Berkshire village of Aldermaston, is to be run down over the space of the next year, leaving the CND with the rather embarrasing problem of finding somewhere else to March from! TWTWTW gave it a rather beautiful treatment by suggesting that the March would continue from Aldermaston year after year, until far in the future nobody would have any idea what they were marching for. Canon Collins would be an Archbishop and Michel Foot the leader of the opposition.

Nevertheless, the 'eggheads and beatniks, squares and ravers', as The People dubs the marchers, have made their point, and Aldermaston will be remembered as a symbol of what CND is fighting against. But what of the future, what new form will protests take now the government has snidely closed Aldermaston? Many were dissatisfied with the March anyway, they want direct action and more forcefull protests. "Spies for Peace" and the fiasco of RSG 6 have given the opportunity to expose official folly in providing funk holes for top brass, from which they can rule no people and no region. These Regional Seats of Government could become centres

for future demonstrations, as could be a more concentrated effort against the 'monster in the Loch' Polaris and the umpteen US bases which just invite action. There may be a greater fragmentation between militant groups, the CND itself being reserved for the very conservative elements and those who like picnics. Infiltration of Civil Defense will undoubtedly bring more 'offical secrets' to the public eye, and one more the gutter press will cry treason to all those who have survival at heart.

From the sublime to the ludicrous, the People for Sunday the I4th of April had a rather interesting factual report on the March, I'll reprint a few extracts, without permission.

"There were stories of immorality, with scores of couples sharing sleeping bags meant for one. Teenagers were accused of drinking the night away.....I paid IO/- which entitled me to sleeping accomodation at Reading and Slough."

At this point, the purveyor to the depraved goes into the tent and after numerous suggested adventures beds down for the night.

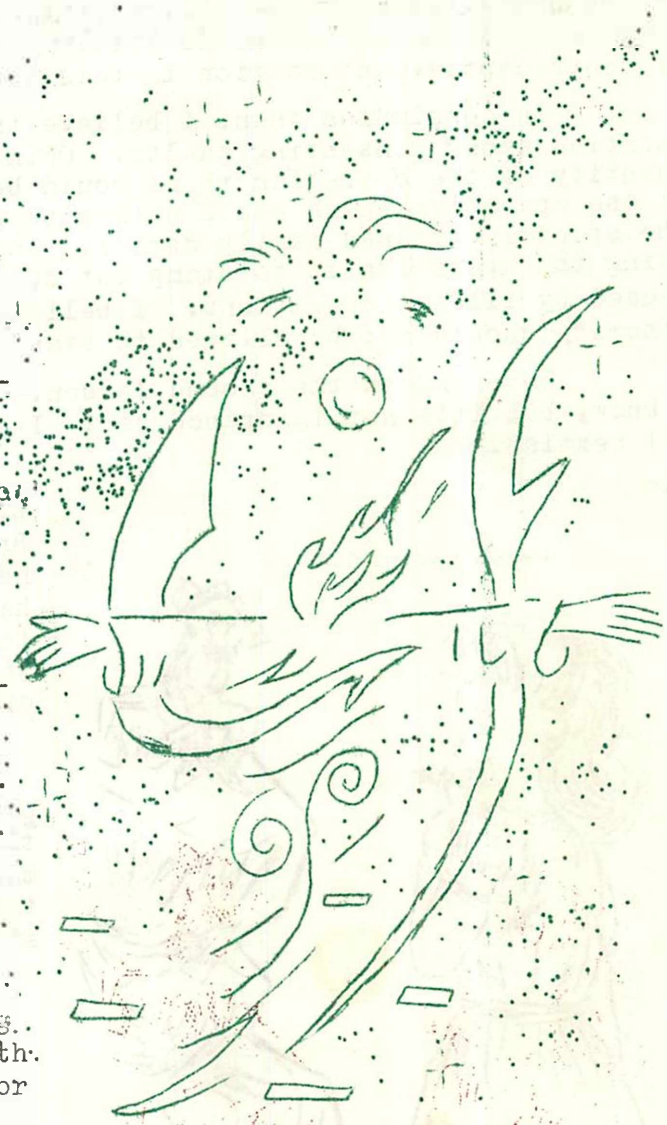
"...and looked round. Near by were two youngsters cuddling in a small sleeping bag. They kissed and giggled under a CND banner. On my left another couple were romping under a blanket....there were the voices of persistent lads inviting girls to hop into their sleeping bags. By morning there was complete chaos. Girls and boys climbed naked from sleeping bags and dressed in public. 'That was an orgy that was' said a I7 year old boy."

Nobody in OMPA writes for this rag do they? All I can say is that I was in the same tent and I didn't see any of this!

There were an estimated hundred thousand people at the Hyde Park Rally on Easter monday, a figure which leads me with an ease reeking of providence into my next topic. Imagine a hundred thousand crimes committed every year, and only a small proportion of them detected, a crime which by its very nature leads to loss of life and maybe two lives. Visualise this and you will have begun to realise the extent of the problem of abortion in this country. Without trying to be sensational, these are the bare facts: over one hundred thousand abortions a year, more than ninety thousand of these are married women, more women die of abortion than in childbirth, and most of these operations are carried out by back street quacks with no more qualifications than a butcher or by medics who didn't make the grade professionaly. On top of this are the few legalised operations performed in hospitals under ideal conditions. These have a negligable mortality rate, in sharp contrast to illegal methods which are both crude and fraught with danger.

The trouble starts when women miss periods, or have a delay for a few days. They panic, and without waiting to see whether it is a perfectly normal affair, dash to the nearest chemists for a home abortion. This will consist of drugs which are reputed to provoke uterine contractions, such substances as quinine or lead salts, and others more homely such as gin. They purchase at exagerated prices 'female pills' which often contain traces of these drugs. Medical experience has shown that almost without exception these methods are futile and can only lead to ill health or, in desperation, a resort to mechanical methods and the abortionist.

This man, some would call him a monster, practices his trade with little more than rule of thumb guidance, little skill, and an only slightly greater chance of success. He uses such crude devices as spoons and knitting needles, slippery elm bark and catheters, very occasionaly acknowledging the progress of science by manipulating a syringe filled with some supposedly [illegible] fluid. Medical abortion is safe and harmless, illegal abortion is pitiless and futile.



The dangers are obvious: ineffectiveness of drugs may lead to the consumption of a toxic dose, resulting in poisoning, or in the case of gin, alcoholism. Mechanical methods, contrased with what are laughingly called the 'safe' drug methods, open all sorts of possibilities like sterility, septicaemia, internal bleeding caused by severe haemorrhage, often leading to death.

What can, or is being, done to solve this problem? There have been many proposals, viewed alternatively mild and monstrous by the opposing factions. Firstly there has been an attempt to increase the grounds for legal abortion; allowing it when the mental or physical health of mother or child are endangered, or the mother has been the victim of assault. This is now law, but many are dissatisfied and think it does not go nearly far enough. It does next to nothing to reduce the appaling toll of life by illegal abortion and may, in fact, drive many mothers to this, if their own doctor refuses to allow a legal operation. Thus it fails to do what it most needs to do, that is to reduce the illegal abortion rate with its grave risks.

Lined up against the Abortion Law Reform Society is a formidable opposition. Naturaly the churches, more particulaly the Roman Catholic Church which, following its attitude to contraception, is even more opposed to any form of abortion. Yet there is a very strong argument that abortion is merely another form of contraception, a 'being wise after the event' device. Thus people who believe in contraception should find it very easy to agree to voluntary abortion. The churches call abortion murder, yet at such an early stage of embryonic life this is surely a very theoretical concept, and the same arguments which can be used to defend contraception against these beliefs apply here. It is a general view that a laxening of the abortion laws would favour immorality, but

this is countered by the fact that only ten percent of illegal abortions are on unmarried mothers, and, anyway, if the abortion as contraception view is held immorality needs little encouragement owing to the free flow of contraceptive information in this country.

In conclusion then: I believe there is a strong case for legal abortion among consenting adults. Owing to the rather unusual nature and quantity of the operation there could be a fee payable to cover the costs of the operation which could either be performed by special clinics or by the specialy trained family doctor. The main argument in favour of legalising the operation is to stamp out death, misery and suffering caused caused by illegal operations. I believe that the militant religious minority should not be allowed to stand in the way of progress.

Here endeth the second lesson. There are great gaps in my argument I know, but it's not ignorance see! I gotta leave something for the letter col nextish.

Like the beloved pontif, Pope John, Bruce Burn has passed away. No, Bruce hasn't passed away literaly, but he has left Britain, taking with him a few of the characters which have made the Pope well liked, even among non-Christians.

Bruce had a habit of calling on people. He came to the village umpteen times, and now John Baxter writes to say that he's just dropped in on him!. Ten thousand miles to drop in, and a mere sixteen hundred miles from home as well.

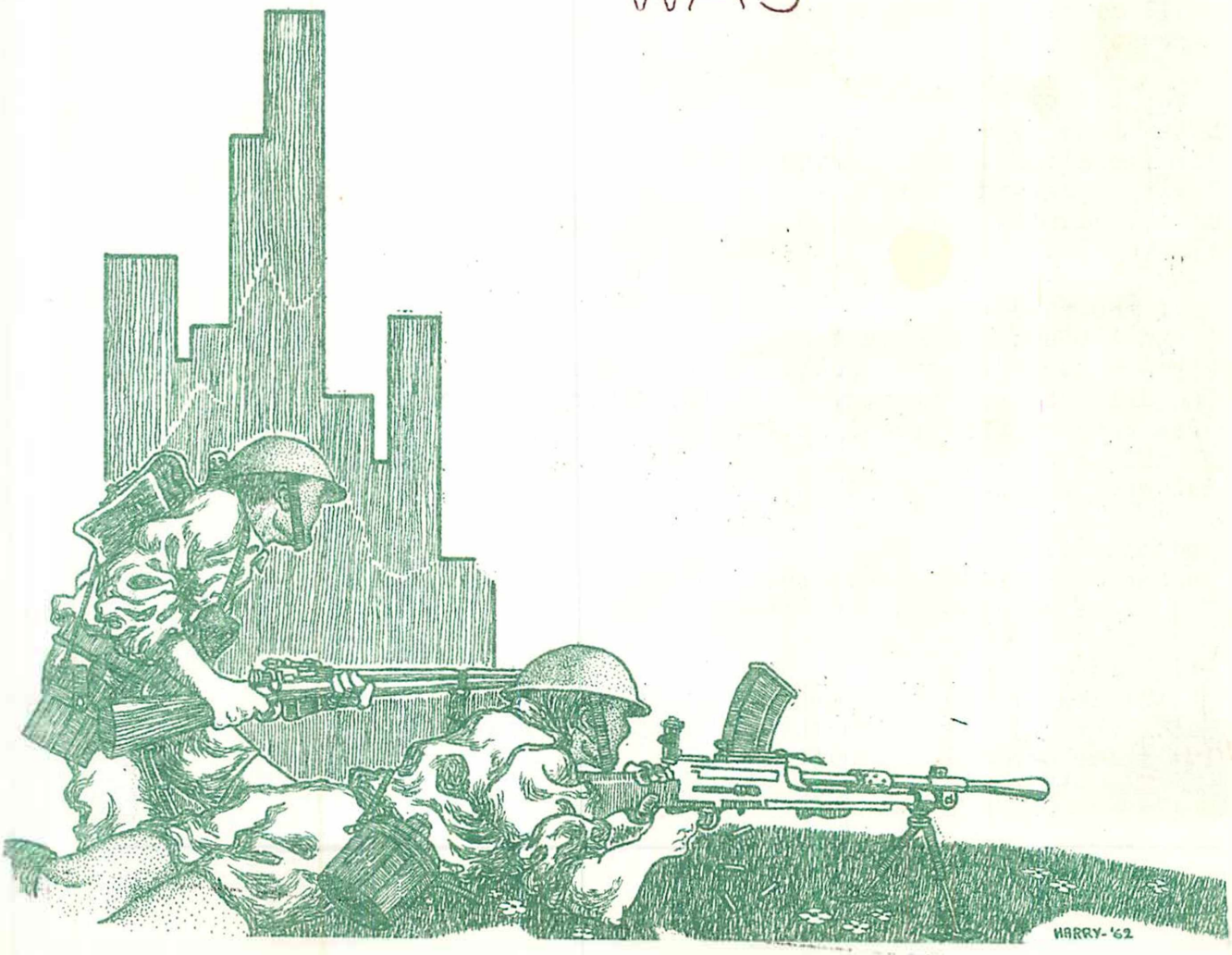
When are you coming back Bruce?

And that is that gentlemen and ladies.

"Och now, begorrah, pwhat would a nice little bairn loike you be wanting with a nasty great Gestetner duplicator?".

"Unca John has one, an' Daddy, and Unca Bob an Unca Ian, an Unca Ted, an....."

THAT WAS THE WEEKEND THAT WAS



VALERIE PURNELL

Ah yes, Peterbro';
Such a quiet, peaceful place.
To wake up in the morning and see the sun
Streaming through windows, and hear the
Distant rattling of empties being hauled
Across the yard.

Ah, nostalgic memories -
Cold toast and lukewarm tea.
At midnight, perpetual brag-and bheer fumes.
Cheerful company - friendly smiles - pork pies.
And Phil, with his glassy eyes. "I'm harmless."
Says he!

A Con highlight
To me, was Bruce Burn's 'Harka'
An aboriginal dance - or something. Bet they
Could hear him way across Peterbro'. My ears are
still ringing. Bring a grass skirt next time Bruce.
More authentic

I don't know that Ella
Must think of my manners.
But I can't remember saying 'thank you' for the
Invite - saturday night - to the room party. So just in
Case I didn't, I'd like to say 'thank you', Ella and Ethel
It was fun.

Say, who remembers
A small plastic gun that
Fired a sucker dart? Well, Archie Mercer stuck
The said dart on my bag, and said, "There you are,
Grow your own Phallic Symbol".
Thanks Archie.
But what shall I do with it?

And the corridor party
On sunday night. Shee! Where
Did all those people come from?

All I remember
Is sitting around the corner, with a relatively new
Fan. And d'ya know something? They just wouldn't
Put those damn lights out!

FROM MY UNCONVENTIONAL NOTEBOOK being some highly personal recollections of Peterborough in '63.

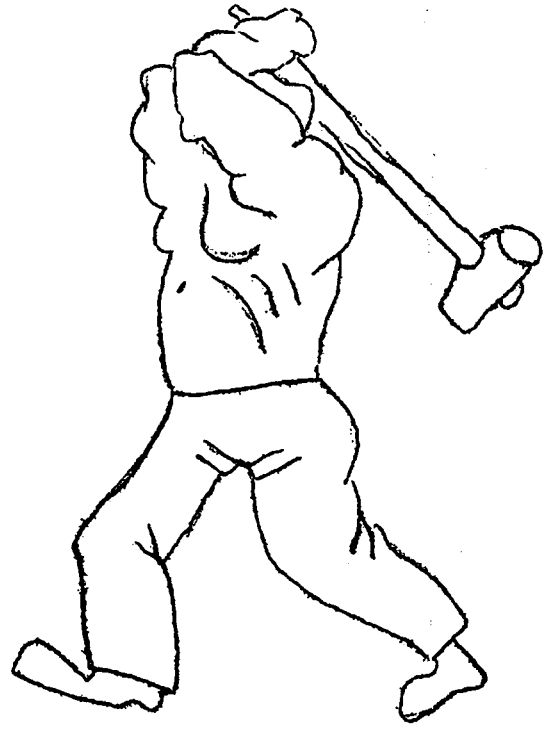
PREAMBLE The notebook from which these oddments have been taken is about as unconventional as you can get. A conventional notebook exists, has a corporeal being. Mine doesn't, and hasn't. Which is an excuse for a title if nothing else.

THERE WERE A LOT OF GOOD PEOPLE AT THE CON Ken Slater for one, who has given up a lot of his time these past months (including earning time) in order to organise things. The result was first-class. Ella and Ethel, of course, who threw one of their open parties to which the attendees flocked fifty at a time. Whenever they saw a free square foot of floor space, Bruce Burn and Maxim Jakubowski squatted down and russian-danced against each other until both fell over. Another time (still the same party) Eric Jones tried to hypnotise somebody - I forget who. He stood there behind him repeating over and over: "You are falling backwards...falling backwards...backwards...." As I happened at the time to be sitting on a window ledge straight in front of a wide open window, I'm rather glad it didn't work out properly.

There were, of course, several outstandingly Good People who couldn't make it for personal reasons. These included Peter Mabey (winner of the Doc Weir Award which he well deserved) and Jill Adams (for whom Jim Groves deputised nobly as a Long Arm of the B.S.F.A. Treasury - Collections Dept.).

THERE WERE A LOT OF NEW FACES, TOO.

Far too many for me to remember, for the most part. Lang Jones who seems to have sprung from Ella's head as a full-grown trufan, is more memorable than most for that reason. To any of the rest of you who may be reading this, my apologies. From the first night onward I managed to have just enough to drink, and just enough sleep, to become an almost perfect case of walking euphoria. I wouldn't know, but I felt akin to the mescalin takers one reads about. In some ways my senses were perceptibly sharpened, in others they were dulled. This matter of names and faces unfortunately falls into the latter class. But whoever you were, I enjoyed meeting you.



A specific sub-category of new face is the newly-acquired wife. Here I single out Wendy Freeman. She's not very big - she admits to four-eleven-and-a-half, and is the only person of either sex I ever remember hearing admit to under five foot - but what there is of her is simply bubbling over with fun. Keith says his recent gafiation was not entirely on her behalf - the exigencies of service life (he's in the Air Force and they keep buggering moving him about) are also to blame. But if it had been, it would have been entirely understandable. As it is, I'm glad Keith's back - and Wendy with him.

I'VE HEARD OF NEOFANS, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS Actually it's nothing of the kind, but perfedtly reasonable. People will get married and have children - in fact one is given to understand that the future of the race depends on it. If a married couple with children both wish to attend a Con, then they have two alternatives - to bring the kids, or leave 'em behind. And more and more fannish couples are doing the former.

At both Harrogate and Peterborough, the Shorrocks have brought two of their four with them - the oldest and the youngest, the former to look after the latter. And if that sounds like childslavery to you, then obviously you don't know the Shorrock family. Janet Shorrock manages to get her full quota of enjoyment from the weekend, largely in the company of Susie Slater - also a veteran of two Cons now.

The Bulmers brought their two little girls, but these were never seen far away from one or the other parent. Harry Harrison and his wife brought one of each - a boy Tod and a girl toddler - who seemed somewhat shy but still ran happily about the hotel. Sundry other juvenile fannish progeny showed up from time to time; in fact I can't recall having seen so many fannish offspring in one place before.

I remember on the monday morning passing along the corridor on the way to my room, to find it entirely blocked by a mixed quintet racing along it on hands and knees, comprising Janet and Alan Shorrock, Susie Slater, and the two Harrison kids. Then they crawled into one of the bedrooms, and vanished from sight. I hope to see them all there again next year, and more like them.

(Look who's talking - I've always reckoned I don't like kids. Perhaps it's got something to do with the fact that when I don't like a kid I probably don't care for at least one of its parents either.)

FOOD, ANYONE? The Great Wall Chinese Resturant was invaded by a huge horde of ravenous fans, for whom there was no room. The Liverpool mob (mighty eaters and drinkers to a man - or woman) were at the front, and as many of them as possible were accomodated in a hidden alcove that was apparently kept for emergencies. A quarted of Cheltenham and ex-Cheltenham fans annexed a single table that happened to be vacant at the time, and several London fans had already fissioned off to take space at the other end of the room. That left three of us - John Roles, Humph, and me. John had somehow got left over from the Liverpool lot, Humph perhaps hadn't been able to make up his mind in time if he was Liverpool or Cheltenham for the occasion, and I'm always different anyway. The two Johns (Humph's a John, though it's difficult to think of him as one) sat down at a nearby table where the couple who had the other two places were almost finished, and I went and sat by myself until things altered. So I sat and sat, gazing now

round the other strange faces at my table, glancing now and then at the John table to see how the stiffs were progressing. They weren't. They finished their coffees and lit cigarettes. They had their smoke. Then very, very slowly and methodically the young man got up, fetched the girls coat, and put it on her. Then he went back to drag out a shopping bag or something from the back. Then at long last they ambled on their way. I got up and whipped across the room and into one of the vacant seats. "It's just like the FAPA waiting-list," I commented.

The Minister Grill (or the Monster Grill or the Grinster Mill, I could never make up my mind which) was part of a pub, and on a sunday boasted but one waitress who was as a consequence run off her feet. I trailed in at the back of a Cheltenham-oriented sextet. There was a table for six vacant, with (due to the layout of the place) no possibility of adjusting this maximum. Caught again. So I sat down at the next table, which boasted Mike Moorcock, Ted Tubb, and somebody else whose name I forget. They had already ordered. When the waitree brought their stuff I managed to get my order in, and was away from the place by the time the Cheltenham table were starting on their first course.

If only I'd been able to get hold of one of Brian Burgess's meat pies, I'd have been making no complaints against the weekend's cuisine.

VALERIE FURNELL, ANYONE? Val is rather a striking hybrid. To describe her in a nutshell (if she'd fit) one could almost say that a cosmetic face hides a cosmic mind. Outwardly, she is every bit the typical late-teenage 'femme fatale' such as one sees on every street corner any week-end. Once one gets talking to her however, it soon becomes apparent that she's anything but - it's just that for some reason (possibly protective coloration) she likes to look one. Her face may not be her own; her mind certainly is her own.

Anyway, she's attended two Cons in succession now. If only somebody could get her interested in fanzines, she could easily prove a Very Good Thing.

I MET MACK REYNOLDS For many years I've had a 'thing' about Mack Reynold's stories. It wasn't just that I didn't enjoy reading them. It would be more true to say that I enjoyed not reading them. And as I'm only in fandom for enjoyment after all, I sooner or later did the obvious thing and stopped reading them altogether, and was far happier for it.

Thus, when I heard that Mack was to be present at the Con, I wasn't precisely enthusiastic. I took the news stoically. I'll leave him alone, I thought, and he'll leave me alone. I'd still go to the Con, even if Randall Garrett was scheduled to appear. And that seemed to be that.

Except that that wasn't. Somehow I found myself on the friday (I think) night as one of a small bunch in Mack's room, drinking his spirits sitting in on the edge of a conversation which he very much dominated. Dominated not through big-headedness, but simply because what he had to say about things in general was eminently worth listening to.

Damn it - Mack's not only a Good Man, he's a nice man. There should be more like him. Next time I come across a story of his, I'll read it. And I'll even be prepared to like it.

THE DAN MORGAN/DON COWLAN ALL STARS The Fancy Dress Party on the Saturday evening was accompanied by a portly middle-aged quintet under the name of 'Don Cowlan's Band'. For an hour or three they sat there bashing or blowing away according to type, while the odd couple took the floor or left it alone. Their playing was all that was to be expected of a dance-gig combo - adequate but perfunctory. They were what they were being paid for, and nobody was paying them to like it.

All of a sudden there was a stir at the back of the room. Somebody was unpacking a guitar-case, and then Dan Morgan stepped matter-of-factly up to the musical end, sat down, and began to play. The difference could be felt immediately. With Dan leading (yes, the Dan Morgan), the band swung into a happy hour of mainstream jazz that proved entirely satisfying to those who still remained - including this traddie.

THE TRIUMPH OF TIME The postponed after-hours unfinished business meeting was an experience unique in my recollection, and an object lesson in sheer cussed persistence. The main business left unfinished from that morning (Sunday) was the question of who would run next year's Con. We had a site - same place as this year's. We had certain offers of specific assistance - including one from Ken Slater, who could not have been blamed in the least if he'd insisted on a year's complete relaxation after all the work he's put into this one. But so far nobody had come foward to accept responsibility for general coordination, which those with experience agreed was the king-pin of the whole setup.

The meeting was, in effect, chaired jointly by Ken Slater and Bobbie Gray - Ken because he was this year's Con Chairman, and Bobbie because she'd been conducting the BSFA business meeting. It started half an hour later than scheduled (people were eating) and gradually snowballed as more and more fans crowded into the little lounge, many of them quitting 'Orphee' (which, though I didn't see any of it myself, I understand called for considerable devotion to fandom on the part of those leaving it) in order to be in on the deliberations. And we argued and we argued and we argued. We argued round in circles, in fact. Somebody would say something, suggest somebody's name perhaps, or ask a question. The suggestee would decline "on the grounds that...", or the question would be answered, Ken or Bobbie would complete the circular argument and start again in the same place as before. More suggestions. More regretful refusals. More questions. And somehow the shape of the circle would subtly shift, as Ken (or Bobbie) started the argument again - from (if it were possible) a slightly different side of the same place.

And suddenly the circle was broken. Some subtle shift in the formula some illumination sparked by a casual but pointed interjection from somebody, had left open a way out of the circle. And Tony Walsh - may much egoboo accrue to his name - had agreed to accept the job.

If he hadn't, I think we could easily have been there all night. I understand they elect Popes the same way.

But I'm damned if I can remember a word that was said - or by who.

A QUESTION OF BARONY I suppose the whole thing's pretty trivial anyway, and its genesis certainly was. I was sitting with a married couple (who shall be nameless) when it occured to me to suggest - quite logically from the conversation - that the man should inscribe his convention-label with the title "Baron".

"But he's not," said the wife immediately and emphatically.

Now in ordinary mundane company, such a remark could expect to be greeted by either sniggers or shock, depending on who was present. However, the way she said it, it was neither salacious nor snigger-worthy, but a statement of simple fact delivered entirely naturally and unselfconsciously by one who had good reason to know whereof she spoke.

It still looks terribly trivial now I have it down on paper. But its significance to me is this: when one's friends can say that sort of thing in that sort of way, then one is indeed amongst friends.

See you all next year anyway, same place, same time, ok? And London in '65.

KEN CHESLIN

I remember how impressed I was with the complexity of staircases and corridors at the Bull. At least twice on the first day my room vanished (well, more or less) and I was sore puzzled on subsequent occasions. For example, when I was hunting for room 258, which I'd left to forage for food just a few minutes before, it seemed as if some villain had replaced it with room I58 (Shorrocks or Slaters room I think). 258 eventually reappeared, and I squeezed back in to join Ella, Ethel and what appeared to be the remainder of the con members.

Well, maybe not quite all of them, it wasn't all that big a room. But a count did produce 53 people and this party was the root of a jest at the showing of METROPOLIS the next day.

The hero, see, is determined to share the plight of the workers (who have to suffer underground factories and living quarters) and descends to the depths to be with them. At one particular door he pauses for a moment, then opens it. With the opening of the door

vast clouds of steam billow out, in an extremely alarming fashion, and this was greeted by cries of "Oh my Ghod, it's 258!" etc. And as some 53 of the people at the film show had been in 258 they well appreciated the sally.

The slide show, given by a couple of the Lincoln Astronomy Club members, was pretty good. The slides were the main item of interest of course, particularly the ones by Bonestell, and no doubt the commentary would be very interesting to people less versed in the genre than the SFictional audience present at the time. It was rather amusing to note the narrators simplification of terms - his plugging of the "black sky means no air" theme - but otherwise he did a pretty fair job.

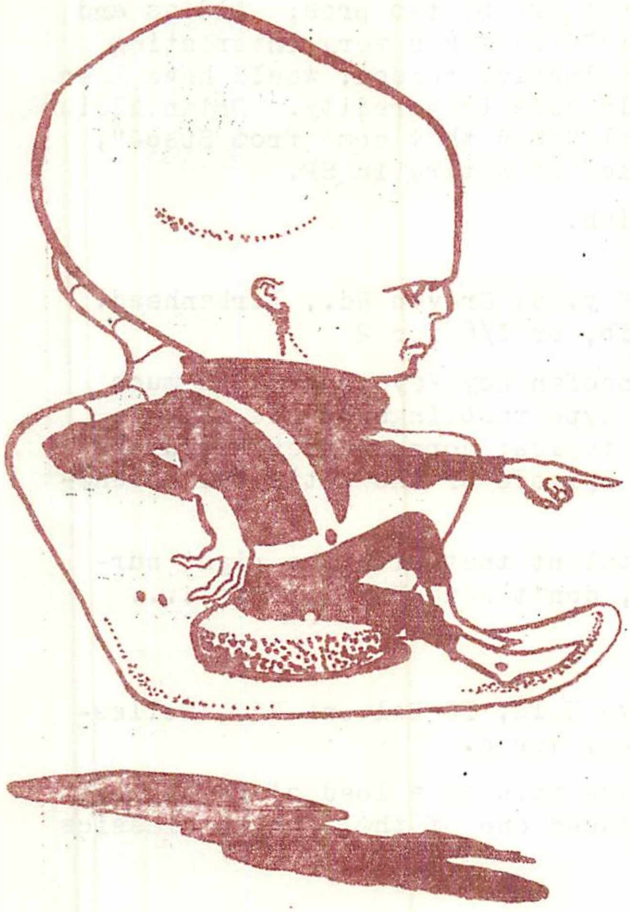
Harrisson was a scream, again. This time he was on about the peculiar ideas of censorship in various prozines, with special reference to SF prozines. Harry makes the kind of...um...speech?, that has to be listened to, participated in, to get the full benefit. Half the fun is in watching his antics and expressions.

The fancy dress was, to me anyway, rather disappointing in numbers, considering the number of fans present - and the judging seemed, again to me, to be all up the creek. The lad who won the first prize deserved it though; he was one of the Manchester lot - one of a bunch of four. His rig-out was fairly conventionally a future-man type thing... but what really made it was the fact that he'd coloured his face and arms rathersskillfully with some red greasepaint, or something similar which made the whole effect utterly fantastic.

Tubb came rushing in just about as the whole fancy dress parade was disintegrating. My Ghod! He was glorious! He'd gotten himself an old shroud (I think) and stappled crudsheets all over it, and a topper festooned with signs like "Wife & 5 typers to support", "Down with TV", "Read more Books" etc., and this, along with a fiercely bristling false beard created quite a spectacle. Reminded me of a holy hermit type, about to belt a few fat priests with his staff, or like that. Quite marvellous.

Actually when Tedd and Iris Tubb came up to the Pen the friday after the con there was some talk about asking the next con committee if they would like to organise a tourney at Peterborough next year. We figured that we could organise something along the lines of the Gloucester battle royal. But with a prize of some sort for the victor, something that would be worth fighting for, something worth winning - such as an ATomillo.

There are quite a few other things, Dave, that I fondly remember about the PeteCon, but so many of them can't be transcribed into words. The kind of atmosphere that pervades a con that's going well, the electric tric air of a pun or a lie swapping session, and the thundering buzz of a crowded room at 3 am in the morning. You know how it is, you've been to a Con, do you think <u>you</u> could explain it to anyone who'se never been to one.



YE FANALYTIC EYE

by Jhim Linwood

VECTOR I8 the OO of the BSFA. Edited quarterly by James Groves, 29 Lathom Rd., East Ham, London NW 6. Published by Michael Rosenblum.

With two notable exceptions the contributions and artwork in this issue of Vector are poor dessert to offer the BSFA member. The cover by Atom is far below his usual high standard, and surely gets the vote for Vector's worst cover. The inside cover illo by Roy Kay is much worse... another variation on the spaceboy meets girl theme. Having had his intelligence mortally insulted the reader moves on to an "estimation" of the old pulp hack John Russel Fearn by Philip Harbotle, who writes in glowing terms of the man who wrote under the byeline of Vargo Statten, Volsted Gridban, and many more names that Ian Fleming would like to have thought up first. Seriously though, Philip should be praised on the amount of research and dedication he has put into this three part series, but I fail to share his enthusiasm for Fearn, and am left cold by such ravings over badly written crud. Following this is an ambitious attempt at converting a well known SF story into a series of strip pictures. This experiment by Ian Aldridge using Richard Matheson's "Witch War" is marred by the artist's poor stencil cutting, but is nevertheless comendable.

The two notable exceptions I mentioned are by two pros; Aldiss and Presslie. Bob Presslie in "Stethoscopes for Sale" makes very interesting comments on what, in the hands of a less imaginative person, would have been dull text-book material; the relation of illnesses to heredity. Brian Aldiss writes a review of the new Mark Clifton novel "When they come from Space", and makes some sharp observations on the place of satire in SF.

The usual sercon letters close the ish.

CHAOS I The thinking fan's zine from Roy Kay, 9I Craven Rd., Birkanhead, Cheshire, Eng., LoC, trade, contrib, or I/6 for 2

An excellent first effort from LiG neofan Roy Kay that shows much promise. All of the material is mainly apa type ramblings by the editor, who comments wittyly on a diverse number of topics; correspondence courses, window dressing, SF, and fandom. The first episode of the satirical adventures of Jason Blilge closes the ish.

Roy appears to have a good deal of talent that with the right nurturing might produce another Berry. Faneds, don't send Roy material.... ask him for material.

EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION published by Dave Hale, I2 Belmont Rd., Wollescote, Stourbridge, Worcs.

Less enlightened reviewers might class this as a load of balls, but I will let suffice to say that Dave has produced one of the fannish classics without really trying.

ENFOCADO 2 LoC, trade, and especially contributions to Pat Kearney, Flat One, 33 Elizabeth St., London SW I.

The retitled Focus appears with almost the same unerring regularity as Panic Button. The enthusiasm and vigor of the previous issue seems to have turned slightly sour, and the zine now tends to verge onto absurd pretenciousness, but nevertheless is still an excellent production.

The semi-hard cover has a very professional layout by Eddie, being a montage of article titles and the sinister face of Henry Miller peering at the reader with Freudian profundity.

Pat begins his editorial by talking about his new typer...a lone fannish subject in a zine which contains no mention of fandom, and then shoots off to Miller, and some partisan remarks about Castro and Cuba making the profound and shattering observation "Cuba Si! Yankee No!" In "The World Remembers" by Stephen Williams (reprinted from Youth Against the Bomb) the whole of the shocking story of Hiroshima is condensed into a few pages, and tells of the present day rememberance services for victims of this war-crime on August 6th.

The regular contribution by Henry Miller in this ish is "Megalopolitan Maniac" reprinted from his "Black Spring", and again it is Miller in one of his worst aspects. For dog's sake Pat, reprint the opening chapter of Cancer and show everyone Miller can write!

The most regretable piece in this mag is Derek Martun's "Lost Generation", which takes serious American problems like delinquency, drug

addiction, racialism, fascism, and witch hunting and uses them in a vicious anti-American/pro Soviet piece of propoganda without offering any solution to these problems and calling them the products of capitalism. Were the students in Belgrade who called African students "Black monkeys!" and told them to "get back to the jungle" products of capitalism? And why do African students in Moscow call the Patrice Lumumba University "the apartheid university"? Surely racialism isn't a difference of economics, but a difference of cultures? The article betrays itself in one single line; "For as in Nazi Germany, a special type of dehumanised, insensitive, neurotic individual is needed to commit the crimes that aggresive imperialism, in its very nature requires". This single sentence must be one of the most self-contradictory, ignorant, and predudiced ever to appear in a fanzine.

The final piece is called "An Extract from the Anonymous Diary of a New York Youth" by Taylor Mead, the bulk of it being almost as ludicrous as the title. What I suppose is beat poetry to me is nothing more than a collection of sometimes funny interlineations on the same level as those collected at conventions. But I must be missing out if I'm expected to take this as a great social document, to me it's a load of balls.

In future issues we are promised material by Brian Aldiss, Ken(Coward? Madman? or Saint?) Potter, Geo Locke, and John R. Campbell so the mag will lose all it's pretentions and will propably emerge a a really high class fanzine.

SOME HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT S-F FANDOM Written by Don Franson and available from its publisher Ron Ellik, 1825 Greenfield Av., LA 25, at 20¢ a throw.

Yet another of those entertaining and informative booklets about fandom that Don Franson produces for the membership of the N(count 'em)3F. Although Eney's fancyclopedia is just as informative this booklet makes for quicker reference and portability. Among its tables of info is a list of all International Fantasy and Hugo Award winners, TAFF and other big-pond hoppers, World Con dates, Westercons, Lunacons, andthe final payoff; a list of all N3F officers from its still birth in 1942.

According to Don there are five existing awards for fans in the states similar to our own Doc Weir Memorial Award, they include the EEEvans award and

invisible little men award. I mention this so that I can congratulate those of you who voted for Miss E. A. Parker on your good taste and for thinking that she's a jolly good Ella.

PRIVATE EYE a fortnightly lampoon, I/- per ish or 35/- a year from it's editor Chris Booker, 22 Greek St., London W.I.

Regular readers of this column may be a little surprised to find me reviewing a filthy prozine like PE, but I mention it here because I think it is a brilliant commercial interpretation of what fans like Bill Donaho, Rostler, and especially Les Nirenberg have been dabbling in for years. PE is a quarto-multilith satire zine that has been hitting the news stands in increasing numbers for just under two years, and as I write now it has reached the peak of perfection; being sued by Randolph Churchill, the great Bumpkin himself. Satire is going over in a big way in Britain, it all started with the successful stage-review "Beyond the Fringe", then PE, and now its biggest breakthrough, a 75 minute BBC tv show late saturday called "That Was The Week That Was" (TWTWTW). The main targets are pompous politics, pretencious culture, capitalism, socialism, Royalty, and other sacred cows that should have been toppled ages ago. Sometimes the satire is layed on crudely with a shovel becoming nothing more than public-school ionoclasm, but when it scores it really hurts and does the public a great service.

Much of PE is the Nirenberg method of captioning photos, among the most famous being the one of Labour's deputy leader George (brother Brown giving a platform oration, "Brothers, what are we worrying about?" and a bored looking girl on the platform is saying, "You, Brother, you". Another feature is the reprinting of newspaper captions like, "No Water available so firemen improvise".

PE is one of the best things to happen to amateur journalism, long may it be sued!

THE DIRECTORY OF 1963 S-F FANDOM compiled by Ron Bennett, retailing for 5/-, I/6 to people listed therein (a good gimmick Ron) or 2½d to OMPAns.

Over 500 listings in the latest commendable Bennett directory and I am sure many more fans as well as myself are grateful to Ron for all the trouble he goes to in keeping track of fans who seem to change their addresses as fast as Macmillan changes his ministers. We eagerly await an article by Ron on how he compiles his directories.

.....Jhim Linwood

TENSOR I a crudzine (sic) edited by Langton Jones, this ish for free, but following ones will cost 9d., Contrib, Trade or LoC.

Tensor is a first ish by a newcomer to fandom, Langton Jones, that despite good presentation, is mediocre, even allowing for the inexperience of the editor.

The editorial makes a few classic examples of Chinese modesty, and then rambles, sometimes entertainingly, about Fandom, intelligence, and the contributors. Fiction by Charles Johns and the editor makes up most of the magazine, Langton's piece winning by a short head over the predictable twist ending yarn of Johns. A two part article by Charles Smith on Heroic Fantasy attempts to define the place of the heroic figure in SF and fantasy and draws parallels with classical heroes. A well constructed article, but why serialise it when the first part is a mere three pages long?

In "Bathtub Blatherings" Gerald Webb reviews books and talks about Gerald Webb for one page before criticizing Sheckley's "Journey to Joenes", which he dismisses with a mere 'To sum up I think the whole thing was too fantastic to be good satire, but not enough to be good fantasy'. Jurgen anyone? Next under review is Blish's "Life for the Stars" which the reviewer compares with a "good hot Indian meal"..."Draught beer"..and "fish and chips".

In the next issue Langton promises us a story about a man who tried to rescue himself, a story about a girl who got married without knowing anything about sex, and a twenty page lettercol. The editor's expectancy of a large response is going to be roughly shattered as have those of editors of slightly better firstishs.

ICARUS 3 edited by Brian Allport, 87 Bridlington Rd., Hyson Green, Nottm. can be got for 9d.

A pleasant little zine originally pubbed as a school-magazine by three promising lads from my home town, Nottingham. Most of it is sercon with a slight tinge of humour that certainly wants cultivating. As is usual in schoolzines most of the material is written by anonymous authors but it is obviously the ork of Brian and his two friends Micheal Booth and Gubby Allen.

Outstanding is an essay on Superman (an imitator of Capt. Marvel, and not vice-versa as stated), and several short vignettes in the manner of Fredric Brown.

Further issue could be improved by artwork and less similarity of material.

BURROUGHSIANA new series no. I edited by Richard W. Ellingsworth, 5 Kingdon Rd., London N.W.6. I/- per ish.

At last after many years Britain's leading Burroughszine returns with a new editor and a new format. Although Dick has written most of the material himself it's made more interesting by his self illustrations. The plumb of ish is undoubtedly his tongue in cheek article comparing Edgar with William Burroughs, and how their followers seem to have a liking for both Burroughs.

"Go on Brunhild; say the lad can join. Herr Hess is a good man, he'll look after him. Besides, it'll stop him from hanging around street corners and getting into trouble."

ROT 5 Usual rates of exchange from Mal Ashworth, I4 Westgate I4, Eccleshill, Bradford 2, Eng.

With material that was compiled two years ago Mal Ashworth returns to the fmz scene again with his usual interesting pot-pourri of off-beat material.

There is material by Doc Weir, Irene Potter, and some dated letters that show that at one time people like Jim Groves and Chris Miller even wrote LoC's.

A commendable and amusing ish.

GUEST REVIEW BY DICK ELLINGSWORTH

ELDRITCH DREAM QUEST from Pete Mansfield, I4 Whiteford Rd., Slough Bucks. I/- etc.

Pete Mansfield has been bitter by the Kearney-bug. Most of you will know what I mean, but for those fortunates who don't, I will explain - - reprinting. Two out of five items in the latest Eldritch Dream Quest are reprinted from a) Marginalia by H.P. Lovecraft, and b) The Fantasy Fan, Sept I934 / The Acolyte Summer I943.

The first item is an article - or rather a couple of letters - by Poul Anderson. I don't know whether to take this as a joke, or pity the poor nit. Mr. Anderson, please let me explain: the Hyborian Age, despite its lack of mod cons is more wonderful than the space age, and magic is more interesting than science - for just that reason you're moaning about - they can't be explained by science, we know nothing whatsoever about them.

And you've never had a hankering to be a swordsman in the army of Richard Coeur-de-Lion? Why not? To use a sword is far more satisfying than using a machine gun. It requires more skill, for example, and far more physical endurance, and anyway, it's nice to be able to play with your enemy a little before you kill him.

And so what if your brother is "currently in the Antarctic, leading a geological expedition into some mountains where the foot of man has literally never trod." ? It's men that interest us, Mr. Anderson, or if not

men then man-like reasoning beings. Oh, and we know all about dolphins, thank you, but so what? We want something that's able to fight back when we try and stick a sword in its guts.

Skipping now from the first item in the zine to the last, we find a letter/review by John Harwood of "Three Hearts and three Lions", the book version of Poul Anderson's serial that appeared some years back in F & SF. A competent rewiew done by someone well-known to those of us who still read the extant Burroughs fanzines. Even this, though, is lacking in something, but then it seems that John meant it only as a letter, and not as a review. Still, John points out a few small discrepancies in the book - glad I'm not the only one wh's getting at Poul Anderson.

Then, of course, we have the poetry: "The Passing of a Fiend" by one David A. Johnstone. A good idea, but rather poorly set out. Could have been worse, but it ought to have been written straight, not as poetry. I'll say no more.

The two reprint's First there's "The Lotus and the Moon" by Clark Ashton Smith, (essily the worst thing I've read by this author), and second "Lord Dunsany and his works" by H.P. Lovecraft - that name always puts me in mind of Marriage Guidance on the never-never.

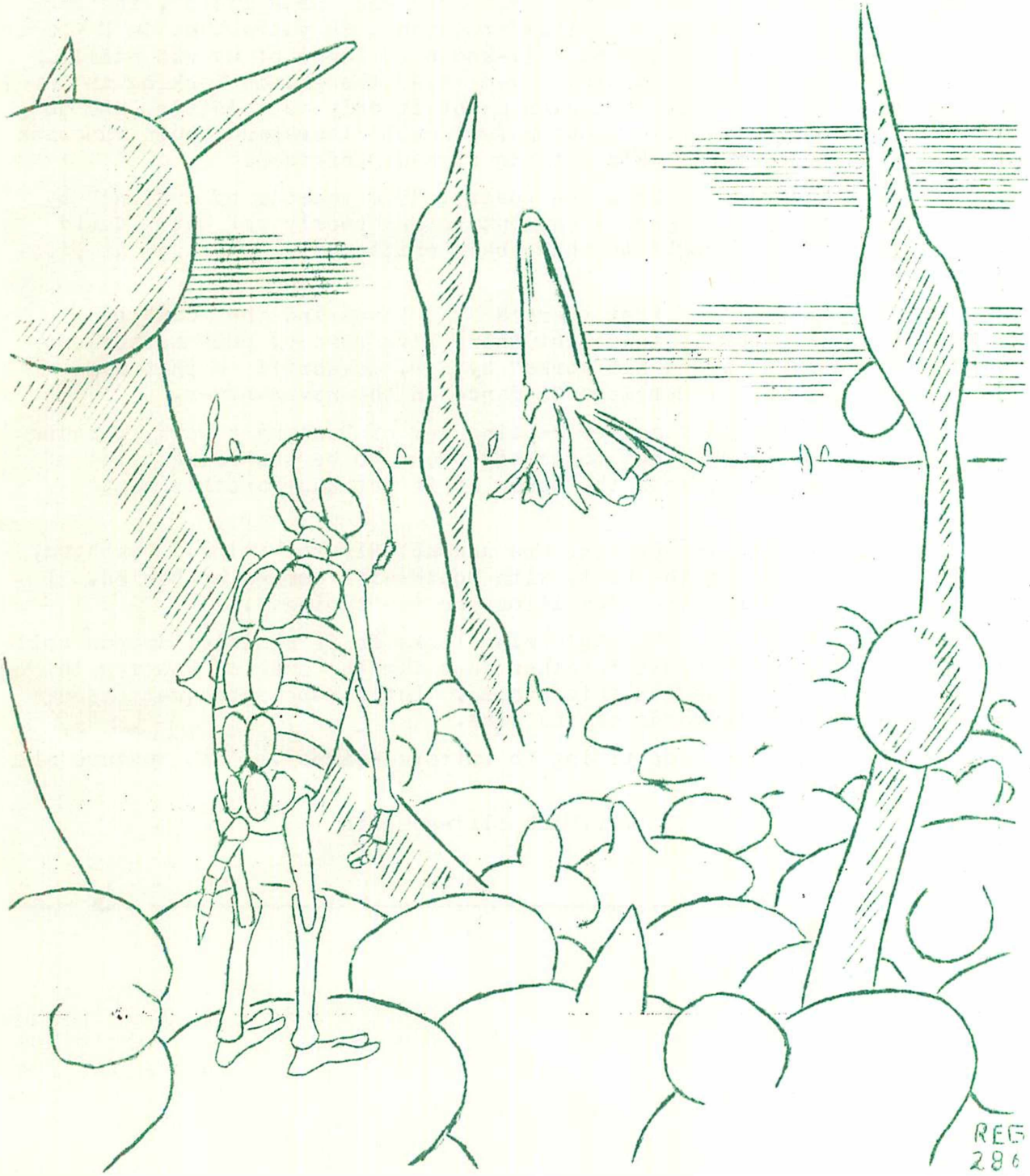
Not being able to remember reading any of Dunsany's work, perhaps I'm not qualified to judge, but Lovecraft seems to be showering a lot of praise onto some nut who, from the sound of it was just another beat author.

The best things in the zine are undoubtedly the illos...Cawthorn, Horvath, and McGann being the best, with Douthwaite coming up behind. I s all not comment on the other few illos, or the typing....

Why no editorial? The whole zine looks as if a miscellaneous collection of junk has been thrown together just for the sake of keeping in OMPA, but Pete hasn't even got this excuse. Let's hope subsequent issues return to the former standards of the zine.

And Pete, please stop trying to imitate Kearney. One immature nit in fandom is enough.

.....Dick Ellingsworth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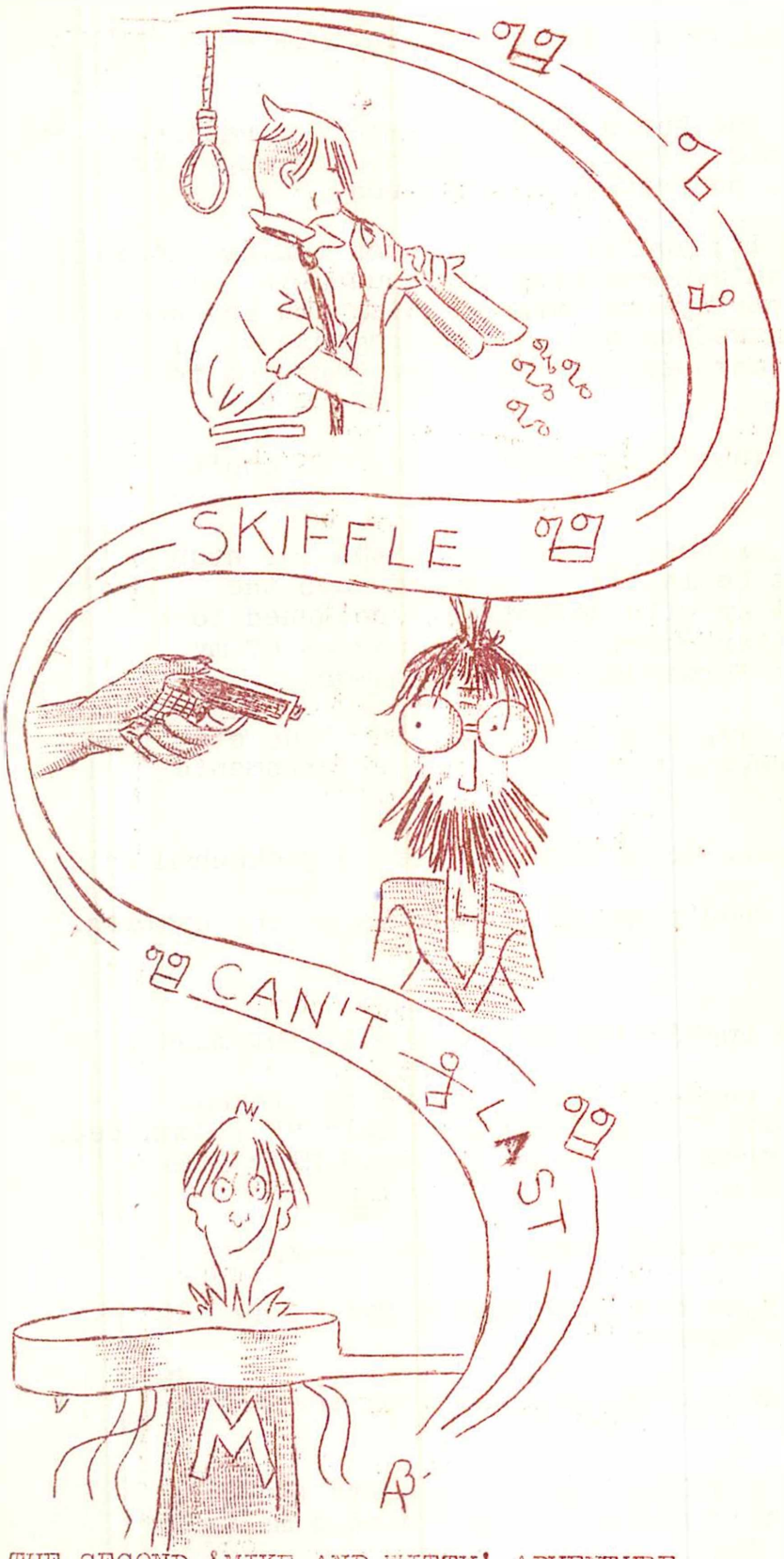


THE SECOND 'MIKE AND WITTY' ADVENTURE,
This time written from the angle of
Witty Whitmarsh, to whom all complaints.....

Skiffle can't last!
At least not if other skifflers have the same trouble as Mike and I in our wonderful show at Beckenham.

According to Mike, and I believe him, it was all brought about by Fred Lovett.

Anyway, one dark and stormy night I was brought back from the complex world of (x-y) (x-z) (x-b) - homework to you - by a loud ring on the 'phone bell. It has to be loud as next door uses it as well - party line, see ? I lifted the receiver and a hoarse voice rasped: "We've got an engagement!"

"No ?", I said astounded, and grasped the table for support - or rather I grasped at where the table should have been before Mum started cleaning - I got up off the floor and picked up the 'phone again.

"Yes, boss, an engagement; now your silver kazoo will get all the appreciation it deserves!"

"Yes, indeed," I said, "You're right for once. I'll see you next Saturday."

"Hey!"

Was the last thing I heard as I resolutely replaced the receiver. I don't let him talk too much - it gives him ideas about his own importance. I returned to my homework.

About the same time the next evening, a Thursday, the 'phone again broke my

train of thought. I snatched it up and bawled into it - "DOWNLANDS 2956"!!!

"Hello, Witty. Mike here." (he knows my bawl) said the rasping voice I had heard so many times before. "I thought you ought to know that the Skiffle Show is on Friday, not Saturday."

"Right! That settles it; you'll have to stop taking those Charles Atlas courses, all you can remember these days is How To Get A Muscle Bound Body, anyway they aren't doing you any good. Do you realise that you've mucked up all my arrangements ? I had a ver important business date on Friday - now I've got to put it off!"

"Sorry Boss," said Mike in a very small voice, "It won't happen again."

"See that it doesn't!" I roared, "meet me at the bus stop at 5.45 on Friday - and don't be late!" I slammed down the receiver. Having patched it up with sellotape I returned to the fire and began to think (any queries on the subject of my being able to think should be forwarded to the Editor).

So, on the following day, Mike met me at the 'bus stop and we went back to No. 36 where I made the final arrangements for the show.

"Now, how do we know where to go when we get to Beckenham ?"

"That's all arranged - Fred's going to meet us at the station."

"You're sure ?"

"That's what he told me bwah!" (he was in a flippant mood).

"Good. Then there's no need to worry when we get there. Now, have you got a good supply of Bheer and Blog Cola ?" I demanded. One thing I'll give that boy credit for - he invented Blog Cola - got his own still and everything.

"Yes, six bottles," he replied. "Made fresh today."

I allowed my tongue to hang out of my mouth for a few seconds to show him that I was pleased.

"Got the sandwiches ?" shouted Mike's mum from the bottom of the stairs.

"Got the 'Spangles' ? " I yelled back with gusto (gusto's the little man next door and he's always trying to beat me to it - just 'cause he hasn't got ITA).

Half-an-hour later we were ready. Everything was packed into the tea-chest bass which had been strapped to Mike's back, and we were ready to set off on the trek down to Norbury station.

"OK Mike, stand still!" I shouted, and jumped onto his back.

Mike sank to the pavement (I told him those Charles Atlas courses were a waste of money) but with a dig of my spurs I got him onto his feet, and we went off towards the station at a fast trot - although I had to apply the horse-whip a little before I could get more than a slow walk out of him.

He's not very strong.

At length we arrived at the station and Mike came to a stop.

"Go on! Round to the Goods entrance," I spat.

"Eh....?"

"Go on!"

"Oh, all right....."

Once round at the goods entrance, I reined Mike in and dismounted. "Now, go and see if the coast is clear," I said to my buggdy.

"OK, Witty, all clearn - but don't you think....."

"No!"

"Very well, Witty, but -"

"Come on will you!"

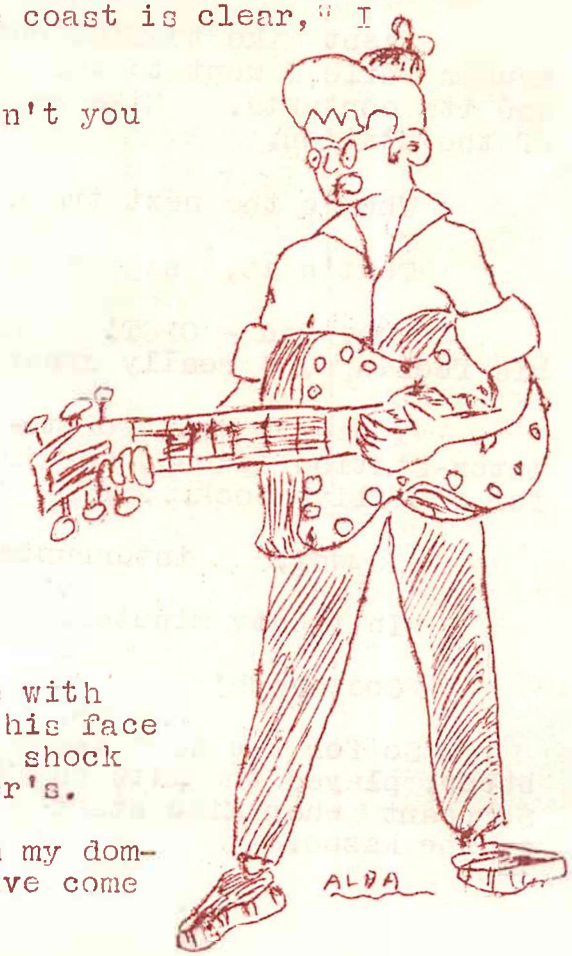
"Mumble, mumble, mumble...."

We reached the door and had just started up the goods ramp when we were brought to a halt by a voice which said:

"Whatsgoinonere, comeoutofit!"

We turned and came face to face with a grizzled old porter. Considering his face and Mike's face - I think that Mike's shock was only a little less than the porter's.

"Ah! Good evening!" I said in my domineering voice. "My friend and I have come



to collect some livestock which should have come in by the 5.10. Has it arrived yet ?" Sauve is the word I'd use to describe myself at that moment. Also Nonchalant would come a close second. I read Sherlock Holmes and know how to act in a situation like this. ((You'd know better if you read CASANOVA))

The old fellow mumbled something about 'domineering capitalists' and 'when the revolution comes,' and shuffled off into his storeroom. I knew who he'd vote for in the next election, but I didn't care, I'm a Liberal too.

"Quick, Mike, up onto the platform," I whispered, and rushed up the goods ramp.

"But Witty....." came a despairing wail, "we....."

"Shut up, and hurry, that chest can't be all that heavy. Oh, pretend the blog cola, bheer and instruments aren't in it - hurry up!

We ran up the ramp and were just in time to clamber on board a train. It was going in the wrong direction but under the circumstances I couldn't afford to hang around.

Three stops down the line we tumbled out of the train, on to the platform of the oldest, dirtiest, shoddiest, most decrepit, tumbled-down station on the Southern Region, Balham.

I sent Mike to find out the time of the next train to Beckenham while I went to the guard's van to collect the Teachest and its contents. Mike returned just as a train was pulling out of the station.

"When's the next train ?" I demanded.

"That's it," sighed Mike, pointing to the disappearing train.

"You, you - CLOT!" I hissed (and I don't care if I did hurt his feelings, I really swear when I'm roused) "Why didn't you hurry ?

"I had to wait for the porter, there was someone on the inter-station 'phone, enquiring about two people who were looking for some livestock....."

"Anyway," I interrupted, "when is the next one?"

"In twenty minutes."

"Ooooooooh!"

So for the next twenty minutes we drank Blog Cola and bheer, played the gits and kazoo and got assualted by a large Sergeant when Mike started doing REVEILLE and THE LAST POST on the kazoo.

At last the train came in, we climbed aboard and it was not long before we pulled into Beckenham.

"Here at last." sighed Mike. "I say, Witty, where are you off to ?"

"Out of course!"

"But the barrier is over there....."

"I know, but we're not going through the barrier."

"Oh."

Instead we went to the end of the platform and while I kept watch, Mike climbed over the five foot fence, leaving most of his duffle coat behind him, but I didn't mind, it was more comfortable for me climbing over the duffle coat than hard railings.

Having picked myself up from the pavement, I looked around for Fred Lovett. Mike didn't bother to look, he just lifted his nose and sniffed the air.

After we had been looking and sniffing for about half an hour, Mike suddenly said: "I don't think he's here."

+ +

I had ridden nearly seven miles (on Mike, of course) when we came to the hall where the party was being held. Just as I was dismounting Mike said

"Witty, we didn't pay for that rail trip."

"So we didn't," I replied.

We stepped inside the hall and were met by a fellow wearing a gravy stained face, old flannels and a dirty old green roll-neck sweater, a pair of horn-rimmed glasses adorned his face.

"It's 'im!" screeched Mike - "the bum! 'it 'im, boss, 'it 'im." He drops his h's when he gets too excited, but I didn't bother to correct him this time, instead I lunged at Fred Lovett with one of the empty bheer bottles.

Having dealt thusly with Fred, we proceeded to go gound the back way behind the stage and get ready for the show. Other people were there too - waiting to go on. We got into friendly conversation with them until it was time to go up onto the stage. Luckily we remembered to wipe the lipstick off - man, what a good idea having a follies show on too.

At 9. 15 we went on stage and played solidly for two hours.

Then someone noticed that the microphone hadn't been switched on and that the curtain were still closed. We put this to rights and played solidly for another two hours.

At the end of the performance the audience rushed at me and I was nearly suffocated by autograph books, pieces of paer, I.O.Us and female fans.

After I had got rid of 'em and promised to let 'em all join my fan club at a fee of a guinea per person (I never let an opportunity slide), Mike said with a look of wonder in his young face - "What's it like, Witty, to my a - a - celebrity!"

My golden kazoo had won the day, succesfully drowning Mike's guitar, the washboard and the bass.

We decided to leave at once in case the fans got too rowdy - I don't like starting these riots so far away from a decent newspaper, not good publicity.

We waited half an hour for a 'bus, and when it did come we had to stand because of the bass. Still we made 3/4½d. busking to the rest of the que (I told you I never let an opportunity slide). Mike went to sleep in the cubby hole where they store the luggage.

When we got to Norbury, the same old porter was waiting.

He was surrounded by several large grates from which came a strange cacaphony of grunts and cackels - like the audience at a Sunday Night At The Palladium show (we've got ITA).

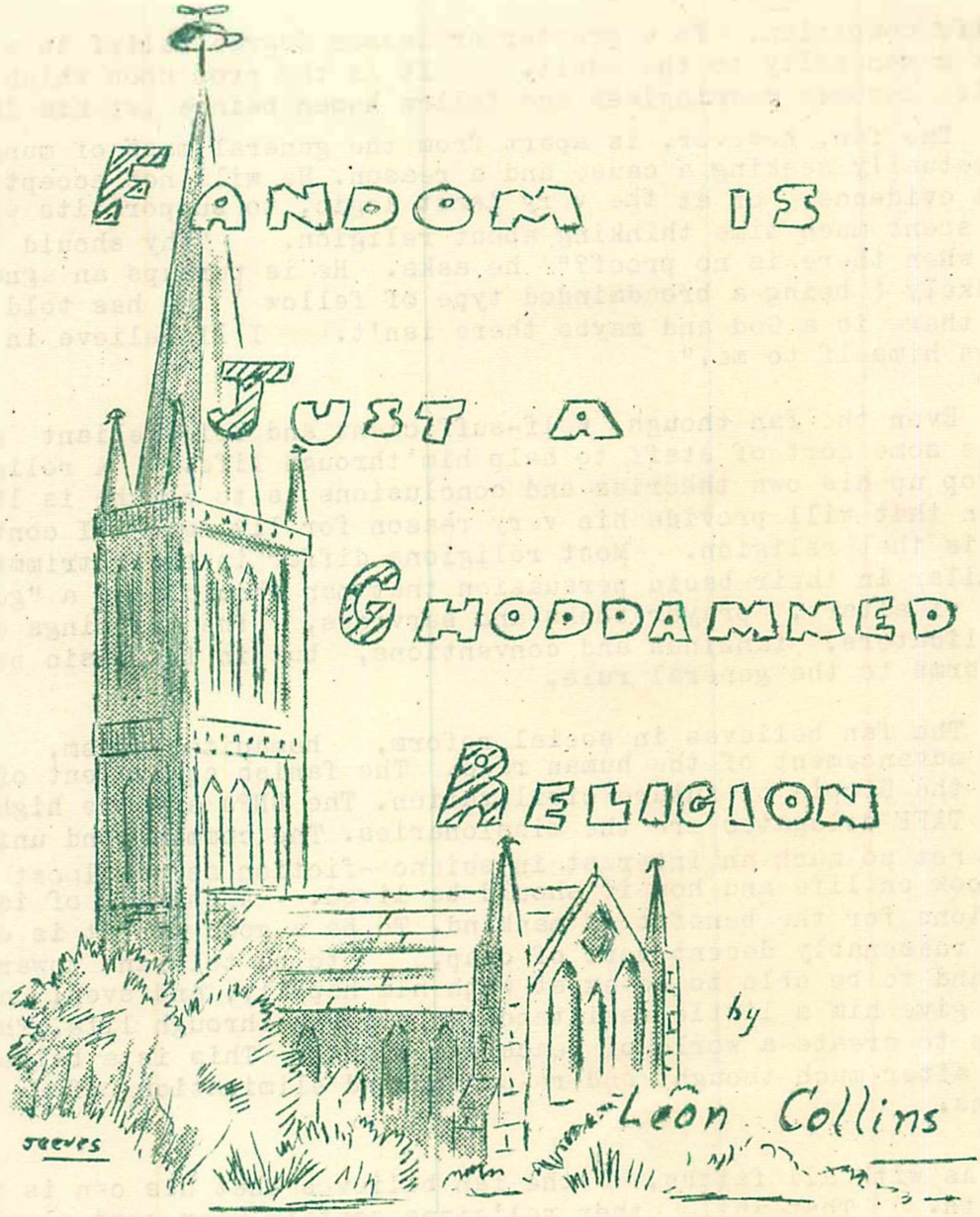
"Ar! So there ye be," said the man, one of the old school, "Oi've gat that thur loivstak o'yourn 'ere will 'e be takin' it now ? 'Urry up, oi wanter get back to moi latest book on muck-spreadin' - got it arta the loibry oi did."

"My dear fellow, you must be under some misapprehension, I don't own any livestock, except what's in my Tony Curtis," and with that I handed him our tickets and walked out of the station. He was so aghaust that he didn't notice they were 'bus tickets.

END.

Editor's note. The above is so garbled, I was sorely tempted not to publish it. But above all I believe in giving these youngsters a good start in fandom. So I did. However, if you want the TRUTH of what happened - it was mainly through Witty's bungling that we lost an important booking in a well-known coffee bar, the same night.

But that is another story.....



Fans, of course, possess highly individual personalities, and fandom is anything but a society of sheep, but there are certain characteristics and tendencies that most fans have in common. One such characteristic is the theological evolution of the fanish mind which, I feel, is typical throughout the greater part of fandom. There is, possibly, an infinitesimal minority of fans who sincerely and faithfully adhere to one or other of the orthodox religions, and the following observations and assumptions do not apply to these fidelous few.

The vast majority of children in the so-called Christian countries are brought up to have some belief in and fear of a divine or supernatural being. Even a parent who holds no religious convictions is often wont to admonish an offspring with such threats as, "You'd better be good, because even if I am not around God will be watching you." Awareness of this omnipotent, invisible supervisor becomes so ingrained upon the impressionable imagination of the child that it quite often remains

as a life companion. To a greater or lesser degree belief in a divinity becomes a necessity to the adult. It is the prop upon which he leans when life becomes meaningless and fellow human beings let him down.

The fan, however, is apart from the general mass of mundania. He is perpetually seeking a cause and a reason. He will not accept anything without evidence, or at the very least logic, to support its existence. He has spent much time thinking about religion. "Why should I believe in God when there is no proof?" he asks. He is perhaps an agnostic, or more likely (being a broadminded type of fellow) he has told himself, "Maybe there is a God and maybe there isn't. I'll believe in him when he shows himself to me."

Even the fan though, self-sufficient and self-reliant as he is, requires some sort of staff to help him through life. A religion that will prop up his own theories and conclusions as to why he is living. A religion that will provide his very reason for living. I contend that fandom is that religion. Most religions differ in their trimmings, but are similar in their basic persuasion that man should lead a "good life" Instead of altars, prayer books and services, the trimmings of fandom are duplicators, fanzines and conventions, but in its basic persuasion it conforms to the general rule.

The fan believes in social reform, humanitarianism, and the general advancement of the human race. The fanish equivalent of kingdom come is the Utopia of future civilization. The BNFs are the highpriests, and the TAFF delegates are the missionaries. The common bond uniting all fans is not so much an interest in science-fiction as an almost identical outlook on life and how it should be lived. A sharing of ideals and aspirations for the benefit of mankind. To be a good fan it is essential to be a reasonably decent sort of chap, to be tolerant towards one's fellow and to be able to co-exist with him happily, and even, on occasion, to give him a little assistance on his way through life. The fanish creed is to create a world of peace and plenty. This is a belief he has reached after much thought and reasoning and elimination of orthodox religions.

As with all faiths, the fan believes that his own is the only real faith. That while other religions contain many good elements and worthwhile teaching, they are inferior to the code and ideals of fandom.

Should God suddenly make himself apparent to a fan and perform miracles (or somesuch) to the extent that the fan is thoroughly convinced as to the credentials of God, it would not make the slightest scrap of difference to this fan's way of life. If God told him that he should go to church every Sunday, or not eat meat on a Friday, or not eat the pig, the fan would laugh and still insist that these things were of no importance at all. He would not waver in his certainty that his own religion was the logical and superior one, and even God would be wrong if he thought otherwise.

.....Leon Collins

CRY OF THE WILD GHUS

Leon Collins, 72 Ellesmere Ave., Mill Hill, London NW 7,

Ron Bennett makes the accusation that my article was "a fleeting glimpse of the truth blended with wild exaggeration", but he fails to accompany this declaration by any reasons or logical opinion. If the day has arrived when fans feel able to make dogmatic announcements without a single argument to support them then fanzines will soon be little more than a feeble replica of the popular daily newspapers. Bennett, incidentally, is just one of those fans whom I expected to feel the point of my article most. As one of the older fans, he has seen and learnt sufficient of politics and human nature to become so utterly cynical as to realise the absolute hopelessness of his ideals ever reaching fruition. He still believes in these childhood ideals, but because of this feeling of futility he fails to give them his support in practice.

Tom Armistead made the point that I had overlooked - the fact that fans were putting their dreams for a better world into effect by attending peace marches and suchlike. I think you will find that the percentage of fans who are active in this way is very small indeed, and also, that almost all of them belong to the younger element of fandom. In other words they are just those fans who still have hope in the practicability of their dreams; fans who are not yet old enough to have given up their ideals as a lost cause. This fact also supports another point in my article, and I think that you will find that it is mostly the older fans who have caused the greater part of the friction and feuds in fandom. In their fanzines they are bursting with bright ideas for a Utopia, and brimful of remedies for all the world's ills, but when it comes to their own petty squabbles they are as unamenable as a con hotel manager who has just had his best table smashed up.

To answer Seth Johnson - I was not stating, or even insinuating, that there are no differences between fans and mundane types. Of course fans are more willing to discuss, argue, and listen to the other fellows view, and even occasionally concede a point here and there, and this obviously is a good thing, and something not to be very often found outside fandom. However, when it comes to living in harmony with his fellow man (or even fan) and practising the gospel he preaches, then it is going to take a very finely calibrated instrument indeed to measure and difference between fandom and mundania.

Bobbie Gray, I4 Bennington St., Cheltenham, Glos.,

Jim's reviews were very good and he spoke a lot of sense on Henry Miller as well as summing up Pat Kearney fairly well. However, Pat is young and from what I recall of my teens most of us went through a phase of reading pornography - some of it honest pornography, that is, printed as such with no excuses, or hypocritic al pornography - under the guise of so-called "realism" or "precious" writing. Pat will discover very soon what we did. That pornography is not only silly, but also boring. When nothing is left at all to the reader's imagination, the reader soon loses interest.

A word of warning about one of the words in Jim's review. The four letter word for vagina is one that the Post Office screeches about if they find out that it's gone through the mails. Luckily I don't think we have a Claude Degler type in Britsh Fandom, but just in case a "public spirited citizen" (in other words a goddam busybody) should pick up your 'zine I'd play it safe if I were you. ((-While using the word in spinge was a slightly calculated risk, there are other PO practices which are more disturbing. When Linwood was working with the Nottingham CND he found that his mail was being opened by the PO. And more recently disarmament material from the US has been arriving at the village showing definite signs of tampering. This worries me; maybe the ~~p~~ police will swoop and confiscate the duplicating equipment one night.....and....read Bruno Bettelheim "The Informed Heart".

I do not entirely agree with Alan in his letter and I think that he is being a little unfair on fandom's younger elements. I have been to a number of cons and some fans who were old enough to know better have not behaved all that well. A small minority it is true, but I don't see why the younger elements should be blamed. On the whole they have been very well behaved. The one or two exceptions don't usually go to a con again. Besides, you're only young once and surely the older fen don't expect the youngsters to turn up to a con and sit knitting.

I'm sorry I haven't a lot of space to comment, but this issue is the best yet, and I'm sorry you are losing Harry Douthewaite - we have very few really good artists in fandom and it's a shame when one goes.

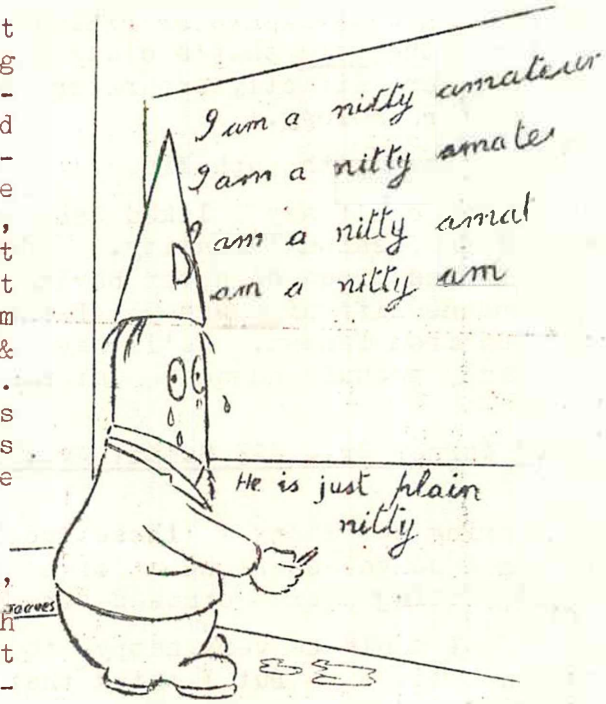
John Rackham, IO3 Clem Attlee Court, London SW 6,

thank you for the copy of IS IO (Incidentally, I miss whatever point there may be in that title.) Not easy to make intelligent comment, as it contains much fiction, which I am not in a position to judge, letter and 'zine reviews, ditto....and only one article, as such, by Alan Burns. That is worth a word or two, if only to point out the unforgivable flaws.

Having your own personal theory about reality is fine, and everyone is entitled to do this, but there is nothing to be gained by falsifying known truths in order to bolster up what is purely personal in the first place. I mean, if we have a general and workable theory - useful - then it is worth trying to prop it up for a while, until something better comes by. But a personal one should stand by itself. And, I'm sorry, it just is not so that intelligence is proportional to imaginative facility..that the more you imagine, the brighter you are. I shall probably tackle Alan privately

on this, so let me say, here, that there are plenty of statistics, and tests which have been made - and the facts are quite the opposite. Apparently, to come out well in the intelligence stakes, you have to be able to control your imagination, keep it in check, and those who can't, or won't tend to score lower than average in IQ. There are those, a few of course, who can do well at both. By and large, though, imaginative creativity and intelligence show no correspondence at all. And that sort of kicks the guts out of the whole thing, doesn't it?

The point I do want to comment on is the art-work. Strictly speaking I am not, and never have been, in fandom. What impressions I have formed have been garnered on the outer fringes. Thus this is the first time I have ever heard of, or seen to identify, any work by Harry Douthwaite. I'm not quite sure, for all your clues, just which illos in here are his, but I am assuming the cover is, and page 18, & that superb "space-man" on page 28. That's enough to convince me that this Douthwaite is excellent and makes Jeeves look like the nitty amateur he undoubtedly is.



Archie Mercer, 70 Worral Rd Bristol 8,

You almost start the issue with the lettercol, and you almost start the lettercol with Ron Bennett's letter. Anent which I am prompted at this point to say that there was indeed an impression current at Harrogate (an impression which I shared for one) that the Londoners were somewhat premature. They had built a long term plan, culminating in 1965, in considerable detail, though, and it did come as a blow to them to discover that not everybody was of their mind, and that the whole first section of their elaborate scheme failed to get off the ground. At which point, disappointed as they were, they promptly pledged support for Peterborough.

Fall-out; an H-bomb which has never been used cannot be the cause of fall-out. Like somebody cannot be shot with a bullet that has never been fired. H-bombs represent great fall-out potential - actual kinetic (so to speak) fall-out comes from testing new varieties, not from making and stockpiling as such.

Anyway, this is rapidly getting more and more irrelevant - I'm by no means sure, now, that the testing parties haven't done the damage already - that'll show up over future generations. But there doesn't seem much point in further worrying - the human race wasn't all that good anyway.

Alan Burn's article - if he could make up his mind what he's talk

ing about, maybe someone could pin him down and spot where he's off the rails. He can't be right all the way - vivid imagination and first-class brains are by no means inseperable.

I think I've tumbled to Jhim Linwood's secret - his column is being ghosted for him by Darroll Pardoe. But whoever's responsible for using a certain four-letter word (five, actually, it's plural) some nine lines from the bottom of the first page has my full approval - even tho' I'm too chicken to come right out with the word myself. It's a genuine English word, with a specific meaning, and has to be overlooked in favour of foreign equivalents or ridiculous euphemisms. Basically, of course, it isn't the word that's classed as undesireable - it's the thing itself. But the more directly one refers to the thing itself, the less acceptable is the terminology.

Down with euphemisms.

I can't say I liked John Berry's story, but I'd definitely say it was of professional quality. Some years ago John went on record to say that he was proud of never having earned a penny professionally - except in mundane life of course. Perhaps, now that he seems to have virtually retired from fandom, he'll have another think about turning pro. He can certainly produce adequate material.

Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Av., Hagerstown, Maryland, USA.

The delay in bearing testimony to these activities was caused by the fact that I was in a convalescent home (or as my best friends insisted, an old folks' home) getting over a cracked bone.

I would be very happy to join your campaign to give more egoboo to fan artists. But I think that there are considerable difficulties in the way and that the artists will never get the amount of praise and comment that writers recieve for fanzine contributions. Art normally provokes comment only on the basis of its manner, not for its matter: just think how scanty would be comments on articles if the subject matter did not remind the letterhacks of experiences of their own, or the viewpoint of the writer didn't stand directly opposed to the opinions expressed in the article. Most of us must feel we're banal if we just keep repeating ourselves about how wonderfully well ATom or Jeeves or whoever can draw: the statement is completely true, but it is hard to find new forms in which to express it. Then there's the added difficulty that most letterhacks are better able to weild the typewriter than the stylus, and they may feel that it's more fair for them to criticize words than drawings, because they have attempted to conquer the medium of prose themselves. I admire enormously the work of the good fanartists, but I can't draw at all and know little about the technical matters of artistic creation. And so feel that I'm better qualified to comment on the words in the fanzine. I realize that all this doesn't help to make egoboo more gratifying for the artists in fandom and I haven't the slightest idea how the situation could be improved.

After all that I should prove my points by producing exceptionally wise remarks about each item in the issue. But this is not altogether easy to accomplish. " A Monumental Decision " seems like the best story

about a fannish ghost since John Berry wrote, so long ago, "A Chance of a Ghost". But I've never had any encounters with ghosts of fans, so I feel no impulse to pick an argument over any of the attitudes in the story, and so my comments on this item must be puny and short lived.

Mike Deckinger's TAFF story reads oddly because of recent developments. For a while it looked as if his situation of trips that noone wanted might come into being. But I believe that the Alphonse and Gaston act has now given way to some gratifying displays of civilized greed for the money and excursion involved. In point of fact, I see no real reason why it should be necessary for the US to Europe TAFF delegate to go at convention time. The British Isles are small enough to see practically everyone in a couple of weeks by traveling around and his presence might not be overshadowed by the other events of a big convention.

I could use one of those courses in imaginative development that Alan Burns recommends. Despite my enjoyment of fantasy fiction, I have never had the slightest success in trying to build worlds in my imagination. As a child I detested fairy stories because they were obviously impossible, and the only pretend games that I liked to play with the children of the neighborhood were those in which we reenacted movies we'd all seen. Apparently the act of going to the latest Buck Jones or Ken Maynard western produced enough reality for me to accept the imaginative effort involved.

John Berry's story impresses me once again with his conscientious descriptive detail, which puts the scene before the reader with a minimum of words, something most fiction in fandom fails to do. Maybe it's the outcome of his police training to observe carefully what he sees. The story seems quite as good to me as any of the few short stories of its type that I've read in professional publications in this country in recent years.

Pete Singleton, Ward 2, Whittingham Hospital, Preston, Lancs.,

I discovered that Alan Burns with his thought-provoking piece on the merits of vivid imagination as a means of coping with the rigours of a merciless reality provided me with the largest measure of enjoyment in this particular issue. Interpretation of reality is, of course, a purely individual process which is variable according to the degree and nature of one's ability to reduce the impressions recieved by the senses into forms accept- by the limited scope of the human mind.

Here follows an example:- visualise a bridge. Consider the possibility of the following things happening to the bridge within one second of observation. A) Collapse, B) Turn into a fire-breathing dragon! or C) Remain rigid and unchanged. It can be stated that C is almost certain to be correct and A and B impossible. But are A and B equally impossible? Surprisingly the answer is NO. Development A could happen and remain acceptable as a manifestation of reality no matter how impossible it is. B equally could never happen. Therefore the relative values of A and B are opposite - positive and negative in terms of reality - but equal in value.

The "rules" of reality are rigid. Consider the relative merits of A and B. A can happen - if not within a second, then next year, ten years on, or a hundred years. The only reason that B is prevented (yes, prevented) from occuring is due to the rigid laws governing reality and preventing inconsistencies, and chaos. Any such example as B is excluded from ever happening only on the grounds of it being completely inconsistant with reality as we know it.

Are the easily visualised restrictions of reality purely subjective - imposed by what must be a selective mechanism that only permits us to perceive and be influenced by reality in terms we are capable of grasping? Logically as least it must be partly so if not entirely subjective.

The very fact, that the bridge can be recognised for what it is, is entirely due to a set of characteristics conforming to restricting laws which limits variability and prevents it from becoming anything else such as a fire-breathing dragon for instance.

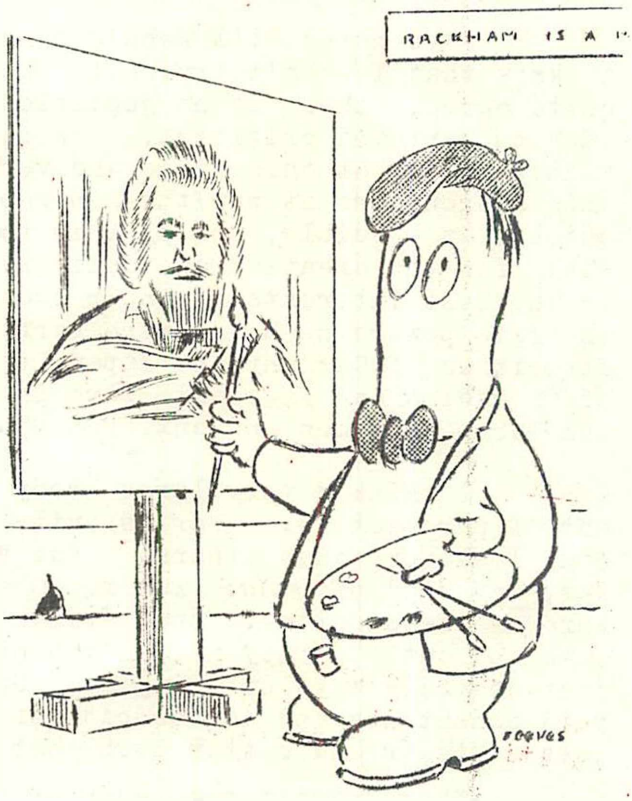
When you consider the seeming paradox that the universe must be infinite and must also be finite, the limitations of the mind's capability of absorbing reality becomes disconcertingly obvious.

Len Moffatt, 10202 Belcher, Downey, Calif. USA.,

...I'll say a few kind words about your artists. Actually, it is understandable why there is little comment from fanzine readers regarding the art and cartoons that appear in fanzines. Few fans can qualify as bonny-fidy art critics, so that all they can say is "I liked it" or "I didn't like it" or "it's good" or "its bad" or wotever. I took a correspondence course in cartooning once (many years ago), but that still doesn't make me a really knowledgeable art critic. Sure, I've read books on art, visited exhibitions, etc. but I've never really studied the subject. I can't honestly use the " classic " phrase: "I dunno nothin' about art but I know what I like." In my case t' would be: "I know a little about art and therefore am not always so sure of what I like!" Take a painting for instance....I may look at it and my first impression could be one of distaste. Maybe the colours look all wrong, or the composition looks too screwy for my simple mind. In short, my first impression of the painting is negative. But maybe I'll give it a second look, study it some more, and begin to find things in it that I do like, that do say something to me (not necessarily what the artist was trying to say.....). Or maybe the first impression will be strong enough to deter me from further examination. And then maybe I'll take a look at it some time later (weeks-months) and find that I like it after all.Or at least like it better than I did the first time I looked at it. Could be

a change of mood, or could be that I wasn't seeing as well the first time. On the other hand I may still find it distasteful to me nomatter how often I go back and study it. Sooo...I know a little about art but am not every time sure about what I like.

Of course fanzine art is usually somewhat simpler than the paintings one sees in museums or exhibitions. However, I have nothing but admiration and respect for the fan artists who can produce well balanced drawings for mimeo and ditto repro, especially for those who have the Touch when it comes to putting their work on stencil. I know what a job this is, having cut a few stencils in my time. Foo knows I don't have the Touch, let alone the talent to draw really good illos in the first place. But I know good work when I see it, and can applaud enthusiastically the work of such artists as Douthwaite, who, like ATom, is consistently good and often excellent. I can also applaud mit enthusiasm the work of Dick Schultz, Jeeves, et al, when it is good or better. I haven't always liked everything RIP has done, but that could be the repro. His work usually looks better in mags other than his own. So there's a few kind words (and a couple of tangents) for your artists, as well as for your stenciller, colour controller, and layout dept.



I'm inclined to agree with Rick Sneary, who recently advised Ella that the best approach for British fans to take in choosing hotels for a Worldcon is to choose one that is best for the British, and let the visiting Amerifans take " pot luck ", or stay at a nearby " better hotel " if they wish. After all the British delegates would be the majority, and as for the minority - us - well, hell's bells, part of the charm of a visit to Britain would be to stay in a typical British hotel rather than in one which was set up to cater to the comforts of visiting Americans. It would be for Rick and me, anyway, and I'm sure for a number of other Amerifans, The ones who complain about "poor accomodation" are softies in my book. When in Rome do as the Romans do, etc. When I visit a country I want to see how things really are, and if you have to share a WC and a bath with other tenants, tough luck. Trouble is we Americans take all of our creature comforts for granted, and need to learn that it isn't really going to kill us if we have to walk a few more steps than we used to in order to take a leak. If the gripers want all the luxuries they're used to paying for at home, let 'em pay for 'em overseas, but hold the con at an economical hotel for the benefit of the majority who come to the con to meet friends and have a good time sans unecessary bitching.

Sorry to hear of Bob Richardson's death, and of course Rick was sorry to hear of it as well, as it was with Bob's help that Rick became a Squire and was presented with the Sword of St. Fanthony. I never knew Bob but as with so many British fan names, his was very familiar to me, and it is always sad to hear of a person dying at such an early age.

Bert Hogson, 77 Anglesey Rd., Ashton-u-Lyne, Lancs.,

It would appear from Ken Cheslin's " Monumental Decision " that you are " fey " as they say in Wales - or is it Ireland? Remind me to introduce you to 'Daisy Nook' next time you come round. This is an areas cramful of manifestations, one of which has a weakness for beards!

I've noted Bill Webb's comment in the magazine, and would like him to know that I wasn't trying to justify dropping the A bomb on Japan. I quite agree, there is no justification for such an act, this is all very easy comment and criticism, in retrospect, but we should remember too, that the bomb at this stage was very new and nobody knew what it would do. When nations are at war the general idea is to eliminate the opposition as quickly as possible, and by this rule it is to the credit of those responsible for the creation and delivery of the A bomb. I believe they acted in the best interests of their country, this was war, and in the case of the axis powers no holds were barred! It doesn't need me to catalogue the atrocities of Germany and Japan, they are well known. The non-combatants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were in no way different to millions of British and European women and children who paid the same price.

I think a very large body of people have got this business right out of perspective. War is evil, nobody wins - there are only losers. Some lose more than others, but there is no justification for any act of war, any kind of bomb. But remember Japan didn't have to go to war. They were on the sideline, then struck treacherously when they thought we were down and out. They not only went to war, but chose one of the worst and most cowardly ways of doing so. So they paid the price for it, as we all paid combatants and non-combatants alike. At this stage the A bomb was just a bigger and batter bomb that those the other side had.

There hasn't been such an outcry about new weapons before. The machine gun, in WW I caused millions of deaths. Sixty thousand British casualties (the majority dead) in the first hour, of the first Battle of the Somme. Have a look at you local war memorials.

And so it goes on. There is no justification for any part of it except that of the man or nation who cherishes his freedom, and is prepared to fight anyone who tries to take it away. And in the process the innocent suffer with the guilty.

One thing more, can anybody doubt the fact that had there been no nuclear weapons, another major war would have been fought -and lost- with conventional weapons.

Nobody can justify acts of war, there is nothing merciful in war. Just destruction, and desolation and heartache for millions. We can only hope that future generations will outlaw even the word, and this won't happen until the world is no longer divided against itself, and the colour of a mans' skin is neutral, whatever its shade.

Art Hayes, RR 3, Bancroft, Ontario, Canada,

A few years ago I got into hot water for commenting on TAFF as it existed then. Some of my criticisms were adopted, not necessarily because I made them, but because others who were more influential, took them up. This involved getting a report printed up for sale at a profit for TAFF. More reports on activities of TAFF have also been coming out, which was another item I'd tried to get going.

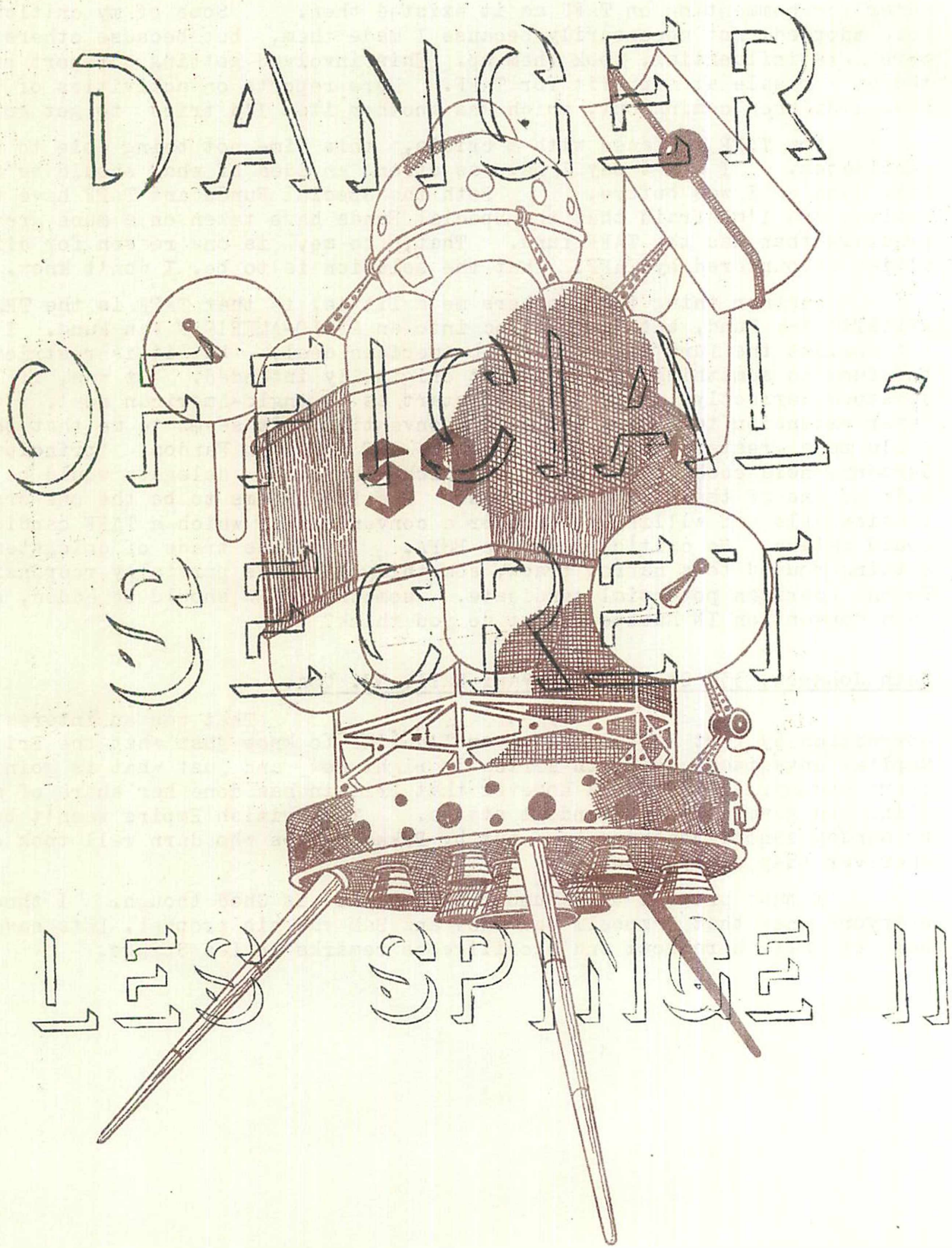
Now TAFF is faced with a crisis, this time not being able to find candidates. I can't say I have as strong an idea of what should be done this time as I was before. Both the Special Funds and TAFF have been active, and I'm afraid that the Special Funds have taken on a much greater prestige than has the TAFF fund. That, to me, is one reason for difficulties encountered by TAFF. What the solution is to be, I don't know.

Another thing that bothers me a little, is that TAFF is the TRANS-ATLANTIC Fan Fund, but has evolved into an ANGLO-AMERICAN Fan Fund. I am not against the fund being an Anglo-American deal, but it is restricting the fund to something I hold wasn't originally intended. It was, if I understood correctly, intended to start as an Anglo-American deal, with later extension to Europe and their convention. It seems to me that there would be a greater interest this time, if European Fandom, principally Germany, held such a convention at which the TAFF delegate would be the main or one of the main attractions. The BSFA seems to be the one organisation able and willing to sponsor a convention at which a TAFF candidate could attend. No criticism of the BSFA, but the trade of delegates is getting routed to a narrow track, something I see as partially responsible To the American potential candidate, something NEW should be added, such as a convention IN Europe. What do you think?

Seth Johnson, 339 Stiles St., Vaux Hall, NJ. USA.,

That was an interesting correction by Bert Hogson. However I'd like to know just what the British Capital investment in South Africa is right now and just what is going on there anyway. I'll remark however that Britain has done her share of meddling and governing independant states. The British Empire wasn't built by sunday school teachers, but by Pukka Sahibs who darn well took over wherever they stepped in.

I must protest this rumour that Willis is Ghod though. I thought everyone knew that Campbell was Ghod and SaM was his prophet. Lets have no more of these heretical and sacriligeous remarks in Les Spinge.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