

## S P A C E C H A R G E

Chief Lancaster tells me a Space Charge is a grouping of electrons in the vicinity of the cathode of a vacuum tube. I prefer to think of it, though, as an amateur magazine for the hedonism of my fellow OMPA members. So be it.

For most of you, this is the first contact you've had with me. It's my first real contribution to ompa--OMPALOG was more of a membership saver than anything else. I suspect, therefore, the best method will be for me to proceed via Jack Speer's Advice fo' Chillun Bill Donaho printed in VIPER #1 last mailing. I can't help wonder, though, if any of you heard me via the tape made up at last year's Midwestcon and sent to England, where I promised to send something through OMPA "real soon now." Considering my tendencies toward procrastination, this is real soon now.

I am the East Coast Al Lewis. Alan J. Lewis if you wish to be really official about it. I am of no relation to the West Coast Al Lewis. The Al Lewis mentioned by Fran Laney in the article Lichtman reprinted in The Best From QUANDRY was the West Coast Al Lewis. He has been connected with Shaggy--I am not. I am the Al Lewis who was previously a member--or rather, Director of the NFFF. I am also the Al Lewis who brought out several issues of a revived reprint fanzine titled FANTASY ASPECTS. I am also the Al Lewis from whom John Berry received Poul Anderson's speech at the Detention. And, yeah--I'm also the Al Lewis who went out and joined the United States Coast Guard six months ago.

All clear?

I have been a fan about four years now. In fact, March marks my anniversary--it was in March of 1957 that I sent in my dues to Janie Lamb and joined the NFFF (goshwow!). I got the address out of one of Bloch's columns in IMAGINATION. Since then I have joined SAPS (and been booted out), the American CULT (and been booted out), FAPA (I haven't been in long enough to be booted out yet) and N'APA (I suppose I'll be gone from there real soon now). Oh yeah--my application for First Fandom was refused!!

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You are reading SPACE CHARGE I 1, from Al Lewis, SA, 338-873; ET B-10; USCG Trasta; Groton, Connecticut. This is being brought to you due to the kindness of Bill Evans who offered to duplicate masters for me. Galactic Press Publication (a big-sounding title I started in '57 when I was too young to know better) #37, as near as I can calculate.

Actually, I suppose I shouldn't talk about being booted out like that--some of you may get the wrong impression. At any rate, I am currently in N'APA, FAPA, and OMPA. I figure these three ought to keep me busy quite a bit, since being in the service doesn't leave me as much free time as I'd like to have.

I am 18 years old. I have been a member of the United States Coast Guard for the previous six months, as I mentioned before. I spent the first three months of this time in Boot Camp, and the other three were spent at the Groton Training Station where I currently am engrossed in learning how to become an Electronics Technician. I've been doing this for 6 weeks--the other six were spent waiting around the station (loafing, painting, or doing some other time-killing device) waiting for my class to start. In fact, the title for this came to me in class one day as the aforementioned Chief Lancaster was instructing us on the merits of a Space Charge. You notice I said instructed--I doubt there are any real teachers around here.

I joined the Coast Guard immediately after graduating from High School. The reason was I didn't think myself to be fit for attending college at that time. That is, I had loafed all through high school--I didn't want to do that through college, so I decided I'd try the service, hoping it would mature me to the extent where I would decide to do some work. It's had a certain amount of that effect--I now know what the value of an "education" is, but I haven't yet received the amount of stimulus I need, and which I'm looking for. Maybe I'm just sitting around, waiting for it to come up to me and bite me on the leg. Maybe I wouldn't even recognize it if it did that. At any rate, I'm not entirely unhappy that I'm in the service for four years. I'm not entirely happy about it either. However, the biggest redeeming factor is this Electronics Technician's school I'm presently attending. I chose it for it was the only school in the entire Guard which held any interest for me. As it turned out, although a fair sized percentage of the people around here are boobs, at least the percentage isn't as large as the rest of the service. For this I am thankful.

There also is the fact that for the first time I am really being challenged by something. I figure if I can't make this school, and make it well, I might as well go off and hibernate somewhere. This I never intend to do, so while I'm not making as big a success of this as I ought to, at least I haven't failed entirely.

After this school--who knows? In fact, how many of you are ~~xxx~~ even interested?

It has been a while since I've last read anything by Robert Heinlein. But from what I distinctly remember of his works, I still am a bit surprised at the reaction to Starship Troopers. I realize the entire subject is an old one--but yet, I still want to get my say in.

The principal objection seemed to be "there was too much propaganda". Yet, I can't help thinking that all Heinlein's works of the last 10 years are heavily propagandized. All of them have advocated his beliefs of non-paupering of individuals. A man must stand on his own two feet. (and did you ever notice his formula for

writing these stories? Take an exceptional person, and put him with exceptional people. No "average joe type boobs" for Heinlein. He uses intelligent people.) So why the reaction? I assume it was because it laid it on a bit too thick, and this time people didn't agree with what he was saying (although I did). Do you suppose this was the reason he won the Hugo?

But what I'm trying to say is I've read quite a bit of Heinlein and I like it. Why? Because his kind of propaganda is what I've always lived with at home--it's something I'm familiar with, and something I believe in. Heinlein has a very conservative attitude toward the participation of government in business, in the private lives of people--and a very definite attitude that a man must prove himself before he can actually be called a man. Maybe the reason I enjoy this is because I don't believe I would meet these qualifications myself. But remember the old man's attitude toward a benevolent government in TIME FOR THE STARS? Remember another old man's (a father of the protagonist in both cases) attitude toward the government and infringement of his own wishes and liberties in HAVE SPACESUIT, WILL TRAVEL? "But professor--work for us--we need you; a;; science needs you." "That may be true, but I don't need you. Good day!"

I'm reminded of a rather recent Earl Stanley Gardner story, in which one of the protagonists (another old man) was having a conversation with his daughter, the wife of a District Attorney. "Pa--do you consider these laws against smuggling an infringement against your civil liberties?" "Nope. Laws don't enfringe your rights, daughter. They just give you a punishment if you're caught exercising them."

I think Robert Heinlein enjoyed that one.

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"The arguments that socialists used in favour of a nationalizing national resources have now become arguments in favour of internationalizing natural resources. The most obvious example is oil. It's a little absurd that a very small territory which happens to have a great deal of oil on its territory should be the sole possessor of oil.

--from BERTRAND RUSSELL SPEAKS HIS MIND

"Contracts are owned entirely by the individual's home world."  
"The present day civilization had progressed too far for each planet to maintain its own training systems and keep up with progress in the many necessary fields. Why support a thousand mediocre school systems when it was possible to have fifty superb ones and trade the graduates for the skilled people you needed in other areas of learning?"

"If this little world of ours had something else to trade for the contracts of out-world professionals besides the blood of our best fighting men, I'd be more pleased. When our forefathers settled this world less than a hundred and fifty years ago, it wasn't with the intention of providing gun-fodder ~~was~~ for the other eight systems. They only wanted a world where no man could bend the destinies of another man against that second man's will."

--DORSAI! by Gordon R. Dickson

Wow--I'd like to see Mr. Russell exist in a world like that!

Since I'm being so philosophical this time, I don't think it would hurt to quote the following. It appeared in PSYCHOTIC perhaps a year ago. That issue was distributed as a Cultzine. Needless to say, I enjoyed it.

#### A LETTER FROM ROBERT BLOCH

It is my belief that the more you give, the more you get.

Of course, the direct cause-effect relationship isn't always apparent, and simple justice doesn't inevitably prevail--hence the ancient, unheeded counsel of patience and turning the other cheek--but in the long run, it's easier to live with yourself and others in love than in hate.

Part of that love, I believe, must be self-love. Not narcissism, not a feeling of superiority, but an acknowledgement of basic worth. And in order to reach this condition of being, it is first necessary to realize that all of us, ~~to~~ to varying degrees, have in our natures an element of the savage; the cruel; the lustful; the rebellious. Denying its existence is both unrealistic and unsatisfactory. I think we must first make the admission, then evaluate ourselves on the basis of how we handle the savage components which do exist in our makeup.

The common solution is ~~x~~ to indulge in a socially-acceptable form of schizophrenia. It works, roughly, something like this: I, Joe Blow, am a hell of a swell guy. Of course, I, as a good Protestant, can despise Catholics and Jews. As a White Man, I know I'm superior to N. As a vot, I know I'm better than Civvies and entitled to anything I can get out of them. As an employer I am entitled to hate ~~union~~ unions. As a Business Man, I am not only privileged but enjoined to lie, cheat, and profit by the need or distress of competitors or customers alike. But all this, you understand, comes about merely because I'm a Republican, Protestant, White, Veteran, Employer, and a Business Man. These things have nothing to do with the Real Me who is, I repeat, a hell of a swell guy....I respect my parents, I'm good to my wife and kids, I like my friends, I'm a good host, I buy my share of drinks, I give to charities.

And so forth and so on, vice-versa, and in all the thousands of alternate combinations which form these attitudes. Within the confines of such rationalization the majority dwell.

Much of my own cynicism and hatred is directed against the ~~xxx~~ activities of this majority group when they are consciously aligned with such groups and exercising the anti-social license which they believe is conferred upon them by reason of their conformity.

And for many years I was able, largely, to dismiss a lot of people by merely assigning them the ~~x~~ labels which they displayed and then damning them for their activities...as members of racial, national, political, religious, social and economic groups.

But I found out, to my dismay, that in actuality one must take into account the other portion of the schizophrenic split. A lot of them are "Nice-Guys", part time, and in accordance with their

own ~~xxxx~~ lights. Met on an individual basis, they are capable of many kindnesses and acts of generosity or affection; if their prejudices are not involved.

The point is, they don't think: they have accepted this as the perfect solution--let themselves identify with some group or groups which permit a channelization of aggression. They are not, in the full meaning of the phrase, conscious hypocrites. A plain case of Forgive Them <sup>rather</sup>, for they know not what they do. To hate their actions and the consequences of those actions...is one thing. But to hate them is another.

We live in a world where such conditioning is prevalent; indeed, in a world where every attempt is made to make such conditioning automatic. The modern man buys his attitudes and his self-evaluations in the same Super-market which dispenses his daily bread.

Of course, this leaves out of the accounting those/renegades who make a conscious attempt to form their own judgements and do not knowingly align themselves with the group-identification pattern. They fall into a mass of errors themselves.

One common one: to reason on the basis of statistics. One hundred million profess to believe this way and only Forty thousand believe that way; by throwing their lot in with the Forty thousand they are "individualists". Fallacy here is self-evident.

Another common one is the notion to consciously "resign from the human race"...to watch and observe from a superior distance. But the operative word here is "superior": one doesn't actually resign because ~~x~~ biologically one cannot do so...all one does, in such a case, is to adopt an attitude of comparative relationship; me on top and all those fools down below.

There are a lot of high winds blowing at that altitude and you soon find yourself buffeted in one of two directions. (1.) you soar off into the stratosphere of complete and utter ~~x~~ egomania and never get your feet on the ground again or (2.) you get knocked off your pedestal or slip off in the course of ordinary events and find yourself wallowing in the same mire down below as the others whom you've always despised...in which case you are equally doomed. Having denied love to others, you now find you can no longer love yourself.

Avoiding such difficulties (to a degree, I don't think many of us avoid them entirely) leaves the rest of us renegades facing a perennial problem of maintaining a working balance of objectivity and subjectivity on the basis of individual circumstances rather than any long-range rationalization--either tailor-made for us by others or hand-woven by ourselves for our own use. We lose our objectivity completely (or seek to stimulate its loss artificially by drugs, drink, enjoyment of sensation alone) and we're cooked.

We strive to uphold objectivity completely and deny subjective sensation and emotion, and we're then alienated from society and normal relationships and cooked again.

Hope, it isn't easy to find the way or learn the rules, because for each of us, depending on the element of fortune, there is a different way, a different set of rules. Fortune determines when we're born, with what physical or mental potential, with what access to factors which will develop same, in what society or stratum which will permit or deny us that development and reward or punish us for same.

A trick of the genes may produce red hair in a Druid society and result in the ~~ex~~ harmless possessor of same being sacrificed to the God of the Oak. A bent for the arts may mean fame and fortune to the kid born in the Athens of Pericles...may mean ostracism to the same kid born in Patagonia or a logging camp community.

The "natural-born-moneymaker" may be worshipped and elevated to the head of the National Association of Manufactrers in today's America: born five hundred years ~~ago~~ earlier in central Europe. He might well have been scorned by artisans, hated by the nobility, persecuted by the Church as a userer and confined to a ghetto.

The burly negro spawned in an Alabama slave-pen in 1622 might be doomed to a life of unremitting toil while his weak, physically incapacitated master lolled in luxury: the same negro, spawned in 1722 in his native land, might be a chieftain, and his future "master", should he venture into that region, be easily captured and consigned to the cooking-pot. And so it goes, obviously enough.

But what isn't so obvious is how that element of fortune, often on a seemingly lesser and more obscure scale, does operate in each of our lives to determine our present fates...and thus influence our present attitudes.

I've lived with a father and a wife who had physical handicaps conferred and know what this means. I also know that the extent of their survival, physical and psychic, depends upon the degree of love they were able to give as well as to receive. Beyond that, I know darned little about anything.

This business of just being yourself is mighty important; but it isn't easy. And it's complicated by the fact that "yourself" is never a constant, homogenous unit, easily labeled and confined to a single level.

Heck--I see I've been giving a sermon. And honestly I didn't mean to, nor did I mean to peddle any of my own beliefs; merely to lay some of them out, in a rambling and impromptu way, in hopes that maybe you'd see something which could act as a springboard for your own views.

--Robert Bloch

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It's time, after all this, that I got on to some mailing comments. Therefore--let's quibble about the Constitution.

DEFILADE #1 Donaho While I agree with you in some respects, there are others in which I don't. Take this egoboo poll, for example. I can't help wishing the subject had never come up--I'm opposed to it. Why? Because I like the free and easy atmosphere CMA has now--I can't help feeling that this egoboo poll will destroy it to a certain extent, which is something I'll regret bitterly. Maybe the egoboo poll is one method of distributing egoboo--then what in hell do you think mailing comments are for? I hope it didn't pass--or maybe I shouldn't say that. Perhaps Bob'll think of it as a deliberate device to take away his worked-for egoboo.

If it did pass, though, I agree with your views on categories and their points, except the one for Best Layout-makeup-Reproduction. This, I think, should also be a 10 point category. It's equally as important as the other 10 pointers. Maybe, though, you could ~~make~~ make Best Cartoonist a 5 point instead.

Your other two proposals (the first two you mentioned I agree with. I've been disturbed myself over the great amount of voting and countervoting that's been going on--I think it's a great idea to make several members present proposals, and have it voted on in the mailing after it's presented. I can't help thinking that perhaps some of the proposals which haven't passed, would have, and vice versa in the past if there'd been a discussion period.

You'll notice I've presented an amendment to the Constitution myself this mailing. I hated to do it, because I think we've been cluttered up enough by ballots in the past year. However, I myself think this is fairly important--it's the one thing which kept me from voting for the amendment myself.

My thoughts boil down to this--I don't think that lack of renewal of dues is the equal of the lack of renewal pages. The first may be laid down to forgetfulness, while the second shows a definite lack of faith. Because of this, I don't think the penalty should be the same. Note--this is not an objection to dropping a person from ~~an~~ membership in both cases--it's just an objection to making a further penalty apply equally in both cases. I just don't think the lack of dues merits it. I hope enough of you feel the same.

UL #1 Contrary to you, I have had experience with W.S. Houston; Metcalf he subscribed to FANTASY ASPECTS some time ago. He sent me the subscription in an envelope which contained one dollar bill, and a mail return envelope to Better Homes & Gardens on the back of which a grocery list was penciled, and he had rubberstamped his name and address. Seems slightly incredible.

\*\* I disagree with you and Deckinger on the value of graduations; for many people they have an "emotional value". I personally didn't share this--but it's there and worth something. During our graduation ceremony, the constant thought kept running through my mind: "I wonder how well our speaker has followed his own preachings?"

SCATALOG #1 And a hearty welcome to you, Art. I'm glad you finally Wilson made it into OMPA. And remember, boy, I like your artwork. \*\* Will you explain this Year of the Rat; Year of the Dog; Year of the Pig jazz? Like, which year is which? How about some sort of a ~~xxxx~~ calender?

QUANDRY A good collection--I'd planned on reprinting the Lichtman (?! ) Tucker piece myself. (My Life and Hard Times as a Fanmag Collector). Another thing, I've got to admit, is running a "Some of the Best of..." collection like this allows you to print dated material, which is still good in its own way. I had to try to steer away from this with my reprint fanzine. (though without a lot of success) Another thing about a collection like this is it let's you run not-so-good pieces which wouldn't stand by themselves in a common rep. fanz. Next, run the Best from ODD. There's a beautiful Burbee piece in there no-one's ever reprinted. \*\* I'd read the Lancy piece several years ago. Imagine my surprise at that time at seeing a mention of "al ~~xxx~~ Lewis".

AMBLE #1 It's book reviews like yours, Wilson's, and Loche's Mercer which make OIPA so enjoyable for me. \*\* Under SLAN SLAN you wrote "no comment required, I believe." It didn't strike me at all that way. I was disappointed with Slan.. it seemed average--not superb. I still can't understand why JWC Jr. featured it as a H\*O\*V\*A story. \*\* Is the book version different from the magazine version? If so, how? I read only the magazine.

Instead of sending the n [redacted] back to Africa, let's send the White Men back to Europe!

VAGARY 12 Recently I've been reading Bertrand Russell Speaks His Gray Mind, and as a result was interested in your comments upon him. I'm inclined to share your views that he is a wholly minded idealist. I disagree with him on many things--from the "internationalization of national resources" (which I've previously quoted) to his views on fanaticism and tolerance. Here's an exchange between him and Woodrow Wyatt who was interviewing him. Russell: I think that the East-West tension which is threatening us all in the most terrible fashion is mainly due to fanatical belief in Communism or anti-Communism, as the case may be. Both sides believe their own creed too strongly. They believe it in the way that I defined as fanatical; that is to say, the prevention of what they regard as wicked on the other side is more important even than the continued existence of the human race--and that is fanatical. It is that fanaticism which is threatening us all, a fanaticism which exists on both sides.

Wyatt: What is your definition of toleration?

Russell: Well, it varies according to the direction of your thinking. Toleration of opinion, if it's really full-blown, consists in not punishing any kind of opinion as long as it doesn't issue in some kind of criminal action.

And that, is where I largely disagree with Russell. "To give in is better than not to give in, if at least you can preserve humanity." This though, I abhor, because to me it is wishy-washy, idealistic, and I don't go along with it. I'm not so sure it would be better at all. As for toleration--perhaps each man is entitled to his own opinion...but, if his radically disagrees with yours, does he have the right to "spread his doctrine"? Or, do you have the right to attempt to stop him? I'm still trying to puzzle that one out in my own mind--I suppose these theories of freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of religion actually just depend upon which side you're on. If you're the under-dog, they're fine--but if you're the top dog, why, they might help someone else get up there some day!

Many dictatorships have been founded on that principal, I betcha! \*\* Article on Witchcraft very interesting; I'd like to see more like this. I'd be interested, too, in knowing a bit more about this religion as it exists today in England, although as you say, the true Black Lodges will probably never be revealed. \*\* Hope to see more Vagary soon.

I've run out of room, and time, so ~~say~~ my regrets to Jeeves, Lindsay, and Loche--I wanted to get around to you this time, but I didn't have the time.

Best,

Alan J. Lewy

Member 102