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SECOND BASE #10

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being Dave Van Arnam's on-stencil fmz  
for the Fanoclasts and with another  
\*A\*L\*L\* \*S\*T\*A\*R\* LETTER COLUMN,  
hey, with room for more letters more  
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The "fan who was at one previous meeting but who I can't remember the name of him" was not Arnie Katz. Who it really was I still can't remember even tho I was told again; but at any rate, Arnie Katz was one of the "and others" I could not recall, tho Arnie is a hard man to forget.

Arnie says nasty things about the Mets, for instance. Now, as any fool knows, the Mets are the greatest baseball team in history. At least, any fool who's a Mets fan. I am a Mets fan the evening after the first game of spring training they ever played, when, after a couple of innings when nothing much had happened (except history being made, it being their first game), some long-departed Met made some error that allowed a run to score. Whereupon, as reported in the Post that evening, a gentleman in one of the boxes got up and left with the remark, "Same old Mets!"

This is connected with a phrase I have yet to hear in casual conversation but which I have no doubt has already been spoken many times, namely, "Hell, I've been a Mets fan all my life!" There you are. The human race needs the Mets. Who cares if they break all records for games lost, for errors committed, for double plays made because so many hitters got so many singles off the Mets pitchers? They've made a game which otherwise has become pretty dull into something that can be viewed both as wild farce and stark Greek tragedy at the same time. When they are playing, anyway. Watch the Yankees. Ok, you watch, and they win. Where's the kicks in that? They're supposed to win; if they lose, there's something wrong with the world that day. The rest of the afternoon or evening seems somehow clouded over; it's good for nothing. After all, if the Yankees can lose, what chance have you got?

Ah, but watching the Mets -- so they lose, who's hurt? You knew they were going to lose the moment Stengel walks away with the umpire and you see the card on TV and they still haven't been able to buy Mays and Koufax. They lose, and in the meantime you get a charge everytime the pitcher gets a strikeout or Hunt or Kanehl beats out a bunt. Every time they do anything right it's kicks. And if they win! Hell, if the Mets can win, you got it made.

Well, that's Baseball for this issue.

Something else the last FISTFA meeting (at John Boardman's) produced was this postcard in my mailbox about two days later: "Dear Dave, Last night you left here a black necktie with a curious tie-clasp on it. The clasp bore, in capital letters, the cryptic word "NOXIN". I would guess that this is an advertising gimmick of some kind, but I don't recognize the product. What is it - a cure for eczema, a dog-wormer, or maybe a roach poison? Or is it simply an abbreviation for "Noxious Toxin"? Please clarify. Sincerely, John." On the other side of the card was rubber-stamped: "GOLDWATER in '64/Hot water in '65/Bread & water in '66."

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Null-Q Press

Undecided Publication #11  
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My beautiful Nixon tie clasp! Insulted! Argggh. Why, I've worn that as a symbol of the grassroots demand for a recount in the Chicago graveyards for 3½ years! What a way to speak about a man who was elected President of the United States! (I wonder what the reaction would have been if he had been the President shot to death in Dallas, though. Forgive the sharp change in mood. But at least he's around to get the nomination if Goldwater can be stopped. I feel Goldwater's election would be on the same disastrous order, if not through the same type of action, as this country has already sustained vis-a-vis Roosevelt's quintessentially catastrophic Russian Policy. Policy toward Russia, I mean; not implying he was Russian. Been enough Guilt By Insinuation in the Donaho Matter.)

I stopped smoking cigarettes about four months ago, as may have been noticed by some. Wan't no trouble a-tall. Just stopped. No withdrawal pangs or anything. I attribute this to the fact that, since I was solely a pipe smoker for about 7 years, I never learned how to inhale, even in the Army when cigarettes were the only thing we had time to smoke during a break. Consequently, I never got hooked on the nicotine and so suffered not a whit when I gave up. Conversely, I later reasoned, since I didn't suffer, I wasn't hooked on the nicotine, and obviously I never inhale. Inhalation being what causes the lung cancer, it would obviously be perfectly ok for me to go back to smoking! So I did.

Ted White made his first FISTFA appearance last Friday. And Andy Porter. And the new FA (I jumped from 54 to 45 - sheesh - and Walter's getting the ax was finalized). Steve Stiles was there, and rich brown, and me, and Arnie Katz, and John & Perdita of course, and Mike McInerney, and a Diplomacy board.

So that's what Diplomacy is all about! I'd visualized something like Tactics II or Gettysburg. I would guess that the main purpose of the game, which seems to be how best to betray everyone else in the game, would be of vast help to anyone who wants to be Cult OA or SAPS OE... No, that wasn't a sneaky reference to the incumbents and their attitudes in the Donaho Dogdiddle.

I rather suspect that I could arrive at Nixon as the desirable Republican candidate by a simple process of eliminating the other contenders. I myself doubt if I could bring myself to vote for Goldwater -- not that I'd vote for Johnson (vote for a Democrat? are you nuts?); I'd probably, in that contest, just write in Nixon. Rockefeller is a man who conjures in me much the reaction that Mayor Wagner does, namely, what moron would vote for him? Lodge is out of the question; he was about as useful as a lead life-preserver in Nixon's '60 campaign, and what does he stand for anyway? Elect him because he's pretty? Might as well vote for Doris Day. Scranton? sure, but again, what does he stand for? He seems to be running Pennsylvania pretty well, but governors don't necessarily make good in foreign policy (I refer you again to Roosevelt's suicidal treatment of the Russians). Romney is completely out of it. Besides having nothing whatever to offer, and being a Mormon, which is a maniac religion if there ever was one, he's botching up things royally in Michegan, at latest reports. Viola! Nixon For President!

I'm not 35 yet, so that lets me out.

Interesting news item this morning: an American flyer held in North Korea for a year returned with the story that he had been told by the Reds Kennedy had been shot by a loyal communist. And in the subways...

Things are really perking up; here's another letter of comment for

a LETTER COLUMN

□□□□ And here is a letter which I think it is wrong in the first two paragraphs, but we'll see. □□□□□

DICK LUPOFF (210 E 73 St, New York 21, NY)

(May 19, 1964)

Dear Dave,

It was not an apartment house, it was an office building!

I mean that business of the rapist chasing the naked girl down the corridor, and her falling down the stairs and his chasing her on down and grabbing her to repeat the deed, &c.

Look, I'll tell you the answer to this "involvement" business (he proclaimed pompously): it's the whole orientation of our citizenry and it is the orientation propounded and promoted by our Official Leaders. From little kidhood on you and I and every other citizen raised up in this modern peaceful democratic just and tranquil welfare state of ours has been taught that:

1. Violence is wicked and weapons in particular are forbidden.\*
2. The policeman is our friend, and he bears civil arms for us, and maintains law and order; it is our job to be good obedient citizens, not to Take the Law into our Own Hands. (How often have you heard that last line? Don't stop to count 'em up, you'll never get your fanzine out if you do.)
3. (This is really the same as "2" but what the hell) Vigilante-type action is at the least wholly obsolete and was maybe never justified at all; leastways it is o-u-t now.

Put it all together and you get a general attitude that the citizen is not to look out for himself, no less for his neighbor. That's a job for the State. Add in the fine performance of Society when somebody does do a Good Deed (remember Arnold Shuster? Sure you remember Arnold Shuster) and you find people both by conditioning and by logic shrinking away from any sort of action when there is something Going On.

The solution? Oh, I won't even say it. You know, it would have to come out all about Individual Responsibility and action on the lowest possible organizational level, down to the individual citizen himself, and get that goddam Big Brother Welfare/Police State off the people's backs, and all hideously nineteenth-century and Goldwaterish and like that. I won't even say it.

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\* □□□□ This is Dick's footnote □□□□ No less a personage than Walter (himself!) Breen, in an early Xero-type publication (perhaps even in The Rumble) (I could look it up but I am too lazy) quoted a friend as saying "It is tougher to get a New York City pistol permit than a U.S. Army Top Secret clearance -- I know, because I've got both!"

((DICK LUPOFF Keeps Slugging))

But Bobby Kennedy has finally got Jimmy Hoffa. And he's getting Roy Cohn, too.

Not that I lose any sympathy on those two bastards, but when the whole mechanism of the United States Department of Justice is turned to the service of one boy's personal vendettae, that's-a strictly no good nohow!

I am talking about YOUR next You Ess Sennatuh, David.

Peaceful Co-existence with Castro...Enlist in the War on Poverty!

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I was going to write you a real kissy letter of commentation about how your fanzine is the swellest thing going and just keep mentioning my name so I get my due egoboo and I will keep loving it (your fanzine) but you wouldn't publish that and you would only be embarrassed by my effusions, so I won't.

-- Dick

□□□□□ That's quite right; I refuse even to refer to the possibility of publishing kissy letters of, er, commentation. Consequently I am not printing any of these remarks. // You know, one of the troubles of publishing as infrequently as I do is cast light upon by the example of yon letter above. I got it a few days ago and said approximately: Gosh, Has This Got Comment Hooks In It! and I Can Comment With This, And That, And The Other. And then I came to type it up and I can't seem to recall any of my brilliant arguments...I do agree about the ridiculous NYC pistol laws (and I'm sure it was an apartment house, but I'm open to reason) and that the strictly Welfare mentality is Not Necessarily A Good Thing (pause for a long parenthesis here: I recall a NYTimes Magazine Section a year or two ago; on the cover was a photo of a sturdy man and his sturdy wife, sturdy children trending from about 18 down to 5 in age, about 6 of them all told. They were standing on the steps of their home in backwoods Kentucky, Harlan County perhaps, and their home looked like it had been built with whatever they could find after a forest fire went through. The caption for this shot could have been "Sturdy Pioneer Stock Survives - Family Will Not Give Up," or "Regretful But Determined Family Prepares To Move To State Where There's Lots Work." The actual caption read about as follows: "Poor Hill Family Standing In Front of Their Home Waiting For Help To Come." Maybe the thing means different things to different people, but all it did for me was disgust me. I don't say Abolish NYC Welfare, or even Abolish NYC Welfare For Recent Arrivals. But there's a lot of stubborn and lazy cruds living on the dole, too, and what a whine goes up when it's suggested healthy people on welfare pay back a little of what they're being paid by doing some useful work for the city...and don't forget that means useful work for all the people paying the abnormally high taxes that partly go to support their uninsulted leisure. Then in Chicago some Catholic nut blocks a sane provision to provide birth control information to anyone on welfare that wants it...well, it's all a big complicated mess, and there's plenty of right and wrong on both sides.) (Catholics and Democrats are always wrong, but that's another question!) □□□□□

It's too much. I just don't want to get involved.

-- dg