

BERCON'S

3

FAPULOUS II



"... so now that we see eye-to-eye on this controversial matter..."

FAPA 92

AUG '60

S e r c o n ' s B a n e # 3 : starting the second year in FAPA with FAPulous #11, since Elinor has 9pp done and has thus preempted #10 before I (F M Busby, 2852 14th Ave W, Seattle 99) could get to it.

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Elinor & I attended a wedding this afternoon. Otto W Pfeifer, Jr, sometimes known as Blotto Otto-- bon-vivant, coeditor of WRR, drum-and-bugle-corpsman, SAPS-member, seller of office supplies, and #3 on the WL in FA#91-- this versatile man, this man of many parts, has now assumed the role of benedict.

And we were there for the ceremony, to see Pat Stenek become Pat Pfeifer and thus give up all hope of ever seeing her name spelled correctly in fanzines, this sterling publication excepted, of course.

The bride's side of the church was pretty well populated; Otto has inherited (no, acquired) a fine large clutch of in-laws and acquaintances. We who were, as you might say, on Otto's side, were an outnumbered small brave band. Wally Weber was up in front helping Otto lose the ring (definitely the best man for the job). Otto's dad was down from Vancouver, B C; Elinor and Tosk and I sat a couple rows behind him. Behind us were Elmer Kreager, with whom Otto has been rooming since the late lamented Swamp House broke up, Terrible Tom Weber, owner of Swamp House, three other ex-Swamp House inmates, Mikki McDaniel and 3-4 of her girl-chums (oops, Elinor says that they were on Pat's side-- gad, how these women stick together). Ric and Virginia West (Ric has done 2-3 covers for CRY) arrived too late to come in and sit down. Yes, it was a proud and lonely thing...

For some reason having to do with the incarceration of Pat's father in a local hospital with back-trouble, the reception was switched from a hall out on Greenwood Ave into the church basement. So there went the drinks. Worse than that, though, ...no ashtrays; one had to skulk near to the exit in order to grab a smoke. This is cruel and inhuman punishment and you should keep it in mind if Otto starts making puns when he joins our sterling organization. Like, Zotz!

The coffee was good-- much better than one has a right to expect on such occasions, and I imagine that the pastry-addicts in the crowd found the cake enjoyable, though Toskey only had 4 pieces, so maybe it wasn't so good after all.

Otto looked as though he expected to be skinned alive as Wally crowded him up the sidelines to the front of the place, but he seemed to perk up when he turned to see us all leering at him. I guess he figured he would still be better off than us, collectively. Or maybe he felt that if Elinor and I, specifically, had managed to cope with each other for over six years now, surely he and Pat can manage.

And I am confident that they can and will. At the moment, I'm uncertain as to how fanac will do in the Pfeifer household-- whether Pat will (as she can) cut away on stencils for WRR, SAPS, and soon FAPA, or whether Otto will exchange the mimeo crank for a lawn-mower handle and a paint brush. It is hard to figure these things in advance. I imagine that the October SAPSmailing will tell the tale; Otto needs 4pp to stay alive there, since courtship has cut deeply into his fanac. Now this is understandable, surely: courtship, as distinct from marriage (and, according to most right-minded persons, there is a distinction), cuts deeply into all other activities-- including, as I particularly recall, sleep. (Anyone else remember the song "Two Sleepy People", from around 1938? It is so appropriate.)

At any rate, we have this day helped our friend and cohort Otto Pfeifer off onto the sea of matrimony with his bride Pat. The Swamp House contingent gave them a bottle of champagne and two (count 'em, two) glasses, in lieu of Dramamine-- a fine gesture, worthy of trufen.

I had hoped to get hold of Otto before the ceremony and to assure him that I would really put some life in the proceedings when it came to that "speak now or forever hold your peace" bit. But I had to settle for explaining at the reception that I was sorry to have missed my cue at that point. And to inform Wally that because of some slight technicality and besides he was standing in the wrong place, he is bigamously married to one of the bridesmaids. Polyandrously, I mean.

I wonder if the local Society Page would like first crack at this writeup...

Ordinarily, this would be the point at which to begin on

a r g l e b a r g l e

concerning the 91st mailing of the F A P A.

But it just now happens that I have not read all the mailing. Worse, I'm not sure just what has been read and what hasn't. It came about, thus: the Evil Old OE of FAPA, not content with making us add up our own page-totals, nor with leaving out all the subtitles so's we can't tell where we are in our overall numbering system, further outraged all right-thinking members by throwing the zines into the fine new envelopes just any old way. My dear sweet wife Elinor, on whom I depend to keep my soul alight in these troubled times, began reading the mailing in the order-of-stack-ing, so that I could not put it in order-of-listing without fouling her the hell up. After I had read some of the mailing, and she had read it all, she kindly and thought-fully rearranged the zines in the order-of-listing. As a result of this kind deed which I truly appreciate, I don't know where (plural) I left off, except in spots.

So, rather than try to foist off some feeble semblance of order in these MCs, I'd rather haul 'em out as I come to one that is distinctly recallable as having been read, and to work up from there. It also seems better to address people rather than zines. So, rooting through the stack, we come up the very first thing with

Phyllis Economou: Loved that cover. But between overexposure of that pic, and your being small in middle of other pics we've seen, you're still a mystery to us as to appearance. Oh well; soon cometh PittCon; then we'll see if you "do too have ears".

Yes, the Berg & Sons' brew-recipe card Burb sent you is probably one we sent him awhile back; apparently it is close enough to the method he's been using for years&years, to be a reasonable facsimile of the OaOGFBtHB recipe. I've seen two other locally-distributed recipe sheets which differ quite a bit in details of how to mix the ingredients, etc, but it all comes out about the same, and we are used to the Berg & Sons' procedure and find it more realistic than the others on the times involved. That "Special Beer Gelatine" is a racket, by the way: an envelope of ordinary Knox Gelatin at 1/10 the cost is exactly the same thing. Also we now have a living culture of brewer's yeast, which leaves much less residue in crock & bottles than does the grocery-store variety.

Couple of months ago I was hearing quite a bit of daytime radio for awhile, on a station that was pretty good at holding down the percentage of R&R and teencrud; still, the repetition got pretty bad after the first few days. Some rather comic features were new to me: commercials urging us to pick up application blanks for dog-and-cat licenses at our nearest supermarket "...these blanks are absolutely free"; I guess I'm not the only one who got stubborn when the leash-law made a dog-license a liability rather than a protective measure. Also, radio now carries commercials for radio itself-- but not yet mentioning Brand X and how it strains your eyes. Yes, 1952 was a good year for pops, except for Johnnie Ray and Vaughn Monroe whom I loathe. Seems to me that the past 4-5 years have been poorer and poorer; let's hope the trend shifts again soon, for the better. Tune in again next year...?

errr-- I think you still owe us that letter-- I think.

That's a New England Conscience: the kind that doesn't keep you from doing something, but just keeps you from enjoying it. The worst kind, no?

Appreciated the statistical bit, since I've been curious-but-lazy about these same trends. But since gradual accretion of the Hard Core has the turnover rate on a definite downward trend, and WL-additions are still at a slowly-climbing trend, it'll take a lot of flitters and no-goes to keep the WL static, let alone reduce it. A "respond-every-mailing" policy would help initially, at least, but then...

Oops. Must be getting along now, to

Boyd Raeburn: I guess you can imagine what a couple of inches of snow (falling in the afternoon and catching everyone at work, for instance) can do to Seattle traffic. Not only are most Seattle drivers inexperienced on snow&ice because of its rarity, but ^{not} even the most experienced driver can do anything in the resultant jam. And then of course there are a few streets in Seattle that are not exactly flat-and-level...

Perhaps the British penchant for overly-cute product names and slogans merely indicates the stage in which the UK ad industry finds itself today. I believe that the US advertising industry perpetrated much the same sort of thing in the 20's and early 30's (examples, anyone?), and we're not exactly free of it yet, really.

Tourist crosses US-Canada border (either way), exchanges his money, doesn't spend all of it, goes home, re-exchanges the remainder, loses his shirt on the disparity of exchange rates, or "house cut". Is there any way for the knowledgeable to beat this gimmick, or is it, like the PO, "just something we got to live with"?

GMC (the corporation) apparently wasted several million dollars on full-page ads for the Corvair, in daily papers and in such as the SEP, without getting through to its namesake. I imagine that heads will roll in General Motors' PR dep't...

Cor Steward: That business of over-correcting a fishtail into a full spin is most apt to happen with a bucket that has too much play in the steering; slow reflexes, inexperience, and nervousness all help, though. I've done it twice, once on slick mud-film over blacktop, and once on ice: lots of play in wheel both times. And once had a '38 Plymouth go into fishtail coming out of a hairpin turn, and ended up side-wise in the road, but that time it seemed as if the front end were whipping from the jackknife position on one side, to the other extreme, at the first tug of trying to straighten it out. Since nothing remotely similar ever happened with the car before or after, I'm still unclued as to just what did happen.

In CRY #86 you have a short letterof comment on CRY #85. You didn't like it very well. #85 (Nov '55) could probably be said to mark the establishment of the PenDen Mob as CRYpubbers, since only two subsequent issues (87 & 90) were published under the Revolving Editorship that was attempted when CRY "went subscription" with #75 late in 1954. You've only seen one CRY? Have to sell you a sub at PittCon.

Sure, the "time-stretch" in emergencies is a speed-up. It seems to be a natural instinct with me, though; I don't know how it could be done by training, etc, though prior alertness probably helps. But the mechanics of it-- well, there is this big shot of Instant Adrenalin, and I suppose it's simply a different way of making use of that, somehow, rather than just getting excited, or "freezing" under the impact of it. Incidentally, along with the "time-stretch", everything except the immediate situation absolutely vanishes from the universe until the crisis is past. Same there?

Wrai Ballard: Don't believe the trouble with that Savage was poorly-designed safety, but rather a worn part, because the gun itself was quite worn-looking and loose in various places. Or perhaps I had pulled the trigger against the safety-catch and released, but some part in the train-of-action had been pushed over the hump and so went the rest of the way when I released the safety (oops-- no, that last can't be right, since I had not touched the trigger, but was checking to see if the safety were on by moving it and watching to see if any indicating mark were revealed. Well, maybe a previous handler had done it, hmm? How about it, Buck? Is that possible with that model, given undue wear and tear?).

So far, aside from N'APA and the OO and letterzine, N3F has not hounded me with material and/or Urges to Action. The WelCommittee letters were OK-type rather than the fuggheaded deals reported by others in past years. But then there was an anonymous pootsarcd demanding that the Rehorst Case be reopened, and a rather unhappy letter from Mr Rehorst himself: seems that in the letterzine I had a paragraph tossing the "exclusiveness" label right back from the apas to the N3F by citing the Rehorst deal; in stating that expulsion seemed a little extreme under the circumstances, I also mentioned that probably the group was just as well off this way; he didn't like that. "I will not tolerate you dragging my name through the mud" is about the way he put it, referring to my statement that "I tend to feel that the group is probably just as well off without that particular trouble-maker". I guess I will have to watch it on this business of making such absolute pronouncements without qualification, huh?

Jim Webbert got himself a Ruger Single Six at Boise; a nice balance, it has.

Tracy's sidekick was Pat Patton, and it must have taken some fine behind-the-scenes throat-cutting, the way he wormed his way up to be Chief of Police over the head of his friend and mentor, Tracy. Who is covering up?

Hope you get your new typer, Wrai, and that the capital-8 works well on it...

Marion Bradley: Gad, woman, you're in all the rooms. Four, anyway. It's Catch Trap first at hand, though. "...but I suggest in future that you identify them ((Elinor's and my separate comments, you mean)) more clearly, unless you LIKE being fannish Siamese twins." But Hez! SerCon's Bane is wholly my zine; Salud is wholly Elinor's; neither of us do any cross-filing; except for a couple of oneshots we have not shown up in the same zine since our first mailing (#88, Aug 59). We have different titles, use different typers with different spacing (though I'll admit that this would not be noticeable), and use different-colored paper, for Pete's sake. What more could we do, to keep our stuff separate and easy to identify? (You were sleepy that day?)

Er-- what was that again about people who read the mailing with their eyes shut? OK, please take my needling with the good old grain of salt; the deal just struck me as funny and too good to pass up; no offense meant, surely.

Swinging on ropes in barns, yes. We had a potentially-lethal game of tag that was played in an unused barn, and one (and occasionally two) heavy ropes hanging from the roof-peak were an integral part of the game. It involved inching around the horizontal-bracing 2x8s about 8 feet up the walls, using fingerhold-cracks between the vertical planks that formed them. One side of the arena was an open framework of 2x4s that separated the unused hay-area from the equally-unused stalls. The main gimmick was that as "IT" laboriously chased you around the wall, 8 feet up, your good buddy would swing the rope to you for a getaway. Then everyone would dash madly for the best strategic positions, while "IT" made his slow and perilous way around to a feasible spot for descent and a new start. "IT"'s best bet was to work the open-framework side where the younger kids hung out, mostly, because it was very difficult to get a hold on the other walls in swinging to them, and the fugitive often wound up having to slide down the rope-- a vulnerable situation. This was a favorite game for 2 or 3 summers, but while there were a few falls, no bones were broken, even tho the floor was mostly hardpacked dirt with just a small pile of old, old hay in one corner. When that barn was torn down, we tried moving the game to another one, but at the second or third session, one boy misjudged his swing, slammed into a wall, and fell into a pile of hay. So far so good, but he ripped a nasty gash in his scalp on a projecting nail on the way down. That did it: "Barn Tag" was a thing of the past.

Heck, gradeschool kids are less apt to serious injury in football than are their elders: they're lighter, for one thing, also more elastic-boned and less apt to bang headon into somebody because the coach said to. Local football, I mean; can't see any justification for big-league stuff at that level. But having played quite a bit of (rather poor) "real-tackle" football on crummy vacant lots, unsupervised and without equipment, and having seen nothing worse than bruises and scrapes come out of it, I can't see anything wrong with grade-school football except the Big Deal aspect of it.

One reason why the rapist-murderer is so often a "good boy" is that the do-gooder types closed the whorehouses and this "good boy" was running around with "nice decent girls of his own age and level" who have all been taught to go just so far and not a bit further-- the word he uses is "teaser". So this nice dirty book stimulated ideas he already had naturally, and one of these nice girls remembered Ann Landers and pulled up short at the critical moment just once too often, is all. Oh well, I have always thought that the adolescent gets a rotten deal on sex in this country-- it's thrown at him from all sides in the mass media, all except for the handle, which is out of bounds. If movies, books, and particularly advertising are going to throw sex at these kids 24 hours a day, and yet they are not supposed to defile their nice clean classmates, what better solution than the friendly neighborhood brothel? Of course, the best solution would be to knock off the overemphasis and give the kids a chance to develop naturally, but I'm afraid there's too much money involved, there.

Despite the controversy and disagreements, above, I am not one of "a horde of faintly disapproving strangers", I hope. It's just the way the comments fall, like.

All those acrobatics (re Gemini); I cringe to think of it, and touch the head. Egad, a full page. Gotta move along, now...

Gregg Calkins: Really enjoyed meeting you and Joanne at Boise, and certainly hope you do make it through here later this summer. And I guess this is a good place to mention that I'm not doing a BoyCon Report in FAPA because between you, Ronel, T&M Carr, Jim Caughran, Jack Speer, Coswal, John Champion, and possibly Elmer, the Con should get adequate coverage. On the other hand, I did put a 3-page report into SAPS (and it suffered from being consciously held to 3 pages) because I doubted very much that any other SAPSmember present was crowding the July 15th deadline that hard.

"Sixth fandom at apogee?" You mean they were really way out? But that pic of Boyd is not so characteristic-- he's not wearing his glasses.

Further, deponent (who just ran out of beer and is dry) sayeth not.

Ron Parker, Easter Bunny First-Class: Jeez, there you were at Frankenstein Castle; why didn't you build a monster? You could have started with a somewhat overripe First Sergeant, and gone on from there-- and it would have been the Fannish Thing To Do. Oh, well-- welcome to FAPA anyhow, and I chuckled mightily over your version of the Army's version of a fanzine.

Terry & Miri Carr: Vy gd to see you-all again at Boise (although I forgot to pass the bundle of Kteics to you, dammit; oh well, they're around here somewhere. Real Soon Now, and like that). Among other things I cannot now at this moment find is the slip of paper with the text for the Beard Approval Board cards that Toskey will one day Multigraph for me and WRotsler. And that's a sneaky way to get around to saying that this is one of the best Kteic-excerpts, this time.

The Panty Raiser: well, don't keep us in suspense. Did the Fund succeed?

Bob Tucker, I hope you repented after misleading that poor constable, and that you now have a proper license and clearance to operate that telescope and to point it at classified objects such as the moon. Obviously you were missing one vital bit of data-- the daily-temperature-chart of the constable's girl-friend. A true scientist cannot afford to overlook these essential factors.

"The Cause" would have been stronger if Fred had been executed for rape (in war-time, natch) or shot by a jealous husband or offended brother-of-the-girl. Can't quite decide whether it's more effective having the narrator tell the woman, or if he should have fobbed her off and just told the reader; there's points both ways.

Your cat sits up and begs for an 18-inch turtle? mumble-mumble, tortoise-shell cats, bad puns, mumble-mumble.. Oh, come on now, Miri; you're kidding, aren't you?

I like Les Wirenberg's classification of "happiness-makers", and agree with all those of his choices that are familiar to me.

Officialdom: Fie on people who omit page-totals and subtitles; sterling characters though they may otherwise be, these omissions make it clear that little shards of clay may be found where such folk have trodden. Like, dig that rhetoric, man!

It's really a shame for FAPA to lose B*L*O*C*H; what more to say? Glad that Helen drew leniency and that Elmer made it (I have a bit from him that should appear further on in here; delivered into my hands at Boise, it was).

Also further along in here will be some questions to and about a new member by the name of Rickhardt. Well, it had to happen eventually, I guess.

I voted for the credentials/^{and response}amendments, but felt that the 22-signature deal would be tightening up in the wrong direction: leave it at 12, but have the petition for postponement of the activity-requirement for one mailing (with no change in the next year's schedule from what would have been required otherwise), rather than (as at present) waiving the 8pp for a solid year. It seems much more sensible to make the waiver less of a boondoggle, rather than simply making it harder to obtain.

PS to MZB: the diagonal line on cover of Sercon's Bane 1 was typed on the 35-inch carriage of a machine down at work, as detailed on the first inside page of that zine.

Nextly, if you were about to fling out your copy of my FAPhelion (the green-ink job in Hlg #89), I'd pay postage for its return; I have several more requests and long since ran out of copies (re your bit on disposing of fmz at times).

Elinor and myself: Well, we made the mailing, and there's two more checkmarks.

Jack Speer: "advice fo' chillun" makes a lot of sense and is about as good a two-page introduction to FAPA as could be done; you say a lot in those 2pp.

For expansion of the considerations brought up in "Jerry Is A Man", see the pb of Vercors' "Ye Shall Know Them"-- a thoughty work.

What, pray tell, is "the uncorrupted form of Busby", of which you surmise that Busbixii may be the plural?

Bob Silverberg indulged in a bit of timely hyperbole in egging me on to sue the elder Mrs Carr for \$35,000; heck, Jack, read it in context, like.

"If socialism sounds drab, find you no drabness in businessmen's luncheons?" Guurre I do, but what percentage of us have to attend those horrors, and (of those who do) how often? Whereas when you have socialism, everybody has socialism, 100%, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I find drabness in compulsion and regimentation of any and of all sorts. And yes, certainly I find the "go out and SELL it!" bit just as repellent as you do-- the point is that neither you nor I are stuck with it. In fact, by due cultivation of a reasonable amount of deliberate incivility, we don't even have to put up with very much of it on the receiving end, if we so choose. But in China or Yugoslavia, say, if Big Brother says you will gather and sing songs about tractor production, that is biGhod what you do. (For a description of the way the more "civilized" Socialist governments in the world today spark up the daily lives of the citizenry, I refer you to one Boyd Raeburn, who has spoken feelingly on this subject from time to time, on tapes, having left New Zealand "for cause".) Slice it any way you like; socialism does a lot of big-talking about the happy happy life, but never once does it abandon the premise that the function of the individual is to serve the state, period. Maybe I'm just not the functional type, in that sense.

"..is it right for a national organization to dictate... to local chapters about excluding Negroes and Jews?" My initial contention was that a private group has a right to be as fuggheaded as it likes with regard to membership restrictions. Perhaps I should modify this: when the private group becomes so powerful as to be a major force in public policy (as, say, in the case of a State Religion), we are then talking about an entirely different situation and my original stand no longer holds true. (I'm just setting an Upper Bound on the discussion, there.) But I don't think that the "national" and the local chapters of a college fraternity, for instance, are large enough or important enough to come into that category: here it is a question of perhaps 30,000,000 out of 180,000,000 Americans who are being deprived of their "rights" to join a group whose total overall membership over a period of maybe 100 years has been on the order of 10,000 people. Cumulative total, including deceased. No, the right of a "national" to coerce local chapters into abiding by old and perhaps unreasonable rules is strictly a matter of internal organizational politics, on the scale we have in mind here. Of course, when the deal reaches a scale such as that in which the Democratic Party disenfranchises Negroes in about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the United States, I'll admit that you have a point, Jack.

Yes, the relation of the amount of boost or retardation given to a (stable in orbit) satellite to bring it back down or cut it completely loose from us is strictly a quantitative thing. To cut it loose, you apply the difference between the sum of its kinetic and potential energies and "escape energy". Bringing it down-- well, here we run into the tricky effects of entrance into the outer reaches of the atmosphere and I cannot do much with that, mathematically, as I could with the airless case. But at any rate it's all quantitative and can be calculated by somebody. So, specifically, there is a minimum amount of retardation, less than which will just lower the orbit without entangling it with the atmosphere too much.

"Shouting an Accolade to Gernsback" has always been one of my favorites, too.

Bill Danner: If I have time to experiment this time, I'll try the "Magazine Black" sample on here somewhere. And thanks.

Accey-deecy radios: back when I worked near shop facilities, fellow-workers used to bring these dogs in for fixing. Usually they were suffering from initial cheap construction plus a long series of haripin-and-chewing-gum repairs. If it couldn't be fixed with new tubes and a couple of good jolts, I handed it back with the Good

Word that it would be cheaper in the long run to buy a new one. It wasn't a popular decision, but it kept the repeat trade down pretty well (this receiver-repair bit was all free and extracurricular, and I had plenty to do as it was).

I drove an NSU Prinz once and was afraid to get out of the curb lane with it; felt like driving down the street on one roller skate. Oddly, the considerably smaller Vespa 400 did not give this feeling at all.

Around here, the cabs are outstanding for illegal U-turns; they don't outshine the citizenry too much for jumping out from the curb or for opening the lefthand door while double-parked (my favorite bitch at people who want to suicide on my car).

I think 2nd Ave crosses or at least runs into 3rd Ave here in Seattle just south of Yesler Way. It used to, at least; maybe they've straightened it out by now. In this town, there are several places where all the avenues turn, and sometimes some of them turn a little ahead of the rest.

Sure, I would prefer a ^{new} Ford at \$275 to an Isetta for \$600. But I had the chance at the Isetta recently. It sort of makes a difference, you know.

Every once in a while I still catch myself doing that "Fault Piece" bit, trying to use Body English on the whole damn Universe. Silly, isn't it?

GM Carr: All too late, I thought of the perfect answer to GM's beef at LeeH. Should have hunted up a GMC paragraph on religion, found a sentence using two terms not found in the daily newsprints, quoted it-- and then quoted GM's own paragraph right back at her, substituting (perhaps such as) "Trinity" and "original sin" for "Corvair" and "oversteer". All that "throwing your hobby in our faces" gunk would have come thru nicely, wouldn't it, though? Well, I just thought maybe you'd like to know.

I'm glad to see GM recognizing some good qualities in Elinor (the light of my life); Elinor is a Good Kid. Just to keep the record straight, though, Elinor and I decided to leave GM alone, mostly (not "ostracise", dammit, just not seek out), late in July 1957. At Southgate, and at Westercon59, I noted that my presence tightened her jaw and loused up her joviality-- that's why we drove T&M Carr over to Western Refrigeration and then waited up the street in the friendly neighborhood bar-- didn't want to tense-up the Carr-to-Carr visit. After GM signed the petition for Elmer, I had thought of dropping by to thank her for that. But this is as good a place as any.

Got one more pin to stick in and let the hot air out: "Hyphen, Ape, Cry, etc, had been "ostracizing" me long before Fanac made a point of it." I dunno about Hyphen or Ape, but Cry has "ostracized" GM in the exact same fashion that Cry "ostracizes" all expired subscriptions with no particular redeeming virtue attached. She dropped the sub because she didn't feel that the zine was worth the money. And certainly this was her privilege. But it's not exactly what you'd call being "ostracized", is it? Somehow I like to see these things laid out right on the line more. You know?

DAG: "Our close friends... are scattered all over the world.." like, man, you have said it so rightly. Every now and then I shake up the office with some casual remark about hosting "a good friend of mine that I hadn't met before" or some such. And there are quite a few in the audience who stand convicted of being people you feel you have known all your life, once you've met them. It's the breaks.

And I enjoyed Bleen about as heartily as could be expected at this time of the week, but all I can say now is that I sympathize heartily with Joe Rupp, Jr. Do you suppose he is up to changing-off to "If it isn't worth doing at all, it isn't worth doing well." ??? I've always liked that one.

Don Wilson: I won't join the Seventh-Day Adventists if you won't, Don. Hang tough.

What's this here ol' Ed Cox doing, hanging around with his flabby tapioca pudding? (Make sure you show him this, now; I never get the extra copies in the mail.)

Isabel is not yellowish-brown at all. I have seen her regally presiding over a quocently spread of some of the best goodies you ever ingested, and, man, your color-vision is clear off the deep end of the Land process. I am sorry to be a bluenose on this, but just check in with your friendly neighborhood John w Campbell, and you will see that I was right all along. So now where the hell were we...?

I guess it is about time to break into these Comments, and to consider.....

The Strange Case of William C Rickhardt Dep't:

In the early stages of the Berry Fund drive, Wm C Rickhardt was its treasurer for a few months. Following are excerpts from my carbon of a letter dated August 16, 1959, in connection with his stewardship of Fund monies. I wrote this letter, and have been assured that Rickhardt received it.

I have deleted, here, portions of the letter which dealt with urgency of having a full and complete Berry Fund Report out as soon as possible, & other dated items.

Wm C Rickhardt:

The Berry Fund being something over a \$500 operation, there will have to be a public report on it after John is on his way back to Belfast and all moneys have been paid out one way or another. ...

Nick says that in order to meet the tickets-deadline early last month, he "made up approx \$45 that Rocket Willie got away with" ...

Two other people ... reported that earlier this year you were burning up the terrain with about \$40 of un-turned-in Berry Funds, after you had withdrawn from Fund activity. This wasn't so bad until the ticket-deadline came up, ... But it did seem a good idea to get this thing straightened out, so on June 5th I wrote you about it, c/o Donaho. Bill mentions ... that he lost that letter ... I hope you stay put long enough to receive this one.

... either you have turned in (to Nick) all the money you received, or you haven't. Either you have turned in all the names of contributors, or you haven't. The report will have to list all contributors ... it is necessary to explain to a contributor why his name may not be listed, if it is not.

... I want to see your side of the story.... I'm not interested in excuses, mind you-- sure, I know you didn't plan to get away with any of the Berry Fund; you simply kept everything in one pocket, and didn't use your head in the clutch. If Nick's statement is correct, you were not in default until you came to the West Coast: my personal feeling is that it was 100% indefensible for you to take that trip while leaving the Fund holding the sack and under a deadline. As a minor, you are not legally responsible in financial matters ..." ((but the Fund Report will)) "...pretty well fix it so that you won't be trusted with more than streetcar-fare in fannish affairs, at least, unless you make a successful effort to square things...

OK: how about writing me a straight story on the whole deal ... ?" ((several lines deleted here, of attempted persuasion, mostly encouragement but getting back to realities with..)) "...I see no justification for anyone else taking your lumps for you in fannish public opinion. Fair enough?

I would appreciate a prompt answer on this deal, in as much detail as is possible for you according to your available records. Play it straight, and I'll meet you more than halfway... Please don't waste valuable time goofing yourself up with the Righteous-Indignation snow-job, though; let's work with the actual situation, and improve it.

Sincerely, F. M. Busby"

I have not heard from Rickhardt in the ten months since that letter was mailed. About him, yes; from him, no. He has since traveled from the Bay Area to New York, and back, which would indicate that he has not been huddling in unwarranted shame of honest poverty. At my request, Terry Carr and Ron Ellick bird-dogged Rickhardt to come up with an answer, and reported that he said he would do so. That was 4 or 5 months ago, at least. I will now ask the reader to stop and consider just what he, the reader, would have to say for himself in answer to a letter like the above.

I did not, after all, bring this deal up in conjunction with the Berry Fund Report. "The Goon Goes West" was in full swing, and I didn't want to inject a sour note into the middle of things, and spoil the fun. But now, with Rickhardt entering FAPA and running around visiting fans and all, it seems like a good time to open the question of his bona-fides. Though to me it appears more on the open-and-shut side, the reader is left to draw his own conclusions about William C Rickhardt. The reader is also referred to fans in the DC and Bay Areas (& maybe NY; I forget) for further sidelights that might help the reader to a more-informed conclusion. I thank you.

The preceding page also appeared in CRY 141 (July '60), since CRYreaders as a group were rather solidly behind the Berry Fund and so deserved to get as much of the entire picture as was available. At that time, I mean. In the month or so since the stencil-to-your-left was cut, more info has floated to the surface. What I'd like to do is to firm up a batch of rumors (and of solid info) into questions to be answered by the jokers who have the first-hand info-- not excluding Rickhardt, who is entitled to say why I should not circulate a petition to bounce him out of here.

There is a guy named Al Graham, in the Berkeley area, who has a checking account with a local bank there. Since Graham is known to several Berkeley fans, it should be possible to determine whether or not it is true that, as alleged, Bill Rickhardt forged checks on Al Graham's account and was bailed out by Al (when the bank caught up) with subsequent reimbursement ^{to Graham} in lieu of prosecution. It should be possible to find out if there is any basis to this story; banks keep records.

There is one other tale that should be checkable-- that Bill Rickhardt took in contributions to the Berry Fund and did not pass even the names on in. The way it goes, either Nick Palasca or Moreen Shaw received gripes from several people who had sent Berry Fund contributions to Rickhardt but who had not been listed in the final report; they had sent in their money, it is claimed, but had seen no acknowledgment. But it seems that only one of these jokers had sent a check instead of currency-- the check was endorsed by Wm C Rickhardt, but the contribution did not reach the Berry Fund, to be credited in the final report about six months ago. So here we have one more deal that can be fully checked-out, on the Rickhardt character-status.

Personally, I'd rather not foam up with anything that I'm not sure can be proved, one way or the other. But I would like to see what several knowledgeable people might come up with, if nudged, concerning (1) money turned in to Rickhardt for registrations for the Detention, (2) the typewriter of John Magnus, (3) the Mad Money of Judy Isquith. I'd like to see some of these deals spelled out.

Not that it matters too much. On the basis of Rickhardt's behavior with the Berry Fund (ratting out across country, leaving the Fund to make its way while he traveled on part of it), it seems reasonable to initiate a petition for ouster proceedings. The rest of this stuff would merely seem to indicate that the Berry Fund caper was no isolated lapse, and that things are apparently getting worse rather than better.

In case anyone figures this Berry Fund bit as a teapot-tempest, let's just recall the fuss that was raised over a mere \$10 of FAPA treasury awhile back-- that \$10 was out of a treasury that is seeking means of depleting itself to best advantage and it was repaid at the first opportunity. The \$40, however, was held out from the Berry Fund at an under-the-deadline moment when it had to be made up fast-- and Bill Rickhardt has been playing dead about for a solid year (by the time you read this), while doing much more traveling than most do. Think it over.

Unfortunately, most of the info as to Rickhardt's later activities was not available at the time of the recent election, or ten members could have accomplished what will now require 33 (of which only about 12 are already convinced, to my knowledge). But that's the breaks; Murphy's Law rides again.

I am not exactly what you'd call a bluenose (or prude, Puritan, Righteous-Type, moralist, holier-than-thou, etc). At one time and another I've known a number of the so-called "likable rogue" type, especially in the Army. And I feel just about the way the GI crowd historically feels about it: that the really unforgivable sinner is the creep who will steal from his own buddies.

There is one further instance listed on the sheet of notes given to me at Boise, but I do not (literally) wish to make a Federal case out of it, as long as there is any sort of chance that Rickhardt might ^{otherwise} get the jolt that would straighten him up.

But I do not think that FAPA can tolerate him at this time. So you may expect to find an ejection-petition coming around hoping for your signature within the next few days or weeks.... So much for the sordid side; let's get back to the fun and games, shall we now?

Dan McPhail: OK; if Gregg and Joanne show up here next month as halfway-promised, we can let them look through the files and select their own choice (within limits) of a snapshot of us for Gregg's book. Like you, I endorse the idea heartily.

Last we heard, NanShare planned to be at Pitt (she's no longer a compleat hermitess, though; Art Rapp visited her recently. Hope you make Pitt also; we intend to, but probably via the Chicken (RR) Route rather than Driving.

"sorry about mixing up Raeburn & Steward's names, B.M." B.M? OK, I guess I should have known better than to get fresh with the Old Master, at that... Come to think of it, maybe I should drop this crusade to get McPhail to be more controversial. I am not quite sure that the state of Oklahoma is ready for any new volcanoes.

No, Dan, if FAPA's 65 members (not to mention your thought of raising it to 75) produced as much individual activity as SAPS' 35, the result would be paralyzing--impossible to comment on. I've had a bad time trying to comment on the past 3 SAPS-mailings (this is written prior to receiving the July mailing); they were 704, 817, and 749 pages, respectively. Now we're trying to break 500 pages going the other way.

But didn't the 74th FAPA mailing break 700pp when the postmailings were added??

That silkscreen business certainly has a fabulous potential, but (sad sigh) it is altogether too much time-consuming W*O*R*K for good ol' lazy deadline-crowding me.

Sen/or Taurasi, sir: Did anyone make any sort of try at convincing Great American Pubs that the deadly similarity (month-to-month) of the top 2 inches of the FU covers (all that showed behind the digest-sized zines, as usually displayed) should be varied, if they wanted to sell the issues? They pulled the same thing with the New Worlds reprint, keeping a deadly monotony to as much of the cover as possible. That zine is indeed a loss; New Worlds is too expensive by sub to make up for the high incidence of dual (US-UK) sales of the same stories and the usual subordinate quality of the serials. I bought every issue during the time that it was available on the stands here, but the sub-price is out of bounds (though we pay it, and gladly, for Science-Fantasy).

I hope Lowndes does get back into the field with his zines. But it would seem that he has been fighting the Uphill Battle for too long a time, maybe.

Glad to hear you're off that New York '64 WorldCon kick, which I loathed.

(Back to Dan) No kidding, somebody named Glen Pray really plans on manufacturing new Cords? Hey, keep us all informed on future developments, won't you?

Shagnasty for TAFF; it's as good an excuse as any.

Coulson-type peoples: Hey, Buck. Re your comments on Earl Kemp's "Who Killed S-F?", what's with this "Busby likes Galaxy better than F&SF" routine? My preferences vary month-to-month with the output, and I think you are time-binding a little too much, on this. 2-3-4 years ago I was defending Galaxy against what appeared to me to be exaggerated-type attacks; the zine wasn't all that bad. At the same time, F&SF was bugging me in several ways: too many reprints, both of overly-precious ghosttales & also superfluously from current Playboys and Ladies Home Journals, and also an all too blatant spate of Reverent Science-Fiction devoted to plugging the One True Faith. Yes, at that point I was Plowing against the prevailing fannish grain. But let's not confuse people and make them think I said any such a thing in my comments that appeared in Earl's symposium. OK? Like, whether or not I still agree with my own writings of 1956-57, say, I always reserve the right to change my mind and to stand on the latest evaluation, strictly, regardless of whether or not it's popular.

You couldn't ever bring yourself to pay \$1.75 for a sandwich? Don't ever ride the New York Central RR very far, Buck, or you'll starve to death.

No, I still back the '56 Rambler even against the '35 Airflow Chrysler, for the Top Ugliers. You have got to consider these things in context, like.

You haven't enjoyed anything in Galaxy for the past 3 years? How about Bester's "The Stars My Destination" or the first 2-3 parts of Sheckley's "Time Killer"? You will surely have to admit that these items had more to them than "That Sweet Little Old Lady" or that thing about the spaceship full of duck excrement. Come on, now...

And I still insist that Heinlein's "Starship Soldier/Trooper" may be controversial and sociological as all hell, but nevertheless it does not have a P*L*O*T.

(Buck, still) I always have to look twice to see that calcium propionate is not in reality "calcium propitination". A personal foible, to be sure.

Basketball is too thoroughly a referee's game to be any fun for me to watch, and I was always too short to play it (aside from the kookie rules that if you took a dirty look at anyone, it was a foul); the rulemakers keep on trying, though.

Juanita: "Heterosexual sex is always just that"-- I croggle. The happy circumstance of our biochemical reactions insures that no two experiences of any kind can possibly be identical, except through Procrustean evaluations. OK, I see that you were talking about sex-in-books, there. But you scared me for a minute, you did.

Bill Evans: Buck Coulson and I laugh wryly at your overwhelming problems with Spec Review: dig in on a monthly zine for 4-5 years, Bill, and then tell us your troubles. The both of us will be much more attentive, then, I assure you.

Your definition of s-f is all well and good, and certainly makes more sense to me than Sallosk's does. But I'm afraid that the Universal Definition will always be: "Science-Fiction is that which I ((anybody)) choose to consider as such." However, the search for a definition is always a good thought-provoking gimmick for all who have time to be thoughty and provocative.

Some British Civil Servant inconsiderately changed ^{his} sex, and according to the magazine article, the bureaucracy immediately printed-up 100,000 forms to be filled out by others who might do likewise. There is nothing, at all, like Forethought.

Frankly, I can't imagine anyone who was "up on peyote" tackling the driving bit at all, except by necessity, in which case I imagine heshe would cope OK. Struck me that peyote frees one of non-essentials and makes it easier to discriminate. But a number of people came up with other interpretations, so I speak only for ourselves.

OK, Bill: You Are Right and I Am Wrong-- "the scientist is trying to find errors in the cosmos" is of course an incomplete statement caused by hurry. You are quite correct; the scientist is trying to find errors in previous interpretations of the Cosmos, in search of a more accurate interpretation. These things happen all the time.

I cannot imagine a boat trip that would leave me too tired for a nice lei.

Your comments on Laney and the changes in fandom's-orientation very interesting; I had deduced the effects OK, but your suggestions as to the causes were most intriguing. Laney-the-fighter is such a controversial cuss that I doubt we'll see any two people agree about him in that aspect-- but I'd still like to see more on this.

Hal Ashworth: Well, maybe God had Solomon on a quota system and Sheba was just one too many. Solomon wouldn't necessarily know anything about this until the roof fell in, of course. The Old Testament has God pulling all sorts of tricky little "test" deals that way; you're going along minding your own business and the first you know, blooie, a thunderbolt hits you and you know you flunked. Must've been nerveracking, serving under a God who behaved like an omnipotent five-year-old child. Look how He personally "hardened Pharaoh's heart" during the Moses Case, setting poor old Pharaoh up as a straw-man villain to be beaten down with plagues and such to awe the locals. And you know to what extremes a five-year-old will go, to get all the attention. It is tempting to theorize that God was very young in those days...

I wish that you and Vernon and Sheila could be with Elinor and me next Saturday when we attempt to follow Toskey up various trails ^{Trout Lake} to a hypothetical lake in the Cascades. Or that you had been there with us (or even instead of us) when Toskey guided us up a perpendicular brush-choked scramble to Lake Serene (well, it should be serene; hardly anyone can get up there to bother it). Of course it wasn't what you're used to; there were plenty of hand-and-footholds in the brush for us, and vice-youcansaythatagin-versa. Also, you've never tried it with dachshunds, have you? I suppose J.E.Q. Barford turns thumbs-down on dachshunds; little does he know what he is missing-- dachshunds do not come equipped with carrying-handles.

After Lake Serene, it was decided that we absolutely must do some more of that sort of thing at least once or twice a summer. I managed to get out of it last year all right, but this year I slipped up somehow, I guess.

"Ascent.." is a mind-croggling bit, what with showing that all the Ashworth Clan are such joyous reading. I hope we see many more such family-oneshots.

Harry Warner: And you, too, are well-advised to avoid the NYC RR, if you want to keep your faith intact (in your inability to pay fantastic prices for sandwiches): chicken sandwich, \$2.30, as of 1957.

I don't know whether it's before or since Al Ashley was driving a cab, but I was driving one for a couple of months in the fall of 1941. Of course, I wasn't exactly a fan at that time, but I was definitely a real gung-ho stf-reader. In fact, my 1st reading of "By His Bootstraps" (still one of my all-time favorites) was done at the cab-stand between calls. I was just recently out of the Infantry, was not yet of age, but had switched from tending bar (in a beer-and-wine tavern) to driving a cab, because you can't get a jukebox in a cab. This was in a small town, but there were some wild occasions in the cab business, even so. For instance...

Because there were no elevators, I took a helper along to deliver the trunk to the top floor of a girls' dormitory on the campus of my alma mater. 4th floor, yes. So we stood in the hall for a moment to catch our breaths, after dumping the trunk. About twenty feet down the hall, the girl came out of the shower-room with her towel in her hand. She was looking back over her shoulder and talking to someone in the shower-room, and had come about halfway to us before she faced front. She froze, gave a small shriek, turned red with unexpected rapidity, and made futile motions with the towel. She wheeled, took about three steps back toward the shower, then stopped. She said "Oh, hell" in a low but distinct voice, turned, and walked toward and past us-- eyes front, and the towel still in one hand, at her side.

I believe it was at our pledge dance, a month or so after school convened, that I had a couple of dances traded with a buddy who was bringing a girl I hadn't met; he was somewhat overboard about her. I recognized her immediately, while being introduced, but (without the cabby-hat and leather jacket) she did not recognize me. We had hardly moved away as the music began when I was hit with an overwhelming case of compulsive laughter. It came in bursts, and every time I'd get it beaten down, the poor girl would ask "But what's wrong? What is it?", and set me off all over again. Eventually I regained some sort of control, and tried to reassure her that all was well. At intermission, however, her escort looked me up. He was worried; he thought a lot of this girl, but if she were going to make him an object of ridicule he wanted to know the score. I would not tell him anything, except that I knew not one derogatory thing about the girl, that I thought she was perfectly fine, and that my case of the giggles should not be taken to reflect upon her in any way. On the second trade, I had it throttled down to an occasional involuntary chuckle, and had quite a pleasant chat with the girl, whom I liked.

I no longer recall either of the names of that couple; in fact, I have no idea who my own date was, for that shindig. I don't know if they married. I hope not. She was much too good for him.

This is commenting on Horizons? But I did find much interest and enjoyment...

It's Eney's Fault: Rich, you must've just about gone bugs trying to figure what to include and what to omit from FanCyII. Except for the multitudinous pennames of fans whose real names are a vagueness to modern-day fandom, I can't deduce the criteria you used. Glad to see this, at any rate; it will be filed with its parent.

The Unabridged hath it that murder is "unlawful homicide", and that while at one time it specifically meant killing-in-battle, that usage is now obsolete. The soldier does his killing of the enemy by direct lawful command, so that (according to the Unabridged, still) he is not committing murder, except in an obsolete sort of way. By golly, isn't Progress wonderful?

Redd Boggs: Here's another file-separately item. This is one I really appreciate, since there are several items of related nature that I'd like to do (if I didn't manage to keep busy and lazy, all the time). I'm at sea as to your criteria for "Important and Memorable Stories", but I realize how difficult it is to hold any consistent line in looking through so large a body of material. At any rate, even if I could only agree with about half your choices, it is nice (and useful) to be reminded, so concisely and conveniently, of the fine large mass of material that deserves rereading, if and when I get the chance. My thanks, surely, Redd.

Helen Wesson: Do you ever see "Moomin", either the books or the British newspaper strips? I know that "Wessonmale" and similar usages are derived from the Oriental way, but each time I see it in your zine, I'm irresistibly reminded of Moominpappa--top hat and all. The strip carries a very quiet and gentle brand of humor, by the way Foop. Just checked with Elinor, and we haven't sent you the \$2 yet... Chortled over the "... I hope it's you, too..." bit.

Karen Anderson: OK, I'll repeat (from SAPS) congratulations on having Your Own House. Mostly great feeling, isn't it?

This Doheug bit is picking up very nicely.

Rotsler/Trimble: All you guys are working at this Treasury problem the hard way. All it takes is for the S-T to submit to the OE, for distribution in the mailing, 68 copies ("to be identical, except for serial numbers if desired") of those little pictures of George Washington, with the numbers in the corner to show how he was first in war and first in peace and first in line once too often and like that. Of course, the S-T won't get activity credit for this, since he had better not have helped to produce these copies in some manner or other, but that's a minor drawback to a dedicated official.

And, maan! Look what a ploy to pull on the completists! They can't spend it if it's listed in the FA.

Hevelin: Dug the Stefnews summaries; we always go for fanhistory and you made it taut.

True, my pages do get overcrowded, also overabundant as related to time and pressure of other activity. Like, if you have a good answer, don't hold back!

Dave Rike: Some medium-small town south of Seattle is raising all bloody hell about the administration of the Minnesota Multiphasic to the high-school set by a faculty member. Some of the questions were quoted in the news-story; high moral indignation was rife, and scientific inquiry was set back on its heels once again. Things are picking up, though; they didn't fire the guy, after all.

Bill Donaho: we seem^{also} to have quite similar evaluations of how John Q Public took to the Korean War, and/or GMCarr and the move to ostracize her.

"Does anyone have any idea why women don't like women?" I expect some cynic will reply to the effect that since women don't really like much of anybody, and since practically nobody really likes women, how can they be expected to like each other? (And I'm sure I haven't read that anywhere; it just boiled up, like.) But I wouldn't be surprised if it were related to this Secret Lore and Inscrutable All-Knowingness that women, according to myth, are endowed with. You see, it doesn't really exist, except in smatterings. But we all "know" it exists, so naturally all women figure that all other women have this Secret Lore in full and are keeping it from the particular woman under consideration, who resents the rest of them all to Hell for this manifest injustice. And of course she couldn't ask...

You know, that makes a lot of sense, even if I did just now make it all up out of my own head, to have something to say on the subject.

Probably you tried to inhale direct to the lungs with no carburetion (mixing of large quantities of air with smoke, before actually inhaling the mouthful of smoke). I suppose there are people who inhale undiluted smoke, but I don't know any of them.

Jean Linard: While there were many fascinating bits in these 2 X-Traps, but I am not up to digging through all that lightly-tinted ditto-work at this time of night, for specific comments. The pica is easier reading than the more handsome elite. But with all that, do you have to print those gahdam upside-down lines, good friend?

Trimble again: Shipside and the (FmP) sheet are the only 2 Postmailings I can find; the filing system sprung a new leak, I think. Nothing but sympathy re your mother, John, but all best congratulations on the event of July 9th. Even though it would have been much more fannish to get married as part of the Program, at Pitt.

Bjo: If this weren't the determinedly-final page of MCs, I'd say more. As is, though, I'll just repeat (from SAPS) that we dug the "Leap Year" bit the most, and all best wishes on having taken whatisname's advice about don't give up the ship.

((Now come Elmer's Pages))

"Mouse milk has gone up to two hundred and fifty dollars an ounce", said G. Gordon Dewey...

In the course of my regular employment, strange things pass across my desk for study and analysis. Oddball and screwball things. Like, last week's very literate answer by the asparagus-growers' cooperative to the IAW's un-American attempt to organize a union of aparagus-cutters: included were acreage yields (surprisingly low), market prices, shipping costs, and justification for the worker's daily five-acre quota-- this contained the intriguing thought: "...although it is true that white asparagus must be cut below the ground level, the stalks are larger and the lesser number per ton equalizes this difficulty." My bemused mind went into a tangent, visualizing a blind wetback crawling mole-like beneath his 5-acre quota, hastily tunneling, snipping, snatching the white stalks down below ground...

The prosaic "Oil and Gas Journal" set me to dreaming of purple distances and lofty splendour, in a short article describing an autogyro for survey purposes. Oh, man, what a vehicle-- requires 50 feet for landing or takeoff; cruises at a pleasant 25 mph (top speed about 80). A single passenger job; one sits in a bucket seat midway between engine and rudder control. And if there should be an engine failure, one merely drops at cruising speed, the lazily-turning rotors acting as parachute. Oh, all the man wanted was \$8,000, FOB Indiana, and I had many happy reveries of lazy days cruising low beelines (or, better, dronelines) over Wyoming and Idaho, vacation-wise in Happysville...

What started this off was a filler in one of these trade journals. "Yak butter turns blue when it is raised to over 15,000 feet elevation." Only that and nothing more, but it conjures up all sorts of interesting speculation. If I had written that sentence, there would have been weasel words and escape clauses. My dear late boss, Robert A Houseman, would only have initialed it if I had written "Yak butter generally presents a bluish aspect at barometric pressure approximately that expected at 15,000 feet above mean sea level." This writer, though, impugns the butter with a doubtful degree of sophistication-- the strength of character, say, to remain yellow (?) in a pressure-test chamber at 1,000 feet after the air has been evacuated.

Varda Murrell (nee Pelter) and I were discussing the possible applications when she suggested I look it up in an ancient dictionary her father had just given her. Intriguing dictionary-- a marked anti-Catholic bias in the way the definitions were slanted. I opened it and read to her: "YAK: a Himalayan ruminant with long hair on the body, and legs sometimes reaching the ground." "WHAT?" said Varda, so I reread it, this time placing the comma in the correct location.

So, came speculative-type thinking of industrial uses of the principle. Airline president calls in #1 Pilot Hot-Shot Charlie, and says "Charlie, I've had complaints from old ladies about how far they'd fall if a door fell off. So keep it under 30,000, pal." And so on board goes a carefully-calibrated 50-50 mixture of goat & yak butters, to deaden the sensitivity to precisely 30,000 feet elevation. And that leaves it up to Hot Shot to conform to orders.

Subsequent events have opened many more remarkable vistas; another source has made the equally flat statement: "Fresh yak butter turns green at 15,000 feet." In accordance that the rule of jurisprudence that conflicting laws must be construed to give as full effect to each statute as possible, the ramifications are endless. Hot Shot says, "Prexy, you're a colour-blind bastard and you'll hear from the union." The evidence is impounded, in cold storage, but cold storage does not equate with freshness. Elevation is missing in the second definition; we must presume that the legislature was aware of the earlier statute and that the omission was deliberate. When the plane gets 15,00 feet away from the starting point, then, the colour changes, regardless of elevation-- and, through comity, does any stale yak butter in the vicinity turn blue? Ah, the engineering, technical, and legal problems are endless. This, gentlemen, is a matter for Doc Savage and his five (s)crappy companions: Monk, Ham, Renny, Johnny, and Long Tom.

I knew only the first phrase when I called Dewey. G Gordon Dewey, a good man, who plays chords containing twelfths and can hold thirteenthths, makes my beautiful kid sister green when she hears him improvise. One of my fondest bits of tape comes from a jam session at her home where she was idly on the 3am bit and Dewey sat down beside her without a word, poking his left forefinger at the keyboard turning her left hand lead note into resonant tenths. This tape to me is Charlotte as she would sound if her hand could stretch but one inch more. It was 3am Pacific DAY-light, man, an' comin' down rain already.

G Gordon Dewey, president of the Mystery Writers of America, is possessed of a burning thirst for knowledge. Not information stuff like the middle name of Leon Czolgosz who shot McKinley, or the last names of Manny Moe & Jack, with which I once disrupted a party when they were playing suchlike stupid games. No, G Gordon Dewey has packed more genuine knowledge into one library than any gentleman I have ever known.

In order that I might get definitive source material, then, I called G Gordon Dewey. He didn't offhand know just right now like, but Sam, you'll hear, hey? And surely you'll want to know meanwhile that mouse milk has gone up to two hundred and fifty dollars an ounce.

I said Sam, maybe perhaps I better tap my head longside chop chop fast. Dust out car. Dollars two-fifty? Yep. An ounce? Yep. A fluid ounce? Allee-same-Meyer, specific gravity one point one twelve.

Well, Gordon, maybe they got C₁₄ instead of C₁₂, for isotope tracer? No Sam, this mouse milk is not pasteurized, irradiated, or homogenized.

So I said, Well Gordon, excuse me. I must mull this. Hibited and couth, I must mull. And I'll hear, hey?

Ah, what beautiful food for thought! The elderly Doc (played by Jean Hersholt, which is a good test of the efficacy of the Methods School, since it's the late Jean Hersholt) putting away the five-pronged stethoscope, saying betimes to the hand-wringing parents, "there's a chance, biGod, and we're going to take it. Here, take this prescription, and feed these quintuplets 12 ounces of mouse milk per day, each." "Mouse milk, doctor?" "Yes, and add 3 drops of calcium propionate as a preservative -- both of the milk and of the quints."

And the bestricken moaning of the villagers called on to help: "Mon dieu, sacre bleu, petit nom d'un nom d'un fromage yak vert!" as they rally to the Fund for the feeding of Les Enfants, while the more frugal commence raising their own mouse herds. Bleedeth not thine heart oh gentle reader, 15 grand per day mulcted for milct?

Ay, at this point, why? Let not the pharmaceutical trusts prate of research and development: did you ever attend, or hear of anyone attending, a mouse race at say Santa Anita where wagers were placed through the totalizer for the improvement of the breed? My \$2 across the board says that you have not. R & D, nonsense. The drug combine has taken common field mice, paying a dime or so a head to the knicker-clad schoolboys in the entrapment game, and has bred them for profit and gelt. The mice, that is. Not the schoolboys, who could probably use it.

But then I realized, maybe it's not the capitalistic system, maybe it's organized labor. By the nature of things the breasts of a mouse, even distended by nursing, are small; moreover, there are 8 of them. This calls for very specialized labor indeed-- say, a midget, not over 1½ feet tall, with 8 arms terminating in teensy hands. So these boys got together, realizing that their relative scarcity made them valuable, and struck for double wages. Management refused to capitulate, and the first executive vice-president carries on with tweezers and blotter while the strikers' families starve and the quintuplets severally and together cry with hunger. And ^{the} first executive.. the FIRST? Hell, can't you hear them babies cryin', Caroline?-- the whole plant management lines up and spells each other with the tweezer chore and the blotter changing-and-wringing. Meanwhile, when next you see an 18-inch man (tall, that is), sneer at him for me and ask whether it will hurt his conscience if Annette dies.

Then came sober consideration, on justification of the cost. And the attempt rationally to arrive at the reasonableness or lack thereof of "\$250 per ounce". Gold is pegged by Federal law at \$35 per ounce; platinum is recorded in the wholesale price index at \$77, but whether this price is federally regulated, deponent knoweth not. However, in part we are comparing cats and dogs, since these metals are measured in ounces troy, versus the mouse's ounces avoirdupois or occasionally fluid.

Let us look at the investment. We require, first, a drove of mice. Then, a veterinarian, a geneticist, a nutrition expert, a good (and I do mean Good) salesman for the finished product. The drove must be kept pregnant or lactant, plus aphrodisiacs for the bull mouse and a security guard for the aphrodisiacs. Culls and most baby mice must be destroyed, and they won't bring much-- it'll take a heap of mices to make a ton of hog food. And the size of the plant required for standby service!

Look. You talk about Anna Held and her milk baths. Just let one taxwise accountant let one major studio know how desirable a large operating-loss history can be for merger-purpose possibilities-- offsetting past losses against future profits of say Homestake Mines-- and we'll see Marilyn taking a bath in mouse milk while everybody grins. The mouse-milk seller gets his commission; the studio head writes it off as a business expense above the line; the studio stockholders unload on Homestake; and Homestake declares extra profits. Marilyn will smile, also.

Somewhere, someone is keeping a drove of mice. An enormous drove. He's locked out the little 8-armed pickets and has hired midget Japanese to attach the 8-cup micro-milkers. His investment, in containers, vacuum pumps, quick-freezers, pipelines and micromilkers (A, B, C, & D-cup, plus custom-made 6- and 10-cup models) is immense. His little mice babies happily nurse at those 4000-to-the-pound faucets, not knowing that they live solely because they are more economically feasible than the labor components of micromilking, when it comes to the excess, as yet unsubsidized.

And the owner dreams of the day when Metro wires in a 30-gallon order: slaughter the micelets. Round up all my trained standby help. Call Manpower, Inc, and the Kelly girls. Pump them whelpin' mamma mouses inside out if necessary. Today, my dream fructifies!

For this, we are paying \$250 an ounce? For this, the Canadian villagers are laboring? Schoolchildren throughout America are donating their pennies and nickels to help their good neighbor Emilie survive? All this, for this?

Mr Busby, this article is submitted to you for your publishing consideration. If you accept it, I request the following:

1) That you print ten extra copies, and mail them to the Kefauver Committee, Washington 86, DC, Att'n: Estes. Send a covering letter suggesting that this matter might well be an abuse of monopoly medication. It might even well be that America needs a yardstick-competitor under Health, Education, and Welfare subsidy. Imply tactfully that what military unpreparedness did for Truman in 1944, mouse milk might similarly do for Kefauver in 1964.

2) That a copy be forwarded to Robert Bloch, requesting that a mouse milk orgy be written into his next prepurchased movie script.

3) That you send a copy to G Gordon Dewey, President, Mystery Writers of America, and ask him an important question to which I know not the answer, to wit:

Mouse milk has gone up to \$250 an ounce. What did it go up from? e. b. perdue

This is Buz again. Elmer has a good solid 3 pages credit coming on this article and it would likely be closer to 4 with anyone who crowds the margins less than I do.

Copying onto stencil is one of the things I do worst; I cannot type someone's material letter-for-letter or even word-for word. I watch the keyboard when I type, glance over to the copy for the next idea, and carry on; occasionally I find myself out on a limb with no help forthcoming from the original author. I didn't get into too much trouble on this one, because I read and enjoyed it at Boise, first. So while there are probably a few minor word-changes, I don't think I screwed it up too badly, Elmer.

- - - What ever did hapen to the Kefauver Committæ, anyhow?" - - -