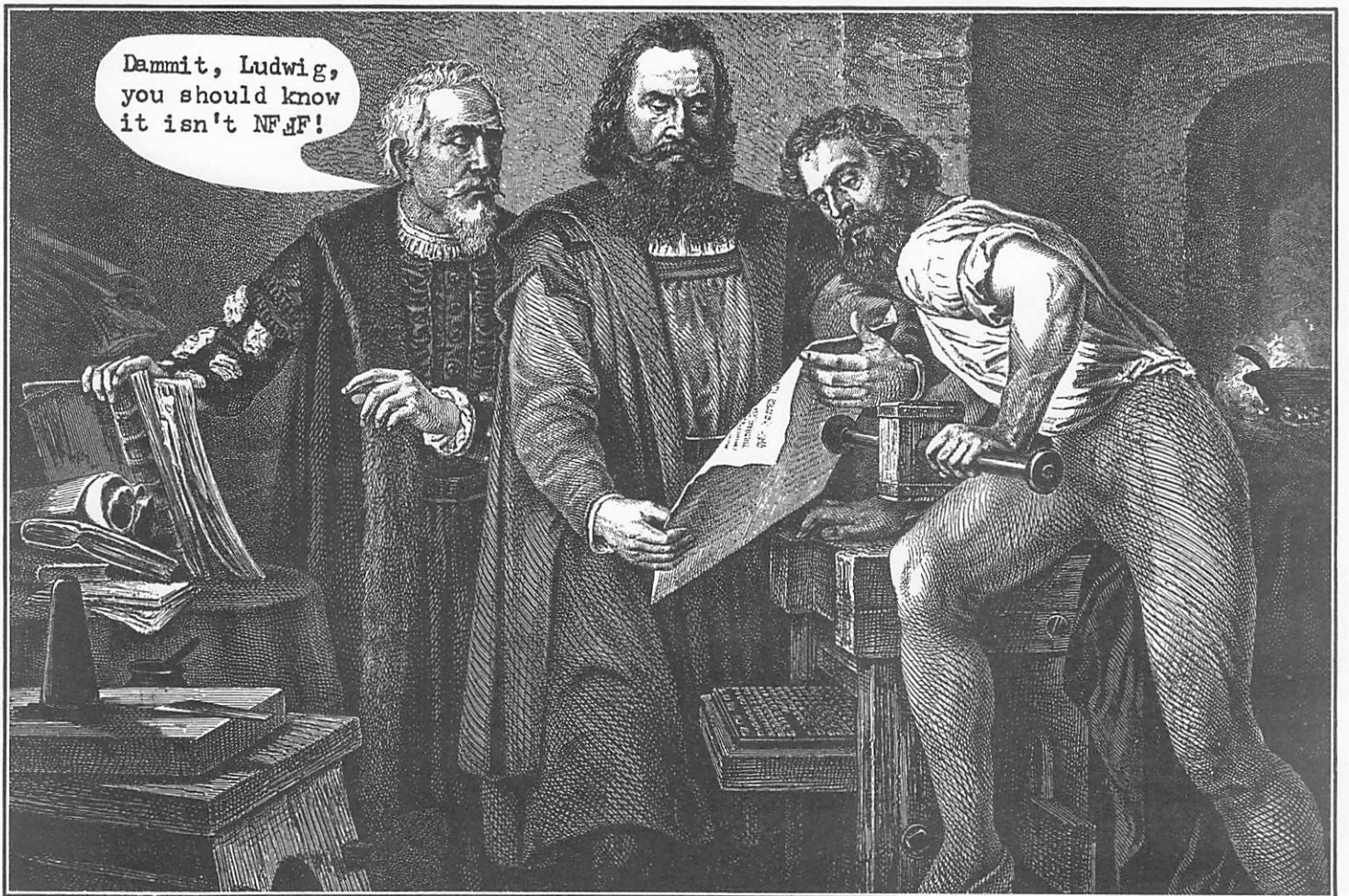


TIGHTBEAM 28



Here we go in a flung festoon, halfway up to the TIGHTBEAM moon...er, where was I? Oh, yes! This is TIGHTBEAM 28, the letterzine of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, for November 1964, and unless God comes across with a particularly malicious miracle it will be out on Deadline Day. Modern fandom has no respect for Tradition you know. This is Operation Crifanac CCLXV, and (aside from the letters)

It's Eney's Fault

THE EDITOR SPEAKS — at least, he does on several occasions here. While I'm not in agreement with the idea that the editor should say nothing, I've minimized my comments within merely because the ed does have a special advantage and ought not exploit it too vigorously when the opposition is not able to shoot back right away.

As far as technique goes, I've deferred all lengthy comments to a break in the writer's argument, so's not to interrupt the development of an argument; but short remarks went right into the text. I believe you may have heard Bill Rotsler's old joke about the folly of putting off all comment to the absolute end, so that the ed has to repeat the whole question to remind you what he's answering. "Back there where you were talking about the superiority of two-month-old oak leaves over fresh moss as to resiliency for bedding: I agree." In all cases, however, I've identified my stuff with editorial brackets, /like this/.

A little editorial modification went into the typography of the letters: the writer is identified in SOLID CAPS at the top of the letter, while those he's talking particularly to are underlined when named first. And unless the letter ends at the bottom of a page, it's tagged with a typed break-line, like this:

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And why shouldn't I comment myself? At least, on TB 27:

Don Franson: You say well and true about the Evil of Hollywoodizing Hugoes. And now, with a committee of pros to select candidates...with Harlan Ellison...ech!

Cuyler Brooks: For board games by mail, try asking Ted Johnstone or Bruce Pelz about "Diplomacy". John Boardman invented a postal version of that...

Liz Brodsky: "Anyone who is uncommon is a hero"? Uh, even Sauron, Dr. Wertham and Barry Goldwater? I threw one of those names in for comic relief, I should add.

Dave Ettlin: Don't go putting the Roman Catholics down for being members of the church they were born into. The problem of keeping children within the bounds of income despite the strictures of Holy Church is easily solved, or so research indicates: about half of American RCs simply ignore the regulations. Of course, if you take a dim view of hypocrisy too, that won't console you much; but it's your own fault for being so hard to please...

Phil Harrell: Hoo boy. As I shake off the mantle of Old Age ("the Tucker Balcony Insurgence...Those WERE the old days...") I see you're casting back to such times as happy and cheerful. No; crede expertum, the Balcony Insurgence was one gun in a fierce fannish feud that had a lawsuit and everything...

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Your editor for TIGHTBEAM 29 is Stan Woolston, 12832 Westlake St., Garden Grove, Cal., Zipcode 92640 — Deadline 15 December! Oh, and MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR, Stan! Write to him instantaneously, you people out there.

Letters

RICH WANNEN:

Ann Chamberlain: Why not have controversies like that with Eric Blake? I think it makes the whole club more interesting. And it gives people a chance to say things they couldn't say if they were talking about Flash Gordon!

Howard DeVore: Some time ago, you asked all fans victimized by a notorious Pennsylvania bookdealer to get in touch with you for a possible prosecution. Well, if you and I are thinking of the same schnook (Penna. should be plagued with more than one?) he's already gotten his...the dear boy was prosecuted for defrauding thru the mails and is going to sit on his can in the clink...and will be closely watched for some time thereafter. (About two years.)

Jeff Cole: ERB one of the worst fantastic writers?? Well, admittedly his science isn't very modern, but let's face it: most of his stuff comes from years when hardly anyone knew very much about outer space and "pellucidars". And tho his science isn't right by today's standards, it's still fun to imagine there is a grain of truth to his works and that it all could happen. /"I don't care what you say; I still believe in Tharks and thoats!" — Leigh Brackett, at the Discon./ Heinlein wants to make you think; ERB just wanted to relax your mind. I like ERB; but then, I'm of a rather childish disposition, which is beside the point...

Lee & Ira Riddle: Last TB was excellent. A good printing job, easy to read. Only thing I noted was that Eric Blake managed to have his name spelled at least six different ways. Oh well...

John Duvoli: Who do you mean by "we" in your comment on "Topics which we know little or nothing of..." You may not know about 'em, but I think I do. Sometimes, anyway. Just wait, things'll look up. And I think the ferocity of "insulting personal ideals" isn't quite as bad as you imagine. What goes on between Eric Blake and the anti-Blake fans (as I imagine this spurred your comments) is no worse, really, than what goes on when Johnson attacks Goldwater (or vice versa). /Are you bragging or complaining?/

Nate Bucklin: Education, eh? Well, I feel the education system is OK. It's just these misguided folks who demand that you have a college education that gets me. I go to college (lah-de-dah) but wish I was out somewhere right now earning an honest living. But employers, like a school of fish, follow whoever it was that decided that a man must be a Hah-vahd grad before he can hold a decent job. Mebbe the roaming spirit is just catching me, but I do feel something is wrong somewhere.

Pacificon Committee: Thanks a passell for a great con. As a filmfan, I especially enjoyed BARON PRASIL.

New Contribution dept.: I once suggested to Stan Woolston — and, curiously, haven't heard from him since — that it might be fun if someone in the N3F had some car bumper-stickers made up bearing the Neff crest. To sell, of course, not to be deducted from dues. Why not? Johnson and Goldwater have 'em, and so does Carlsbad Caverns. If a hole in the ground deserves a bumper-sticker, then why not N3F?

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DOUGLAS O. CLARK:

Many years ago I was involved in a Round Robin with a bunch of talented robineers and we were doing a story on the adventures of a bewitched Irishman and a great Power Mite named Vesper the Viper. If any reading this who were involved in that tale would like to try again, drop me a line (6216 Famous Ave., St. Louis 63139 Mo.)

I've always been intrigued, ever since I saw the first letterzine in the NFFF,

with the idea of using one page of it as a revolving full-club competition fiction serial and/or story. My idea was this. Suppose one writer opened the thing with a story background or chapter, which would be printed on the last page of the TIGHTBEAM. Then when contributors wrote in their letters to the TIGHTBEAM editor of the month they could also include their try, if they had the urge, at adding a chapter to the first. You're thinking that soon the letterzine would be all story and no letters. Not so. The editor need only print the latest chapter or page of the story with an acknowledgement of the author plus a small synopsis. He could choose the chapter, among the ones sent in, best fitting the story at hand, and use it, acknowledging the others or not as he saw fit. This would help in giving those who want to try their hand at fiction a chance without having to try a whole story at once, thus recruiting new members to the manuscript contest and recruiting for the fiction RR's new contributors.



I realize by my suggesting this I kind of place you out on a limb, as not wanting to set policy for future editors and publishers, but I think it would give more of the club as a whole to participate in a sort of contest...I am enclosing a possible starter which you can use or not.

/See the enclosed issue of STUPEFYING STORIES, closing page. I think the irregularity of contribution would be a drawback. Some of the APAs have tried this sort of thing, since they also have fanzines coming out at regular intervals; they found it best to arrange beforehand (by correspondence or something like that) who would write the next chapter, rather than trusting to chance to have somebody send in one.7

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PHIL KOHN:

I hope you will let me have an unshortened go at my various detractors! As if to illustrate my point, Seth Johnson used our mailing list for THE NATIONAL GUARDIAN, and very properly so in my opinion. Apparently they had the sense not to use the Spanish address, but it might as well have been any kind of radical or "subversive" paper, and the next mailing clerk may be less thoughtful. So I have two plain questions to Dr. Dupla: will it be no risk to you, to receive such a publication? I do not question your right to make your own decision in the matter; I merely oppose people making you take a possible risk which you may not have known of. And, second, assuming that there is no risk for a respectable MD — what would be the situation of the very likely next Neffer from Spain, a young University student with proletarian background and maybe an uncle with a "red" Civil War record, upon receiving, say, the DAILY WORKER? Assuming we can't help our mailing list from falling into all kinds of hands, what should we do? Incidentally, don't give medical advice without knowing what you are talking about, or carefully reading about the complaint. /Aw, c'mon, now! "MD" means the same in Spain as America...7 The point is that Dianetics, let alone autocontrol, is known to be detrimental when under the influence of any drug, even aspirin. Hubbard clearly warned of this. As soon as I knew my tooth was infected, I naturally went to the dentist, but for some time I was under the druglike influence of the infection without knowing it, and that's what I told about.

Most everybody: Your consciences seem to be working overtime, for staying out of politics. I took no stand, I advocated no political boycott (which would be strictly against the N3F constitution). I am thoroughly FIAHG about the N3F and proclaim we have no right to risk the freedom or lives of people who may not know what they are getting into, and, perhaps, cannot be warned without risk, since any discussion of risks would sound suspicious to some secret police types. Either way we are deciding for them, and I advocate failing safe.

Tackett: Towel? Bandages? A drink? I assume GEM has taken care of your "I thought you and Phil were close politically" and I suppose you're convalescing now in a soberer mood.

GEM: I didn't think disliking undemocratic governments was at all controversial. Even knowing it is, I still can't realize it. The point is, do they expect either THE NATIONAL GUARDIAN or my own political diatribes, when weighing up whether to join an apparently harmless overseas organization? Do they know they're risking anything?

Ed Bryant: I am in no way interested in anyone's faith, when proposing a bar, but in his residence. I would welcome known commies, birchers, etc., and am having a stimulating correspondence with near-bircher GEM who's sponsoring me in N'APA, and haven't resigned on Janie's admission that she's a s*gr*g*tionist, which I count about twelve times as objectionable as Communism. And let me make one point clear: once a person knows the situation, it is absolutely his own business what risk he or she wants to take.

Robin Wood: Censoring TB, N'APA, etc., is precisely what I'm trying to prevent! Even if it means cutting the mailing list.

Ned Brooks: Precisely! Every time an organization lets itself be intimidated, freedom is whittled down a bit. Can't be repeated often enough. And that's why we shouldn't get into the position of having hostages that can be hurt.

Buck Coulson: What it comes down to is discrimination against people with Spanish, etc., residence, not race, citizenship, or anything else. Washington DC residence means you can't vote! /Except for President -- and 1964 is the first year that's been possible./ I'd fight to death anyone who wants to discriminate against me as a Jew, but find discrimination against Israel mere normal political behavior. The point is to keep one's categories clear; I admire DeGaulle as a person, oppose his politics no more than any other conservatives, and perhaps less so, but his getting France into the atomic list makes him more dangerous to the existence of humanity than Hitler and Stalin together ever contrived to be.

Marc Christopher is right about world government and some other things, but, more important, he's a specimen case of the US Liberal ("Weimar democrat") and he's why Goldwater's going to win. /Gad, you do have slow communications.../ Frame his letter -- it's a basis for a doctorate thesis on the degeneration of liberalism. I can't even start to answer him here. But to all of you who say that this or that country is now "not so bad" I can only say that arbitrary power doesn't have to be exercised all the time, or towards all possible victims, and that the SatEvePost wouldn't write a thing which a catholic womens organisation might disapprove of. One shot at Franco or Nkrumah, and the respective police forces will go back to the worst phases, and you never know when that might happen.

Pournelle: "Prevention of a recurrence of the Civil War Franco's main aim"? And who started it at first? By all means put Ghana on the list; maybe most of Black Africa. Nazi material wouldn't make me uncomfortable, they'd think I was patriotically studying it, or being annoyed. But left wing Arab material might sic the police on me. However, since my eyes are open and I am a politically committed person, this need worry no one. On the other hand, any Arab living in an Israeli military government area /Phil writes from Eilat, Israel/ must definitely be counted as living in a totalitarian country, and if you accept his membership, you are morally committed to any demonstrative action or intervention that may be necessary on his behalf, or his family's. (Yes, they do victimize families; systematically, too.) Apologies to Dr. Dupla for not spotting him sooner, but I tried to find him on ear-

lier rosters, and couldn't.

Eric Blake: Yes, I specifically lump Commies and antis like you together as "The Scissors", whose blades are not fighting each other but freedom, and me, and which I must do my best to smash, any means allowed. On Israel, we almost agree.

Fergus: Ideas can do plenty of harm. So can movement of limbs. Still, I propose to kill anyone who tries to put me permanently in a plaster cast, or prevent my getting to know harmful ideas. And I mean that "kill". It's not a matter for argument. One should not let a censor live, if one can prevent it.

/Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice?/

Elaine W.: Where did you get the idea that my birthday is July 5? It definitely is not. Your thoughtfulness consists of refusing to recognize my existence as a person, substituting a standard "member of society", for which evisceration you are willing to do things, while ignoring my repeated protests as to my dislike of opening an envelope to find a contentless greeting card in it. Do you make your child play when he wants to read? I hardly doubt it.

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ERIC BLAKE:

Greg Shaw seems to believe that I am a fanatic because I am a Christian. If this is the case, then there are a great many fanatics around. /Are you bragging or complaining?/ Is everybody out of step but you? Does everyone believe, as you seem to believe, that writing a book which makes fun of Christianity is a proper thing to do? And, if you cannot bring yourself to accept the teachings of Christ, please refrain from ridiculing those of us who do.

I tho roughly agree with NFFF's refusal to affiliate with an international Communist front. I hadn't even heard of the ISFS, but apparently there is nothing that the reds won't try to infiltrate if they think they get advantage from it.

Marc Christopher is extremely short-sighted if he thinks that laws against the Communist conspiracy are unconstitutional. How can they be (except perhaps in the eyes of our pink Supreme Court) when the purpose of these laws is to defend our Constitution against Communism. You might as well say that it is contrary to Christian teachings to reject the temptations of the devil.

/They can be unconstitutional laws, whatever their purpose, if they act in unconstitutional ways, just as it is contrary to Christian teachings to reject the temptations of the Devil by, say, machinegunning His ministers. Punishing somebody who has not actually attempted some injurious deed is contrary at least to the spirit of a Constitution that holds mere words, however bloodthirsty, will never hurt the USA; similarly, "Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good" — not by being quicker on the draw with more&better evilness./

Jerry Pournelle's letter came as a distinct relief. I had begun to think that all the members of NFFF were anti-anti-communists. I don't know of any liberals who protest the Illinois law which he refers to.

For Grace Cox's information, I have read and enjoyed many of C.S. Lewis' works. They are at the same time good fantasy and possess a high moral tone.

Donald Miller's idea of a Game Bureau is an excellent one. I have always enjoyed chess, including the intriguing variation in which the initial positions of the bishops and knights are interchanged. And the new war games, such as Tactics and Diplomacy, are also very challenging.

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TOM DUPREE:

Huzzah to Jeff Cole for saying the magic words which will undoubtedly make him friendless: "In my opinion ERB was one of the worst sf writers that ever lived." At last it has been said! I must say that the first TB I ever received

was the one in question, and this is the first time that I have ever heard of a fan daring to say that about the Almighty Edgar. But I agree with him.

I have read each of the Martian books of ERB's, and have copies of same in my collection. They are merely Tarzan in outser space. May I add that I think the Tarzan books are the most tasteless "classics" ever penned. For sheer stupidity (loveable stupidity, but still stupidity) in literature, turn please to Edgar Rice Burroughs' comments on Green Martians and Blue Venusians and Purple Plutonians and what have you.

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EARL E EVERS:

Elaine Wojciechowski: Thanks for the birthday card. I have my own way of responding to fannish birthday cards though -- I send the senders the next zEPEn. Will this help stamp out fannish birthday cards? Seriously though I think it's in bad taste for any Neffer to criticize a fellow member for sending a card. Fen may live in their own little world but why discard common politeness?

Incidentally, it's a good thing receipt of your card was delayed -- as is generally known in Fandom I assume by now, I'm in the Army and was undergoing Basic at the time of my birthday. As a matter of fact I spent the 24th of June crawling through an infiltration course with real bullets going over my head. Which doesn't exactly put one in a birthday mood.

Buck Coulson: You've come almost around to my viewpoint on fan fiction -- if the field is suffering from lack of trained storytellers due to the lack of pulps and fans are the next-best source of new writers, where are the fans going to receive their training in fiction writing? Where else but in fanzines? As a matter of fact, the total verbage in fanzines these days seems almost to equal the erstwhile volume of the pulps. Now if we could just encourage more and better fiction in fanzines... But would the average 1964 fan read 1944 pulp fiction even if the quality was the same and the writers were fans? That's the big question right there. Anybody got an answer?

/Yes. See Alva Rogers' The Golden Age of Astounding (Chicago, Advent: 1964.)

I'd like to congratulate Roy Tackett for his intelligent, relevant, and well-presented editorial in TB #26.

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CLAY HAMLIN:

It's always a little discouraging to hear from a new member of the club who is already fed up with the organization for one reason or another. It happens quite often; there is something like a 35% mortality rate of non-renewals among the brand-new members, each and every year. I had always assumed this was because of their being people who simply did not have the fannish type of mentality; it simply did not take with them.

Maybe so, but the letters in the last TIGHTBEAM make me wonder a bit. I mean the ones by John Duvoli and Clyde Kuhn of course. No question but what Mr. Duvoli has a point, fans do enjoy arguments about many subjects, and they tend to put undue emphasis on their opinions at times. But that certainly is not all that goes on in this club; there are so many things going on, and so many people participating, that any person can easily find a type of activity that will be interesting to them.

As for Mr. Kuhn, I can only wish he had been more specific about the instances of inefficiency, bungling, and confusion that he mentions here. Be sure of one thing, Clyde, you can always get a hearing about such things by simply writing to the directors. Inefficiency there is bound to be. Just try to figure out a method of handling an organization of almost 400 members, who generally can be reached only by use of the mails rather than personal contact, whose members have at least fifty different ideas of what is worthwhile for this organization to be, where all

activity, except that of personal correspondence, is done by volunteer workers, and which, to top it all off, is strictly an amateur organization. Inefficiency, bungling, and confusion? Probably so at first glance.

As for half baked fanzines, I guess maybe they are. They certainly are not professional magazines by any stretch of the imagination. The editors have put a lot of time and effort and money into these, though, and will gladly welcome criticism of why they failed to interest you. And it is the easiest thing in the world to find someone to print whatever you might care to write on that subject, or any subject you care to write.

As for N3F needing a lot of good luck, sorry but you are wrong. The club has lasted over 22 years now, good times and bad, and will continue to do so, because they DO have something worthwhile to offer to a certain number of people.

Richard Mann has some sensible ideas about new fans. You simply can't just send in your dues and immediately know all about what is going on, or why. Fandom IS confusing, maybe especially so for N3F. A person can't immediately have things going just the way they would prefer, or be an important part of fandom and well known. But you can, in spite of everything, find a few others who are congenial, and have to offer exactly what you are looking for. From there on it is up to the individual just how deeply they wish to go into this business of fanning. A good many don't wish activity, and that is fine. For those others who do want something to do themselves, the club tries hard to give them the opportunity. That is what all these bureaus are for. No other way out that I know. So, Clyde, if you have some ideas of better ways, write me personally, and I'll see what might be done about it. If you are looking for some special thing in this club, maybe I can help. And if you simply feel you must drop out, sorry we didn't have what you were looking for.

As for Nate Bucklin, in his answer to John Boston (this gets confusing, doesn't it?), I know perfectly well there are some non-Neffers who think well of us. Just ask Janie Lamb how many new members of the club have joined on the suggestion of two professionals, Lloyd Biggle and Fred Pohl, in the past few months.

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G.M. CARR:

Harry Warner's letter brings into focus the unending circle that is N3Fdom ...in the "old days" he speaks about, it used to be the Neos who complained pitifully that they were ignored by the BNFs at Conventions, whereas now it is the BNF Harry Warner who complains pitifully that he was ignored by the Neos in the N3F Room! (Maybe this doesn't seem funny to anybody else, but it tickled my funny bone. That's what happens to BNFs that become so very exclusive — although Harry Warner has been doing his regular stint of LOCing right along, and if his name wasn't familiar to the neos, they must have been very neo indeed.)

Warner is right, however, in pointing out that "censorship" is exercised around us continually, whenever a merchant makes a decision as to the type of merchandise he stocks; when a TV network drops a program for lack of overt interest; or when some minor bureaucrat makes a "value" decision regarding some facet of our community life. Take the matter of so-called "floridization" of a city's water supply. Whichever side wins in this matter is exercising a form of censorship over the other side. In fact, civilization itself consists of subtle forms of "censorship" — who would dare to go to Church on Sunday morning, dressed up in the formal garb of a Fiji Islander, for instance?

Re SIASL: Ira Riddle loaned me this book so I could read it, and I was rather disappointed in it after all the brouhaha. just because it presents a non-Christian set of moral values does not seem to me to make it "anti" Christianity. /Aha, a believer in peaceful coexistence, eh?/ I found this book distasteful for the same reason: Farnham's Freehold was in places: namely, the author is apparently entering that stage in life where he is indulging in erotic day-dreaming to bolster his ego.

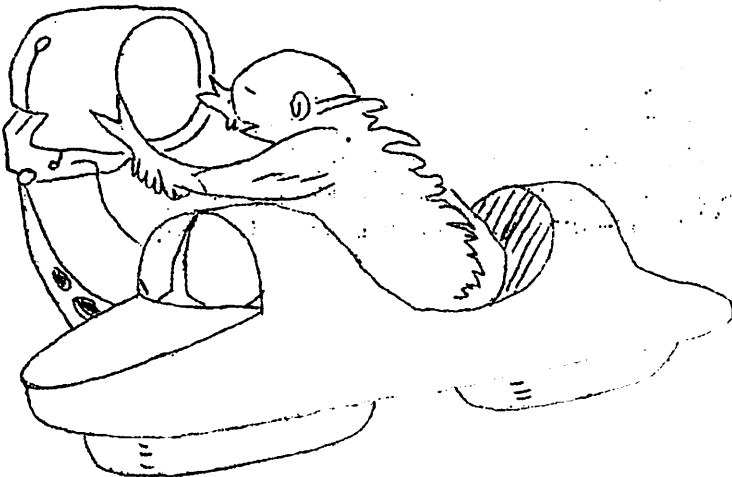
This is a biological condition that seems to afflict both men and women when they reach "a certain time of life". As in adolescence, they find vicarious satisfaction in dwelling on daydreams of sexual prowess. Usually this type of erotic imaginings is kept to oneself, but I suppose an author who has to grind out his daily stint sometimes finds it necessary to use anything and everything that comes to mind in filling up his daily chore, without taking time out to examine the source. Glory Road had a slant in this direction, too, though more orthodox in nature. As though there were something fascinating in the idea of a male with apparently unlimited capacity for females. Some men, when this "silly season" hits them, divorce their old wife and marry a young one; apparently Heinlein just sublimates to "silly-sex" in his novels.

But I do think some of the writers are a little hard on Eric Blake: if he is 56 years old, and just encountering the new mental horizons of science fiction, he is bound to be shocked at this upsetting of all the old "tried and true" values he probably has taken for granted all his life, before. Younger fans can take these mental, emotional, and spiritual upheavals in their stride — as part of the general upheavals encountered in the process of "growing up" and trying on new concepts for size...but it's a little harder to adjust to new ideas when the mental arteries are starting to harden.

Re the "Birchers": It is a documented fact (Congressional Record) that Communists in the US have been instructed to destroy the John Birch Society by any means they can. Including slander, vilification, and lies. Why? Because the JBS represents the strongest anti-Communist movement in the US at present, and because — difficult as it is for most people of good will to believe — there is a Communist Conspiracy. They really mean it when they say such things as, "We will bury you" — "Your grandchildren will live under Communism" & "...The US will drop into our hands like a ripe plum..." /Are you bragging or complaining?/ Most of the objection to the "Birchers" is vague; very few fans bother to find out what "Birchers" actually do or what their objectives are. When Lis Brodsky says "...what about the Birchites, their philosophy is almost akin to Communism, only on the other extreme" what does she mean? Does she actually know what their philosophy is? Or only what it is — vaguely — assumed to be from the nature of the objections to it? As Paul Gilster says, "Nor is it true that most conservatives are Birchers. The Birchers are definitely in the minority." Bue doesn't the fact that Communists are doing everything in their power to destroy this minority — using every Ellsworth Toohey technique described by Ayn Rand — ever make any fan stop and wonder why? Why do the Communists in this country (and in Russia) hate and fear the Birchers like they haven't hated or feared anything since McCarthy? It's worth pondering even if you don't believe there is a "Communist Conspiracy" dedicated to the overthrow of

this country just like it overthrew Hungary and Poland and is fighting to overthrow Viet Nam right now.

/Passing by GM's sales pitch, I may note for N3F's overseas members that the U.S. Congressional Record is not a body of official US doctrine; it contains the proceedings of the House and Senate and matter which any Congressman thinks of interest to his fellows. Appearance there does not mean that the Congress certifies the accuracy, or even the truth, of a statement; for that matter, GM doesn't even indicate whether the "Red Plot against the JBS" was cited as a fiction.



ALMA HILL:

Members who read my letter about the new service for writers, the Writers' Exchange, and the official announcement about it in TNFF, probably will want to get caught up with events; now this is still early days, as this is written. So no problems yet.

Don Franson put the Writers' Exchange in business with presidential endorsement as soon as he got his copy of the TB letter, superseding it before it could appear. So you can see that despite all the handicaps of distance, Neffdom can act with promptitude. But the letter still made plenty of sense for the membership, so they could see the foundation stages, and know what had been going on and why.

In fact, Don signed on as Exchanger #1. I hope he has recovered from the comments he got on the first story he sent through the new mill. He has excellent style, as we all know, but he does not understand conflict whether fictional or real, and that's not news either. It's a little-known fact of writing that fiction is somewhat ignoble compared to real people in real life -- maybe that's why it sometimes seems to be more interesting.

At any rate, I set up a pack of file cards and if inquiries come in, I send one of those with my address on the back so that it can be returned as a postcard if anyone finds it handy to do so. Unless it is filled out by a new Exchanger I forget the matter entirely; so anyone on this list is a bona-fide volunteer willing to take a good look.

The card reads: NFFF Writers' Exchange / Name / Address / Remarks / Volunteer club work -- no charges or other obligations, and I make them out with a pen, by way of indicating that this is not a machine operation but a matter of helping hands and personal judgement when and if. I also make up sets with carbon paper, to provide a one-page explanation of how the Exchange operates, just mentioning a few personal principles and some practical advice worth trying out. One of these goes to each inquirer with the file card, and pretty soon now I'll probably have it in a form that covers enough, so then I'll stencil it for mimeo and then all I'll have to do is write the inquirer's address on an envelope, stamp it, stuff it, and send it off -- even less time than the few minutes it takes now. So far there are seven listed and the Official announcement hasn't yet appeared in TNFF.

In a week or two or whenever I get the explanation page run off, I'll also probably mimeo the names and addresses of Exchangers so that all will know about all; that is simpler than setting up a seating plan. They all say a few things about their preferences but that may not be important -- the main thing is that a readership poll is a real help to some writers. It has all been very enjoyable and seldom crowded my time, so there's every good reason to hope that the Exchangers will be able to get exactly as much action as they wish, no more and no less, with regard to their own writings, with even less bother with clerical work than I have, in this simple way of operating.

About my personal fanac, I'm working on the second issue of my fanzine, WORDSHOP, and #6 of my apazine, ZZZ; might be able to work in fiction for general comment since both of these zines go to an unpaid limited reading group -- copyright first-rights are not disturbed and the author can still market it. Some editors will use fiction which had fairly wide circulation in fanzines, I hear, since this is still a drop in the bucket of national prozine circulation. However, legal opinion as far as I can find out is "less than 100 copies and private unpaid circulation". Therefore my fanzines are not open to new people right now -- Project Semi-Pro has various irons in various fires and can't stand any more additions at this time. But the Writers' Exchange provides the best part of the same sort of activity including whatever I've found out about improved methods, so nobody loses.

I wish the membership would help settle this question of how far a poem or story can be circulated via mimeograph, and still be ethically permissible to market as new material. The fanzine-forum has developed a lot of new writers. One editor (pro) who has seen fandom for a couple or three decades -- this applies to most of them but

this one was specific and emphatic -- says he feels that fandom is the only source of new stf writers. It certainly seems to be the only source of new editors in the genre; Cele Goldsmith and Diane Sullivan are exceptions but neither is a managing editor so they are not clear-cut exceptions.

Many people feel, and I agree, that all sorts of writing can be good practice to develop a talent for word-work. If the practice is specifically in stf, and the author can have the benefit of intelligent sympathetic (but not over-indulgent) reader-comments, improvement can be considerable.

Now none of this is likely to turn into a mass movement. Part-time writing makes up most of the material in the field, which is itself small and scattered. All I have is spare time myself, and all I'm trying to do is open a few possibilities for those who want to try them. Many writers will still prefer to go on their own and if that's best for them, good. I do better with advice, and best with advice from several angles -- so of course am best fitted to cooperate with those who find that way best for themselves. If a person writes two stories a year and reads maybe a dozen, I'd say that's average, though not enough to be called serious effort. But as many as ten carefully-written stories in a year is probably a good output for the amateur. Now suppose these stories turn up in fanzines; the author gets a fresh look at the work and realizes that it is full of faults and virtues he never noticed; he's being a reader for himself. This helps him to grow and improve; how could it fail to?

Fanzine fiction has been running too low in quality in recent years, because the near-pro writers haven't cared to lose possession of material likely to sell. If this question could be taken care of, we might see a big improvement in material available to fan-editors, and in the pro field derivatively. That would be nice.

There's a lot I'd like to comment on, as a member of this club, but maybe if I just stick to my own department it'll be enough of a share for this time.

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CHARLIE BROWN:

I finally got an issue of Tightbeam before the deadline for the next issue so I think I'll put my 2¢ in on number 27.

I've been around fandom for about 15 years but never joined the N3F before because it didn't seem to be the type of club I'd be willing to put much work into, and, like any other club, you don't get very much out unless you put something in. I've received some very interesting publications from the N3F over the years and have taken advantage of the free coffee at many conventions. That's what decided me to join -- I've had more than \$2 worth of free coffee, and by paying dues, hope to help the project continue. The welcoming letters were, for the most part, pointless and inane. One person gave me directions for joining a club whose meetings I've been attending off and on for about a dozen years. I had listed this on my application blank. The Welcome Committee could actually read the applications they receive; it might help them with their letters.

Lee Riddle wants to know what the readers think about editorial comments on the letters. Here's my opinion. I'm all for it as long as the comments come at the end of the letter and not broken into the middle of it. The editor should have some advantage to offset the trouble he's gone through publishing the thing.

I noticed a number of letters in the current issue complaining about the vast amount of discussion of religion, politics, etc., and hinting that these have no place in the column because most of the readers don't know what they're talking about anyway. There is some truth to this, but most teenage readers (physically or mentally) need a place to sound off on any subject they damn please and TIGHT-BEAM is as good a place as any. If they don't like it, they can always ignore these letters and write on subjects they feel do belong in TIGHTBEAM. I notice that Wally Weber ignores most of the discussions and uses his letter as a book re-

view. Everybody should feel free to do the same.

Phil Harrell's letter has some very interesting things to say about fanzines and brings back earlier memories for me, also. Time seems to have blurred his memories though...there were many nasty fanzines back at that time also.

I hope Don Franson's letter on the Hugos starts some sort of discussion in TIGHTBEAM. It's a very important subject at the moment and deserves a lot of discussion and some constructive ideas. I disagree with Franson's idea about an author category. They already have one. It's called Guest of Honor. I do, however, agree with him on the fanzine award. The average person who votes for the Hugo categories today just doesn't know enough about fanzines to make an intelligent choice. It should be in the hands of the people who actually follow the fanzines. I think Don is wrong in his objections to promotion ads, campaign letters, etc. The main trouble with the Hugos today is that not enough people are familiar with the eligible items. The publicity helps. For example, Harlan Ellison did a lot of pushing to try to get people to watch the TV production of Soldier which he wrote. Without the publicity, I would never have made any attempt to see it and might have missed a good program. (It wasn't very good, but it might have been.) If enough people push choices every year, it will be an incentive to read and see the items mentioned.

The plan I've been trying to push for the Hugos is very simple and might help quite a bit. It's merely for each voter to nominate a full slate instead of just one choice. This would not only give the nominations a broader base but would eliminate the problem of everybody's second choice not being on the ballot, even if it is the same second choice for everybody, because nobody nominated it for first place. The same trouble holds with the final ballots. I would like to see a Campbell type An-Lab rating system used for these. The final choice would be more likely to reflect the opinion of the majority in that case.

I've pointedly ignored the Hugo committee set up at the Pacificon because I think it's something that should be pointedly ignored. If they are trying to broaden the base for the Hugo nominations, confining the nominations to a small committee is not likely to achieve that effect.

As usual, Harry Warner has the most enjoyable letter in the issue. Any discussion would just echo his own comments because I can never find anything to add or disagree with in his letters.

JAMES WRIGHT:

Riddle: by all means comments should be inserted by the editor. Compare Tackett's TB with your own. Tackett's has a central factor, the editor; it has organization. It goes smoothly and efficiently, and seems like a dialogue among 3 people: the writer, the editor, and yourself. But look at 27. It is chaos; no organization or connection...Instead of dialogue, it reads like the committee reports in TNFF. You can bet that if I get to edit a TB, I'll interject plenty of editorial comments. Mostly because I want to participate...The editor deserves a chance to be heard, and what better way than interpolated comments?

Weber: Dogs do not go BOW WOW WOW. Just like fans don't go GOSH WOW WOW.

Mann: Spelling your name in lower case letters is a sign of immaturity? What do you consider CRY or FRAP or any number of fanzines? Fandom itself is immature, a friend of mine told me. Is it? No more so than the mundane world, I would say. But this spelling of name, why now? Simply because of a silly tradition: "someone who does not comply is immature"? This is logical reasoning, friends. It bugs me when someone grotches about tradition breaking...

McDonald: I fully support the doctrine of the Communist Party, both in the US and abroad, and advocate overthrowal of the United States of America and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat. I am active in the Communist Party, and believe Marx developed the ultimate government. /Are you bragging or complain-

ing?/ I happen to be slanted more toward Trotskyism than Stalinism, but I still support all actions of the Party, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. So just what the hell are you and the Directorate going to do about it?

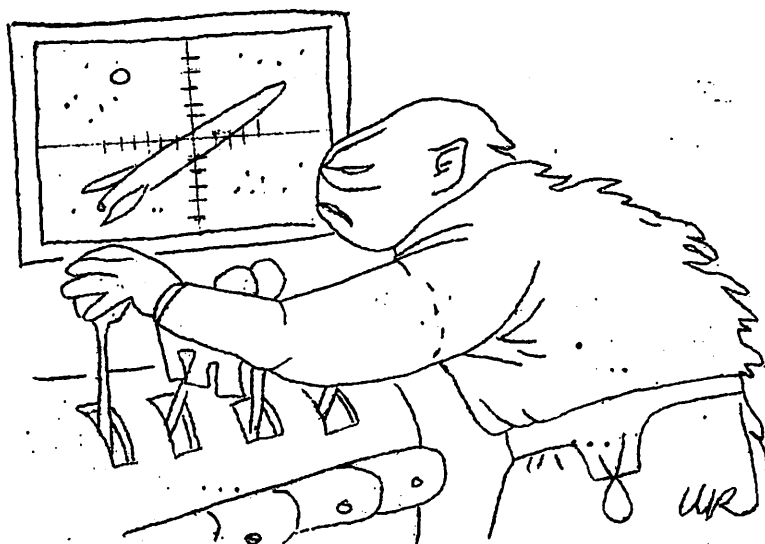
Apparently Bucklin is the only one to admit it, but I think the whole membership should be informed that Eric Blake is a Fake made up by Scheming Fans, to irritate N3F. Why bother with an obvious fake? I refuse to believe in Catholic Socialists and Jesus Christ fans. Unmask yourselves, you culprits!

Wood: I actually saw one of your letters being opened. I was up at Nate Bucklin's this summer, and walking along through the Dark and Evil woods of Vashon, he opened the letter you sent him. We were walking back the two mile (approx.) trip from the Post Office. He opened it, skimmed it, then tore it into a million shreds (approx.) and threw it to the winds. All he said was, "Sucker."

It is possible to recruit new fen. I was, through a giant conspiracy. It started when I had a letter printed in a comic. Then some fan saw it and wrote a letter to a gaffiated fan living in Richland. Then the gaffiated fan called me on the phone and told me all about the neff. That was the last I heard of it until I got a letter from Janey Johnson (whom Krueger has apparently never heard of) with more about the neff, and an apple blank. Also, she soon sent a batch of fanzines. All this persuaded me to join the neff. So I think you could say I was recruited...

The closest thing we've seen to world government would be the Roman Empire, not the UN. A world government need not be democratic. You could also consider the Communist Bloc, but that is breaking up, while the Roman Empire was unified during Julius Caesar to the next five or six emperors' time. And ruled what at that time was most of the known world. Now if Alexander's men could have gone on into India, Rome might actually have ruled all the world. Whether or not it would be for the best, we cannot say. Thanks to the Romans, we have most of the Greeks' gifts, while if the Persians had ruled, things would be different. Or the Carthaginians. I don't know. But for sure if the troops of Alexander the Great had gone on, the Mediterranean as a central unifying force would have been useless. I doubt if a Roman Empire containing India and China would have held together as long as the actual Roman Empire did. (Remember Thermopylae?!!!)

Warner: It is good to see you in TB. I don't think the neff really deserves you. Maybe you are just thinking this would be a good place to publish your History. Say, Franson, you were looking for a project for the neff, how about pubbing Warner's Fan History. Unless he has plans for doing so himself. But it would be appropriate. Warner's already made arrangements elsewhere.



ROY TACKETT:

Ah, this is a fine issue the Riddles have put out. What was it, Lee, multilith or what? Luverly. Although, of course, I lean toward Ira's viewpoint on editorial comments on letters. That's most of the fun of putting out a zine such as TIGHTBEAM — being able to interject comments into the letters. In the case of TB 26 it was the ham in me coming out. I couldn't resist.

Noted in TB 27 are a couple of sour notes. (Put 10¢ in the pun fund, Tackett.) Notably from John Duvoli. I think they are somewhat justified. People interested in speculative fiction join the NFFF expecting to find discussion pertaining to the field. At the present time in TIGHTBEAM most of the discussion, if it can be called that, seems to concern religion, and that, dear hearts, is not a subject that can be discussed because few are really objective about it /yes — and each of us thinks he's one of those few/; what usually ensures is an emotionally loaded argument that does no one any good. While I agree that the reason for TIGHTBEAM is to provide a place for discussion I strongly suggest that this is one subject we can do without. If you want to argue religion, people, do it in private correspondence, not in the pages of TIGHTBEAM.

/"I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd virtue, unexercised and unbreath'd, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat..." — J. Milton.7

Wally Weber: Psst. Hey, Wally, did you read Clay Hamlin's letter? He mentioned The Book. Yes, the very book that the Nameless kept trying to foist off on unsuspecting new members. Did you send it to Clay? Excellent.

Speaking of books — Pyramid has brought out The Ghosts of Manacle, a collection of stories by Charles G. Finney. Not all are fantasy (none are science-fiction) but all are excellent. This collection contains the very fine "The Life and Death of a Western Gladiator", which is by no means speculative fiction but well worth reading.

Also new is The Day New York Went Lry by Charles Einstein, which isn't particularly a good story, but is a good example of realistic speculative fiction in which the persons, places, and things mentioned are not necessarily fictional. Presumably it makes for a harder-hitting story if the author throws in references to real products such as Coca-Cola, for example, instead of fictional versions. In any event, this one could really happen and is fairly interesting reading.

Something old? Bantam has revived Doc Savage, with three Doc books now on the stands: The Man of Bronze, which is the introductory story, Meteor Menace, and The Thousand-Headed Man. I've picked up only the first one so far. The Man of Bronze, dear hearts, is pulp fiction in all its gory. This is straight from the 1930s (first printed in March, 1933, in fact) and appears to have been printed as it was originally written. I can detect no evidence of updating the story and consequently it provides some chuckles that weren't present 30 years ago. If the younger fen want some examples of what we were reading 30 years ago — and the older fen want a wee bit of nostalgia — spend 45¢ on Doc Savage.

Robin Wood: Of course it is possible to recruit new fans. All we need is a big campaign. Let's see, we could put up signs in front of newsstands all over the country: a picture of Tucker pointing a la Uncle Sam and saying "The NFFF Wants YOU!" We need slogans. "Fandom builds Fen!" /Are you bragging or complaining?/ Recruiting offices. We could fill them with old, retired fans who still want to serve. The rolls of First Fandom are filled with them: Doc Barrett, Jean Bogert, Ted Engel, W.S. Houston, to name a few. We could circulate pics of good-looking femme fans like... oh, there's no end of things. You do it. I'm tired.

Special for William Schumacher of Colorado Springs: Hi.

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STAN WOOLSTON:

Time between issue is a bottleneck for TIGHTBEAM. I am writing to some of my fanfriends all the time, and as of last week decided to ask them for letters to

go in the January issue so as to get it in early. Maybe a "manuscript bureau for letters" sounds silly, but if it helps get enough early letters so I can run off copies ahead of time for some of the pages, and the usual last-minute spate of "letters of comments" can then, I hope, be taken in stride. At least if it works I may be able to get it out earlier and relieve the next editor's need to be a machine pounding out stencils and grinding out pages and collating all in a frenzy.

When I write to the fans I correspond with I'll remind them you have an edition to get out, and also emphasize my idea that without waiting for the next issue a fan can pick a subject, or series of subjects, and originate letters. They can, in effect, be little essays — a page more or less, on a subject that interests them. They can in effect be "little columns" touching on what the individual fans want to write about. This may — and I hope it will — break away from some of the tendency to write comments on comments on comments, which occasionally need refreshing from those who do have original thoughts but who have gotten in the habit of making all TIGHT-BEAM letters into commentaries on what others have written.

It is easy for me to excuse the typo goofs — the letters left out and other mix-ups — in the current issue, with this rush in mind. Even with some early letters, which may arrive, I think grinding out 400 copies on my hand-crank machine is going to be an experience. That will mean well over 5000 sheets to run, collate, and mail. I intend to get the stencils, ink, and paper from cheaper sources than I usually do — otherwise the cost alone would be extreme. I didn't count that when I volunteered to do this issue!

I've been wondering how two #24 can be followed by a #27; did someone count wrong? Maybe it is the thing to do to have two of each number now, though. /The affluent society?/ The cover is distinctive and useful except for that number, which confuses me.

As usual I read lots in the issue I agree with and some I don't, and while individual expression is fine I'm not in the mood for it now, except to comment on the editorial difference mentioned by the ElderLee Editor: personally I'll probably try to keep comments to a minimum as footnotes and include a letter of my own to double as editorial rebuttal. Or maybe I'll fix up something to remind people that in January if they haven't renewed their memberships that TIGHTBEAM will be the last, for apparent reasons. I hope people will renew before then — being on the Renewals Committee it would help Ann Chamberlain and Kaymar Carlson as otherwise we may have to write those who have delayed, and with this issue my end-of-the-year time is going to be limited.

Starting a new year is logical time to look again at your fanac, and I hope those who want to be active in N3F will check the new officers at the first of the year. There may be few changes with the regular officers, but it is a logical time to think of being active, including those who were new members last year. When a member joins they may find the information asked for on the membership blank a little confusing; after their first year it should be understood.

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LEN BAILES:

Well, well, the latest installment in the thrilling adventures of SUPER TIGHTBEAM reached my doorstep today. Will the evil Dr. Blake be boiled in oil and pelted with copies of Stranger in a Strange Land for all eternity? Will Abnorm Metcalf ever find a fanzine devoted to science fiction? Will the entire N3F resign en masse? All these exciting and thrilling questions remain to be answered in the next action packed episode! I can hardly wait. Actually, I have a confession to make. I hardly ever bother to read TIGHTBEAM. The arguments don't ever seem to change, as Harry Warner points out, just the names on the letters. I do, however, want to write to TB 28 to hand out some egoboo and take care of some Club Business. (Confess, Eney, did you read the last TIGHTBEAM?) /How do you think I found out I was going to be editor this time?/

I thought Richard Mann's letter was a perfect answer to the angry grumblings made by several neos about How Rotten It All Is In N3F. As a matter of fact, the thing shines like a beason amidst some of the other letters in the issue. Of course we'll always have these fanatics like Weber who cling to outmoded and ridiculous beliefs. (Bcw wow, indeed! All enlightened people know that dogs go Arf! Arf! Don't you read "Little Orphan Annie", Weber? Are you some sort of subversive?) /In your heart, you know he's right./ But, for some reason, TB #27 cheered me up immensely. It's almost like the thing was a representative sample of fandom. 85% of it might be considered crud — by which I mean absurd insult throwing, ignorant blatherings, etc. — but the other fifteen percent was very enjoyable. Intelligent and articulate expression of opinion and even a little humor were present. In addition there were several letters from serious people engaged in worthwhile fannish projects. It sort of makes me feel that despite all the talk about how Blech the N3F is, and how neoish, there are still facets of the club that make it a worthwhile organization not only to rank neos, but to other fans as well.

Alma Hill (I think it was Alma) suggested a worthy project in one of her letters to me. This was the establishment of an N3F Mimeographers Squad. I'm always getting letters from fans wondering where they can get various items mimeoed. And after all, Redd Boggs can't handle everyone in fandom. As chairman of the Follow Up Bureau, I'd appreciate it if anyone who has a duplicating machine and would be willing to use it to run off stencils for Neffers would drop me a line. Let me know how much you charge per given run, the type of machine you have, and send a sample of your duplication. I'll compile a list and circulate it in FB, the Follow Up Bureau zine, and maybe get it printed in TNFF. Remember, though, if you volunteer be prepared to make good. Possibly later some kind of Stencilling Battalion could be set up, too, but let's take one thing at a time. Anyone ever hear what happened to that Fandbook on Publishing that the Clevecon Committee was going to put out?

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CREATH THORNE:

I was extremely sorry to see the letters by Kuhn and Duvoli in the issue of TB. Not sorry for myself or the club, but sorry for these people who cannot find the enjoyment that is present in the club. It seems that Clyde did not even take the time to see what he was condemning before he wrote his letter. He calls the N3F "inefficient, bungling, and confused". "Inefficient"...probably the N3F is as organized and efficient as any other fannish organization. "Bungling"...in a number of cases, N3F projects have had great success. "Confused": only if you don't even take the time to find out what is going on...

I'm wondering if Phil Harrell doesn't overstate his case, but no doubt some of the things he says are true. Still, I find it hard to believe that the demise of the fannish prozine would cause such a great change. There was the Hugo award to compensate for this: I think, rather, that probably it is due to the change in men all over the world, and due to our rapidly changing culture. Perhaps a return to "the good old days" is impossible at this time.

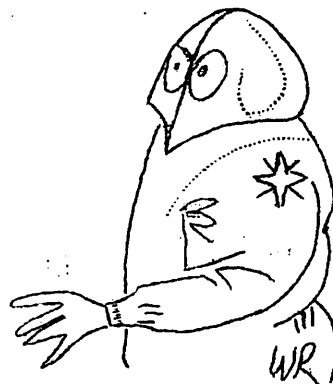
Just by reading Norm Metcalf's letter, one can tell that he is obviously devoted to SF to the extent that he decries other important and worthwhile things simply because they are not SF. He has got the wrong idea here, and it seems that he is not going to change it. His operation of the Collectors' Bureau was, let us face the facts, not of an extremely high quality...Actually Norm admits that he was not cut out to be a Bureau head when he says that he never answered letters personally about it. Good grief, man...It would not be a great effort to answer the few letters that might come concerning the CB. I have a feeling that the only reason you didn't work for CB was because you felt that it was getting away from SF.

Oh, by the way, Nate Bucklin, and others; I am sorry to report that the Burroughs Bibliophobes has already been formed than therefore we cannot have the honor of setting up the organization and being charter members. However, we can still be

members in good standing. I remember reading in N!APA where one fan had accused another fan of stealing his idea of the Bibliophobes, and surely we don't want to cause dissention among our ranks since they are small.

I can see how Harry Warner feels about writing letters to TB, even though I don't share his ideas of fannish ethics. It seems to me personally that one should write as well as possible at all times and not worry too much about the length...But I do share his frustration of seeing an issue of TB that deserved much comment, and finding that I must limit my comments to a page or less. I thought that this issue was much more commentable than the previous issues that I have seen. I can think of several reasons why this might be true.

1) The format was very, very good. I'm not sure if this helps commenting, but it does make for an enjoyable mag. 2) Not so many comments by the editor. I feel that the editor should make some comments, but the flux of comments in the Tackett issue was just too much... 3) Material from the readers that is more varied. I would suggest to any potential TB writer that they try to comment on something else beside the large areas of controversy in the zine. This makes for a more enjoyable zine, both to read and comment on.



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DON FITCH:

One of the great Dreams of Fannish Glory has long been the emergence on the scene of some hyper-enthusiastic neofan with a linotype and a printing press (or a varityper and an offset press), an infinite amount of spare time, lots of money, a burning desire to publish a thick fanzine every month, a reasonable degree of critical and editorial ability, and no pretentions towards writing himself. It sure would be nice if the Riddles fit all those requirements; TIGHTBEAM 27 would have been an adequate first issue of the Greatest Fanzine Ever, and as it is, it's a very good TB.

I'm all in favor of Roy Tackett or Wally Weber interposing editorial comments in the letters, or adding them at the ends, but very few of us have their consummate talent for keeping such interjections witty and amusing without becoming insulting, annoyingly overbearing, or choking off discussion in the following issue. As a rule, I'd prefer that the editor make his comments on a sheet of paper, and mail it to the following editor, but this seems to be something which ought to be left up to the individuals who devote their time and energy to publishing TB, and not important enough to establish a Strict Rule.

John Duvoli may be right in saying that fans speak out too much on topics they know little or nothing of — though with a bit of practice it's possible to detect when someone is merely stating his opinion (which many people do much of the time) and to judge their opinions on the basis of their apparent knowledge of the topic — but that fans commonly engage in "insulting other persons' ideals, religious beliefs, etc." does not seem to me to be quite correct, save in the case of a minority who have not yet learned how to express themselves with adequate tact. What most of us do is to challenge other people's opinions, ideals, and religious beliefs. This is sometimes conducive merely to an Emotional Reaction, but much of the time it leads to a re-examination of these important things, which sometimes results in a change of mind, sometimes to a greater conviction of rightness, and often to the acceptance of the validity of other points of view, even though they are very different from one's own. It is this challenge of the Established Order which is the core of Science Fiction, and the quality is naturally to be expected among fans.

I hope Clyde Kuhn doesn't discourage many neos from joining the NFFF; it isn't all that bad, and can provide many helpful hints and rewarding acquaintances, if one

uses a reasonable amount of discrimination. Look through the letters in TB; those writers whose opinions agree with yours are hereafter the Good Guys, those whose outlooks disagree with yours are the Bad Guys, and you're all set for many years of fine fannish feuding. Or, more seriously, the Neo can look through those letters and write to the people he thinks he'd like to know, discussing what they said and maybe asking for their fanzines, if they publish any; if he's reasonably active, and has very much on the ball, he won't be a Neo any more after a year or so.

Norm Metcalf seems to have constructed a very specialized definition for the words "fan" and "fanzine", by limiting them to persons or publications primarily (or perhaps entirely) concerned with the reading and discussion of Science Fiction. My own definition, which may approach more closely the concept held by most people who consider themselves part of "fandom", is more along the lines of: "a fan is a person who has the sort of mind which enables him to enjoy reading (and perhaps talking about) Imaginative Literature — the type commonly called Science Fiction and Fantasy." I don't know for sure how fanzines originated, but the three main types we have now can be traced back to the very early days: 1) The Imitation Prozine, usually with an editorial, reviews of SF books, fan-written science fiction, and possibly with a letter-column. I gather that this is the only type for which Metcalfian Purists will permit the word "fanzine" to be used; they are most often published by neofans, and are usually of a rather low quality. 2) The Little Magazine; very similar to the Imitation Prozine, though often less rigid in format, but with little or no attention paid to science fiction. These are often Type #1 zines after the editor and his regular contributors have discovered that they've said everything they have to say about stf, and they are often influenced by the literary "Little Magazines", with perhaps some infusion from the mundane Amateur Journalism field. 3) The Letter Substitute: — a rather inadequate phrase to describe some of the extremely elaborate publications in this category, but it covers their Essential Nature. These may, indeed, be the True Origin of the fanzine — an outgrowth of the always-too-short lettercolumns in the old prozines, combined with the desire of those letter-writers to correspond with an unmanageably large number of the other letterhacks. This aura of interlocking mailboxes is prominent in most fanzines today, becoming most extreme in the apas. Naturally, very few publications fall wholly into any one of these categories, and most have some element of all of them. Until someone thinks of a more satisfactory word, which is printable I'll continue to call all these sorts of publications "fanzines" and the people who publish them "fans".

I believe it was Ed Wood, some months ago, who Put Down neofans for turning out poorly-written and wretchedly-duplicated fanzines. Perhaps someone with a better collection than mine can direct Mr. Wood's attention to specific examples of the early fanzines of Ray Bradbury, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Bob Silverberg, Ted White, Avram Davidson /huh?, Jim Blish, Don Wollheim, and Harlan Ellison, among others. The percentage of poorly-written crudzines among these is extremely high (roughly 80%, by a conservative estimate), yet all these fans went on to be professional writers, editors, or publishers of some note. Three of them, at least, owe the larger share of their reputes to the effort they put into selfadvertisement, I'm afraid. It might also be worthy of note that most of those fanzines were not primarily science-fiction oriented at all, and that the 7 of those named who still publish or write for fanzines rarely talk much about SF. But Ed probably does have a good point; the neofan would be well-advised to stick to writing letters of comment and acquiring some of the better fanzines for six months or so before he begins to consider publishing for himself; this may spare him some later agony of looking back on a really terrible first issue of his fanzine, and maybe the expense of buying up old copies of it to burn.

The problem of Neofans not being Accepted by BNFs and Pros has been raised, and pretty much settled by some of the more perspicacious neos themselves; the neo who is reasonably polite will usually be treated politely, though there are exceptions to this. Both established fans and professional writers are very busy people, and it does not seem unreasonable that they sometimes simply have to ignore people they

don't know. On the whole, this is not a policy on their part, but is something they are forced to do by the inescapable fact that there are simply not enough hours in the day, and they naturally devote their time to those things which are most profitable to them...but this is material for an article, one of these days. Any neo wanting helpful advice might do well to read Richard Mann's letter on pp. 7-8 of TB #27; about the only misconception I can detect in it is the idea that "cliques" are the result of new fans coming into fandom at the same time. This is only a partial answer, since many "cliques" are composed of individuals who have particular interests or outlooks in common, and the neofan who shares them will not usually find admission difficult (if he can avoid being misled by the fact that these people say often some pretty blunt and insulting things to one another — they can do it, because they're old friends; a newcomer would do well to avoid plunging in with too much familiarity too soon). The little circles of people who came into fandom about the same time don't often last more than a few years; re-alignments take place, perhaps because people change with time.

Maybe John Boston would resign from the NFFF if the organization expelled a member because of his political philosophy or religion, but I wouldn't — not until I'd done an awful lot of talking/writing, and made an attempt to impeach the officers responsible for such an expulsion. (I'm assuming that the majority of the members are too devoted to the ideals of intellectual freedom to condone such action.)

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ANN CHAMBERLAIN:

TIGHTBEAM 27 reaches me three days before deadline, full of all those (ugh!) letters from cranks and hecklers who still are fannishly wet behind the ears. Let's set up an award for these people...two rotten eggs in the eye at the next con ...or take a vote and give them back their money and blacklist them. This is undeserved slander and we have no recourse for compensation...no laws by which to settle such rancor. Not wanting to give them any satisfaction by mentioning their names directly, I move that all such remarks be recorded permanently for the shame of such persons, and let them be barred from conventions, or at least from the N3F Hospitality Room at conventions. What is the matter with us that we keep turning the other cheek? /"Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him" — Proverbs xxvi:4/

I have been a member of N3F (this time) since 1956 and in that time I have enjoyed many wonderful friendships and very pleasant N3F activities...mostly correspondence. I have seldom found any N3F members who were remiss in appreciation except newcomers who have somehow been misinformed as to the status of N3F in fandom. I think we'd better take a poll and find out who is doing the foul whispering...if any. What started as a joke has become highly misplaced humor.

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RICK BROOKS:

The N3F loses too many kids like Clyde Kuhn because the Welcommittee paints them a pretty picture that just isn't so. We have no right to call ourselves the best organization in fandom until we become head and shoulders above everybody else /and in all fields of fan activity, too/.

Admittedly most of the problems that beset the N3F are incapable of solution. This doesn't mean we ought to sweep them under the rug and try to appear like the answer to every fan's dream just to snare new members.

No, I do not intend to do anything about this matter. I have college to consider and I'm not bright enough to devote much time to outside interests. Besides, I have no idea how to go about improving things.

It seems to me Ira should have specified N3F fandom for his two big arguments. The rest of fandom was pawing about some guy named Breen getting barred from a con.

at least that was it the last I heard.

Phil Harrell has a good point. Fanzines now days have developed into petty backbiting. At least, in the old days it was epic backbiting. /Don't worry, the current fusses are epic enough.../ Insert here a good word for N3F member Buck Coulson, who tries to keep YANDRO out of this sort of thing.

Lis Brodsky says she is sorry for Eric Blake's being all alone in this club. He probably glories in it...the worse the trials on Earth, the better the reward in Heaven.

Nate Bucklin says anarchy isn't perfect because people aren't perfect. This is the reason why no type of government works very well. I am for government by computer myself...if I can just decide who's going to do the programming.

As GM Carr says, totalitarianism is a matter of definition. This country is seriously infringing my individual rights by not allowing me to punch out some of the politicians responsible for the political commercials drummed at me night and day. So you see we're getting to be a totalitarian state already...

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DR. ANTONIO DUPLA:

Shaw: Well intended though somewhat impulsive. Yes, it's doubtful that anybody would risk his life for reading fanzines. I don't know what kind of authorities pullulate in foreign countries but to imagine myself asking them to OK my reading TB sounds simply ludicrous. I agree with your comments about "Phil Kohn and the Spanish Neffer". As for the first part of your letter, yes indeed, those you refer to are heretics, at least for the believers. Read your dictionary.

GM Carr: Thank you.

Ed Bryant: I find your comments acceptable, but they grow in me a doubt. If there were a Communist in the N3F, should it be kicked out for the peril of official intervention with consequences for the organization; or for fear of contagion; or for being so despicable as not to deserve speaking to?

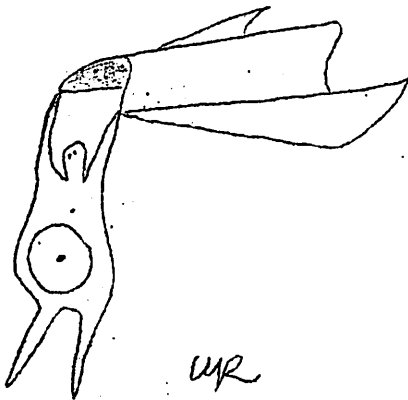
Robin Wood: Your inclusion of Mississippi was a good one.

Ned Brooks: Right you are on "PK&SN". In pure truth every time I heard of people having a certain level of security clearance I feel sorry for all of them. A person can or not be fit to have access to classified information but to have such people stratified in different levels of deserved confidence is ridiculous if not tragic.

Buck Coulson: Fine, thanks.

Mark Christopher: Thanks. But, is not to be a conservative to like things as they were? And yes to you and Roy; it's all confusing...Yes, dictatorship has many of the ingredients of efficiency (not all, of course) — but is efficiency the ultimate goal in government? The idea of a World Government sounds good, but if it turns totalitarian and of the virulent species, where can you fly in exile if necessary? To an orbit?

Jerry Pournelle: You always treat soundly that about which you write, as now. As for your question, Franco is Chief of State by election of the governing body, in Burgos (the then Junta), the first capital of the National/Fascist zone (as it was called respectively in the same and the Red/Republican, id) in 1936. And on the currency is put "Francisco Franco Caudillo de España por la gracia de Dios" or "FF Leader of Spain by grace of God" so you can see he has the investiture from the Highest. /Before witnesses?/ But he is also the Regent of a Monarchy, as was voted in the referendum of 1946 when a great majority of Spaniards voted yes to a Law of Succession so complicated that few people cared to read it and less chanced to understand it, but which they interpreted rightly as a token of confidence and approbation of him. (It was so.) The Monarchy is as yet acephalous, though with some pretenders well interplayed by his down-to-earth realism, as a Gallego that he is (=Missourian in your country). /I.e., in the "show me" sense./ And none of them with the least chance of establishing himself firmly as king in the view of a not lesser majority.



Confusing always, and rather more as for the future.

Felice Rolfe: I am, and very much, interested in ASF. Would you mind sending me your price for what you have from 1942 to 1955? Excepting those that I have: 48 Sep, Nov; 50 Mar; Aug-Dec 51, Jan-Mar, May, Aug-Dec 52; Feb-Jun, Aug-Oct, Dec 53; all except Apr and Dec 54; Jan, Mar, Apr, Jun, Jul; 55 Jan, Feb.

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PHIL HARRELL:

I received my TIGHTBEAM 27 today, and I must say it was every bit as magnificently done as I expected it to be. I think Lee might even be forgiven for the lateness of it, although to make the deadline I'll have to use a special delivery letter as the deadline is October the 15th and to-

day is October the 14th. But then in fandom missing deadlines is a way of life.
/Don't worry — you made it./

I think what I most enjoyed about the whole issue was ~~my letter~~ the last paragraph of Ira's editorial where he was talking about how he always got TB a month late...well, I figure he didn't want to break with tradition.

In the other editorial on the other side of the page I notice Lee poses a question: "should the TB editorial staff interject their comments into the body of the writer's letter?" I think this mainly depends on 1) who the editor(s) is/are, and 2) whether I felt a comment there would help. I think they could be put at the bottom of the letter without harm to either the writer or letter, and if I was doing a TIGHTBEAM and felt the comment had to be made then and there I'd give out with an editorial remark and then continue with the letter.

Now I come to a letter I have to agree with. Never in my entire existence as a fan have I EVER seen a MORE apathetic group of people than those that received the COLLECTORS' BULLETIN. Not one of them took even the trouble to notice it had arrived, and you wonder why Norm Metcalf didn't have any interest in it. How could he? You didn't; none of you but Dr. Robert S. Rozman took the time to write and give the information I asked for for the file. I supplied (with the help of Ned Brooks) all the materials and when I sent a bill for it the Directorate merely said they'd consider it and now sit there procrastinating whether to pay it or not. I'm not that rich; I don't think Norm Metcalf was either. If you want a Collectors' Bureau I think that some interest should be shown — that you not exhibit this "Gad! Another fanzine!" attitude that currently seems to prevail. You sit there waiting for someone else to do something and figure when nothing comes forth it's my fault or Ned Brooks' fault or anybody's fault — but whose is it really? YOURS!

Being a Bureau Assistant Head might be an ego-plum for some folks, but for me I like to see a little return for my money. I don't like to just type stencils to hear the clatter of my typer or run off a CB just so I can have something to do with spare energy, stamps, paper, time, and money. I like results and I haven't gotten one small result out of the whole business. Like Norm said to Fergus: "you wanted something for nothing?" But unlike Norm I answered letters and asked for material and artwork.

I sometimes wonder if there's an ounce of appreciation in the whole of N3F. How often has anyone here written Janie Lamb to express the deepest appreciation for all the monumental job she's done all these years? And the TIGHTBEAM editors, the TNFF editors and Publisher. Do you realize that Wally Weber sits up until 2 and 3 AM putting together your OO even though he has to get up at 6 AM or earlier the next morning to go to work? And this isn't just one night but about 3 different nights running off the pages, collating, stapling; pasting on labels and stamps — no; all you can do is sit back and say, "My TNFF was late this month" instead of

"Thanks very deeply, Wally, for a fine job well done." And Norm also brought up another important point: no one is paying us a cent for doing this. In fact most of us that publish for N3F are lucky if we even get back the money we put into it.

Does anyone realize how very grateful they should be to the legion of people that do things for N3F? The next time you feel tempted to complain about "my TNFF/TIGHTBEAM is late" remember these people have other jobs to do to make a living and you're lucky to be getting a TNFF/TIGHTBEAM at all. I for one want to express my deepest and most heartfelt thanks to Janie Lamb, Wally Weber, Lee & Ira Riddle, and the others for a magnificent job well done and to all who have done things to make the N3F an enjoyable club to belong to. And to the rest of you apathetic souls I give my pity -- and my scorn for feeling the way that you do.

I guess that's all I have to say, I'll let you get back to your apathy.

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MARIJANE JOHNSON:

I'm not at all sure that this is going to reach anyone in time for anything, things seem to be that way all over these days, but may as well try.

So, if TIGHTBEAM is for various and sundry messages and what have you, a mere Christmas message shouldn't cause a ripple, even if it doesn't show up 'til '65!

I'm finding that many too many nice people have gone under the bridge for me to remember each individually, but those people, as individuals and as Neffers, hold an important place in my affections. So, all who know me, & that no doubt has been quite an experience, & also to those newer to N3F, a ghoud club as we all know, I'm wishing a very Happy Holiday Season!

With all best wishes, "Janey" & "Clancy".

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THE CLAUDIUS:

As a general rule I like to avoid fan-feuds and such, but people like John Duvoli get under my skin. I would like to know why in shrdlu he joined the N3F if he is unwilling to take part in a little lively discussion. If it is his policy to live and let live, what does he want with organized fandom? Ignorance is certainly no excuse, for it is relatively easy to get hold of a few TIGHTBEAMS which should demonstrate what N3F is all about. The same goes for Clyde Kuhn, tho I tend to agree with him on the Welcomittee. It does nothing for me to receive a warm, friendly, personal mimeographed letter "welcoming" me to the Federation. The idea behind it is all right, but the approach is all wrong.

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RICHIE BENYO:

TIGHTBEAM runs a tight schedule. It arrived two days ago, and I'm supposed to have this letter in on the 15th -- it is the 15th, for heaven's sake! /This arrived Saturday morning./ The beautiful job of repro on the issue, tho, sort of makes up for the delay. I should talk about delays... Today is also the deadline for the First Mailing of APA 45, but I've been getting letters right and left from the Membership to hold up the mailing for a little while, as their gen-zines are presenting a problem. Seems no one can get them run off (me included). Must be the cutdown on fanac now that everyone is back in school. The ones that have arrived to date are pretty darn good tho -- 13 in all, from 4 members. The Official Postmailing will probably double the initial count, 'cause I'm not going to hold the mailing any longer than two weeks, and that with reservations. Looks like the APA will succeed, tho, as there is still enthusiasm aplenty for the most part, and the zines are up to par with many of the other APAs. Keep tuned for further news. (Maybe we should use TB as our official outlet, since most of the mem-

bers of APA45 are Neffers, and N'APAns.)

Sure hope someone is going to the PhilCon this year and does up a complete Con Report (dedicated to Buck Coulson7, naturally) of the proceedings. I went last year (my first con) and enjoyed myself no end; but I have classes on Saturday here, so I'll miss it this year. It was great last year to meet pros and fellow-fen, and it proved to be my introduction to fandom -- now everyone boycott the PhilCon... It is strange how I remember almost everything (except the boring speeches -- hee, hee) that happened there so distinctly. I can remember the huge editor of this ish of TB striding about the fen, brushing beards with the dirty pros, etc. I'd never heard of Dick Eney at that time [are you bragging or complaining?], or of Jack Chalker, or EEEVERS, or John Boardman, etc., but they still stick out pretty well in my mind when I learned of them through the zines.

I think I'll beg out of any controversy this round, and reflect on PhilCon for '63:

In the lobby, where I waited for about an hour after having checked Constitution Room twice to find it empty, I noticed two slightly pudgy fellows walking about, one carrying what looked like a briefcase, and the other just striding about. For some reason I immediately picked them out, out of the milling masses in the lobby, as fen. They wore white shirts, too, which should have thrown me off. I was too scared stiff of the whole thing to venture a conversation, even when they almost walked on me, checking the activities board behind me -- where the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society's Convention was advertised in large white letters, along with a wedding and some mundanecons. Later, in the actual con, with our name tags on, I noticed the name of this particular fan -- for I was right, they were fen -- was Jack Chalker. The name stuck in my foggy brain, for some reason.

While in the latter part of the con, between speeches by such notables as L. Sprague de Camp and James Blish (my two favorites there), Judy Merrill and Lester del Rey, Fred Pohl (a very enjoyable correspondent, but one whom I had no chance to meet at the con) and Will Jenkins, I noticed a fellow in front of me (I was in the second row) who had a pile of GALAXYs beside him. He wore glasses and looked almost as lost as did I. He also looked like the intellectual type, so I figured conversation here would be futile, altho John Woods (a friend found there) made a comment about his purchase. Now I find that he is one of my tape correys, Syd Silverstein, who is coming up in fandom at no mean rate.

I don't like to insult people -- usually -- but when I saw Dick Eney there I figured him to be a dirty pro, as he fit right in with Lester del Rey and Sprague de Camp, matching them whisker for whisker. He certainly is a big fellow, so don't start a feud with him face-to-face, Stranger. All during the panel that Dick was on, tho, I looked back a couple rows at Sprague, and was appalled to see the gleam in his eyes that said: "Boy, would I like to see how far I could drive a broadsword into you!" [Sure you weren't absent-mindedly looking at Ted White?] Nothing unfriendly, now, just some of Sprague's intellectual curiosity...

NY fandom sent a batch of their crop there, too. I noticed EEEVERS in the back of the room, and I noticed too John Boardman, because he was explaining Diplomacy to some other fen, and as soon as I heard of Diplomacy in fandom, I immediately associated it and John. He's a little on the chubby side, with a moustache, but bhoy oh bhoy, girls, is he cute...His wife was there, tho. [She's cute too.]

I could go on with this for pages, but I had better not bore you all with it. All I can say is that the PSFA throws a good regional con, and a darn friendly one, too. If you're willing to go half way. Attend, if you can -- you won't be sorry. I wish I could go this year. Maybe next time....Can't wait for a worldcon....!?!?! GOSHWONBOYBOY, do I love cons...Even Libertycon I...

REMEMBER the next issue of TIGHTBEAM will be put out by Stan Woolston, 12832 Westlake St., Garden Grove, Cal. -- Zipcode 92640 -- Deadline 15 December! Write now!