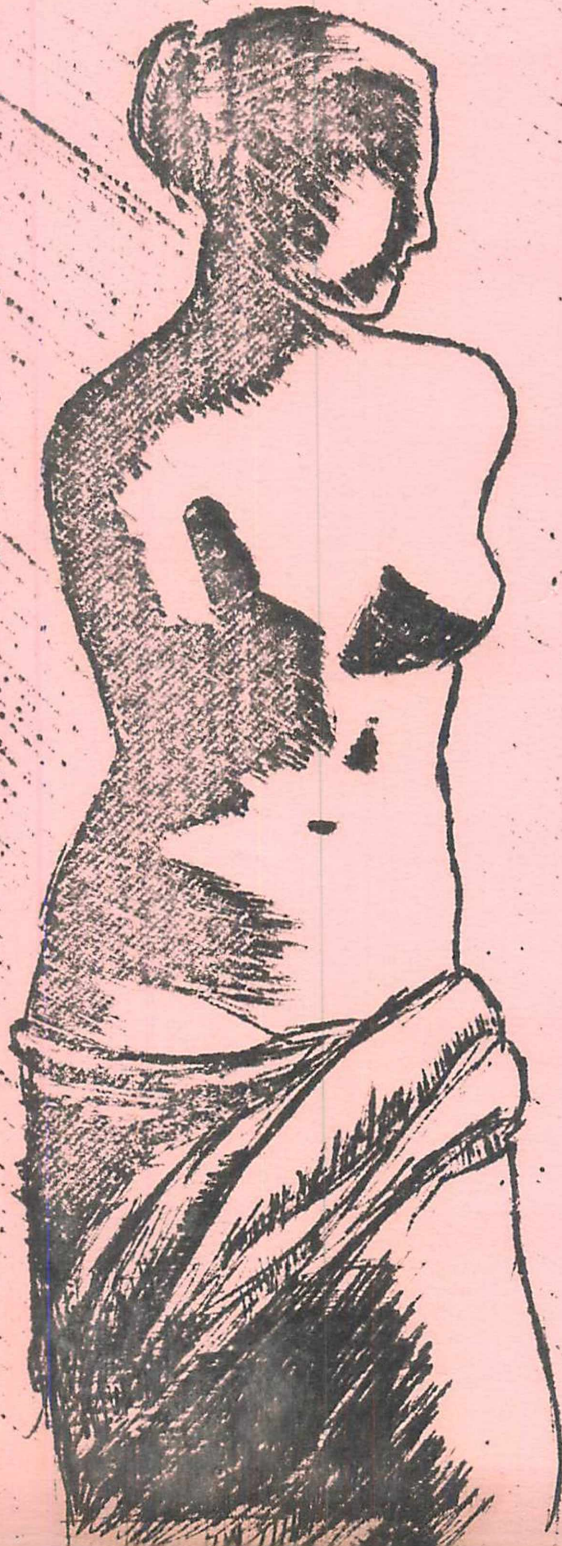


ESPRIT

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ESPRIT



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Esptorial

This issue comes to you from Scotland where Ron has been posted for a while, so please note that new address. Although this address was printed in SKYRACK in January and again in OFF TRAILS in March, I still occasionally get things sent on from the old one.

Once again, in spite of full intentions to be brief, the mailing comments have run into far more pages than is really desirable, I feel. This time it's 13 and it's far too much. Next time I shall write a letter to anyone who merits more than half a page. What is the general opinion on how much space should be taken up by mailing comments?

HOW NOT TO LOSE THE MAIL

I suppose the average civilian does not make a habit of moving house very often and it occurs to me that some of you may not know that you can get your mail forwarded free by the Post Office for three months after you move. All you do is fill in a form. If you want it redirected after three months it will cost you 5/- for another year. I mention this because I know it is not possible to inform everyone in fandom oneself - especially as one just doesn't know who one is liable to get a letter or a fanzine from out of the blue. I don't know whether this system exists in America too but, if it does, it might be worthwhile one of you mentioning it in a general zine. It is not only as a recipient that you benefit but think, those of you who are fanzine editors, how many of your zines must have ended up in the lost letter office because people have moved.

MORE FANZINES FOR YOU

There should appear a proposal from me in the current OFF TRAILS to the effect that new members should have put in half their requirements by the second mailing after they are in, i.e. half way through their first year of membership. I suggest this because many, no doubt well-meaning, people have joined OMPA in the past only to find that they had not the time, or perhaps the interest, to contribute anything to it. At the end of a year their names are dropped but, meanwhile, a whole year's mailings have gone to them virtually free. This seems to me highly unfair to everyone else, not to mention the waiting listers who are kept out by it. It also makes the mailing a lot smaller. So, in the interest of bigger mailings, if nothing else, how about voting for this? Please? Overseas members, it has been pointed out to

me, may object because if they are put on the membership list near the end of a quarter their second mailing would be in little more than three months time from which time for postage back and forth would have to be deducted leaving them hardly any time to conform to the rule. I have avoided this by making it "from the time their name is published in a mailing.." This gives anyone anywhere a clear six months to get out some material and if they can't do it in that time it seems reasonable to assume that they aren't very interested don't you think?

THE COVER

The covers on this issue vary greatly in the reproduction. Some of you will have inky black ones and others have a greyish looking one. There is, I presume, something wrong with the inkfeed. Or whatever you technical types call it. Within a very short run the effect changes from black to grey and that patterned look some of them have that looks like some new sort of shading plate is a pure buckshee effect. All I did on the stencil was oblique lines. Actually, I believe it is the pattern of the cloth screen. Or whatever you technical types call it. My idea was to use pink paper, shade in the background and thus have the body stand out in a natural colour but it didn't work out because a) I couldn't shade in the background enough and b) the paper was the wrong colour anyway. I still think it was a smashing idea though.

DUPING

Anyway, at last I have got fed up with my bad attempts at duplicating and recently INChmery agreed to do it for me. For which I am truly grateful. So this issue is duplicated by Vinç Clarke.

OMPA - HOW I MISS YA....HOW I MISS YA

It is a whole year since ESPRIT last appeared and I had it in mind to review more than one mailing but the reason I changed my mind will become obvious when you look at the reviews this issue. There has certainly been plenty to get one's teeth into in the last twelve months although I don't think I had quite realised how lively things really were until I read Walt's masterly summing up in SCOTTISHE. He made OMPA look like a cross between St. Trinians and a Summit Meeting.

* * * * *

This is ESPRIT No. 12.

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for the
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June, 1960

WITCHCRAFT

In the last issue I reported a lecture on witchcraft and said I would give my reactions to it in the next mailing.

Shortly afterwards I received a very interesting letter from SID BIRCHBY commenting on the subject.

Sid says:

"As I look up from the typewriter, I see the delicate egg-shell blue of the Manchester sky (yes, truly!) with purple and gold clouds drifting across from the direction of the setting sun. This is beautiful, and I admire it; but I do not worship it. Nor do I worship, though I admire, the way my runner beans spiral clockwise up the side of the garage, or the way in which, having hung nuts out on a tree branch last winter for the benefit of tits and greenfinches, I am now rewarded by extra-fine grass on the patch of lawn beneath, due to their droppings.

"But this is all...I know you will agree....Nature, which you would have me believe is the religion of the witches. In fact, I cannot so believe. Many people gain great satisfaction in observing Nature (perhaps Peter Scott's name is best known today) but very few civilised people would be inclined to worship it. In spite of Richard Jefferies or Algernon Blackwood, one might as reasonably worship STEAM...I mean steam.

"It is not as if Nature is beneficent. Nature is pitiless. If ever it appears to favour one species it does so always at the expense of another. So I cannot agree with the witch's statement that all those who worship Nature by means of the witches' ritual will be influenced for good rather than evil, because Nature is good.

"So possibly one can define the witches' activities in terms of this 'power' which they claim to be able to generate. If so I have never heard of more interesting forms of psionic experiments than dancing in the nude, and would not like to say they might not be fruitful, but I can still not imagine, say, Eric Jones, or John W. Campbell, if they decided to pursue such a line, claiming it as a religion.

"In primitive societies I can imagine quite well a religion of nature worship, and I have myself seen dances in Africa that parallel the descriptions of a witches' dance. Possibly, then, the modern witch is continuing the tradition of the tribal raindance, or the fertility dances. That I cannot say, but even if so, I still see nothing to be worshipped.

"It is, of course, notoriously difficult to account for religious belief, which is a phrase covering many types of belief from that of primitive man, who believes that there is a separate spirit in charge of each tree, river and mountain, to that of civilised man, who prefers one spirit only. I certainly don't propose to account for it, but it does seem to me anomalous for a group such as these witches to attempt, as civilised people, to revive primitive belief. Such attempts usually don't work. Civilised attitudes tend to creep in; as you reported, someone thinks it would be a good.

idea to apply the scientific method to studying the witches' power supply. My feeling is that the outlook which gave rise to the god of the witches died many centuries ago, and we have our own Zeitgeist today; quite another matter.

"I found your report most interesting. Fandom does, every so often, skate around the edges of the subject, possibly because of its link with off-trail fiction. The last occasion was when Julian Parr wrote about it in, I think, 'Triode'. Before then there was 'Tigrina', Forrie Ackerman's so-called 'witch-girl', a ham if ever there was one, but still worth mentioning.

"I should like to hear what other folks say. Are these witch-groups playing the game for sex, psionics or spiritual values? That is the question."

So Sid concludes and the following are extracts of my reply to him.

"I am pleased to see that, in general, your reaction was the same as my own.

"Thinking about the lecture afterwards, I concluded that, (a) it had been composed with a view to whitewashing the real reasons why people go in for witchcraft or, (b) the lecture was herself naive or, (c) as Dr. Joad used to say, "It depends what you mean by witchcraft."

"The first alternative needs no explanation. By the second I mean this: she admitted to not having been a witch for long and to knowing only one other person in it; that the covens were not in touch with each other nor were there any agreed rules or organisation of any sort. In these circumstances how could she know anything about the practice as a whole? All she could know was what she and her group had developed out of the basic ritual she had been given. And that leads to the third alternative; the process goes like this apparently: one person initiates another into the ritual, she forms a group and when it becomes too big for convenience she initiates someone else to form a splinter group and so on. Now we know that it is virtually impossible for information and instructions passed on in this way to remain exactly the same for long, especially when they concern things emotional and, in practice, the ritual would depend to a great extent on the personality of the person running it, and therefore vary from place to place. How, then, could anyone claim to speak for 'witchcraft', as such? If the above conditions are true then there is no coherent body of ideas called 'Witchcraft' but merely a set of activities vaguely representing a 'back to nature' movement and having a few common threads such as dancing in the nude and raising power.

"That's how it looks to me but perhaps I'm simplifying it too much. I don't know anything about primitive religion so perhaps it is possible for rituals passed on like this to remain the same. You say you've been in touch with them in Africa. How much did you find out about them?"

"As you say, Nature is by no means entirely good and there is no point in worshipping it; neither would people be influenced for good if they did so. That was another point on which the speaker was either naive or thought her audience was.

"I don't think I agree with your suggestion that primitive religion is anomalous in a civilised society. Is it really any more civilised to prefer one spirit to several? Is one spirit any less anomalous with civilisation than several? One might say that religion is anomalous with civilisation regardless of how many spirits it is concerned with. You say that civilised attitudes, in the form of scientific investigation, would spoil the chances of primitive religions but the existence of science does not seem to interfere with Christianity. If people are deserting it, it is because it has no emotional hold over them not because of any scientific investigations into it, don't you think? In the Victorian age, people were made to believe in Christianity through the use of fear and no amount of scientific argument is any use against fear. (I understand that the membership of the Roman Catholic church is increasing and this is one church that does provide emotional stimulation).

"I think, here, we should distinguish between the trained scientist and the majority of ordinary people. It may be true that the training of the former would prevent him taking any part in the worship of spirits but I am not convinced that the bulk of people today are much different from their primitive ancestors. Do you think that, if modern propaganda techniques were used to convince people that there are spirits in trees and flowers, they would not again believe in them?

"It would be interesting to know whether the people in charge of primitive religions actually believed it all themselves or merely used it to keep the community in order. Did the witchdoctor really believe in spirits or was he just as aware that it was nonsense (though effective nonsense) as today's manufacturers are aware that their advertisements are nonsense (though effective)? When we compare modern society with primitive society, are we not likely to make the mistake of comparing today's scientists with yesterday's masses instead of the two masses with each other?

"(Incidentally, on the subject of spirits in trees, I vaguely remember reading that scientists are experimenting to find out whether plants have feelings and are getting some positive results. If this is so then it follows that plants are conscious and thence that they have spirits! Get round that one.)

"I have only ever read one book on witchcraft and that was 'Witchcraft Today' by a man called Gardiner. Most of the others I have heard of or read of on the subject seem to be written purely from the sensational angle complete with details of what witches do to people and what their persecutors did to them, which I do not want to read, and which, in any case, has no bearing on the basic

6 aspects of the whole thing. This book by Gardiner gave very much the same sort of innocuous picture of it that our speaker did and I think she mentioned his name so it is probable that he was her contact.

"Bobbie Gray told me that Gardiner is the 'laughing stock' of the witchcraft world today and this I can well believe from one angle. There must be plenty of young people today who go in for 'witchcraft' for what they call 'kicks' and no doubt there is a thriving racket in it. At the same time, there must be other groups who are genuinely religious about it.

"It is interesting to speculate how witchcraft came to have a bad reputation. Presumably it started off innocently enough in the form of, as you suggest, fertility dances. Interrupting my train of thought for a moment, it is rather amusing to think that fertility dances automatically make one think of sex when it was more probably the fertility of the crops that was being danced for. In primitive conditions, human fertility would have tended to outstrip the food supply (long before Malthus said it was a result of civilisation!) and the crops would have been all-important. Now what was I saying? Oh, yes. Later it would have succumbed to the normal process of decadence and when Christianity came to stamp it out, propaganda would have put the final seal of 'evil' on it. Paradoxically, people who liked the sort of activities attributed to witchcraft by its enemies would have been attracted to it, thus making it what it was said to be. One of those vicious circles.

"Speaking of circles, one of the questions that came up at the talk was whether science was essentially different from magic or just the latest form of it, as some sceptics would have us believe. Someone suggested that the basis of science was the concept of measurement but it was pointed out that a witch making a potion would put in so many frogs' legs and so much bats' blood (or whatever they use) and so they had a scientific formula just the same. Eventually, it was said that you could distinguish magic by the fact that its exponents argued in circles. I have been wondering whether this is true or whether we too are arguing in circles without being aware of it. Certainly people who argue in circles seem to be unaware of it because one can never show them that they are. On the other hand, when you come to think of it, the 'circular argument' is a concept invented by scientists anyway; it's part of logic and so has no validity (or rather no invalidity) to people who scorn logic.

"I'd better stop here before I become too incoherent. It does often bother me though, whether science really is a realistic and unique way of looking at the world as opposed to religion and magic or whether it will itself be superseded by something at present inconceivable which will make it look like just another religion. Looking at the past, I have often wondered why those people could not think as logically as we do now (or attempt to) but presumably they couldn't or they would have progressed as we have. When religious ideas ruled academic thought, their beliefs must have seemed just as 'obvious' to them as scientific method does to us.

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"You speak of 'our own Zeitgeist'. If this is scientific method, then is Logic just another spirit which we are worshipping?"

But Sid is obviously not a man who believes in letting a woman have the last word (thank goodness) so back he comes again with:

"Methinks your witch dissembled. For consider: she had not been a witch for long: she knew only one other person in the cult: the covens are not in touch: there is no formal organisation. That is what you report her as saying, and one can fault her on every point.

"Quite a lot is known about the witches' organisation from the records of the trials held between the 14th and 17th centuries. It was one of the points on which the prosecution was keen because, as with Communism and witch-hunting in its modern sense, by picking up one, a whole coven could usually be unearthed with a little grilling.

"A coven consisted of 13 men and women, one of whom was the Grand Master and appears to have been regarded as literally the god...or devil, according to the viewpoint. All took their orders from him and there were all the ceremonies, sermons, prayer-meetings and devotional activities that most religions develop. There are instances on record of covens acting in unison, especially in Scotland.

"May I, at this point, clarify my own position. I support, to a great extent, but with some reservations, the anthropological explanation of witchcraft put forward by Margaret Murray, which says that witchcraft was the name given by its opponents, the Christian churches, to the previously-existing religion of Western Europe and that the reason for its association in the popular mind with evil is that, as always, history is written by the victors. Margaret Murray, as you may know, is an Egyptologist with some dozen books to her credit, three of which bear upon witchcraft. She is at present, among other things, a vice-president of the British Folklore Society.

"As I say, I don't agree with all her ideas, but I can certainly credit the Horned God of the old religion which she refers to; others beside her have also done so, and I myself met with a number of supporting facts when I was in Cornwall last month.

"You ask about primitive religions in Africa: I can only speak for the territories where I lived (Kenya and Uganda) or which I visited. How much, you ask, did I find out about them? Not much: in spite of travel-book authors, one never does. What, come to that, does one really know about primitive religions in our own land? I know a little about rain-making ceremonies, which were one of the powers accredited to European witches. Living in Manchester has not inclined me to study the matter however.

"As to your query whether it is in fact more civilised to acknowledge one spirit rather than several, it is a fact that in some non-civilised societies (I did not say 'primitive' mark you) both good and evil are attributed to the same god. At later stages, the separation of functions arises. Example: the Cornish Piskies are still said to bring either good or bad luck according as they are wellspoken of or the reverse.

"That does not answer you. Originally I was thinking of that school of anthropology which says that one of the first religious beliefs of a society is in a separate spirit for each waterfall, fire, forest or other aspect of life. Later there is a gradual amalgamation, a series of heavenly take-over bids if you like, reducing a legion of deities to one who later splits into two: a good and a bad.

"Objections to this theory include the fact that, by the time anthropologists came into being, there weren't many primitive societies left to study, so that a certain amount of post hoc reasoning had to be applied. Also, unless the tribe is completely isolated (never invaded or been invaded or met another tribe) there will be hybridisation with the gods of other tribes. It then becomes hard to distinguish the main line again.

"Lastly, to follow up my feeling that primitive religion is an anomaly in a civilised society, may I put this to you: the witch-cult probably developed in the late Palaeolithic as a religion designed to ensure success in the chase, fertility, & other ends we can only guess at, including the solace of whatever spiritual needs they had in those days. Historical records of the cult virtually ceased about 1700 A.D. when, due to the witch-hunts, paganism lost its force in Europe, & the court records show that it had, by then, become so garbled and gained so many accretions that one must call it debased. This debasement has since gone further and is now precisely true, because the public now has no recollection that Christianity once had a rival. All that survives are the biased reports of the Christian courts; hence the conventional gestalt of 'Witchcraft'.

"Because the popular basis of the Old Religion has gone, any revival must be esoteric, appealing chiefly to such types as:

- (i) nostalgic good-old-day-ers
- (ii) those attracted by the 'orgy' traditions.
- (iii) do. do. do. power traditions (including the psionic researchers).

"The third group is the natural budding-point for a serious revival....but then it wouldn't be either witchcraft or the Old Faith."

A L'ABANDON This mag has improved greatly since I last commented on it, in terms of interest, that is. But that's a whole year now. This time I have no less than 10 crosses in the margin. Thanks for reviewing 3 mailings; nice work.// I don't think Ethel meant that you didn't have the talent (to write about people) - all she said was sit down and think. And this issue gives plenty of sign of thought anyway so that's all right. As for needing memory, why not do what all godd reporters do - take notes? I am pretty sure that all those detailed conreports one reads are not just remembered. I have never actually seen anyone taking notes at a con but I suspect that whenever they happen to be alone they grab up a pencil and jot down a reminder of things and people and events and probably do this every few hours. Confirmation any of you con hacks?// Hear hear about 'popular usage'. I am sure that originally the phrase meant 'popular usage among educated people' but is now taken to mean 'the language of the common people'. However it doesn't require much contact with this latter to find that far from conveying meaning best most of it has practically no meaning at all. Any attempt to find out exactly what they do mean is met by hostility.// Re con programmes I, too, find very little of interest. Can't think why. A great deal of work goes into them but the only items I really enjoy are usually fan items such as the Liverpool tapes.//Your "This is a statement about fandom" - all right. Touché!//Thank you for your support on logic.(under VAGARY)// I agree with you about history but I can understand Nan's attitude. When one is taking a course in something that opens up new vistas and radically alters one's view of the world, it is only natural to say that everyone should learn this subject, isn't it? I had the same feeling when I took a course in statistics a couple of years ago. I felt that nobody could have a proper prospective of the world if they didn't know about the properties of the normal curve and that there are five different meanings to the word average and wondered how I could ever have got on without it! It's true, of course, of almost any subject if you study it in relation to your general outlook. Whenever you get a new chunk of basic outlook, you can't help wanting to share your enlightenment with others and correct their distorted view!! But there is the other side of the reaction too - the realisation of what a lot of nonsense one must have talked on the subject in the past and the vast number of other subjects not even glanced at making one wonder just how many other distortions there are still in one's outlook...still, nobody can study everything can they, and the line never ends// No. No. Learning plateaux could not be due to vacations. They have been discovered in controlled experiments concerning the learning process. They exist regardless of circumstances - for instance a typist on a 3 month course would go through these plateaux.// Hm. That was issue No.5. Wrong mailing. Still, never mind. On to No.6. Was interested in your list of maths

subjects taught in schools and colleges. This effectively squashes the idea that American colleges are way behind English ones. As a matter of fact, the impression is fairly widespread over here and I was under it myself until very recently and then found out that as usual it is simply a matter of out-of-date info, rather than inaccuracy. Not only is there no truth in it nowadays but America is ahead of us in most subjects especially those concerning people, i.e. opinion research techniques, management sciences, etc. I remember Arthur Clarke, in one of his flying visits to the Globe a couple of years ago, saying that he would not bother to go to a lecture in this country nowadays as they were so out-of-date. Many standard textbooks here are also of American origin.// Dear me, you figured 'Ron' meant 'Bentcliffe' did you? And that he was a school-teacher? Tut, tut, and him up for TAFF too! "Know your candidates" what?//Us that interlin. on p.3.funny?// Laughed at "why a capital 4 is a @" (which you didn't exactly say, either, but with me a capital 4 is a @)//What's corflu?// I have often wondered how long it takes to reorient from left-driving to right (or vice versa). Seems to me that with so much Globe-trotting going on these days it might be one of the causes of accidents though I've never seen it mentioned anywhere.//Miri Carr's page would have been quite pleasant reading if it hadn't been for the unnecessary obscenity... even Dick E. himself has the grace to put dashes where necessary. Not that we mind personally you undersand but have a little thought for the poor OMPA editor who is likely to get thrown in jail for putting such things through the post.//Donaho's article was very good indeed, especially the part about the Mohawk Indians. Would like some more on these lines.//All in all, interesting issues but not very keen on the red ink.

AMBLE I was interested in the caravan plan. But why is the cupboard for rough stuff so far from the beds for loose...oh, I see, you mean the beds are mechanically loose. And I take it the caravan curtains are mercerised cotton?//Internally euphonious? But who could possibly swallow a euphonium in the first place?// I liked the title speculations especially the swilthy fine and 'preamble'// No more comments come to mind I'm afraid.

ANIMUS curiae This title phrase isn't in my dictionary so must ask you what it means please.//I like the personality of this magazine and the clarity of the repro. I agree with you about the cause of wonderosclerosis but we are, I fear, in a minority. A good point made re comparison with mysteries etc.// Agree that funerals are as much the concern of the survivors as of the deceased but deplore the necessity to keep up with the Joneses even in this// Enjoyed all the rest but oh those empty spaces! Fill up those pages man or you'll be put in the same sell as Dorothy Ratigan!//Meaning of cover illo lost on me.//You re ARGASSY. You can, of course, check which mailing they belong to by O/T list.

ATOZ Have commented in a letter but for the benefit of other OMPANS a quick summary: Approve introductory piece, look forward to 'illo ideas', mildly interested in 'George', most interested in the back page, liked the attractive, readable, layout.

CYRILLE I can't approve enough of your introductory material about yourself. Will all new OMPANS do this, please? Than k you for distiguishing between college teaching and school teaching. I have an idea that the same conditions apply here too//I liked Wheatley in my teens but recently glanced at one and the styl& seemed longwinded and unreal.// What, pleas& is a three credit year course? Your analysis of why some students are of a low standard of education was very interesting, especially the bit about not understanding the text because they couldn't remember the first part of the sentence. This sort of getting down to a simple fundamental reason for a complex situation is beautifully satisfying if only because so many people try to answer complex problems with even more complex and meaningless answers. Do please tell us some more (or recommend a book!)/I am entirely with you in your view of modern writing styles but I didn't notice anything wrong with GRIFFIN in this respect. As for the Notes from Undercover I found them enjoyably amusing. It is the dead serious stuff written in this vein that gets on my nerves - for instance I couldn't get far with Salinger.//Why did you change the word English to British?(under STEAM) See MORPH 23 for references to usage on this.//Your advice re dealing with namecallers ("don't answer") is no doubt the best but the trouble is it is often more subtle than actual namecalling: a person's motives or values are called into question and the victim feels he must defend his selfrespect. And what of the 'namecaller' who genuinely believes that he is rightfully exposing villainy? Can you distinguish between them? // I found all of this interesting - one of the best in the mailing.

ERG I see your point about the non-voting but I don't think anything could be carried through if there were any opposition. In the case of an example like the one you mention all that would happen would be that the objectors would arise as soon as the amendment was acted upon (even though they hadn't voted against it) and would force it to be withdrawn. At least I should think so. The point is that they can't really carry this non-voter counting into anything that matters because it's against the constitution and they wouldn't get away with it. We'll see what happens on this present amendment.//I can't make head nor tail of what K.T.McIntyre is getting at// Pleasant reading but no other comments.

EYETRACKS Your info. about drugs was very interesting. I noted especially the calm way in which you stated that LSD is likely to come onto the market. I say 'calmly' because it was you who wrote an article against mesaalin and yet Donaho in one of his article says loudly "By all means, stay away from LSD" (his underlining). One thing that occurs to me is that if either of these came onto the market would they not be in a much more dilute form than that taken by researchers? It seems to me that no-one has taken account of this factor when arguing about possible bad effects.//You say we elect an

Official Editor to pronounce judgement on any matter in doubtful taste. Unfortunately this is not so - I wish it were but the Constitution states that the only restriction on material is that of legality so there it is. As for free speech, we must remember that even that stronghold of free speech, the British Parliament, is restricted by a list of words that members must not use to describe each other in heated debates and that if the Speaker asks a member to withdraw a remark then that member must do so.// I think the reason why APAS are considered to be places for retiring old fans is not that they are composed of old fans (as you say, they are not) but for the following reasons: 1) They make less demand on the editor than a subzine does. 16 pages a year is not a lot to produce - one would never keep regular readers of a general zine at that rate. 2) You get more for your money than anywhere else. e.g. this last year over 1,000 pages. Where else would you get 1,000 pages of fanzine for only 7/-? Something like a fifth of the normal price! A very good bargain in return for 16 pages. 3) Anything goes in the way of material. No necessity to please anyone. 4) More comments. I don't know what percentage of readers of a subzine usually comment (anyone like to give his experience?) but judging by their pitiful cries of "Write, please" or terrible threats like cutting you off the mailing list if you don't write, one cannot think that most editors are exactly overwhelmed with them! (There are exceptions I admit. APORRHETA and ARGASSY get so many they have to list the names of writers whose letter they haven't got room to publish but then they are monthlies (near enough) and deserve it.)//I enjoyed the account of buying the duplicator etc.// Do you mean you composed all this mag straight onto stencil? Jolly good if you did.

FANZINE INDEX. Very good piece of work. Great nominal value.

FANZINE REVIEW It is not clear whether you mean that TRIODE is typical of British fanzines because it is 'well produced and literate' or just that it is typical anyway. Would be interested to know. You Americans are always using the words "typical British fanzine" though what you mean by it, since they are all quite different, is never clear. Describe a tBf, if you can! Ken Bulmer first TAFF winner? Hadn't thought so but I expect you know best// Correct me if I am wrong but I gather from your FEMIZENE review that you have not much respect for the female sex. As for your implication that snogging should be done when ones husband is out of the room - is that real George activity either? Or perhaps you mean that you don't approve of snogging in any circumstances?// "Down Under" (for Australia) is a phrase in common use over here.// Glad to see we aren't the only ones who pack the most unlikely things together when we move. Fanzines with pots and pans indeed!// You mean you're reading the Fancyclopaedia? Good luck to you but should have thought it was for reference.

GRIST That back page by Norman Metcalf was rather confusing - not in itself, of course, but because it followed straight on after your own comments. One doesn't always read straight through a zine and I wondered at first why there seemed to be duplicated comments - especially as they differed! Do please put a heading (rather than a footing which you have) on things like this. (This appeal has been in the cause of the Campaign for Clarity which I am forever waging. Anyone with me?) You can't be serious about children respecting the whims of their elders? I am greatly in favour of children respecting rules - but rules with a good purpose, not just whims. And the purpose should be explained to them. Admittedly explaining the purpose may not have any effect on the majority but at least it gives a chance to the intelligent child who is all too often inclined to think that the rule of adults is mindless tyranny. By all means bash those who understand no other method but indiscriminate punishment by the letter of the rules is a terrible injustice to my mind. That is what you seem to be advocating and correct me if I am misunderstanding you. So help me you may even be joking.// We are staggered at your rates of retirement pay. Ron estimates he will get about one sixth of his income after 22 years. About enough to pay the premiums on a house mortgage with any luck.//Can't say ARCHIVE gives me a square feeling (as per Norm. Metcalfe). In fact, Archie is probably the least square OMPAN we have. Which is saying something. Not quite sure what though.

HUNGRY Cats? Not again! Aren't there any doglovers in fandom just to even things out?// Nice to see all the enthusiasm; getting 4 contributors when you're only at the second issue is good going. That's a good front cover and the layout inside is clear and readable. The only thing I don't like about the set-up is the foolseap - makes it difficult to find in the pile because of the top being folded over. //I liked that bit about Dave returning to thank you for escorting him home! Laughed at the haggis bit - we've just discovered the species ourselves - but tell Ken he'll be a poor beast himself if Ethel catches him! Barbaric indeed!

MORPH Thank you for your defence of the use of the word "England" And with unimpeachable references too! As for your courage in using that dread word "Scotch" (for people)....I got it in the neck just for defending "English". As a matter of fact, there is another reference for the use of the word "Scotch" for people; Nancy Mitford, in her now famous essay on the use of words says that it is normal usage among the upper classes(if you'll forgive my using a more or less taboo term), that she always puts it in her manuscripts but the printers always alter it.//Facetiae: my dictionary says it means "Pleasantries, jests, obscene books." So you and Fowler are maybe both right. I am surprised at your info. that erotica is sometimes confused with obscenities but imagine this is probably the result of Christian

outlook. // I enjoyed your new abbreviatory spelling - might try it myself next time. Would certainly save a lot of paper. Don't blame you in the least for composing on stencil but - er - a few paragraphs next time, huh? // Hear, hear, to your mind-bogaling-but inferior-writing-over-smooth-but-empty-writing outlook. I was beginning to think I was the only old fogey on this point. // Your mention of elephants reminded Ron that when he was in Tanganyika there was a herd of wild elephants nearby. One of the soldiers had the idea of shooting one of them so he went out on foot with a Boyes Anti-Tank rifle and a day's provisions. Twelve hours later he was back full of his prowess as a White Hunter. He had Shot an Elephant. This was quite something, as the rifle is over twenty pounds in weight and has a kick like a mule - a mad mule. (Needless to say this is being dictated to me!) It throws a .5 high-velocity armour-piercing bullet. So this bloke asks for a three-ton lorry to go out and fetch in his trophy. But the story has a disappointing ending. They told him that shooting elephants is against the law. One has to have a licence to shoot elephants; and not only elephants but each elephant. One a year is the allowance. // I am sorry your cover and justification had to go but agree it is better than not appearing at all. I keep trying to live up to this belief myself. Maybe sometime I will. // Can't find it now but I think you said somewhere that you didn't really like your own title - MORPH. If it's any help (though why should it be) I would like to say that I think it's a very apt title for a fanzine. A shape is something that exists but doesn't commit itself to being any particular form. It is both concrete and abstract, can exist in any number of dimensions and is visible but indefinable. What more do you want?

PIPRESS To start with, here's a guess at the meaning of your title. Being mathematically minded I think of it as pi press which is very apt because pi is a characteristic of circles and circles are made of curves and, to judge by your artwork, you have a curvaceous view of the world. How's that? // Glad to hear you enjoy tea; it is the general belief in this country that Americans drink only coffee - at least when a visiting American asks for tea, great surprise is expressed - and I myself am a great lover of tea and hater of coffee. I have read that the tea consumption in U.S. has gone up by leaps and bounds in recent years; that it used to be about a pound a head a year but that now most people keep it in the house. I also read that it is becoming "the thing" to drink tea there just as a few years ago it became "the thing" to drink coffee here and coffee bars now outnumber tea shops. Ron and I drink about 3/4 lb a week. // Could you explain the 'squirrel' jokes please? I keep seeing references to them in U.S. zines and they seem to be connected with your name and now here is one on your cover. // I sympathise with your art school troubles. When I left school I had some reason to believe it would pay me to continue with art so I joined a couple of evening classes. In the pictorial class, instead of being given a definite assignment everyone was asked what they wanted to draw and each just got on with his own ideas. There was no instruction or criticism. And in the life class it was almost as bad. True we all drew the same model,

but the instructor would wander round making encouraging remarks like "uh-huh", "mm" and "that's coming on" to each person, now and then lashing out with his pencil to alter a line for you here and there. I soon gave that up. Then I thought I would try and advance my French and German but soon gave these up too because there was no proper teaching, just little attempts at conversation and bits of reading and everyone was obviously there just to pass the time away. Anybody else had this sort of experience at evening classes?//Another cat lover! Are all US fans cat-lovers?xFew people here keep more than one cat, if that; it's a matter of expense to us - all part of the lower standard of living, I guess.// Ah, a high-heel hater! What with tea and artclasses and not liking breakfast and now high heels, I can see you and I have a lot in common. And I'm only on page 7 yet. See under TLF for my views about heels.// Re our 4th July party what we actually called it was: "the day we got rid of those furschlugginer colonists". I deliberately used the humorous adjective as a caution against causing possible offence.//Re Miss Universe perhaps you will give me your opinion (from your 6 years study!) of the 'fault' of No.6. It says, "space between calves, knees and thighs". I had always thought these spaces were normal. Is this not so?//Thanks for the info. on how to ring up film stars. Just say I'm an answering service. Right!// I find your artwork very much in accord with what I like - my favourite here is the garden piece. That gives me an idea. Could Pipress be the feminine of piper? You do sort of pipe away merrily and I hope you keep it up too.

POOKA No.10 is a good con report though that mauve stuff is a little hazy and hard on the eyes. Thanks for the photo. In POOKA 11 the reviews are much too short for my liking but then you spent a long time on your record lists//What does "gone Walter Coslett" mean please?//Your comment on DUPE seems to have some hidden meaning but too hidden for me//I am sorry to have to say that your comment on STEAM is in very bad taste.

SAND IN THE BEER I dote on this sort of thing and this is a very good example of it. Your "gesture of pity" is appreciated. Let's have some more pity or at least give us A.H.Rapp's address so that one could write and beg spare copies.

SCOTTISdE Pleasant reading as usual. Brian Varley's (nice to see him using his proper name) piece made absorbing reading but I would not like to see such a film//Willis' Warblings was a fine piece of writing - he's right of course about the Americans thinking we are a dirty lot but not many people would have the courage to say so in print! Re the connection between plugs and WWII - I do like to read unusual ^{and fantastic} trains of thought like this and possibly it's not so fantastic as it sounds. After all, one country's mental image of another (equivalent to the manufacturer's brand-image but what could you call it? Country-image? Nationality-image? Too clumsy, There seems to be no word for it but I bet the Germans have one) must play a part in important

decisions, even if only on an unconscious level. As for the analogy about the Worldcon, I would say that, of the two, this was the more fantastic. Is it true that Americans cancelled their reservations because of the plumbing? Hard to believe.// What a waste of ideas on the cover. Each of those blown up would have made a good cover. Atom must be getting reckless!// Ethel, where have been these "screams of outrage against Sandy's criticism" (on mescaline)? Maybe I've missed some of it, but it seems to me that it was Mal who had to suffer the screams of outrage from all sides. He doesn't often write a serious article on anything and I predict that this lot will push him right back into his shell again. (Though please note I'm not suggesting you yourself have said anything unnecessary.) //In SCOTTISHE 19 I wholly agree with you in your detestation of sentimentality re the nursing profession - in fact I don't like sentimentality about anything and so I must correct the wrong impression I gave: the remark in ESPRITO about nurses was meant to be humorous and harmless. Also I apologise for any misunderstanding about your country. I certainly have nothing against it and did not make any remark at all about Scotland - all I asked was that the English should be allowed to call themselves that instead of British.//On fireworks I heartily agree with you too.//Was interested in your piece about how problem families are dealt with. Specially the bit about teaching mothers to budget; I have always thought this should be taught at school (possibly it is nowadays) because so many people seem to have absolutely no thought of controlling their spending and seem incredulous at the very idea that it can be done. The average housewife is 'broke' by Wednesday and let her see that anyone else has any left and her only remark will be "Well, she must have plenty of money". And while on the subject of NHS, once more I must apologise for giving the impression that I had a 'grudge' against it. I wrote what I did because I thought you would be interested and might discuss it. I also said that it was people's fault things were as I described (pills instead of prevention) and that it was not to be blamed on the doctors (i.e. the NHS). I hope this clears up all the ways I seem to have put my foot in it last year!

WALDO I found this all very readable and your headings stand out nice and clearly. Have already given you my comments in a letter but would like to put here my views on your I.Q. statements. You seem to be under a misapprehension regarding the usefulness of I.Q. tests. You suggest they do not mean anything in regard to getting on in life; as a matter of fact, it is the ability to succeed in life that is exactly what they do measure. It is true that most of us tend to think that the I.Q. test only tells us whether we can do well in academic subjects but that is because popular knowledge on the subject is out of date and the nature of the tests keeps changing. The testmakers use a sort of feedback - since it is now over half a century since Binet invented the first I.Q. test, it is possible to compare the test results of those

early examinees with their success in later life and those questions can be used which have been shown to be significant in selecting successful people, while questions which do not distinguish between successful people and unsuccessful ones (i.e. by their answers) can be dropped. It is interesting to note that there may seem to be no logical reason why a particular question shows up intelligent people while another does not; the test in this respect is pragmatic - we can only say that experience shows it to do so. This is why some I.Q. questions appear to the layman to be pointless and give rise to the popular belief that they are only of use in the realms of abstract thought and not in 'real life'. I don't suppose that I have put this very clearly but if anyone is interested I would recommend the Pelican book called "The Uses & Abuses of Psychology" which, in spite of its imposing title, is very readable on this subject and others. (It also deals reassuringly with much of the natural hostility we all feel towards psychologists as a group who always seem to want to put the nastiest interpretations on everything we do!)

I agree with you that intelligence and education are not of much use without experience but you will admit that intelligence is basic while experience is a polish, so to speak; in other words, given two people of the same age and experience, the intelligent one will be the more capable. On the other hand, some characteristics can substitute for intelligence in terms of success. Persistence for instance. A persistent person often gets on where a brilliant but erratic one fails. And it is a fact, of course, that many employers are definitely prejudiced against highly intelligent people because it is known that such people do not 'fit in' with the rest. They cause trouble by getting their work done too quickly and having nothing to do which rouses resentment in the others; or they have ideas about changing the working system. What most employers want is a nice steady plodder who will do what he's told and arrive on the dot every morning. I read somewhere that a survey was done in America among young executives to find out which characteristics were most likely to get a man to the top in business. Only one characteristic was common to all those who got ahead. And what do you think it was? Ideas? Initiative? Smart appearance? Contacts? It was none of these but good, old-fashioned obedience!

ZOUNDS Ah, someone else who's considerate enough to give us an autobiography! Good. A tri-apan eh? Bags of enthusiasm. Just the sort of person we want. Can't see why you're so keen on the ditto process though - I find it rather hard to read and, to me, the colours aren't attractive enough to compensate for that. // Thanks for the OMPA/SAPS comparison and also your notes at the bottom correcting any false impressions. But 704 pages! This would mean reading 8 pages nearly every day for 3 months - what chance has anybody of getting all his work read? // It's not true that with 100% mailing comments the same subjects would go on for years. The way I see the m.c's, they're like a group

conversation and subjects change by a sort of branching off process (how often in conversation is it necessary deliberately to introduce a new topic?) Not that I would want to see 100% mailing comments, of course, // I don't know anything about ergs but from your figures, that 10⁹ should be 10⁵ shouldn't it? (Since there are 10² centimetres in a metre and 10³ grams in a kilogram). // I don't agree that 'no comment is required' when you have written a letter. After all, we all like to read the comments on all the others. Why not compromise and publish excerpts from your letter that you think will interest everyone? // I like your style - you have a good sense of words.

TLF As usual, this presents so many subjects for comment that I'll just have to content myself with a selection. (My rough draft went into two and a half foolscap pages!) Anyway some of them will have been cleared up in discussions and visits.

The picture you give of accommodation prices here is a true one but I think that, to complete the picture for the Americans, some account of the alternative - that is, buying a house - should have been included. So perhaps I may add a few facts here. The average couple cannot afford to rent a furnished flat, or even rooms, as a permanent mode of living. The wife needs to be at work to afford it and what is more few landlords will allow a family in a flat. So what the average young couple does is to live for the first two or three years in a furnished flat, both going to work and avoiding a family; by this means they save up the deposit required for a house. Now house purchase is encouraged by the authorities and loans of as much as 95% can, in some cases, be given. (This may or may not be true as you read this because of the recent 'credit squeeze' but it is true on and off, so to speak.) A house in the inner suburbs (provided you are content with an old one) will cost around £2,000 or just under and the repayments will be about £2 a week. On top of this there are, of course, the "rates" but these vary so much it is impossible to give a figure.

Would you mind telling us, Joy, exactly what you mean by "the British Establishment"? According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, "establishment implies the existence of some definite and distinctive relation between the state and a religious society other than that which is shared in by other societies of the same general character". Since this doesn't seem to fit the context you usually use it in, I would be interested to know what the word means to you, individually. // Practically everything has been said now on the mescaline topic but there is one point I would like to make that I haven't seen mentioned yet and that is the fact that if alcohol were not already accepted as a drug suitable for mass consumption; that if it had never been heard of and you were to read a description of its effects in the same circumstances as you have read of mescaline, i.e. without favourable prejudice; then you would almost certainly react to it in the same way as you have to mescaline. Consider alcohol impartially: after only the accepted "few drinks" one's muscular coordination is affected enough to make one dangerous behind the

wheel of a car; one's critical judgement is much reduced; one is inclined to do and say things that one would normally consider irresponsible; some are inclined to talk confidentially to total strangers while others are inclined to quarrel even with their best friends; one's perception of the world is altered (the well-known rose-coloured-spectacle effect); and one doesn't have to go as far as being "really drunk" for these effects to occur. They are descriptive of the state of having "just had a few" - a state approved of ^{by} most people including you and Sandy. But just because alcohol is familiar and already in common use nobody says anything against its use. The idea of prohibiting it because of the undesirable effects mentioned above is so outside of possibility even, that "prohibition" is a subject only for jokes; and anyone who seriously believes in it is considered a puritanical old spoilsport. Yet if you were presented with a chart showing the lists of effects of various drugs including alcohol, you will agree you would be hard put to it to give reasons for approving alcohol and disapproving the others.

One other point is the question of continuing a "normal existence". An intoxicated person cannot do his normal work while in this state any more than one under (say) mescaline but then one doesn't try. Drink is taken in leisure hours and one is sober again by morning and presumably the same applies to mescaline takers. Donaho in L'ABANDON 6 describes the Mohawk Indians as "physically magnificent specimens working on jobs requiring skill and co-ordination"; also that they are educated people who have adjusted well to the white man's world. This doesn't sound as though the effects of peyote are entirely bad, does it?

Re your 'How does one BECOME callous?' (your capitals). I don't think one has to learn how to become callous. What happens is we are born callous and have to learn how not to be. As for lies, it is not always correct to assume that an untrue statement is necessarily a lie. It is more often either a misunderstanding or a statement that is true from another viewpoint and a little discussion can usually clear such matters up.

I read your suggestion that Lynn's quiz is trying to prove "that fanzine fans are a load of bums" with some amazement. Since Lynn himself must be one of the most prolific fanzine publishers and therefore a prominent fanzine fan himself, it seems hardly likely, does it? Nevertheless, I sorted out the quiz and reread it with your suggestion in mind. I must admit that I still cannot see anything which remotely supports your suggestion. Still, you may have seen some implication I missed. Even so, need you have used such strong language? Why not say that the quiz appears to put fanzine fans in an unfavourable light or that the compiler appears to have a bias against fanzine fans? Reasons would be in order, too. OMPazines are skimmed through by many people outside OMPA, you know, and your rather hasty phrase is just the type that would stand out to a skimmer, who might then pass the word

around to his friends that "Lynn Hickman thinks fanzine fans are a load of bums" and, before you know it, there's another fead.

Ah, well, I seem to have run to two pages after all. And I still haven't mentioned high heels, which I had something to say on, and other things too but I really must stop or you won't get these before deadline.

BLUNT Very relieved to see your explanation re counting of non-voters (that they are only counted when there is no real objection). I have not so far objected to this unjustified procedure because up to now most proposals have dealt with innocuous things like duplicate voting sheets and suchlike clerical conveniences. But it will be interesting to see what decision is made on the current OMPA/TAFF proposal in view of the fact that six people were against it - one of them went so far as to say "never!". //Am fully in agreement with you with regard to the fact that fans do, too, read s-f; also that their statements that they don't are meant jokingly. The "What! Me read s-f?" attitude started in the early fifties, it became the "done thing" to say, and, in my opinion, was a reaction against the sudden popular boom in s-f and the new (for fans in this country anyway) discovery of the social life of fandom; big conventions, parties etc; in other words, the discovery of each other which, for the moment anyway, put s-f itself into the shade. But this attitude has declined a great deal in the past few years I would say - one sees a fair amount of references to s-f in fanzines these days; film reviews, pb reviews etc. If they aren't as extensive as previously, it's only because much of the s-f itself doesn't merit serious criticism these days, as seems to be generally agreed. //Referring to your previous issue, you mention your para. on BSFA and seem surprised because someone accused you of criticising it; you call this person (and correct me if I am misreading you) "mentally deranged". Isn't this description a little exaggerated? I re-read the paragraph referred to and there is a flavour of criticism though no doubt this was unintended on your part. It was due, possibly, to an unfortunate choice of words in some parts: e.g. "were they wasting their time?".. "what do you think of Vector...after all the work you put into it?" Honestly, Sandy, would you use these phrases about an organisation which you considered successful? In any case there is nothing undesirable about criticism so why should you find it necessary to say that the person who accused you of criticism, whoever it was, must be "mentally deranged"? //I must say that the micro-elite here was easily readable perhaps because of the double columns but I didn't see any difference between the first pages and the last; they were all equally good.

GROUND ZERO Glad to see you are substituting P. for GZ. I don't like half-size zines - they get lost in the pile.

PEALS I cannot accept the last part of Sam's definition of s-f, i.e. "speculations on science, space, time, sociology and philosophy". What sort of a classification is this? "Science" includes all the rest in one way or another. "Space" and "Time" are two of the many subjects dealt with by science while "sociology" and

"philosophy" are examples of "sciences". I'm not sure either that one could say "imaginative speculations" because what sort of speculations are there that aren't imaginary?//Frank's poem is a good idea but I'm afraid, like most of these questionnaires, I find it quite unanswerable. I don't think many others could answer it with any degree of accuracy either - especially the question of percentages of expenditure. Anybody who has ever tried keeping accounts will agree that the truth is always far away from the estimates, and, since few people bother to keep accounts, the answers you get will probably be far from the truth! Still, the results should be fun, anyway.//I found the Inchmery Section very interesting and like Arthur's drawing of it.//Sid's wordiness was entertaining as well as informative.//A Fan Abroad - this account of England knocked me over; I've got so many comments on it that I'll just have to write you a letter.//Chris sounds almost unbelievable - with all those activities I mean. I like biographies though. Let's have some more.//Les Gerber's reviews were interesting//As for Harry's article it was difficult to know whether it was meant to be funny or not; at first it seemed serious but the ending seemed to be funny. It even looks as though the whole thing was just a lead-up to that last punchline about getting out of the U.S. because it's a member of a communist organisation!//Skimmers Guide! Indexed Egoboo yet! A good idea. But you seem to be under a misapprehension (STEAM). Anesthetics are available for home childbirth. Pamela had Trilene which was the one the Queen had for her second one. She also had her doctor as well as a nurse in attendance so I think you will agree that in these circumstances the advantages at home (familiar surroundings, freedom from routine afterwards, etc.) outweigh the disadvantages.//The headings on pp 26 and 28 I had a job to read. I like crazy drawings but not for headings please. (Support the Campaign for Clarity).

MARSOLO I like the more friendly atmosphere this is acquiring and, no, I don't think it is cowardly to change if you are criticized. It shows an admirable consideration for others. Only small people insist on fighting all the rest.//A month and a half's salary in tax is about what we pay too.// You say that human beings are always illogical and there is always chaos and then in the next breath that it is difficult for anything to remain unorganised for long. But doesn't organisation depend on the use of logic?// You are right - mailing comments do take up a lot of time. I find them enjoyable to write though and you seem to be doing all right with them - very nicely in fact.// Difficult to get an account in a British Bank? As far as I remember all you have to do is give 'em some money - as little as a pound will do - but then Ron is in the Army and that's a good reference.//Yes, please, I would like a copy of synergetics as a whole.//The article about the Greeks was most interesting and I'm sure you've picked a winner this time as far as popularity of material goes. More like this please// Repro hard to read though.//

