

ROX

issued by Tom Perry, 4018 Laurel Avenue, Omaha 11, Nebraska, on occasional intervals when the need for an opposition rag in fandom appears evident.

"...any fan, anywhere, may bring any science-fiction work (novel, short fiction, magazine, artist, dramatic presentation or fanzine) to the attention of the Hugo Nominating Committee by writing to Dick Lupoff, 210 East 73rd Street, New York, NY, 10021."—from Starspinkle, special issue dated September 17, 1964, by Ron Ellik.

Had any fan, anywhere, ever heard of the Hugo Nominating Committee before encountering this paragraph in Starspinkle? Well, maybe. Ron goes on, "This Hugo Committee is something new—it happened about two weeks ago, at the 22nd World SF Convention in Oakland. The business session voted to appoint a committee to study the Hugo nominations system, to present a preliminary report at London and a final report, for vote, at the next American stf convention; in the interim, a Nominating Committee is being formed, to review the s-f field and prepare a ballot for voting by members of this year's, and next year's, conventions.

"The Study Committee is Anthony Boucher, Richard Lupoff, Harlan Ellison, Ethel Lindsay and Dr. Josef Nesvadba; the Nominating Committee does not yet exist, but at this time your suggestions for their perusal should be addressed to Lupoff (above). Anyone wishing to serve on this Nominating Committee should also write to Lupoff."

This news is no less amazing than its offhand presentation...as an afterthought to a special issue of Starspinkle, apparently paid for by Harlan Ellison, the purpose of which is to urge fans to watch a TV show Harlan wrote and consider it for next year's drama Hugo. There was no place, it appears, for mention of the new Hugo Nominating Committee in Starspinkle #46, the Pacificon II issue. Ron's coverage there of the business session is as follows: "At the business session London and Long Beach received the World and West Coast conventions, respectively, and the business of the meeting was remarkably poorly chaired by Al Halevy, whose weak performance was handicapped and confused by hot and heavy squabbling in the congregation." Period.

There was room for Ellik's opinion of the chairman and the mention of "squabbling," you see, but none for what the squabbling was about. It's only a guess, but I think a good one, that it may have concerned this sudden move not only to set up a study group for the Hugo nominating procedure, but also to completely change the nominating procedure before the study group had time to sharpen a pencil.

Was there a vote taken at the business session about this? Ellik's report doesn't say so, but one supposes—one hopes—there was. Was there mention in general fandom of the impending move before the convention? If so, I didn't see it. I could easily have missed it, I admit, and the discussion such a move should have had might easily have been drowned in the other controversy of this convention. I suggest we back up a bit and let the study group have its two years of study before we change anything.

The old system—letting members of the current and the previous con nominate candidates for Hugoes and making up the Hugo ballot from the top scorers—seems to have worked well. It's not a perfect procedure by any means, but it's a basically democratic one. Let's study it, yes, but let's not replace it till AFTER we've given it some study and some wide-open discussion.

Since there is no official machinery, so far as I know, to overturn motions voted on (if it was voted on) and passed (if it was passed) at a con business session, I suggest we urge the Hugo study group to appoint the 1965 London con committee as the 1965 Hugo Nominating Committee, and that that group make up a ballot out of nominations by fandom or convention members as before. This violates nothing laid down by

the business session, as near as I can tell, and would preserve a system that has proved workable for some years now until we have time to see if we really want to replace it and, if so, with what.

And while the study group is studying, they might try to determine what is and what is not proper behavior in promoting a Hugo candidate. I mention this because Dick Eney, in the just published fan poll results, gets quite exercised because one New York fan urged others to vote for a friend of his for Number One Fan Face, and some of them did. Eney calls this "...a deliberate attempt to cook the results...(an) effort to load things...the Great Ballot Stuffing Plot." Is it then ethical for a professional to urge fans to vote for one of his works, or one he has an interest in, for a Hugo? Presumably Dick Eney would not think so. This special issue of Starspinkle is Harlan's second attempt at this; an earlier one was made in MINAC, urging readers to consider a story of his. And Dick Lupoff wrote an article urging fans to vote for an Edgar Rice Burroughs book his firm had published, on the grounds, I believe, that ERB deserved a Hugo even if the particular book did not. There was criticism of this on logical grounds but everyone, as I recall, was too polite to mention that Dick's company could better promote the book if it happened to win a Hugo.

I don't wish to wound Harlan's ego or lose Dick's friendship, but I think it's fair to suggest they talk this over with the three other members of the Hugo nominating-procedure study group before Dick Eney jumps down their throats.

For each and every action there is an equal and opposite Goldwater press release.JP

ROX, as the title suggests, is Starspinkle's opposition. I don't plan at this time to publish it regularly, or to reflect on Ron Ellick's veracity or integrity when I do. There is a certain amount of fannish news Starspinkle doesn't publish, for one reason or another, and there are times, like the instant case, when I feel that Starspinkle gives the news it publishes insufficient emphasis. When I feel such circumstances warrant it, I'll issue an issue of ROX. As in this issue, there will be editorializing. Because of space limitations it's mixed in with the news; I trust no one will be confused between what is reported as fact and what is stated as opinion.

Ron Ellick is to be praised, in any case, for bringing us news regularly, frequently, and fairly accurately. The line credited initially up there belongs to Joe Pilati. Terry Carr—a Nice Guy for TAFF.

from Thomas Perry
4018 Laurel Avenue
Omaha 11, Nebraska

Mimeographed Matter
Third-Class Mail
Return Requested (if
no order to forward
has been made)
