

mlg #16

M I L T Y ' S M A G

Published for The Fantasy Amateur Press Association

by Milton A. Rothman at 1730 P, NW, Washington, D.C.

PRECONVENTION ISSUE

June, 1941

What you are going to read was written about two years ago, and was supposed to be published by Baltadonis in time for the Chicon. We have now gotten tired of waiting for Baltadonis to come through, so here it is, in time for the Denvention, with minor alterations.

THE CONVENTION OF 1960

You wouldn't think that in a half hour the convention was officially to be called to order. The hall was wild with last minute preparations. Papers and decorations strewed the floor, and everybody tripped over electric wires, rushing around to complete their work.

Suddenly a wild Comanche yell came from the door, and Jack Speer roared in, a sheaf of papers under his arm, and a box of thumbtacks spilling from his pocket.

"Guess what?" Tucker, exhibit chairman, said to him.

"What?" Speer asked, naively.

"You're late," Tucker leered, twisting his flowing black moustache. "Get to work."

"Yes, master," Speer bowed to the floor, kissing the third fringe of Tucker's left sandal. He then bounded up in three directions at once, getting his photographic exhibit plastered along half of the wall.

Of course Tucker wore sandals. He was dressed as a djinn, and kept appearing and disappearing in black puffs of smoke.

Baltadonis came bounding along, the hair on his chest waving in the breeze. He was dressed, or rather, undressed, as Prester John, and was at the moment engaged in the unheroic task of getting his paintings up on the part of the wall unoccupied by Speer, pausing every few moments for disputes with Speer over boundary regulations. Speer quoted voluminously from texts on international law.

Doc Lowndes was dazzling in the silver armor of a robot, and as he paced up and down the hall he rehearsed to himself the dramatic monologue concerning the fate of the man stranded on an alien planet. By the time the program started, most of the audience knew the speech by heart, but Lowndes was still rehearsing.

All this time the audience kept pouring in, and they gazed with much interest at the many exhibits that lined the wall. Balty's paintings were colorful and fantastic, and also gruesome. Speer's photographs were well known by this time. His clever scenes from other planets were so natural looking that you wondered why it hadn't been announced that space travel was an accomplished fact. Johnny Michel was present with his group of abstract, nearly four-dimensional sculptures. Colored glasses were provided for those whose constitutions were not strong enough to bear the eye-wrenching curves through infinity.

Suddenly silence fell, making a very loud noise doing so.

From the east door stalked Wollheim, and from the west portal swaggered Sykora. Hands nervously reached for holsters and for sword handles. Jack Gillespie, garbed to represent Hawk Carse, stood there easily, blowing the bangs out of his eyes, slender hands twitching near the butts of his ray guns. The faint at heart retreated to the lee of the bar, below which they remained for the remainder of the evening, gaily quaffing the alien and exotic brews concocted for them by M. Pohl.

Groups of costumed conventioners shifted their positions to strategic points along the front. Ackerman, in Kimball-Kinison grey, snicked the switch of his ray screen, and moved his DeLameter to the front of his belt. Elmer Perdue, in shirt of obscure and shifting colors, with words of horrible portent engraved thereon, moved his mouth in strange incantations. Kornbluth sneered, and three of the opposition collapsed.

Then the tensivity was broken by a cheery laugh that ended upon a sinister note. "Ah! Friend Sykora!" Wollheim strode forward and grasped the other's hand.

It wasn't till the next day that it was disclosed that Wollheim had been wearing invisible gloves strown with ivy poison. Sykora was the first to find it out.

A siren shrieked through the bodlam. The crowd scattered to the corners of the room, frantically searching for airraid shelters. Then they recalled it was the chairman's quaint way of calling the meeting to order. It was the only way he could manage to be heard. The rush for seats was accompanied by many and varied strange noises: bellows, wails, shrieks, while the fans ran, slithered, crawled to their places. Some ended up hanging from the ceiling, which had cunningly been fitted with trailing vines for the purpose.

Milty was chairman. His was the strangest costume of all. He started out impeccably tailored in white tie, tails, and top hat. Later on in the course of the meeting he began to grow evanescent. He would waver, and at times the wall behind him could be seen. Gradually he disappeared, and there was only a voice speaking from the air. Then a luminous body began to radiate from a point about two feet below the ceiling. It's brilliance became intolerable, and tentacles reached out from it to all sides of the room. Then the tentacles changed into green,

slimy snakes, which twined together and coalesced into a brilliant orange reptile with blue eyes. The shape of the being changed oftener and oftener, until there was nothing but a blur from which momentarily emerged fantastic limbs, and once there was a face that just leered. It became quite disconcerting. Knives, swords, bullets of atomic explosives, beams of force of fearful intensity, all streamed through that space from the audience, but the chairman continued. Finally, from impatience, Fred Pohl dipped a splitball into one of his drinks, and projected it at the monster with a rubber band. With a thunderclap the being disappeared, but the voice continued, calmly continuing on with the business of the meeting.

Afterwards, the many photographers who had been busily snapping away noticed a curious thing. No matter what shape had been visible on the platform at the time, the photographs always showed Milty in his full dress suit. You see, he was disguised as Mandrake the Magician.

In the meantime, the meeting continued. An incantation by Perdue soothed the hovering spirits, while Lowndes, hand on the switch of a vibration neutralizer, watched keenly for signs of trouble, at the first outbreak of which the ether in the auditorium would become impassable to ether-born oscillations.

The speaker of honor was H. G. Wells, a tottering old man with hair of white and straggling moustache that persisted in sticking in his teeth. "Civilization is doomed," he croaked, and then his legs gave way, and he was escorted back to his seat. The audience cheered wildly.

"We will now have discussion on the location of the next convention," the chairman said, following an old tradition, and immediately disappeared behind an impenetrable wall of force. The hall suddenly seemed to grow dark and cold. Someone in the audience rose. Could it be Wollheim? The shape was not clearly seen. A bolt of incandescence spurted with a roar, the standing figure shrieked, and darkness suddenly clamped down as Lowndes the switch of the neutralizer.

Who was it that had risen? Was it really Wollheim? Was he safe, or had he been demolished by the bolt? Had Lowndes been in time? For the next episode of this thrilling drama be with us next

No, silly, this isn't a serial. Of course it was Wollheim, and of course Lowndes saved him.

"Curse Lowndes!" one of the audience -- it could have been almost anybody -- exclaimed.

The lights suddenly flashed on. Nobody was to be seen. Slowly Robert G. Thompson rose from behind his chair. Thompson had come in his every-day working clothes. He represented a mad scientist. "Mr. Chairman," his voice quavered out, "I make a motion that on New Years Eve, 2000 A.D., we hold the greatest con-

vention ever to be held....."

"Point of order! Point of order!" Cries arose from all sides. "Quiet!" the chairman ordered, slapping Thompson into his chair long distance, with a pressor ray. "You are somewhat premature."

Who would be next to propose the convention place? Who would dare? All remembered the last convention, where five had been slain, and many wounded in more or less horrible ways, all because of disagreement on the convention location. Eyes turned expectantly to a corner of the room. "Be brave. Be brave." It was Speer talking to himself. He finally built up enough courage to rise. "Your honor, please, president, Mr. Chairman, sir," he faintly uttered. "I would like to suggest for the next convention the location of Comanche, Oklahoma."

He sat down abruptly, while the audience cheered. The look on his face was somewhat expectant, somewhat fearful, and somewhat like the thing the cat refused to drag in. Every year it had been like this. Every year tragedy and heartbreak. Always he would try to get the next convention at Comanche, Oklahoma, and always some other place would win.

But ... what was this? "Are there any other suggestions?" the chairman was saying, and the audience was very loudly silent. So : "It is unanimously accepted that Comanche, Oklahoma, will be the meeting-place of the next convention."

Oh joy, oh glory, oh foo. At last, the convention will be held in Comanche, Oklahoma. In gratitude, Speer gave his very special, wildest war dance, a procedure which might have gone on indefinitely, had it not been for the request of a dozen or so conventioners, who induced him to desist by sitting on him for the remainder of the meeting.

"Business completed," said the chairman, we will now proceed to the entertainment, which, of course, is what you have been waiting for. After all, what is the convention but an exhibition to show your friends, whom you see but once a year at these gatherings, what you can do, and what you have done. We do creative work during the year: in literature, art, and science, and we come together here to share our creations with the other science fiction fans. That is the sole purpose of an organization such as ours."

The lights were dimmed, and a single, narrow beam angled down from above to make a small circle on the stage. Lowndes was standing there. He had discarded his robot costume, and was dressed in a dirty, torn, spaceman's suit. He stood stooped, and his expression was haggard.

"There is a sun up there, he said, and his voice was weary. "But that sun is dark, and I didn't see it when I came out here past Procyon, where there shouldn't be any star. It is

dark here, and it feels cold, but that shouldn't be so. There is heat in there to melt this planet, and there is light ready to come gushing out, but the sun is too heavy and too small, and its pull keeps the light and heat held in there so that it is hot there to the ultimate of possibility.

"So I didn't see it when I came out here past Procyon, where there is no star on the charts. But there it was, and there I was, caught in the gravity pull that light itself could not conquer. I found this planet to land on, but it would have been better to have fallen directly into the sun. For something is wrong here. I don't know exactly what is wrong, but I feel that it would have been better to fall directly into the sun and smash completely, not smash only a little bit like the ship did.

"Something is wrong and I don't know exactly what it is. Things seem to be and yet are not. The planet feels alive, and perhaps it is trying to kill me. The ship landed without more than a dented plate, but I was out of the ship for only two seconds when a mountain fell upon it. And then the ground opened beneath me. Somehow I saved myself, for I am still walking on the surface, but I have no right to be sure of anything, for things are not the way they seem here.

"Things seem to change. I hadn't been walking for more than five minutes, and I couldn't have gone far, but I could not find my ship anymore, what there was left of it. I climbed to the top of a rock, about a hundred feet of it, and suddenly I wasn't on the top of a rock anymore, but it was a deep hole in the ground that kept getting deeper. I tried to climb up, but the side fell in, and I was in a tunnel. I had to run somewhere, so I ran. The tunnels branched without end. I think they were tunnels. Sometimes they were huge caverns whose sides I could not see in the distance, but as soon as I entered them, they collapsed, and I was in a narrow tunnel. I tried to go up. I wanted to reach the surface. Whenever I entered an upward sloping passage I felt myself going down.

"On and on. Endlessly and meaninglessly. Like a dream of running, flying, breathlessly, fearfully, with a tension that builds up unbearably. Then I stopped running and sat down; the sky and that dark sun was over me. I don't know. Did I happen to stop just as I found the opening to the surface .. or was it that because I stopped ... I shouldn't think about that.

"What did I imagine, and what was real? There were mountains that disappeared in an instant, and hollows in the ground which suddenly filled to overflowing, and became huge, towering rocks. There was a turmoil, and a movement, and a shifting that made the horizon flow.

"Did I just imagine that the planet was trying to kill me? Or did this just happen, and I was there, and I got caught, and .. That rock there! A moment ago there was nothing, and then a little thing far away came up, and suddenly it was right there, before me, though it had not moved. The hyperspatial transition -- and what it means! This planetquake between two planets that exist simultaneously across hyperspace -- portions of each planet

changing position!

Oh-h-h! The ground below is gone, and I am falling. But where? In what direction? From within, from without, from all sides the other planet materializes, and I am falling into it, onto it, out of it, within it! The heat! The center. . . . "

A blinding glare of light puffed upon the stage, and the spotlight went out. Darkness for a moment, and then the house-lights went on, as applause swept the hall. Lowndes was gone.

He refused to take a bow. A true actor remains in character even after the performance. It takes time to recover, so Lowndes remained hidden. It was not until after the program, and the rest of the crowd started looking for him, and could not find him, that they started to wonder. . . .

No one has seen Lowndes since.

But back to the convention. The chairman was at the platform again.

"We have with us now an event which has been long awaited. The Futurian Motion Picture Company has, after great effort and expense, completed their first full-length movie. So raise the screen and lower the lights, and we will have 'Odd John,' starring Odd Johnny Michel, supported by Wollheim, Pohl, Kornbluth, Lowndes, and Gillespie, as the other odd homi superior."

Little more can be said about the movie. The audience experienced unendurable pleasure, indefinitely prolonged. The casting superb, and the acting was perfect. In fact, it was difficult to distinguish between acting and real life in some cases.

"And now," it was the chairman again, that next, "we have an item that has been twenty years in preparation. Yes, twenty years. It was in 1940 that I started to write my science fiction opera. Others had tried it, but so far this is the only one to come to completion. In searching about for a plot, I recalled how impressed I had been with the resemblance of the movie Metropolis to an opera or ballet. It was more of that form than it was a movie. So the adaptation was quite simple and natural.

"The stage is set, and the opera Metropolis will be sung by the combined opera divisions of the Philadelphia and Washington Science Fiction Societies."

The lights are dimmed, and Milty is at the piano. He begins pounding on the keys with his fists, making a horrible racket in this rhythm: dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum, dum dum dum dum etc etc. Allegro con fuoco, a la Stravinsky.

The curtains rise, and the stage is a dim blue, with a red light in the rear silhouetting vast, vague shapes of machinery, which move up and down to the rhythm of the music. A streak of light shoots from one of the machines, and all of them start moving, in different rhythms. Milty pounds harder at the piano, left hand giving four beats against seven in the right. A tramping of feet is heard from both sides of the stage, and the chorus marches in, in close formation. They are chanting, very softly, in mixed rhythms, and off key. Whether it is on the score or not, they sing off key. Their chant becomes louder into a sorrowful wail, and it goes like this:

We are the slaves of the machine,
We are the men who live below,
We turn the wheels and tend the engines,
We toil with steel and steam and fire,
We are the slaves of the machine.

Up above the city rears,
With towers high and colors bright,
With music, singing, dancing, joy,
With stars and sun and moon and sky,
And freedom that we never see.

Here below is black and foul,
With smoke and soot and grime,
With toil and labor never stopping,
Wearing down our bodies til
We are machines like those of steel.

We are the slaves of the machine,
We are the men who live in toil,
We make the food, the power, the light,
We forge the metal and build the world,
We make the airplanes, the towers, the bridges,
We fight the wars that others make,
We live in darkness, the levels below.
We are the slaves of the machine.

The last verse begins *fff. fortissimo*, as loud as possible, and keeps getting louder and louder after that. Finally Milty is pounding on the piano with both arms and elbows until he falls to the floor, exhausted. When he is revived, the opera continues.

The hero enters the stage. (applause) He is the parasite from the upper levels who is slumming down in the workers quarters. He sings an aria explaining this. He is astonished at the things he sees, and wonders why his father didn't tell him all the facts of life. He doesn't know that the Dies Committee had said they were subversive and had banned them from his grade three reader. He happens to barge in upon a workers meeting, and the heroine is making a speech. She is giving them the real red hot stuff. He looks at her, and she looks at him, and -- bang -- they are in love. He says to her what goes on here? She says to him, comes the revolution the workers will eat strawberries and cream.

He says to her, I don't like strawberries and cream. She says to him, comes the revolution you will eat strawberries and cream whether you like it or not.

Curtain goes down on the first act.

The scene of the second act is laid up on the upper levels, in the office of the hero's father. It is very ultra, with huge incandescent tubes flashing on and off, and sparks crackling from point to point, for no good reason at all, as far as anybody can see.

There is quite an argument going on as the curtain rises. The father is berating his son for being caught down in the lower levels. That sort of thing just isn't done.

"Why were you there, down below?
What were you doing,
Midst the dirt and the smoke,
And those creatures that live there in shame?"

"Not people, those beasts,
That ignorant mob,
Who know naught but to slave.
Let them stay there,
And you stay here,
With white men of your kind."

"Hah," says the hero. "You know not what you say.
You know not what goes on.
You stay up here in the light and the bright
And speak of what's below.
But what is what you do not know
And you never think to look.

"I saw below a wondrous vision
Amidst the crowds that march.
Among the workers, grey and black,
Was the spark that flares
And the light that shines
And dazzles my eyes with its glare.

"She is the girl I see when I dream
Her beauty is not to be told.
She is the one whose very name
Sets rivers of thermitic through my veins.

"Her eyes are the blue of copper ions,
Like lead chromate is her hair.
Her teeth are white like silver chloride,
And her lips have that ruddy glare --
That ruddy glare that only comes
From mercuric iodide.

"Her motions are light like electrons in flight
With the grace of planets in their orbs.
Like a sine wave, a cycloid, a hyperbolic curve
Her figure shows geometric functions and forms."

This agonizing poetry is happily interrupted by a flare of light from the direction of the door. Come in, the capitalist says, and in grovels a spy from the lower levels.

"The revolution comes
And blood will flow in the street.
Like borsht it will run
And our heads will be used for football."

"At the crack of dawn,
Two weeks hence,
Civilization falls.
For then it is
That the workers rise
And we must guard our necks."

"Away!" the capitalist shouts, and the spy aways. The capitalist broods back and forth across the luxurious rug, callous to the thought that those below do not have such luxurious rugs to brood back and forth across.

Call in Xyltzy, the Mad Scientist, the capitalist commands. He'll know a way to down this dastardly revolution.

The Mad Scientist walks in.

That's the kind of promptness I like, the Capitalist gloats. Tell me how.....

I know. It will be very simple. We will kidnap the girl who is the leader of the revolution, and substitute in her place a robot which will look like her, but will have the essence of evil. This robot will lead the workers to their destruction, and after there are no more workers, we will have no more trouble from them.

That sounds very good, the capitalist says. There is only one thing that bothers me. But the Mad Scientist has already disappeared, in a blinding flash of light.

Curtain

There is an entr'acte between the second and third acts that shows the girl being chased by the Mad Scientist. She runs back and forth, round and round the stage, and he runs back and forth, round and round the stage, while the pianist plays the William Tell overture for about half an hour. Finally everybody collapses from exhaustion, and the opera goes on.

The third act is a tremendous, inspiring spectacle. The hero, the parasite from the upper levels, has joined forces with the workers, and has rescued the girl from the evil clutches of the Mad Scientist. A mob of workers mob the evil robot, and it burns, screaming with joy. Now comes the revolution. The Masses gather from all sections of the underground city, and commence the long, slow climb upward, demolishing every resistance in their path. The Capitalists above try to foil them by letting open the water pipes, and flooding the upper levels, but the Hero and Heroine save the women and children, and the Workers take care of themselves, and everybody gets up to Safety (two counters past young ladies corsets). The Capitalists, seeing defeat, grovel in the dust and beg for mercy, but they are all cut down, every one of them. Finally, with blood running in the streets like borsht, or did we say that already, the act closes triumphantly with everybody, including the audience, standing up, fists clenched above their heads, singing the Internationale in Esperanto.

*

Boy, did I fool you people. That wasn't really the last act. That was the way Wellheim dreamt it after falling asleep. What really happened was much different.

The third act is a tremendous, inspiring spectacle. The Hero, the parasite from the upper levels, has joined forces with the workers, and has rescued the girl from the evil clutches of the Mad Scientist. A mob of Workers mob the evil robot, and it burns, screaming with joy. Now comes the revolution. The Masses gather from all sections of the underground city, and commence the long, slow climb upward, demolishing every resistance in their path. But things are happening elsewhere. The machines, having been left out of control by the revolutionizing workers, are running wild. Faster and faster they go, and smoke and flame belch from all corners of the stage, while floods of water gush gurglingly from one side to the other, women and children dashing frantically to and fro. But the Workers go on with their Revolution. The Hero and Heroine rush into the machine rooms to quiet the machines, but they don't want to quiet. Things work up to quite a terrible climax, and just at about the moment you are getting sick and tired of it all, everything blows up in one huge smash: Workers, Capitalists, stage, opera, and Convention.

The End.

dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42dcon42

DCon

STUFF

about the last mailing

The mailing looked like it was going to be pretty slim, but after one or two supplements floated in it turned out to be a pretty fair package.

The Fantasy Amateur: Interlineations starting to get too personal. The secretary took up too much room, but since he mimeographed it, who was going to stop him?

Horizons: Milty should never have made that issue of Milty's Mag so small. Millions of people wept at its near-exclusion from the mailing, and it made him as conceited as all hell. Comments on the previous mailing agreed in a mild sort of way with my own thots. But that Year of Astounding! Milty Thot he was a bug on talking to himself, but this takes the cake. I did read some of it. Reaction on Slan is probably typical. The first few parts roared upward terrifically. The climax came with the death of Kathleen, after one of the most beautiful passages in science fiction, when for the first time in my life I sat there cussing out an author. The end of the story came several pages before Von Vogt stopped writing. That's why the last installment seemed such a letdown. Between the three of us, Elmer, Lester del Rey and myself had figured out what was what, and the only thing we didn't get was that business with the genes and chromosomes, so Elmer and I were sore because the author hadn't been smarter than us.

So Warner has the Hampdenshire Wonder. I'll have to start figuring how to steal it. So far Odd John is by far the best superman in my reading.

The Time Scanner: Enjoyed the contents very much, especially because of being so involved in them. A masterpiece of understatement was the sentence: "We dined at the 'Purity Restaurant' -- what a dive that was." What a dive that was! Some day I'll tell you. Or better, Elmer should tell you. He knows the proper words better.

You people must have a pretty awful impression of Elmer by the various descriptions that have gone around. It looks like I'll have to have a picture of him somewhere in this issue. He really looks almost human sometimes. (Particularly after a haircut.)

Fantascer: Thompson's story not bad. Perhaps a bit too subtle. The point had to be searched for among the words. Typical.

Strange Fantasy: Look, if you people don't use your own names, you're just not going to get any activity credit. I presume this is put out by Farsaci, but I don't know who the others are. Except Clark Ashton Smith, of course. To think that some

very new readers might not know who Clark Ashton Smith is! We've come a long way since his stories in Wonder. There hasn't been anything quite like it since.

Le Vombiteur: Some nerve, putting in something brazenly dated half a year old. What do you think of the FAPA officers now? If you still want a revision, what do you think of this set up: Editor, Secretary-treasurer, and manuscript bureau manager. These three to act as executive board, with the editor as chairman. Proper check upon assumption of too much authority by any officer, or upon the negligence of any officer would be (1) powers of blitzkrieg given to the other officers and (2) the good sense of the dear constituency in making elections, which is what democracy means, anyway.

Fan-Tale: I've already written Jones a couple of pages so I won't say much here, except to tell him to keep on trying. The only way to learn to write is to write, and no writing book or teacher which is worth two cents will disagree. And of almost as great importance is reading. You read great literature and absorb the style and smoothness therein.

Nachgemachte Schildkrötensuppe and L'Oasis d'Horreur: Felt very proud of myself on reading NS without the aid of a dictionary.

Milty's Mag: Milty is running out of inspiration. But wait. He'll soon get into another depression and there will be more literature forthcoming.

The Phantagraph: Gawd.

The Reader and Collector: And to "For Gawd's Sakes Don't Start a Subscription Magazine" may we amen with "Join the FAPA instead."And by the way, Mr. Keenig. Shouldn't it be "For Gawd's sake?" The apostrophe between the Gawd and the s makes Gawd singular. See? I know some grammar, too. Nyaaa.

Well, the Disgusting Publication was disgusting, wasn't it?

Mikros: I refuse to be fooled. This is only an advertisement for Sweetness and Light. Fic on you.

I would like to get in on a party like that.

Ramblings and Sus Pro: (Hold your hats and keep your arms inside the car.) Jack Spicer's theme song for the last mailing seems to have been "Doing the Reactionary". For which Jack is not to be blamed too much. It takes the utmost effort for a government clerk to keep from being swallowed up in the bureaucracy within which he works. It is hard enough when you keep in touch with liberalism as well as you can, but when you believe in that bureaucracy in the first place, as Jack does, you are sunk. What

Jack needs is to spend less time in his Philosophy Club and more time among the people of whom he speaks with so much authority.

Jack spent a page or so on a fraction of a sentence which I used purely for the sake of rhetoric. so to keep the books straight and comply with the rulings of the Federal Communications Commission I'll have to give at least as much space in reply. This Union question doesn't have much business in a science fiction fanmag, I know, but the trouble is, some of you readers who are not as well informed as you might be will read what Jack had to say about unions and think to yourself this guy Speer has always struck me as being pretty intelligent and straight thinking. If this is his opinion concerning unions, then they must be pretty bad things.

Most of the time you might be pretty safe in taking Jack's opinion, but unfortunately, in this tremendously important matter Jack blew off his mouth without knowing the slightest thing about what he was speaking. For perhaps the first time, the philosophic and objective Speer gave an opinion on a subject of which he is ignorant. How much do you think an opinion like that is worth?

How I do know Speer is ignorant about labor unions? (1) By knowledge of his background and reading matter. (2) by looking at what he wrote in Ramblings.

Speer's father is a lawyer, and Jack is preparing to become a lawyer; he identifies himself with the managing class rather than the working class. It is probable that he has never attended a union meeting (other than the insipid government workers' unions) in his life, and has no first hand information as to the philosophy and practice of labor unionism. For second-hand information there can be only his reading. What does he read? The professional newspapers.

The professional newspapers which a government agency, the Federal Trade Commission, has shown are controlled by big business. The professional newspapers which have never attempted to tell the other side of the story concerning labor, and which have consistently slanted their contents to suit the advertisers. If Speer's reading is confined to these sources, then it is not merely possible or probable that he is ignorant about labor, but it is certain that he is misinformed. Has Speer read anything which tells the other side? Friday, In Fact, PM, union newspapers? That is for him to say.

Suppose we examine Speer's own statements, sentence by sentence, as he is wont to do with the statements of others. "... in view of the fact that organized labor has contributed well over half the violence that has been connected with unionization." In Fact says: "...there are now 50 volumes of LaFollette Committee reports showing that big business men and not labor are generally to blame for all strike violence." This LaFollette report, abbreviated into a book called "The Labor Spy Racket" (which is in my bookcase and which Jack is welcome to borrow) shows that one side only being armed (for which big business

spends many millions every year), the victims are generally those on the other side, i.e., labor. For every law "enforcement" officer hurt there are 100 workmen hurt.

"... we feel that they have set themselves up as a government coexisting with our own, an "invisible empire," but one not run on the republican lines that are designed to serve the wishes of the majority of the whole citizenry." (As an off-side remark -- watch these people who use the word "republican" rather than "democratic.") Unions exist for the purpose of increasing the standard of living of the working class and keeping it there. That's the very pragmatic purpose of getting as much for their members as they can. The working class is the majority of the citizenry. Speer must think that the unions exist for the benefit of the people that "run" them, rather than the membership. It doesn't occur to him that when tens of thousands of workers, many of them with families to feed, and with little enough money to keep going in normal times, go out on strike with the future blank, they are doing something pretty serious, and that maybe they mean what they are doing.

"Moreover, rejecting as we do communism with a small c, we deny the need for labor unions to exist, feeling that on the whole they have militated against the general economic well-being, that such benefits as they have brot could have been gained much more easily and securely and with less blood and tears had half the devotion shown in organizing labor been turned into the legitimate sphere of political activity." As the semanticists would put it, this seems to me to be a group of meaningless noises strung together. Sometimes I wonder whether it is worthwhile answering this sentence, it is such a ridiculous thing. This is not a philosophy club. We are not interested in whether Jack "feels" that they have militated against the general well-being. We want to look up figures and facts and find out how much has been gained in wages and better conditions and the incalculable gains of morale and pride.

Jack should define what he means by "the legitimate sphere of political activity." Be that as it may, a lobby to operate in opposition to the powerful lobbies of business must be pretty strong to get anywhere. An individual worker couldn't be expected to get anywhere, could he? But a powerful lobby means an organization, and an organization is a union. Jack contradicts himself; his sentence is meaningless. Not only internally, but factually. For what does Speer think Mr. Lewis does with his spare time in Washington? How were the Wagner Labor Act, the National Labor Relations Act, and all of the employee benefits that Jack himself works under brought about, other than by the legitimate political activities of the unions? And wait; you haven't seen the end of it. The organization is just being accomplished. The activity is just beginning.

Why speak only of "blood and tears"? Why not mention the majority of labor disputes which are settled by arbitration and agreement? The newspapers don't talk very much about those. They would have it that whenever there is a labor dispute there automatically follows a strike and violence. Whereas strikes and violence is the exception, rather than the rule, and would never exist at all, were it not for the refusal of employers to make concessions.

so think it over, dear readers, withhold your opinions until you know the inside story, and don't believe everything you read in the newspapers.

We also hate to spoil Jack's spoiling of our little joke in re the IQ. We remember from our semester of psychology that IQ in the adult is an indication of the rate of mental growth of the child. The point of our Joke, which Jack missed, is the fact that IQ exams are rated in such a way that the average must be 100, for an IQ of 100 indicates the average in the first place.

Frankly, we are getting quite tired of Jack's list of lies, mis-statements, etc. And that is a hint.

For SusPro I won't say much, incidentally, the fellow in the office whom Jack mentioned, misunderstood what I had asked him, due to the noise around us, and therefore I misunderstood what he told me, which is why I thought he claimed to write Darker than you Think.

Jack should learn to stop down his lens when taking flash pictures at close range.

Guess that's all. ... Which is a hell of a way to end an article.

I got so interested in the argument that I left the heading off the last page and didn't notice it until I was completely through. Oh, my, I just noticed that I left a line out of this page, too. it is: As a whole, Ramblings was very much unenjoyed. That is a hint, also.

Flash!!! MILTY IS GOING TO BE AT THE DENVENTION!!!! Flash!!!

When interviewed, Milty made the statement that he had come to the conclusion it was silly being a superman if you couldn't just take a book and learn calculus out of it, especially if you already know what it was all about. So he decided not to go to summer school and immediately thought up two dozen other things to do, which made Lester Del Rey very disgusted, for Lester is trying to make Milty as lazy as Lester is. Isn't that a laugh? Things planned so far are: write article on superman, write two stories, learn calculus, go to the Denvention, play table tennis tournaments, learn the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (he is up to the third page of the fugue already), memorize Liebestraum, figure out how a rocket works, find out how relativity works, and forget all the chemistry he knows. Anybody want to keep score?

I am being stood up. Jack was supposed to come here to do some mimeographing and he isn't here. Guess I'll go out and eat some supper or dinner or something.

Tying up loose ends Department:

This issue started out to be twenty pages long. Comes the usual rush towards the deadline, and we decided to leave out a couple of book reviews and make it eighteen pages, fifteen pages already being stencilled. Then comes final exams with no work at all done on this for a couple of weeks, and suddenly Jack Speer rushes off to Oklahoma leaving me to run off his stuff, the Fantasy Amateur and ballot, and my own stuff in three evenings. Which is going to be over thirty pages. Ow. Did twelve last nite. Think I'll kidnap Del Rey and make him turn a handle while I stencil the membership list.

Anyway, this isn't even going to be eighteen pages. Think I'll finish this page, mess up another with Elmer's picture and call it quits.

So you are going to miss my campaign speech. What a pity, for it was going to be monstrously clever. I'm running for vice president, you know. I hope somebody votes for me. Besides myself, that is. It would be funny if Wollheim was elected. Lowndes, too. How would we ever explain having the editors of professional magazines as officers of an amateur association? And there is Wollheim, too, making a hue and cry about activity. I notice, from my little file box, that Wollheim went three quarters of a year last year without an item in the mailings. Astonishing, isn't it, how he perks up when an election comes around. And I shall personally laugh in his face if he tries to say that he was more busy than I. As for talk concerning the inviolacy of the constitution, it bores me. At my office they spend nearly as much time arguing about details of procedure and how the work should be done as in getting the work out. The FAPA is not my life nor my work. It is my hobby, and I like to get some fun out of it. I like to think that here, for a change, is a place where I can do things the logical way, rather than from the rules in a rule book. If a couple of nice fellows want to come in, and there are vacancies with no signs of being filled, and the rule book says that the new fellows don't have quite the requirements to get in, then I let them in. Otherwise a couple of mailings would go to waste. What's the logic? So I've made lots of mistakes in my time. The FAPA nearly went to pot on account of a couple of my mistakes. So I personally went and fixed them up. And in fixing up those mistakes I became more intensely interested in the FAPA than any of you members who turn out your little sheets every three months can imagine. And the FAPA was quite a bit more interesting during those periods of turmoil. If, by reason of constricting rules and regulations rigidly adhered to, the FAPA becomes wizened and dried up and uninteresting and placid and mild and insipid, then I shall personally break all the rules in the constitution, if that would make it interesting again.

And that is my platform.

