

The problem of titling a fanzine is quite a momentous one when the matter to be titled is as important as one's first FAPazine. Your servant opposes, as a general thing, a multiplicity of titles from one fan-publisher: one likes to be able to make ready identification of a publisher with his zine, or of a zine with its publisher, and too many titles from one mimeo make this difficult. Now I have, apart from one-shot publications, thus far used two titles: The Vinegar Worm and Nematode. The first of these was a magazine of general circulation and the second a SAPSazine, and whatever their faults or merits as fanzines, I confess I feel a fondness for their vermicular titles. Therefore, at the risk of confusing future historians, I have decided to use the former title for this FAPazine. But to aid these hypothetical future scholars, this new avatar of The Worm will be called Volume Two. O.K? You are, then, reading

THE VINEGAR WORM

Vol. II, No. 1. Published for the 93d FAPA
Mailing by Bob Leman, 1214 West Maple,
Rawlins, Wyoming

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Over the years I have received a number of invitations which have caused me considerable gratification. I include among these my bid to the coronation of George III, my invitation to join the After-Shave Club, and the generous invitation extended not long ago by Clive Khrushchev, of Soft Center, Iowa, which was phrased, as best I remember, "Buddy, have a drink."

One remembers and treasures such honors, and I cannot but feel that I have been more fortunate than most men to have invitations like these in my treasure-chest of memory. And now I add a new and brilliant jewel to my invitation collection: I am invited to join FAPA!

And, I hasten to add, I accept. Who, after wearying out the tedious years on the Waiting List, would do otherwise? It's been a long anfractuious road, and its terminus--this valued invitation--finds a FAPAn much changed from the hopeful neophyte who first entered his name on the Waiting List. When I embarked upon the long voyage I was a downy-cheeked lad, bursting with energy and enthusiasm (this was, if memory serves, during the Harding Administration) and my ultimate entry into the organization finds me a broken-down and stove-up old crock, running to paunch and baldness, with fires almost quenched and soon to be ready for shawl and rocking chair. But By George,

I made it! And I must admit that I'm greatly pleased, although it's more than possible that many of you won't share my sentiments.

I have had prior acquaintance with many--perhaps most--of you, but it may be that to offer a few words of introduction would be the mannerly thing to do. I made my first shy bow to fandom in the fall of 1957, with the publication of a short item of curiosa called The American Journal of Oculenteratology. At the time I published this oddity my sole acquaintance with Amateur Publishing had been through a few copies of SF Times and Inside, and a single copy of The National Fantasy Fan, and The Journal bore no resemblance to anything theretofore seen on land or sea.

My mailing list came mainly from the NFFF roster, and the few letters of comment I received betrayed a uniform dense incomprehension of what I was up to. The writers were, I took it, alumni of a Pen-Pal club, who considered fandom to be a club of the same kind. I was about ready to conclude that Inside was a sport, and that fandom was not for me.

But from somewhere I got eight or ten new names, and I sent copies to these folks. I don't remember who they all were, but among them were Bloch, Coulson, GMCarr, Tucker, Grennell and Boggs. The response here was highly gratifying, and I received, amongst others, copies of YANDRO, GRUE, GEMZINE and SKYHOOK. The dying small flame began to burn brightly.

It was Dean Grennell who told me how to apply for the Waiting List, and when I received my first copy of the FA I used the Membership and Waiting Lists to compile a mailing list for the second issue I was planning. Meanwhile, INSIDE #52 appeared, in November or December, 1957. I had sent Ron Smith a stupefyingly serious and constructive article entitled, "Conformity in Science Fiction", and it appeared in that issue. Since The Journal had gone to few indeed of the people I now know as fans, this article constituted my real introduction to the microcosm. The thing has plagued me ever since: it's entirely untypical of what I like to write, but it apparently stuck in a number of minds, and I still receive requests for material that say, "Please don't try to be funny--write something like the INSIDE piece." Maybe they're right, at that.

That article had another consequence: I received a letter from G----- W----- . I am a political conservative, and the article had to do with the political notions of a number of SF writers and editors with whom I disagreed. W----- seemed to think that he had found a kindred soul. He wrote me a thick bundle of sick, rancorous invective, containing actionable matter about several of you who are reading this. The thing almost scared me out, but again, DAG set me right.

In January, 1958, I came out with my second fanzine, The Vinegar Worm. In that and two subsequent issues I published a total of fifty-three pages, which I mailed pretty well all over. The results were astonishing. I have received, I guess, several thousands of pages of fine fanzines in exchange for those slim and most irregular Worms. I am, I hope, duly grateful.

I joined SAPS with the 45th mailing, publishing a zine called Nematode. Six issues of Nematode had been published when I received my invitation to join FAPA. That was the end of the zine. Two APA's are too many for me.

I have published a few items in other people's zines, and have corresponded in a fitful way with quite a few fans. I attended one convention, the Solacon. I have called upon one FAPAN, Gregg Calkins. I have been visited by several of the faithful: Jim Caughran, Ron Ellik, Jack Harness and Bjo. There are also nine waiting-listers whom I've had the pleasure of entertaining: Bruce Pelz, Ed Cox, Ernie Wheatley, Norm Metcalf, Chuck Hansen, Andy Main, Ted Johnstone, Al Lewis, and Bruce Henstell. All names not represented here are invited to stop by at any time, for a first visit. Those listed know what they'll be up against, but if they've the courage to tackle it again, they'll be most welcome chez Culvergast. We liked 'em.

Which pretty well covers my career in fandom. Now as to vital statistics und so weiter:

I am thirty-eight years old. My wife, Peggy, is thirty-three. My daughters, Frances and Nancy, are eleven and eight, respectively. My dog, Tater, is seven months. My cat, Hawkins, is four. My suit, Robert Hall, is six. All are in good health except the last.

I am five feet nine inches high, weigh thirteen stone, and have a scar on my right knee. I detest do-it-yourself projects of every kind, particularly painting interiors. I like scotch whisky, bourbon whiskey and rye whiskey. I am a great trencherman. I don't make as much money as I deserve.

I work for The Humble Oil and Refining Co., a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Standard Oil Company (N.J.), as District Landman for the Wyoming District. Unless you're in the oil business, you don't know what a landman does, and to explain it would involve more verbiage than I care to squander at this point.

I like books and music. I read practically anything I can lay my hands on, including science fiction. I am especially addicted to Dickens and Faulkner among novelists, and I am a fan of Joyce up through and including Ulysses. Finnegans Wake has thus far very successfully resisted me, although I've been toiling through it off and on for several years, with the aid of the Skeleton Key. Of music I love Beethoven above all, and Mozart nearly as much. I like most composers who composed earlier than these, and some who composed later. Mahler and Richard Strauss are about as "modern" as I like my music. As to jazz, I can't rid myself of a sneaking suspicion that the whole thing is a vast hoax, and that both players and listeners are moving deadpan through some insanely thorough practical joke. This, I know, reveals a great gap in my cultural facade, but there it is.

FAPA has been very kind to me during my time on the WL, and I'd like to thank you. Since first my name appeared on the WL, not a mailing has gone by without my receiving a number of FAPAZines. And during the past year and a half, while mundane matters have seriously curtailed my fanactivity, few if any of the generous souls who sent me zines have had so much as a word of thanks. Let me assure you all that these magazines were greatly appreciated, and that my failure to respond was the result of lack of time, and not of indifference.

But I'm bygod going to find time to maintain this FAPA membership. It was right at three years from the day I entered my name when I received this bid to join, and at my age you don't lightly throw away three years.

After six glorious months of dogless bliss we have acquired a new pup. When our old bulldog died last fall, we found ourselves, for the first time in years, without a dog, and I thought it was wonderful. I missed the old girl, of course, but it was pleasant to be able to go away for a weekend without having to take the dog to a boarding kennel, and it was a relief to be able to cross the lawn without the necessity for watching very carefully where you put your feet, and it was great to sleep without a dog in the bed. I enjoyed it so much that I firmly laid down a ukase to my family: No More Dogs. That was my decree, as immutable as the Law of the Medes and the Persians.

The decree stood for almost five months. But its demise was preordained from the day, six weeks or two months earlier, when my eight-year-old burst in with the electrifying news that Lady Had A Litter Of Puppies!

Nine tailors of warning bells sounded in my mind. I didn't stop to enquire who Lady was, or whom she belonged to, or even what kind of dog she was. With the uneasy firmness of a man who is licked before he starts, but who must put up a fight to preserve his honor, I said loudly, "No puppies!"

She gave me the veiled look of a female who is faced with male recalcitrance, but is confident that in the end she will prevail, and she went away.

Next time it was both of them. I was relaxing in my chair after a hard day's toil, engaged in restoring my flagging energies with a vessel of bourbon, when the two entered the room and seated themselves in a decorous manner on the sofa. This was unusual enough to make me look up from my paper: most commonly they dive upon stuffed furniture in a manner calculated to drive the springs through the toughest upholstery fabric in a matter of weeks. It was apparent that I was being cozened.

The elder had been elected spokesman: "Daddy, guess what? Their eyes are open!"

I am a little proud of how nimbly my mind worked on that occasion; if I had said, "Whose eyes?" I would instantly have placed myself at a disadvantage. But in the split second before I said it I comprehended what she was talking about, and I seized the offensive. Fixing them with a basilisk glare, I said, in a manner which I flatter myself would have done credit to Captain Queeg, "No puppies!"

They crept away, giving one of their very best performances as homeless waifs going sadly off to the poorhouse through a snowstorm. A few minutes later I heard, from another room: "Mommy, guess what? Their eyes are open!" The campaign had opened a second front.

The sniping tactics continued for quite some time, but I valiantly held my position. Oh, there was an occasional strategic withdrawal, but no real retreat. Then the heavy artillery was brought to bear.

The timing was perfect. I was taking my ease after an excellent dinner, absorbing a medicinal drop of cognac as a

digestif, and I was feeling, in a word, mellow. My Frau's practiced eye discerned this, and she remarked, in a conversational way, "I went over to see the puppies today."

Through long experience I have become as cunning as a weasel when confronted with these gambits: "Puppies?" I said. "What puppies?"

"The Tode's Lady has a litter. Eight. They're--"

"Tode's bitch has a litter? Say, that's too bad."

I scored with that one. "Why?" she said. "Why 'too bad'?"

"I've known that old dog for a long time, and I figure Fenwick Tode's going to have a hard time getting rid of any of her pups. That's as treacherous a dog as there is in town. Those pups 'll never make safe pets. Who's the sire?"

Notice the way I stayed right in there, keeping her off balance. Lady is a promiscuous old strumpet, and determining the paternity of her get is a matter which will have to await further developments in medical science.

"Well," said Wife, "I don't think they actually know who the father was."

"There you are," I said. "Probably some insanely vicious sheep-killer who wandered into town one night and ravished poor Lady whilst still dripping with the gore of his innocent victims. No Sir, I don't envy Tode the job of finding homes for those pups."

She looked thoughtful, and I had difficulty in restraining an urge to grin like a catfish. By George, I might pull it off after all!

She spoke: "You know, they're the cutest things."

My sand-castle collapsed about my ears. There was no doubt about it, the battle was lost. I said, with the desperation of a cornered rat, "A Bengal tiger cub is cute, too. The trouble with pups and cubs is that they grow up."

She hadn't heard a word. "Just like little balls of fluff," she said dreamily. Oh, I was a goner.

"We're not getting a puppy, and that's final," I said. She smiled and said, "I think I'd like a black-and-white one."

And so a black-and-white ball of fluff duly came to live with us. But by the time he was old enough to be weaned and taken from his mother he was considerably more than a ball of fluff; he was, in fact, showing signs of becoming a creature of exceptional size. Just what kind of creature, it was impossible to tell at that point, but there was every indication that he wouldn't be small. I was prepared to predict with moderate confidence that he'd grow up to be some sort of dog, but his ultimate size was a total mystery.

It still is. He's still growing. He might stop growing tomorrow, in which case he'll be the size of a small collie, or he may continue to grow for months more, a possibility which I refuse to think about. And he is, indubitably, a dog.

No particular brand, of course. Just dog. I have occasionally occupied myself by attempting to prepare a genealogical table which would account for a dog that looks like this one, but so far I have been unsuccessful. If it were possible to work in a paternal great-grandfather who was a panda, and an anteater on the distaff side four or five generations

back, the thing might be done, but since nature decrees that all of his forebears had to be dogs, the precise composition of his ancestry must remain forever unknown. Only this much is certain: they were a highly variegated lot.

Now that in itself is quite all right. A variety of strains can blend to produce a handsome pup. But somehow in this case they didn't quite blend, and Tater appears to have been assembled by a near-sighted worker from odd bits out of some canine salvage yard. Examined individually his various features are presentable, if not of classic beauty; but in combination they present a somewhat unsettling picture.

Take his neck, for example. It is of quite extraordinary length, and is entirely out of proportion to the rest of his body. Normally it is projected horizontally before him, after the fashion of a tired old horse; but occasionally, when something engages his attention, he stands erect and gives his impersonation of the alert sagacious dog, man's best friend, and at such times his great length of neck gives him something of the appearance of a stunted giraffe. Atop this neck is perched a head which has a bulging cranium, à la Sirius, and a long thin nose. From the sides of the head sprout limp ears of generous proportions. These ears are a veritable tropical rainforest of tangled and luxuriant hair, and they have the apparent effect of doubling the size of the head. Viewed from the rear, Tater resembles a critter out of Dr. Seuss--the Tufty-Topped-Tiff, or some such.

So exotic a creature quite naturally arouses a certain amount of curiosity and comment. I have lately been in the habit of exercising him on choke-chain and leash, attempting to teach him the rudiments of dog-manners; and this sometimes takes us out of our own neighborhood, where the neighbors have become habituated to the sight of Dr. Giraffe. There in the outlands I am not infrequently approached by strangers wearing a somewhat stunned expression who ask, "What kind of a dog is that, anyhow?" For a long time I used to reply to this question in what I hoped was a facetious manner. I would say, "Well, his mother's a mongrel, but we don't know who his father is, so I guess you'd have to call him a mixture ha ha " Or something of the sort. But after a while I got tired of my stale little jokes about Heinz 57 varieties and Curb Setters etcetera, and one day when one of the dumfounded on-lookers put the usual question I said, "He's a Vesuvian Goat-Dog."

My interrogator nodded sagely. Evidently he was some sort of expert on dogs. "Looks like a good one," he said, after staring at Tater in a critical way for a time. "A little long in the legs, maybe. Get 'im in Denver?"

"Phoenix," I said.

"Yeah, sure," he said. "There's a kennel down there that breeds Vesuvians, isn't there?"

"I've got the address. You want a pup?"

"Well, no," he said, "I've already got a boxer. But that's a fine Vesuvian you have there."

"Thanks," I said. I meant it sincerely. The name, "Vesuvian Goat-Dog" had somehow sprung out of my subconscious as an irritated reply to a tedious question, but this fellow's ready

acceptance of the name suggested that I'd found a useful answer to all such inquiries. And ever since then I've told all inquirers that Tater is a Vesuvian Goat-Dog.

As time has passed, I have bit by bit developed a fairly elaborate mythos of the Vesuvian Goat-Dog. They were first bred in Italy by goatherds who pastured their flocks on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius, and the dogs were deliberately bred for the astonishing hairiness they now possess. Their hair has a peculiarly fire-resistant quality. This is of course a necessity since they work on the ash- and lava-sprinkled slopes of volcanic Mt. Vesuvius. The curious timbre of their bark (Tater has a voice like no creature known in historical time) is readily comprehensible to goats, and a well-trained Vesuvian can lure a large herd of hysterical goats into a dark cave by the sound of his voice alone. They are still rare in this country, but there is a growing demand for them by municipal fire departments, who prize their ability to pass unharmed through furious conflagrations. A Vesuvian belonging to the Fire Department of Passaic, N.J., for example, has thus far rescued from incineration \$24,500 worth of negotiable securities, four infant children, a valuable painting purported to be by Rembrandt, and an elderly lady who was so grateful that she bequeathed a large sum of money to The American Vesuvian Goat-Dog Breeders Association.

Most of the people to whom I've told these preposterous yarns seem to take me quite seriously. You never know, though. It may be that they've got me tagged as That Nut Who Tells Lies About His Mongrel. That's why I'm recounting all this for FAPA. I know that all of you will accept everything I say as simple fact (I see it as a reciprocal matter--you believe me and I'll believe you) and it gives me a feeling of security to know that there's somebody who has faith in my narrations. And if there are any of you who are of such coarse grain as to doubt me, to you I make this simple rejoinder: My old man can lick your old man.

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Is conversation about science fiction permitted around here? I inquire because I've been saving a clipping that seems to me to be a sparkling example of the mundane world's view of SF, and I'd like to repeat it for you. This is from John Lardner's television column in The New Yorker, and it appeared in the February 20, 1960, issue:

"'Men Into Space' stands cleanly apart from so-called science fiction. The average science-fiction story shows space-dwelling human beings living pretty much in our contemporary style, on planets or satellites that differ from present-day earth only as Newark differs from San Francisco, or Brussels from Paris, or, to use an exurbanite analogy, Scarsdale from New York. People make love both indoors and out, and give

cocktail parties al fresco or in rooms with the windows open. They leave the house in evening clothes, or in summer frocks or shirtsleeves, and walk the streets with no more than normal effort. All this, as 'Men Into Space' has demonstrated, is nonsense for the immediate future of space and probably for the migratory period envisioned by Dr. Clark. Walking either on man-created satellites or ready-made celestial bodies is like walking under water. In the preliminary stages of space life, it is bound to produce--this is my own inference--mass neurosis and, very likely, widespread outbreaks of novel forms of the bends and multiple sclerosis. As for clothing, no one in 'Men Into Space' goes outdoors unless he is wearing comprehensive overclothes and accessories that would cost twenty thousand dollars at Abercrombie and Fitch at twentieth-century prices. A touch of atmosphere (I may mean non-atmosphere) on the body of the stroller (or wader) beneath the suit means death by disintegration. . . . Detail like this has been checked for accuracy by experts in the Department of Defense and the Air Force. A space physician serves the program as consultant in space medicine. Sets are inspired by the paintings of a space artist (his name is Chesley Bonestell) who, a network spokesman says, 'can tell you the exact angle of incidence of the sun's rays on Deimos.' 'Consequently,' the spokesman goes on, 'when the series enters the realm of conjecture--what the surface of the moon will look like, for instance--its ideas are not based on imagination or fancy.'

Well, there you have it. If it's based on solid scientific fact or knowledgeable conjecture it "stands cleanly apart from so-called science fiction." They're not going to allow us a thing. This is scientific; ergo, it's not science fiction. Why, everybody knows that science fiction is that "I Was a Teen-Age Maggot" stuff. Now here in "Men Into Space" we have Chesley Bonestell telling us the exact incidence of the sun's rays on Deimos, and that's scientific, boy. So this just isn't science fiction. This is good stuff.

It's an old familiar refrain, of course, and its existence has been remarked innumerable times by people who write about SF. 1984 received high critical acclaim; accordingly it was not classified as SF. On the Beach was a runaway best-seller; it followed that it was never referred to as science fiction. (It wasn't a very good book, either, but that's beside the point.) The rule is simple: if it's good, or if it's popular, or both, it is per se not science fiction. It's a novel of suspense or a novel of high adventure or perhaps just a novel. "Science Fiction," in the minds of practically all the reviewers, is a term of opprobrium.

Now this is far from surprising. Those of you who are of

my vintage will recall the necessity of concealing SF magazines (stf, it was then) with their lurid bem-and-babe covers from parental observation. There is behind us a full generation of the conviction that SF is trash on a par with, say, Confidential, and the equation SF=crud² is basic in the thinking of most people. Now a reviewer isn't going to label as "crud" a book he likes, and so, of course, he won't label it "SF". And most publishers realize this, and don't label their science fictional books "SF", any more than they'd label them "crud".

Some SF is crud, of course--maybe 90%, as Sturgeon said; but we should recall the rest of The Law: 90% of everything is crud. And to use the name of a branch of fiction as a synonym for "trash" seems grossly unfair.

Nevertheless, there it is. And you see it in its full flower in Lardner's smug pronouncements. It's superior scientific stuff when men wear space suits on the moon, but if people give cocktail parties al fresco on a planet in another system, that's science fiction--which is to say, trash. One is inclined to wonder what odd process of ratiocination leads Lardner to believe that because the moon is airless, all planets everywhere must necessarily be the same. Maybe he's trying to convey the idea*is close to being practicable, it is no longer SF, and therefore respectable. But any neo could point out to the urbane gentleman that the despised SF magazines were saying years ago precisely what this superior telecast said this year. Any reasonable commentator would recognize, it seems to me, some merit in saying, "This is how it will be" a decade or two before it has become a practical matter. And it might occur to him that a prediction of an earth-type planet somewhere, where people might go about in their shirtsleeves, is no more far-fetched than was the moon journey when SF writers began to speculate about it. Indeed, one would like to say to Mr. Lardner, no less an astronomer than Harlow Shapley has said that it's a statistical necessity that there be such planets. Why, Mr. Lardner, would you insist that people wear space suits on such a planet?

I'm afraid, though, that the best answer that one could get out of him would be, "You mean you read that crazy Buck Rogers stuff?"

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The expatriate SF writer Mack Reynolds recently blew himself to a spot of tourism and visited Russia. He was evidently mightily impressed by what he saw or what he was told. His trip has already inspired two published stories, and more are to come, according to Mills' blurb for one of the pieces. These two stories--"Combat", in ASFF, October, 1960, and "Russkies, Go Home", in F&SF, November, 1960--differ in plot, but they are identical in point of view, and are laid in the

* Please here insert the words, "--that when an extrapolation--".

same future world. This world, and the apparent convictions of the author who created it, are interesting enough to merit a little analysis and an attempt to determine what Reynolds is up to.

The time of the stories is the not-too-distant future--still in the twentieth century, one gathers, East and West have long since reached an accommodation, and the cold war as we now know it is a thing of the past. Hot war is of course out of the question, since all nations, even the smallest, possess fusion weapons. But economic war is being waged--a battle for markets. And the "Soviet Complex" is winning.

There is high prosperity in the communist nations because they don't actually need foreign trade; they can absorb internally all their production. The West, on the other hand, is permanently depressed. And the production battle moves steadily in the communists' favor because they are automated to a fantastic degree ("When they got to the point where they were producing all the steel they wanted, in the late 1960's, they built an automated plant in Sverdlovsk that dwarfed anything the rest of the world had ever seen. . . . Not an obsolete piece of machinery in the plant. . . . No wonder they can sell (the cars) for two hundred dollars.") , while the West clings to archaic methods of manufacture. The consequence of this automation is that employment is full and the situation is idyllic: "Every time a new discovery comes along that would ordinarily toss a couple of hundred thousand people into the ranks of the unemployed, they just lower the work week for everybody in that industry. It's down to an average of ten hours now."

Well sir, that's a nice little Utopia. How did they get it, anyhow? Why, like this: "A planned economy; no depressions, no strikes, no unions to stand in the way of automation. They caught up to American gross national product shortly after 1970. Now they're really underway and the satellites and the Chinese with them." Very nice indeed. And what's more the West brought this situation on itself: "That was our own fault. When we refused to trade with them we threw them on their own resources. Pushed by necessity they made themselves self-sufficient. Now the Soviet Complex has no need for foreign trade."

Hard cheese for the West. And Reynolds seems to take a ghoulish satisfaction in it.

Why? What's he trying to do?

I submit that Reynolds is not simply writing science fiction stories in these tales; I contend that he is writing unabashed polemics, urging a change in our present attitude toward the communists. "Change your ways," he is saying, "or these will be the consequences." And the ways that he wants us to change are nothing less than our self-defense in the cold war. If I am reading Reynolds correctly, he is advocating a unilateral cessation of cold war hostilities--surrender, in a word. And the oft-repeated burden of his song is that the communists are much like us ("I'm not so sure there's as many differences between the West and the Soviet Complex as we usually think") and have pretty much the same aims we do and that hence

we should conclude that their rush toward industrialization has as its ultimate object simply the production of consumer goods to raise the standard of living. If we stop trying to oppose these people, Reynolds seems to be saying, they can get on with trying to raise these living standards and they won't be driven by our foolish intransigence to the heights of superiority they've achieved in these stories.

Now if the aims of the communists were in fact simply to raise the standards of living of their peoples, then Reynolds would have a point. But their main purpose is, of course, quite different. It is, and always has been, the establishment of a world-wide socialist state, under a "dictatorship of the proletariat"--that is, world-wide communism. The most casual reading of history is sufficient to establish this beyond question, and the history of the past fifteen years, in particular, demonstrates that their determination to achieve this end is becoming, if anything, stronger.

So Reynolds' comfortable fiction that these communists who are so much like us want only to work and enjoy the fruits of their labor--to possess gadgets and travel abroad and lord it over the natives as we do--is simply that: a fiction. Whether this ignoring of historical fact is naive or disingenuous, I will not hazard a guess, but Reynolds' blindness in certain directions is worthy of notice. There is no mention whatever of communism as an international conspiracy, of its continuing effort to subvert the government of every non-communist country in the world, of its willingness to employ any method, however base, to achieve its ends. There is a sneering statement that "'The so-called "free world" included Saudi-Arabia, Spain, Portugal, Formosa and South Korea. Evidently a country was "free" simply if it was on our side'", but there is no reference at all to the ruthless suppression, with Russian tanks and guns, of the bids of the Hungarian and East German people for freedom. Reynolds utterly fails to show communism as anything but an economic system, and suggests that it is simply another means of attaining a universally desired end: "'Man's age old problem has finally been solved--the production of sufficient food, clothing, shelter, medical (sic) and education for everyone. Different groups accomplished it by somewhat different methods, but at this stage it's been achieved by just about all.'"

Now how's that for a bland writing-off of the deliberate mass starvation in the Ukraine, the murder of a million Kulaks, the most repressive police state the world has ever seen, the sending of twenty million people to Arctic slave-labor camps, and the sadistic crushing of the Hungarian patriots? "Different groups accomplished it by somewhat different methods." Well, yes. Somewhat different.

Reynolds gives us some very curious readings of history. In fairness, it should be noted that the examples which follow have been put into the mouths of Russians. However, nowhere does he put into the mouth of an American--or anyone else--a refutation of these eerie perversions of fact. We are left with the Russian view, which in at least one case in "Russkies, Go Home," is a downright lie: "'When the Bolsheviks overthrew

the Czar, the churches largely lined up with the old regime. So the Bolsheviks had to fight them."

Of course the Bolsheviks did not overthrow the Czar. They overthrew the moderate Kerensky government, which had deposed the Czar, and which might well have brought Russia something it has never to this day known: democracy. And the explanation of the religious persecution seems a little thin when one remembers that it continues to this very day. There is a strong flavor of 1984 in history of this kind.

Or how about this? "' [Lenin's] main task was to bring the Bolsheviks to power. He succeeded. Stalin's main task was to pacify the country under party rule and to lay the foundations for industrialization. He succeeded. Khrushchev's task was to overtake the West in production and bring abundance to the Soviet Complex. He succeeded.'" And the "Soviet Complex" lived in plenty happily ever after.

Let's look at this. If Nikita's task is to overtake the West in production and bring abundance to the "Soviet Complex", what's he doing in the Congo, trying to put his puppet into power? Why is he pouring oil on the fires of the middle and far east? Why does he have his agent as dictator of Cuba? To overtake the West in production? To bring abundance to the "Soviet Complex"? Or simply to further the basic Marxian plan of world communism? The answer is obvious.

And what about "'Stalin's task was to pacify the country under party rule and to lay the foundations for industrialization.'"? We have to accept the first part of the statement, although "pacify the country" seems to be pretty slippery language to describe a blood-bath that makes Hitler's look like a Sunday-school picnic by comparison. But--"lay the foundations for industrialism"? How did his direction of a world-wide organization devoted to subversion and espionage--the Comintern--lay the foundations for industrialism? How did his years of infamy in international relations, culminating in the pact with the Nazis, lay the foundations for industrialism? How did his voracious colonialism of the immediate post-war period lay the foundations for industrialization?

The truth is that the main task of all these men was, of course, to further international communism, and the other aims were simply steps along the way.

So any contention by Reynolds that these stories are extrapolation from current situations and tendencies cannot be accepted. He has quite deliberately overlooked the most important characteristic of communism: the fact that it is, basically and essentially, an international conspiracy. And in refusing to admit this fact he has totally destroyed any validity these stories might have had as extrapolations. The cozy picture he paints of the opulent "Soviet Complex" wallowing in luxury and anxious to live and let live, cannot legitimately be extrapolated from the known facts. These stories are, therefore, not science fiction but polemics.

It is, no doubt, pleasant to delude oneself with the notion that if we cease our self-defense in the cold war, and give the Soviets whatever they desire, they will discontinue their colonial expansion and devote themselves to manufacturing abundance for their people. But even to consider such an idea

betrays a dangerous ignorance of communism. Their leaders are devoted, dedicated and convinced communists, who have a religious faith in the gospel according to St. Marx. It is impossible to conceive of any power other than brute force that could induce them to abandon their drive toward a wholly communist world. And we should not make the mistake of thinking of them as mere opportunistic power-seekers, expanding solely for personal aggrandizement. They are, in their way, men of principle. True, their sole principle is Marx, and they are totally without a moral sense, but to think that they will abandon their principle in order to bring a better life to their people is to grasp at a straw. I would like, in this connection, to quote from a speech by Ambassador George Kennan, whose point of view is, on the whole, far closer to Reynolds' than to mine:

"In his approach to the Soviet problem Roosevelt made a mistake to which members of the older higher Anglo-Saxon society were, perhaps, particularly liable: he underestimated the ideological seriousness of the Russian Communists. He doubted the importance of principle in their psychology; he thought that their complicated, mistrustful, irritable, almost psychopathic political character was only a subjective reaction to the face of their opponent, rather than a position of principle, ideologically determined. . . . He expected that they . . . would react favorably to a friendly smile, a brotherly pat on the shoulder, and a strong dose of Rooseveltian charm. . . . This attitude of Roosevelt's was for the Bolsheviks the greatest possible insult, for it made light precisely of the firmness of their ideological faith, of their self-respect as theoretically schooled and disciplined Marxists, and attributed to them a susceptibility to subjective influences which must seem an abominable weakness in the eyes of the Communist movement. In time this mistake of Roosevelt's brought bitter penalties; nevertheless one may doubt that he himself ever recognized his mistake."

Reynolds' notion of the "Soviet Complex" working happily within its own borders is thus an impossibility. The ideological faith which they take so seriously demands that the international conspiracy be ruthlessly prosecuted until the whole world is communist. Any concession we make will be seized greedily, but to expect a quid pro quo from the communists would be naive. They will take but not give; and to expect them to give is to fall into Roosevelt's error. It is therefore quite clear that to suggest that we make concessions to the Russians is to suggest that we surrender. To make such a suggestion is to do a grave disservice to the Western World, and, indeed, to civilization.

Campbell and Mills doubtless published these stories in the hope of stirring up talk, of arousing a controversy. I'm sure they will be successful. But they should not have published them. Not only are they morally reprehensible, they are not even science fiction.

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SERIOUS CONSTRUCTIVE FICTION DEPARTMENT
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DEATH OF A FAN
by
Cavanaugh Razor

Last summer I mentioned in a letter to an Eastern fan that I was scheduled to make a business trip which would take me on a long swing through Montana and Idaho. He wrote back, "Your itinerary won't take you through Otter Falls, will it? If it does, why don't you have a shot at solving the Tapwillow mystery? I imagine that all fandom would be grateful for some light on this perplexing business."

I replied that I was indeed going to pass through Otter Falls, and that I'd be happy to try to solve a fannish mystery, but that I hadn't the faintest idea what the Tapwillow mystery was.

His next letter enlightened me. "I guess the whole thing was before your time, but it's something that has puzzled a lot of us for years. Actually, the mystery is nothing more than, 'Whatever became of Osborne Tapwillow?' He was a BNF of some years ago who suddenly quit fandom at the height of his fame. He didn't die, we know that, because any fannish mail that was sent him came back marked 'Refused' in his handwriting. But he quit fandom, utterly and completely, and never offered an explanation.

"Tapwillow came out of nowhere a few years ago with a fanzine called FANIMADVERSION. His name was absolutely unknown; he'd never before published, he'd never written anything for a fanzine, and as best can be determined, he'd never corresponded with any fans. So the coming of FANIMADVERSION was quite a surprise. In all seriousness, that first issue was one of the top eight or ten issues ever published by anybody. It was a fine fat zine, beautifully Gestetnered, with contributions from six of the top fan writers of the time. (Apparently his letters requesting contributions were so persuasive that the writers obliged, even though they'd never heard of him.) The illos were by leading lights, too, and the cover cartoon has stood the test of time as probably the funniest ever published in a fanzine.

"There were some superb pieces by unknown names (which later turned out to be pseudonyms of Tapwillow's) and an editorial which showed that Tapwillow was not only a gifted and clever writer, but that in fannish matters he was entirely au courant. It was this last that led many to believe that he was a hoax. How could a perfect newcomer be aware of every nuance of Fan-speak, how would he be able to allude in such a knowledgeable way to all-but-forgotten people and incidents? For a time trying to guess Tapwillow's identity was a fannish fad.

"But he was real, all right, and as first-rate stuff continued to pour out of Otter Falls everybody admitted it. Tapwillow was hyper-active. There were quarterly issues of

FANIMADVERSION, there was an occasional one-shot, there were articles and stories in all the top zines, there was a veritable flood of letters. Tapwillow was in the top ten in most of the polls in his first year in fandom, and in his second year he stood number one in several categories. He made himself an authentic BNF in not much more than eighteen months.

"And then one day he quit. He never published another word, he never wrote another letter to a fan, he refused any fannish mail that came his way. There was never a word of explanation from any source. One of the Travelling Giants of the day managed to make his way to Otter Falls on one occasion, and Tapwillow slammed the door in his face. It was a classic case of aggressive gafia.

"So if you're willing to have a door slammed in your face, how about investigating Tapwillow? I'd really like to know the whys and wherefores of his odd fannish career. And if you should find out, you'd have material for a damned fine article. In fact, I'd be glad to have a chance to publish it."

With this letter was enclosed a fat bundle of Tapwillow zines, and after I'd read them I was even more eager than my correspondent to get to the bottom of The Mystery. There was a fresh, lively humor in them that was immensely appealing. Skillful as the man was as a writer, and capable though he was as an editor, I was chiefly affected by the impact of the personality that seemed to come shining out of the pages of the zines. Tapwillow seemed to be a sunny, almost jovial type, who had withal a sly, dry sense of humor, and a bit of a temper when provoked. He had been, it seemed to me, an immense asset to fandom, and I made up my mind that I'd find out why he'd quit.

My trip was a long and fairly tedious one, but in due course I reached Otter Falls. It's not a place I'd ordinarily choose to stop over night; I had been through it before, and had always found it infinitely depressing. It's a gray, treeless down-at-the-heel kind of town, where a gritty dust is always blowing in your face, and where even the buildings look discouraged. I checked in at the sole hotel, a seedy relic of the day of the drummer, which bore the somewhat grandiloquent name, "Mansion House," and as soon as I reached my room I checked the phone book to see if Tapwillow was listed. He was.

The desk clerk gave me directions, and I drove out to Tapwillow's house. He lived on Green Street, and surely there has never been a thoroughfare more woefully misnamed. Not a trace of greenery was to be seen. The houses were gray and the yards were gray and even the few pedestrians had a grayish hue. When I located number 1227, I found that it was as gray and depressing as all the rest.

My knock was answered by a tall lean man just short of middle age who wore a grim expression. I had planned, fan-fashion, to use his first name, but one look at him changed my mind. "Mr. Tapwillow?" I said.

His voice was as grim as his face. "Yes."

"Uh, Mr. Tapwillow, my name's Razor--Cavanaugh Razor. I'm a fan, and some of your old friends in fandom asked me to look you up."

His face became a shade grimmer, but he didn't say anything. I went on: "You know, a lot of people would like to have you back in fandom, Mr. Tapwillow. You've been missed."

He looked as if he'd found a rotten egg on his breakfast plate. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

"You are Osborne Tapwillow, aren't you?" I asked.

"That's right."

"Well--uh--is there anybody else in town with the same name?"

"No."

Inspiration struck. "Have you got a son?"

"No."

"But--I don't understand," I said. "You must be the Tapwillow who used to be a fan. Don't you want to talk about it?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said again. And, as predicted, he shut the door in my face.

I stood there on that gray step and stared at the door. What in God's name was the matter with the man? What had turned him so violently against what must once have been a favorite hobby? A feud that went too far? Harrassment by the paranoiac, like Grennell? Apparently I wasn't ever going to know the answer; there had been complete finality in the heavy closing of the door. I turned and slowly walked back to my car.

Back at the Mansion House I had a greasy semi-digestible dinner in the Coffee Shop, and began to cast about for a way to spend the evening. It was no simple problem; Otter Falls is far from a lively town. The night life seemed to be confined to a scattering of morose drinkers in dingy saloons, and the single movie theatre was showing a rock-and-roll picture. A canvass of the book-racks in the drug stores and the hotel lobby revealed no SF that I hadn't read, so I selected a couple of paperback mysteries and prepared to retire to my room.

There was a bulletin board in the lobby, listing the meeting times of the various organizations that used the hotel --"Kiwanis, Noon Tuesday, Coffee Shop," etc. On my way to the elevator my eye was caught by a line on the board that said, "Alcoholics Anonymous, 7 P.M. Thursday, Mezzanine." This was Thursday, and it was a little after 7 P.M., and I've got a warm place in my heart for the A.A. They rescued a favorite cousin of mine from certain destruction, and today he's a successful, happy man, instead of a skid-row bum or a corpse. I'd attended A.A. meetings from time to time, and I'd found them interesting and rewarding. I decided I'd step up to the mezzanine and meet the Otter Falls A.A.'s.

There were perhaps a dozen men and two women at the meeting. They looked at me a little curiously when I came in--they were such a small group that a new face was noticeable--but they immediately jumped up and introduced themselves, using only first names, of course. There was quite a little flurry there at the door, and it wasn't until business had recommenced that I saw, glowering at me from a chair at the rear, Osborne Tapwillow!

I wasn't able to follow the meeting very closely, because I was all too aware of Tapwillow sitting back there, glaring at me. Every time I glanced back at him, his expression seemed to become a little more ferocious. It seemed likely that he'd

have something to say to me after the meeting.

And that was the case. No sooner had the meeting been declared adjourned than he bounded out of his chair and made for me with fire in his eye. "Look, whatever-your-name-is, what's the idea of following me around? I told you I didn't know what you were talking about. Keep away from me!"

"Hey, hold on," I said. "I didn't follow you here, Tapwillow. I didn't even know you'd be here. I just came to the A.A. meeting."

"You're lying!"

"It's the truth. How would I have known you'd be here? Anyhow, I'd given up on you."

He calmed down a bit. "Did you really come just for the meeting?"

"Sure."

"Are you an alcoholic?"

I told him about my cousin.

"Well, that's different," he said. "I thought you were following me." His face cracked in an unaccustomed smile.

"Could I buy you a cup of coffee?"

"Well, thanks," I said. We went down to the coffee shop.

He relaxed quite a bit over the coffee, and we chatted amicably enough, although I was doing most of the talking. I talked mostly about my work, and he told me a little about his job as bookkeeper for one of the coal mines. He seemed somewhat abstracted, as though his mind were on something other than our conversation. Suddenly he seemed to come to a decision.

"Look," he said, "you were trying to find out about me and this 'fandom' of yours. I guess there's no harm in telling you. It's kind of a screwy story, and I never expected to tell it, because it's about a time in my life that I'd rather forget, but hell, there's no real reason why I shouldn't. You know I'm an alcoholic anyhow--you saw me at the meeting.

"The thing about this fandom and me is that I was telling the truth when I said I didn't know what you were talking about. I honestly don't know anything about it. It was--well, the fact is that I was drunk the whole time I was in it. I just don't remember what I did during that time.

"I was in really bad shape at the time that I apparently began the, uh, fan activity. I was never sober--never at all. Sometimes I'd be drunker than others, that's all. Looking back, the whole thing seems like a dream--nightmare, I mean. I have flashes of memory of those years, but nothing coherent, nothing with any continuity. I was probably drinking a couple of quarts a day by then, so you can see what I must have been like.

"I still hadn't reached bottom, though. I hadn't worked for a long time, but I had some money left. The mine where I work now--it used to belong to me. I inherited it from my father. It took several years for me to drink it up.

"God knows how I got started on this fan business. I've got no recollection of it at all. Somewhere I must have got hold of a bunch of fan magazines. I had a habit of taking long tours in the car--why I didn't kill myself I'll never know--and I could have picked the things up practically anywhere in the country. Or Canada.

"Anyhow, evidently I got hold of these magazines and

decided to enter the game. I have random recollections of pounding a typewriter and cranking a duplicating machine, but why I was doing it escapes me. Apparently I spent most of my time at it, though. Fan activity and the bottle made up my whole life. And I seem to have gone through a great deal of both.

"The end came, as it had to. My money ran out, and I hocked or sold whatever chattels I had, and I borrowed or sponged where I could to get whiskey money. I was on Front Street by then--skid row. My wife had left me long before, and none of my family would have anything to do with me. I was panhandling for nickels and dimes. A bum, pure and simple.

"Then A.A. got me, thank God. I backslid a couple of times, but I haven't touched a drop for four years now--and I never will again, I hope. I'm through with the jug. Through with the fan activity, too. That went with the booze.

"After I sobered up and recovered my health I found this job and started to try and straighten out the mess my affairs were in after the drunken years. Among some effects my brother had stored for me I found files of letters and fan magazines. Thousands. I hadn't any idea what the things were all about. I did a little reading in the magazines I'd published myself, and I found myself entirely unable to comprehend why I should have taken the trouble. Of course, I've never been much of a reader, but all this stuff seemed pretty damn' silly to me. I wrote the whole thing off as just another of a drunkard's aberrations, and burned all the magazines and letters. I saw them, I guess, as another reminder of what I'd been before the A.A. straightened me out.

"And that's why I'm out of fandom. I sobered up, that's all. Tapwillow drunk and Tapwillow sober are two different men. About as different as it's possible for two men to be. And Tapwillow drunk, who was a fan, is dead. Dead forever, I hope. And Tapwillow sober--this fellow sitting right here--has no interest at all in your fandom. In fact, it strikes him as a damn' silly way for adults to amuse themselves."

Tapwillow leaned back in his chair and stared at me, awaiting my reaction to his attack. I said the first thing that popped into my head: "I think I liked Tapwillow drunk better."

He was taken aback for a moment. Then he gave me a really malevolent scowl. "I'll say it again," he said. "That Tapwillow is dead. And he's going to stay that way." We glared eye-to-eye for a moment.

He stood up. "I'll be going now. Goodnight." And he went out.

I swallowed the bitter remains of my coffee and left the cafe. As the elevator creaked its way to the third floor I mused upon the conversation. Well, I said to myself, I guess the Tapwillow mystery has been solved. Tapwillow the fan died four years ago. R.I.P. Too bad, too. He was a mighty fine fellow. A serious loss to fandom.

When I got home, I wrote to my Eastern correspondent, telling him the whole story. He wrote back: "I'm inclined to agree with you, that it's the wrong Tapwillow who's dead. What a shame that the fan personality isn't the sober one."

Still, you know, these fellows do sometimes fall off the wagon. If that happened to Tapwillow, it would be a terrible thing, of course. But there'd be a certain compensation in the fact that Tapwillow the fan would be brought back to life. Fandom can use as many of his type as it can get."

And that, I guess, is a fitting epitaph for Osborne Tapwillow, fan.

-The End-

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SERIOUS CONSTRUCTIVE MAILING COMMENT DEPARTMENT

A dozen zines from the 92nd mailing are on hand to be commented upon. That's not a great many, but actually it's more than I deserve. As I mentioned earlier, FAPA has sent me a great many magazines during my three years on the Waiting List. There was a time when I managed to acknowledge these zines with a card, if nothing more, but of late (for a year and a half, in fact) I've made no response at all to the good people who sent me FAPazines. That was a matter that couldn't be helped, as little as I liked it, but certainly a word of thanks is due those generous folk who kept me on their lists. I owe special gratitude to Bill Danner, Bill Evans, Harry Warner, the Busbys and Gregg Calkins, all of whom have had me on their lists almost from the beginning, and to the others who sent me zines as my name crept higher on the WL. Bless you.

Let's have at the dozen, now. First to hand is

SERCON'S BANE - Busby, F.M.

Radio listening hereabouts is pretty well restricted to the local station, unless one has an especially good set, or an antenna. We're cut off by mountains from towns nearby enough for decent radio reception, and these towns (Laramie and Casper, each 120 miles away) don't have very powerful stations. Their radio is of about the same quality as ours, anyhow, which means that most of the air-time is monopolized by popular music. To listen to much of this stuff affects me much like prolonged application of a dentist's drill, so my radio-listening is limited. This is one of the very few complaints I have about living in an isolated small town. I get to Denver every couple of months and to Los Angeles two or three times a year, so buying books and records etc. is no great problem, but I can't imagine a greater boon than to have within listening distance an FM station that played lots of good music.

Buz, as you know, I have good reason to be leery of entering a discussion in which I've heard only one side, and in your conversation with Speer I've heard only your end; but I do want to offer my congratulations on your statement, "Never once does (socialism) abandon the premise that the function of the individual is to serve the state, period." Well and neatly put. And

this fact, plus the necessity, under socialism, for subjecting all else to The Plan, demonstrates quite simply that socialism must necessarily become coercive and repressive. Life in a socialist state would, as you have pointed out, be a drab and joyless thing; but what is worse, it would be life under the iron heel. If socialism is to work at all, individual rights cannot stand in the way of The Plan; and even "the more 'civilized' socialist governments" of which you speak must in time become either coercive or less socialist.

What is most disquieting about this, to me, is the fact that there are plenty of people who stand ready to welcome this coercive system if they think there's something in it for them. We have a situation here in town that fair gives me the willies. There in one chain grocery store here, a fine large supermarket. Its prices are, of course, lower than those of the local merchants (who continue to prosper, however, because of the extra services they offer--deliveries etc.) and it has always done a very good business. Store and town were mutually benefitted: we townfolk were able to reduce somewhat the pressure on the family budget, and the chainstore company was able to make a profit.

Something over four months ago the Retail Clerks Union called a strike on this store. They wanted higher wages. They threw up a picket line.

Now the two big payrolls here are those of the U.P. Railroad and the Sinclair Oil and Gas Co. refinery, both of which are totally unionized. All the railroad and refinery workers immediately began to trade elsewhere. All the retail merchants, all the purveyors of services, who depend upon these union members for their livelihoods, and would have been boycotted if they had crossed the picket line, began to trade elsewhere. So with the professional men. So, in fact, with practically everybody in town. The store did almost no business. The big parking lot, which had always been jammed, now never had as many as a half-dozen cars in it. The daily losses to the store must have been tremendous.

But the chain has chosen to fight. It has, one assumes, enough money to bear the losses. But what if this had been a local merchant, with an independent operation? They'd have sent him into bankruptcy in a week, if he'd chosen to fight. He would have had absolutely no choice but to give in to the union's demands, no matter how unfair and unreasonable they might have been. And that, my friends, is power.

And it scares me. I've seen strikes before, of course, but never in a place where the labor bosses had such a relentless grip on the life of the town. These people have a huge club, poised to smash anyone who opposes them. When I look at that empty parking lot I can almost hear the goose-step rhythms of a brown-shirt squad.

Some few people do continue to trade there. The ranchers are not susceptible to union coercion, and our own office does not depend upon the good will of the labor bosses. Our people are free to trade where they will. Most of them choose to patronize the struck store. I do myself. I like to buy my groceries as cheaply as possible.

The pickets take the licence numbers of all cars with a "6"--Carbon County--tag that enter the lot, and the unions then check the numbers at the court house to see who's been crossing the picket line. If he's a railroader, he somehow fails to get his call for two or three traps, and he's left with a substantial part of his month's pay missing; if he belongs to the refinery or some other union, he'll be fined heavily. In either case, his name will be widely publicized, presumably so that he will be subject to social pressures from his fellows who are less independent. But there has been only a tiny number of such transgressors against the bosses' commandments; I don't know whether it's out of fear or conviction, but they present a remarkably solid front.

The people at our place, however, aren't quite as easy to handle. Our livelihoods aren't in the hands of a union boss who can fine us or keep us from working by kicking us out of the union. The unions have put on what pressure they can: they told us that they'd instruct all union members to turn in their credit cards for the filling stations that belong to the company we work for, and they put about the word that that if any of our people were transferred they'd see to it that they would be able to sell their houses, and their pickets jeer at you when you go into the store. But none of this has had any effect.

The odd thing is that the people who are doing the threatening aren't retail clerks at all. They come from other unions. And this is the matter that is at the root of the danger. The unions may legally combine and cooperate--in a word, gang up on an opponent. A man belonging to the plumbers' union, say, will be fined if he's seen trading at this store, because all the unions are working together to force this store to bend to a union's will. The unions, with this control over their members, and their legal right to gang up, hold in their hands a deadly amount of power. If two businesses were to attempt to cooperate, they would have the department of justice down on top of them before you could say, "Sam Gompers." But the unions have a free rein to cooperate as they see fit. Where's the equal justice under law?

And now let me go back to the point I started to make way, way back there: that there are plenty of people who would welcome a coercive system if they thought there was something in it for them. It appears that many, if not most, of these unionists feel that way. They cheerfully accept the levying of fines--or worse--upon a man who simply exercised his free choice of buying his groceries where he chose. "He shouldn't have done it," they say. "The strike's for everybody's good. We've got to stick together." Which is, of course, the most common excuse for tyranny that history records. It's what Hitler said as he marched trembling little old grandmothers off to the gas ovens, and what Stalin said as he decreed the starvation of a thousand toddlers. "This is for the good of the whole."

Or, to put it otherwise, The End Justifies The Means. I don't think so. I think it's evil. And it scares me to see this brute power in action. In theory, it's collective bargaining; in practice, it's a few men in positions of power who have decreed that a business must bow to their will or perish. That people go hungry "is for the good of the whole."

and so we come to page twenty-two (if I may borrow the Busby pagination system) and it will be, I now discover, the last page in the issue. This is the last stencil in the house, and today is the day that we polish off number one of volume two, so the remaining zines for comment will receive but short shrift. Not to waste time, we begin with SALUD: You disappoint me with your adverse judgment on The Tents of Wickedness; there are few things I find as delightful as good parody. There are not very many things as hard to do well, either. To write a successful parody you must first be able to dissect a style, to determine just what it is that makes it what it is, and then subtly switch its direction to east by northeast, so that it's recognizable but comical. Ira Wallach, whose Muscle Beach you enjoyed, is one of the ablest current parodists. He has a dandy on Tennessee Williams, entitled "A Tattooed Streetcar Named Rose." RAMBLING FAP: Lord, I hadn't realized that "Universe" never got into hard covers. When you think about the tons of crud that are embalmed in boards, it seems like the worst sort of injustice that "Universe" hasn't had anything but a 1951 paperback reprinting. This was one of the stories that changed the direction of science fiction, and it should be accorded the utmost honor. The "Who's Who" list was most interesting. There were a number of names that I'd never heard before, and others that were apparently run-of-the-mill at the time, but which today should have an asterisk: Berry, T. Carr, Elik, Eney, Raeburn and Warner. STEFANTASY & LARK: It appears that you've got the color printing problem fully under control; the cover and page fifteen are beautifully done. The register is perfect, and the colors, except for the olive on the test pattern, bright and clear. The back cover ad has provided me with a conversation piece for several months now. KLEIN BOTTLE: "The Kookie Jar" is a superior feature, and I'm surprised that somebody hasn't done this before. Kteic has been around for some time, but not, evidently, editors as perceptive as you 'uns. Celephais: (Forgive the typo: that should have been upper case) You have a typewriter, I see, with an umlaut. It must be a useful key. I have, from time to time, tried to use a little German in things I've put on stencil, and I've always ended up with an uneven pair of periods straggling between the upper and lower lines, when I tried to type an umlaut. French is even worse. If you haven't a key for it, how do you type a circumflex? BANDWAGON: This Gun For Hire is a good novel, worthy of a much more complimentary label than the "entertainment" that Greene gives it. But the movie, as I remember it, was unspeakably foul. The connection between it and the book was at best tenuous, and of course Ladd is the only living human with a face more expressionless than John Wayne's. I don't remember the name of the woman in the picture, but I recall that she impressed me as the supreme deadpan of all time. THREE CHAMBERED HEART, MOONSHINE, PHLOTSAM, and HORIZONS: You will find, as the years grind along, that I very seldom manage to comment on all the zines in a mailing. This time I've managed to fail to get through a dozen. Next time, however, as I keep saying, I'll do better.

That's the end of the zine. But I'd like you to note that this has been put through the mimeograph by Ellis T. Mills, P.O. Box 244, Carswell A.F.B., Texas, who does this sort of thing for hire, and does it very well, too.