

TWILIGHT ECHOES

DEDICATED TO THE LIBERAL FANTASY MIND

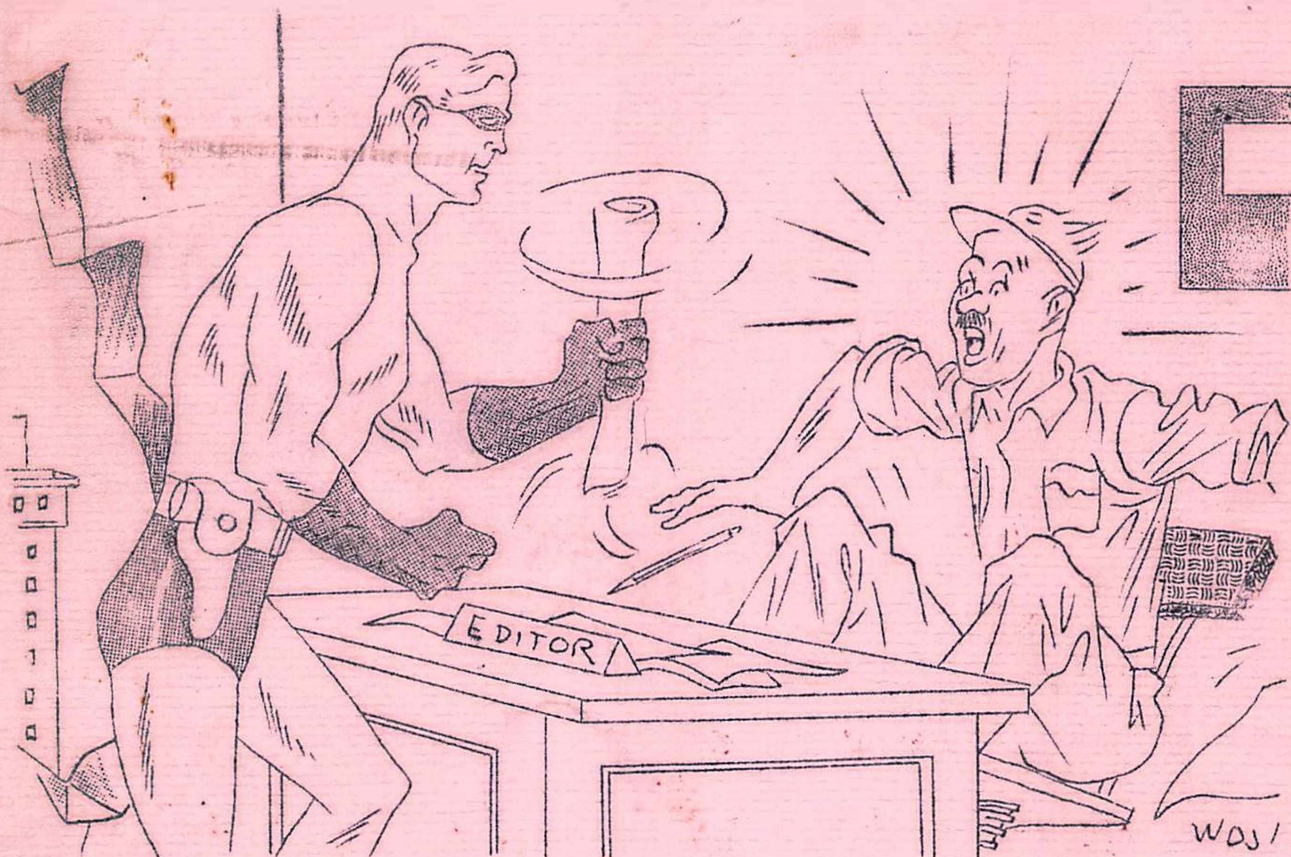
AUTUMN 1945

NUMBER 5

TRUTH

FREEDOM

JUSTICE



" SO YOU THINK MY SUPER-MAN STORIES LACK REALITY? "

To the States, or any one of them, or any city of the States, Resist much, obey little,

Once unquestioning abedience, once fully enslaved,

Once fully enslaved, no nation, state, city of this earth, ever afterwards resumes its liberty.

--- Walt Whitman

PRELUDE

Here is my editorial department. Here is where I pop that 64 member question by saying I hope you're pleased with the change I've wrought this time. It's not complete, it's not all I anticipated at the start, but it's the big step & I believe the next issue will see most of the finished changeover. The cartoons, in case your curiosity has been aroused, are by Pfc Charles Wojtkoski, creator of the Blue Beetle & other professional comics. Here is where I wish to make some acknowledgments: to say Woji is a fine cartoonist; to thank Laney for his superb reproduction of my publication in the past; to thank Watson for coming to the rescue in a crisis. And here is where I go into my routine of this issue's editorial.

The Futurist has been defined, satisfactorily I believe as a beginning, but taking a cue from Saari it would seem that the simplest phrasing, concrete to us though abstract to the outsider, might be 'the liberal fantasy mind'. At this writing there has been but one comment of last issue's Interlude feature of Futurism; that was a heartening one & I have reason to believe that the idea is going to catch on with many readers, both inside & outside this association. One can expect many dissenters: Koenig, Searles, Swisher, Watson & Wollheim -- to guess at a few. Yet I would be content to find just one among the 64, or among any group, who would give some sign of agreement, some word of understanding.

Alone I could rest content in having found this term, in having understood its fuller implications. As it has been said in times past, one must needs classify because of a frailty or whim of the human mind; the Futurist gives me my classification, for no other track is of my gauge. Neither politics now religion in any established field holds me sway; no philosophical trend, ancient or modern, in any sort of entirety whatsoever can claim me. My being is one of countless contradictions (as Koenig may readily see), yet that would seem superior to clinging to an idea that is barbed & barbed again until it festers with time. "Every man must have a name," expounded some sage or modern wit, someone with an eye to psychology. Even so it is with me -- & no matter how tangled my thoughts, how bastard my beliefs, how modern my mood, I can call myself a Futurist. A liberal fantasy mind allows one to be like that.

"I think of France, a country suffering from overcivilization, a country of individuals, of peasants, of rentiers ... of people who demand only security in which to argue, to fornicate, to eat, to rear families, to save money, to drink wine. How beautiful the idea of France, the idea of it! How decadent the practice of being French ... la gloire ... la patrie -- fraternité ... égalité ... liberté -- phrases, catchwords that have upon occasion almost come true. -- I believe in Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount. But only as an

TWILIGHT ECHOES is edited & managed at the leisure of Cpl Joe J Fortier, 39036059, 101 Detachment, 57 AACG Group, APO 788, N Y C; distribution is made through the Papa, although a very limited quantity is made available for interested outsiders. Pages are now open for short, provoking & stimulating writings by other members of the armed forces; the masthead reveals the desired trend in literature, modern controversy; some relevance to the fantasy idea is the restriction -- & no slander please.

athiest". Channel, a character in 'Congo Song', spoke thus as I would like to have said it.

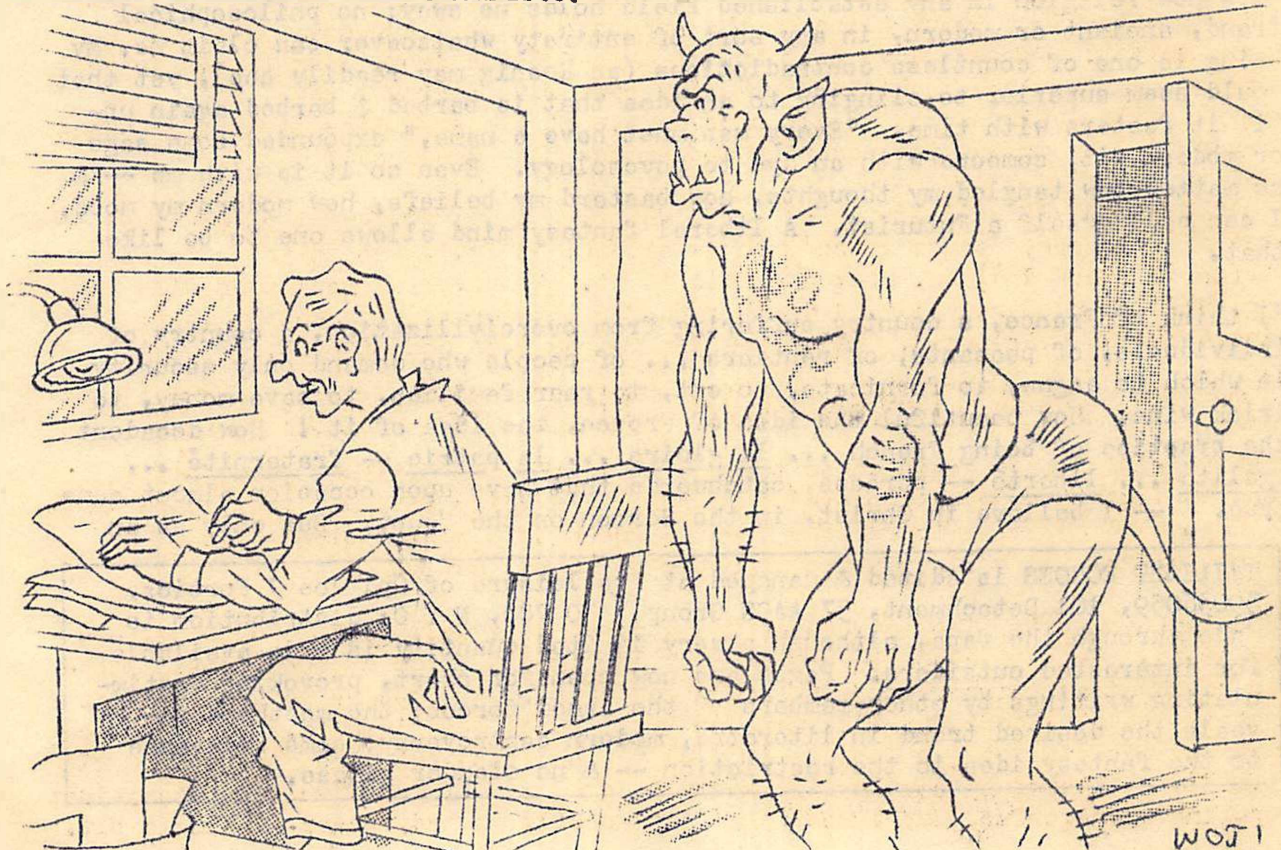
That quotation serves many purposes. I wish Channel could be real or there could be someone like him to write such words for this publication. I believe therein is some of the spirit of a Futurist. I hope that reveals a facet of myself, but tomorrow it may be denied.

However, this so far pointless editorial needs a point; actually I have been hedging forward to spring one. I not only feel, I know, that among the followers of fantasy there are those who have at times been unable to find themselves even as I for a while. Some turned to laconic cynicism, others to bitter materialism or forgetful escape or something again, but many must still be searching. I feel the answer is here, right with us in fantasy.

Fantasy itself is not what I mean, but I do feel that the outlook resulting from this diversion or pursuit holds something tangible & worthwhile. I'm going to take a crack at that old, battered saw again. It's to say that there is a purpose to fantasy. It provides diversion. Granted. It even gives a new view. Granted for the most part. It opens the doors to a new philosophy. Will you grant that ?

I've given you a term, defined & qualified. Now I'm trying to say there's something in it. The subject is far too immense & involved to deal with in an editorial or even an issue, but through the pages of this publication I hope to open the doors just a little wider, to reveal the vistas of the liberal fantasy mind & all there is implied.

To reveal the world of the Futurists.



Boy ! It sure would be funny if there was a real monster like I'm writing about in this book !!

ECHOES

As the running commentary on last Spring's mailing gets under way, I wish to say that while there were not as many outstanding publications this time, the general average has mounted over the winter quagmire. However, spring fever & Euripidean upheavals caused a definite deficit in the number of publications present & accounted for. Once again the ever increasing social & philosophical awareness is on the gain, but so is the not quite understandable objection from a small circle.

With realization of the number of Futurians mounting the death bed, as far as fapa is concerned, albeit the vava may be a future element for concern, I cannot say that I am sorry to see this occurrence, for it may mean less election crud & a higher overall quality. Nevertheless I admire the Futurians for sticking to those convictions they feel to be right — & I am certain as I can be that they were sincere in every act, every gesture. Moreover I am deeply despairing of the actions taken by some opposing and not very tolerant members, people who could but wouldn't look at the other side of the moon, so to speak. All in all here is an example of today's worldly ill, failure to arbitrate, narrow-minded dogmatism, uncooperativeness — not the slightest desire to employ fair compromise shown by either of the parties.

I note by the Fantasy Amateur, which I do not believe should be classified among the ratings, that there is a waiting list containing old friends & true proponents of real oldtime fantasy & ruggedly individualistic thinking. Sykora & Moscowitz, freshly matured, should do much to further the fapa. Already Sam has shown his fine colors in & out of the association; for my money he has been a ranking fan writer at all times. Bill I know has it in him too. Jim Blish's entry just about clinches the Apostate deal, I suppose. But Lou & Larry Smith! Members I've been hoping to see for a long, long time. We've drifted apart, since khaki took priority over blue serge, & now I hope that the old friendship may be welded once more. At the same time it is sad to see Jenkins & Spencer go, yet memories are better than deadwood.

Replies to the OE: 1) I'm in on time, get that chum; 2) I want to continue receiving Sappho, 'cause I can't rhyme either; 3) Well, who is going to run Partier's stuff? 4) Hm, what the hell is it, the cover, I mean 5) We like you too, Willie; 6) Personally, I don't care for three-ring circuses at that; 7) Discrepancies overlooked. FA serves its purpose & so does the OE.

"A" MASTERS OF THE 4th ESTATE

THE TIMEBINDER once again comes through as 1st in the mailing, every bit as good as last time, even improved in parts. I'm going into no detail here as I wish to save my comments for the special space this publication merits. No other part of the mailing comes near the standards set here.

THOS improves yet. Thomas Gardner has started an intelligent, promising, entertaining series & comes through with a legitimate bitch on the first. Rothman reviewed an interesting but hardly new fact. It crops up here as well as in many other places, but I'll mention my tip on this iqmania. It's not so much what you've got (so long as it's up to a bit) but more what you do with it. I'm staggered by people like Laney & Jenkins & others I've forgotten, just bursting with genius, but I keep plodding merrily onward, never minding a bit.

I'll make some brief remarks on your NFFF platform, then cover it more thoroughly later in this issue. 1) Less recruiting but wider open requirements; 2) Emphaaize the promotion of aid, minimize the promotion of projects themselves; 3) Make this contact setup more omphatic as an NFFF basis; 4) This is healthy, the realization that professional standards are NOT the ones to be raised directly; 5) Generally good, so long as we continue to govern ourselves.

(Who is Saville-Sax ?)

"Our best chance of achieving the brave new world is thru a slow infiltration from the bottom up, via the cooperative movement, (with a consequent raising of the general level of social consciousness) rather than a sudden wrench of political action in the superstructure." I want to make sure you don't forget that, Art. And I appreciate your report to Koenig; I was unable to muster up words at the time. You take the time with Bridges that I didn't have; or do you really get these ideas & replies as easily as the smooth flow of verbiage would seem to indicate? I'm sorry to confess I couldn't muster a bit of response to any of the poetry other than 'To Be'. Otherwise, congratulations, Art; I made it too -- again.

"B" HEIRS TO THE 4th ESTATE

THE READER & COLLECTOR is back ! It's good to see youse, Meck. Noticing 'Tony Boucher', old time companion in throwing of the bull at those zestful GGFS meets, reminds me to remind youse all that he takes a prominent & entertaining part in each issue of Ellery Queen's mystery magazine. Also, unless one is interested in anacrostics, there is much of the value lost in the Sabell books. The intricate key & meaning is cleverly hidden, yet easily traced when the 1st clues are unraveled.

Frankly & in all seriousness, just how does Twilight Echoes fit in with your 'General Delivery' topic ? I'm very interested.

FANTASY COMMENTATOR I may have been doing an injustice in the past, but I do believe that it has just now attained a certain tonal quality of vibrant interest; there's just such a thing as that for me whenever I'm reading : certain styles make a Stokowski run of contrasts in my mind while others pluck the same chord time & again until boredom is reached very shortly. I haven't had a chance to make a thorough reading of the works concerned under discussion, but I have nothing but raves for the presentation of the material. This is the best of the 'B' group; if I had the familiarity with Lovecraft & Hodgson that I should, if I were in touch with the pro field of today, I'm quite sure I'd rate this as a master rather than an heir -- but this is my honest stand now.

Noticing remarks made about the less-esteemed fantasy pulps, in Gardner's article, & comments upon Burroughs who is merely tolerated by most of our group, in Evans' feature, I have a few notes to add, the brief part of what I feel about such topics :

Magazines such as Thrilling Wonder, Startling Stories, Planet, etc, have a definite appeal in the field of fantastic pulps -- & I allude to more than the selling consideration; these publications offer clean, idealistic, imaginative stories of adventure for the juvenile mind, primarily for the early teen-age group. These magazines are to the field of fantasy what Boy's Life and others such as sport pulps, etc, are to the so-called normal field. They're great

stuff (though I suppose the editors wouldn't consider this approach a compliment) & I for one would no more condemn this field's readers than I would the Boy Scouts.

Amazing Stories seems to be something else again. At one time it fitted in to the picture aptly, but in a very great number of ways. In its span of publication it has covered almost every field of approach; the material used has ranged from stuff hardly short of classic or epic to the sort of trash I'd prefer a copy of Spicy or Crud Comics to. In its present stage I think it is something altogether as useful to anyone as the appeal of Dr. Townsend or Fr. Devine. As such it deserves to be banned — perhaps even crusaded against. I've been doing the former for years; the latter isn't my meat.

I go one record in the face of threatening supercilious sneers by maintaining that Edgar Rice Burroughs is a master & a writer of excellence. Tarzan is great kid stuff. The Mars series is terrific reading for the adolescent mind. Some of the less popular stories, Venus, Moon, Pallucidar, etc, range into writing that is good adult adventure and occasional thoughtful writing. I can't enjoy Burroughs anymore, but I've saved two score or more books which I'm sure my hoped for children will enjoy reading. Burrough's material isn't dated like that of many other similar authors.

"C1" QUITE SATISFYING

FAN-DANGO is 1st on the list with one of the best issues I've seen for a time despite a mounting blood pressure & setting in of anemia. I'm sorry I didn't make the music poll, Fran, for if I had, your jive would have been right up there in second spot. Even classical solos would have been acceptable in second place, but to see such supposedly tastenoted music lovers from our ranks place the crap of hit parade variety in 2nd place is just too much too accept. I can't believe the voters realized the connotation of this sort of thing: Guy Lombardo, "Deep in the Heart of Texas", gooey warblers were upheld just as much as the capable arrangements of the program or anything else. I got enjoyment from this half-hour of music, but I dislike what it represents.

It's heartening to see such a magazine as this spring up. I used to do some writing for the amateur disc group in pre-war days but I'm no longer hep to the beat; the speciality, for the case of the record and not as what Boowulf believes may be free publicity, was 'Fantasy in Swingtime' in which I covered Charlie Barnet, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman & a couple others, before folding. It's too early for judgement at present, but by some means I hope the faps can brow-beat you into giving with at least six pages each mailing. As Watson puts it too aptly, "Those moan-offs ... "

This seems like a good spot to make a remark about Esquire, the magazine of the good old days. It's fallen & I mean collapsed. I don't know how many of you have had the courage to follow it lately, so I'll enumerate just a bit to explain what I mean. 1st & foremost is the fact that the good old writers don't send anything anymore, gems or castoffs, & the new unheralded authors unlike other days deserve to be unrecognized, should be glad know one knows them by sight or name. There is no longer any fantasy. The one good idea for awhile, the crusade for riteous jazz & all its components, has descended to a narrow viewpoint of a certain group of 'Feather' merchants & at present many real jazzmen feel that Esqy is doing as much harm to the field as any other active disintegrating force.

I purchased the June issue for the express purpose of reading Sinclair Lewis' new column, which I'll mention in a moment, but there was a certain jazz character or sketch of one page; my attention was snared by noticing the words leading to mention of James Joyce. Fortunately the master of stream of consciousness stuff is beyond hearing, for what followed was good for libel — although unpinnable. After reading that page, and Crackerman's page in this mailing, I nominate those two pages as the two best newspaper studies of 1945. — As for Lewis: it cost me ten piastres to read a very short work on Negro literature: a merely fair bit of writing, I judge, which was to Kepner (for free!) as butter milk is to butter fat. Considering what Lewis is worth on the Esquire scale, Kepner should be drawing a good thousand dollars a month.

PHANNY rated next best, BUT IT EVOKES NO OTHER COMMENT /whups! sorry! /than to say I prefer your verse to that of Gray, Don, & I am glad to have cleared something up for you.

EN GARDE has a beautiful cover. 'Forgotten Fantasies' liked best. Whether or not I agree with the answer to phanny makes no difference in one point: 'rugged individualism' may be due for a polishing, but I prefer the dramatic contrasts of mountainous territory to the smoo' beauty of the sandswept desert.

MAN-TODS, I believe, fits Koonigh requirements rather well. Reviews galore? Yes, but 'Revista' is hardly a rehash of the last mailing. To go into discussion would take up this entire issue.

INTRODUCING "DUNK * - " & DEVIL TAKE THE HINDMOST are good because they're about that entertaining Dunkleberger character. A TALE OF THE EVANS was okeh.

"C2" SATISFACTORY, NO MORE, NO LESS

HIS MAG, WALT'S WRAMBLINGS, SATYRIC, PHANTAGRAPH, IN DEFENSE OF, NUMBER TWO, MILTY'S MAG, FANTAST'S FOLLY, THE DOODLE, SOUTHERN STAR. HORIZONS I felt to be a bit more interesting this time. It's the best of the lot & now I'm not quite sure why I didn't place it in a higher rating, but then so many of the other publications have improved. Just a bit more blank space will do the trick of legibility, Harry. I'm serious when I say that the closely packed print is a real strain on my eyes. 'Anecdote Deglers' & 'Quoteworthy Quotes' my favorites.

V-R RECORD REVIEW, as a publication, isn't much. As an announcement it is thrilling. My best luck to the Vanguard Record Company & my thanks to you & Blish, Doc, for the introduction. I'm even more sorry that I didn't make that record date with you.

"D" WHITE TRASH & PINK AGITATORS

THREE FINGERS: Without a laugh.

ANNOUNCING THE-RENT-A-TITLE-ETC: Even sadder.

MOJULF: And sadder.

RAINBOW TRAIL: 'We strolled along the shore at night, & drank ...' Now there, my patient MP, you had an idea -- not original, but an idea worth pursuing. You had that chance for 'A moment precious as the years.' I'll say

WILIGHT ECHORS

There's a small measure of fantasy in the effect : 'Took the world & found no
bars.' What are you, a wise guy, a prohibitionist ? What does the MP biz do to
you ? Seriously -- but no, I can't be that cruel. Let's let it go at a jest,
for this is the best humor in this group.

It's hard to tell who did the single sheet referred to previously. As something
serious this would belong right where I've placed it. As a clever stroke of
genius by the Yabe Nostaw gonii /that's us/ this is worth a chuckle -- but be-
cause of what often follows harmless (?) chicanery of this sort, because of its
bad taste everything considered (even my goodnatured chuckle), I place it right
where I've placed it. So.

* * * * *

Lacking anything better, Joe, we hope you'll forgive our using one of Goo's lat-
est creations to fill that horribly vapid space resting below ...

ADD COMMENT

Drifting, drifting through the streets,

Where the blank macadam fades;

Where the shadow city meets

In memory, a land of shades.

Out of darkness, from the mist,

Shrieks into the mind's shocked eye

Evidence of midnight tryst --

Echo of a strangled sigh.

Here the coiling night may show

Faces acting of a part.

Figures banded to the slow

Pulsing of the human heart.

Caught in time, a tense tableau --

A god damned hackneyed piece of art.

B — L — A — S — T

Rally to fankind united ! Slandom, Inc, will save the world ! That, constitution makes of the NFFF, is the sort of typical reaction you may expect to see to such a name as United Fantasy Fandom. The newly proposed title is, in its best, no better than that jaw-breaking, slightly regurgitative National Fantasy Fan Federation.

The above is one of the reasons I voted against much of the new constitution. In such little space as I am going to allow myself I cannot deal with my subject adequately, but I'll do my level best to give the gist of what I maintain to be the shortcomings of the NFFF. As for the name problem, I suggest something slightly less pretentious along the lines of Speer's type.

The purpose, why define the indefinable ? The best thing that I can see to say is that the NFFF is to provide a contact organization between the members & the outsiders as well as between one member & another. Offering aid in co-ordination is about as large a promise in purposes as can be made.

In order to do away with some bureaucracy I suggest the following as the vice-presidential duties : to take over the office of the President in case that office is vacated; to preside over the directorate. That calls for a change in the directorate, which will consist of six duly elected members (calling for a change elsewhere) with the following duties : grant or revoke membership; approve or disapprove of presidential recommendations or appointments; act as advisors to the executive on policy; have the powers granted them; elect a chairman from their midst in case of the vice-president's office being vacated for any reason; appoint a secretary-treasurer in case that office is vacated.

As far as the official organ goes, saying we'll have one of appropriate service issued whenever expedient is about as much as one can say about such changeable things. The rest of the constitution wasn't perfect, but one can't throw away everything. While Speer's oversimplification isn't recommended, the NFFF can take a tip from Jack,

I can see at the most three reasons for the continued existence of the NFFF. None of these include letterheads & envelopes nor do they include stickers & titles or club blurb sheets & membership drives.

1st : Followers of fantasy, amateur or professional, escapists or planners, need a means of organized contact with the general public. Everyone from followers of Little Orphan Annie to the genius of Saroyan caliber have such an organ. It is not a matter of following the crowd; it is taking a useful tip. 2nd : A means of contact with one another is a prime requisite, particularly in this scattered world; if expansion comes, as some claim, it will be needed tomorrow. 3rd : A provision for a kind of co-op is about the only concrete purpose I can envision. Things such as centralization of data & co-ordination of large projects would be worthwhile. But there are certain things the NFFF seems to favor. These things I consider evils : 1) the super-duper letter section attitude, 2) the bended knee to the pulp magazines, that amazing USA love of commercialism, that American bilge, and 3) the conception of planned programs for fans, the reverse of the real need. If these are what we're working toward, if the three suggestions are not considered prime, I don't think I'll be alone in telling the NFFF to pucker up & — blow !

Interlude

Foreward : & I hope we're not being that way, abely speaking. Neither Lambert Ashton nor Juke Sandwright, both of this field, could make deadline this time -- the former gave me a manana and the latter, a travail -- so I let them pass the buck until next issue & am now inserting something that may be a bit premature. An abortion of an idea in my way of thinking, but here it is. All I can add is, "Dammit, give me your cooperation this time !"

This is a survey.

Come back here ! Don't run away.

Because of the way things are situated for me, service & everything, I can't very well work out a system of stamped, self-addressed envelopes, nor can I neatly supply mimeographed questionnaires with all the hints to the answers. Perhaps it's better that way, for I'll have your honest opinions and your own way of stating things, all 64 of you. Got that ? All sixty-four of youse !

There's no time limit on this, but I'd appreciate promptness so that I can give results on some of the questions by the time of the next mailing.

1. What 2 features do you like best in this publication & for what reason ?
2. Is there any feature you dislike & why ?
3. What is your attitude on the present trend of material presented ?
4. Is there any specific type of material you would care to see presented ?
5. Do you favor staying strictly on fantasy literature or do you care to discuss its outlets ?
6. Which types of music do you prefer in classics ? In Jive ? Do you listen for fantasy or for the overall enjoyment ?
7. List your 1st & 2nd favorites of today in the amateur field of fantasy, for performance rather than personal whims: (A thru I -- persons; J & K -- mags)

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| A. Fact | G. Editing |
| B. Fiction | H. Organization |
| C. Art | I. News Coverage |
| D. Poetry | J. Publication |
| E. Humor | K. News Sheet |
| F. Publishing | |

8. List your 1st three favorites of today in the professional field of fantasy, not restricted to the pulps but in all fields of publishing :

- A. Authors
- B. Short stories
- C. Novels
- D. Artists
- E. Magazines

9. Briefly, what is your opinion of the NFFF
10. Elaborate on postwar fantasy 'fashion', both steps you think it will take & the ones you think it should take.

Let me close by assuring you the gathered data will be put to good & frequent use, not filed away & forgotten.

* * * * *

SUMMING UP

--At which time one speaks on the TIMEBINDER, EEEVANS, & some other noteworthy contributors to the beginnings of the philosophy behind the Fantasy mind. This is an indirect manner of speaking, since I haven't an issue at my side, because what I am about to say is more prompted by, than directed to, the Timebinder or anything connected with it. At this point I'll make it clear that in approaching a certain trend with this & future issues, while trying to reveal a definite idea behind my Futurist theme, I'm not going to step into the folly of certain bugs with their pet theories. On the contrary I feel that by touching every cornerstone of relevant (to Fantasy, not to the theme) sociology, psychology, etc, in addition to the stated attitude on philosophy, we'll be driving a spop closer to the homeplate.

After all, isn't that what a good philosophy of life or of anything is founded on : all aspects of daily living & thinking, all experiences vicarious or active, rather than the passive pipe-smoking attitudes of the armchair thinker. Even at times this magazine may get off the beaten track; that will be good too, because it will prove the path we've been following is leading us to nowhere of any particular value. There may be argument to that last statement, but then I'm one of those who doesn't think that the ends even begin to justify the means. It's the act, not the climax, which satisfies man in his search for happiness. What a final stage has been reached in anything, man -- the live variety -- begins his search for something now again. If utopia means blood, sweat & tears, & perhaps more, & a shanty means love, living & sweet memories, & not a whit more, then I'd be all out for the shanty : it would be my dream. Didn't someone say that were we to reach paradise the 1st thing we'd set out to do would be to reorganize the place ? Yes, it's the doing & not much more ...

I quite agree with Evans that some healthy optimism isn't going to hurt anyone. In fact it's going to be a necessity in the years ahead of us, of you & your remotest acquaintance, to save us from the awaiting bitterness as a result of the fumbles & jumbles bound to come, appearing even now, while the peacemakers make like Sans. Even in a country like ours where evolution is supposed to be the theme there will be revolution, more mental than physical of course, but it will mean hurts -- sometimes unnecessarily -- and blunders -- often terrible -- that will make you & I wonder if this stage we're shifting around on isn't some cruel jest, some hellish dream, & the realization that isn't will hurt even more -- unless there's optimism, the stable kind that isn't founded on a bed of roses.

It will have to be healthy, note that I said that, but I'm not in a position at present to define just what I mean by such a term. It has something to do with an eternal skepticism, which every overseas soldier has learned, & a will not to let that optimistic tendency slip into your analysis of yourself. There's where pessimism is needed; there's where some downright revolution & near bloodshed is requisite. We, as individuals, need some scrapping with ourselves to turn some rascals of stupid thought out !

No, it wasn't much of a summing up, but it was a kind of final challenge for this mailing.

What have you to answer ?

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