



Long Shot, Short Snort

Edited by Martin Levin

GET ME OUT OF HERE!

President Kennedy says we're going to outer space simply because it is there.

—News Item.

It may be proper to deduce
We go because it's there,
But isn't that a weak excuse
Considering the fare?

—WILLIAM W. PRATT.

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TED KENNEDY AND I

I'LL NEVER forget the time I met Ted Kennedy and had a brief conversation with him. It is in a way a nice memory but one that is hardly mutual because since then I have had various reminders of him, but he none of me. So while it was a unilateral affair, this meeting with the third latest to join with and make up what some are calling the Kennedy Triumvirate, it is nonetheless important historically.

It was during the winter of 1960—the day was “unlucky” January 13—and I was in Charleston staying at the Daniel Boone and covering the legislature. Neil Boggs told me at the press table that Ted Kennedy was coming to town that afternoon and had rented a parlor at the Daniel Boone for a press reception. “Come along,” Neil said, and that's how come I was in on it.

There was a long table there with drinks and a waiter had been employed as a bartender. There were fellows there from the local Charleston dailies and from TV and radio. I had hardly got into the room when this handsome but rather emaciated fellow bid me welcome and asked what paper I was with and I told him the West Virginia *Hillbilly*, and right quickly he drew me over into a corner and put it to me most bluntly.

“How do you think West Virginia would go for my brother Jack?” he asked.

He gave the name of the state an r-ending, something I have since got used to at White House press conferences where words end in a. I didn't answer right off. That afternoon I had stopped in to visit a grocer man who was high in the Democrat echelons and got the real scoop on how West Virginia was going to go. The fellow

was cutting meat at the time and he was extremely glad to meet me, but in a hurry. It seems that he was to meet Eleanor Roosevelt either here, or somewhere near, and the two were going to launch Adlai Stevenson as West Virginia's choice for the Presidency.

With that almost secret, and very explosive, information in hand, I just didn't know what to say to this boy. He looked so young and eager and intelligent, and so terribly, terribly hopeful, that I didn't have it within me to tell him that his brother Jack had just about as much chance of winning the West Virginia primary as I had. Fact of the matter, I had a better chance. I remembered how the West Virginia voters took to Al Smith, that other Catholic who tried for that high spot. After all, West Virginia was still about 95 per cent non-Catholic, and a member of the Bible Belt in pretty good standing.

But I couldn't put it to him without saying the state was bigoted and I looked for a way out and I saw Jake Neal coming. Jake is a high Democrat of status in the state, and at that time was State Senate doorkeeper, if I remember. He is also a good man with the talk, and I grabbed his hand in greeting and turned him over to the boy and said, “Meet Jake Neal, the man who has his ear to the ground at all times and knows a winner when he sees one.” Then I fled. It just wasn't within me to break that kid's heart.

—JIM COMSTOCK.

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MINIATURIZATION IN THE MARKET (SUPER)

I BOUGHT a zipper the other day. Not ordinarily a matter for comment. But this was no ordinary zipper.



It was all curled up like an anchovy fillet in the cunningest little drum-shaped plastic box. It cost almost twice as much as the same kind of zipper used to on a piece of paper, but I *had* to have it; the cunning little box, this is.

When it comes to cute little boxes and packages, I am one of that type of person of whom there is one born every minute. And lately, I have been seeing more and more items that appeal to my type of person.

Take yesterday for instance. My husband sent me out to get four number eight screws to put up the towel rack in the bathroom. He said they would cost about five cents at the hardware store. But I dropped into the supermarket first to pick up some eensy-teeny boxes of raisins. There are only about three raisins in each of them, but they come in such adorable little gold foil packages that only a grouch would give a hoot that the raisins cost three times as much by weight as the ugly old middle-sized box. While I was there I also picked up a bunch of those itty-bitty sacks of potato chips with about three potato chips in each. Then, golly, I saw some of the dearest little salt and pepper boxes . . . and little cleanser cans with pretty shiny paper. I noticed the contents cost three and four times as much by weight as the regular package, but Gee! I kept thinking how much would have loved to have them for my doll house when I was a little girl. So I said to myself, “Well, maybe I can't be a little girl again but I sure as anything can buy these dear little boxes of salt and pepper.” And I did.

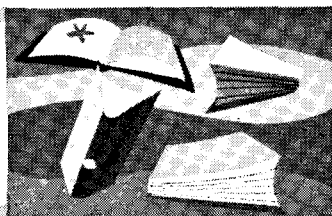
Well, I was about to leave when I noticed the little cans of beer. The cleverest little things! Not much larger than a baby food can. I couldn't think what they could be for. Then I thought how they would be just the right size to serve to any “Half-Beer-Charles” I might know, or to tuck into the kiddies' lunch box or pop into a lady's handbag to be handy for quick refreshment.

Then I saw the screws. Now, ordinarily I can look at screws in a hardware store all day (this also goes for nails) without feeling a single quickening of the pulse, but these screws were something to behold. All four of them were nestled in a little red plastic box that had a clear, plastic, hinged lid! When I saw that hinged lid I just lost my head. After all, they only cost five times as much as they would have at the hardware store!

I'm a sucker for cute little boxes and packages, all right. But at least I have lots of company. Sometimes I think we suckers would buy those adorable little packages if there wasn't anything in them.

—KAY HAUGAARD.

Trade Winds



IT WAS CHARLES DANA, editor of the old New York Sun, who many years ago laid down the dictum for a classic news story. As everybody remembers, Dana told a cub reporter: "If a dog



bites a man, that's not news. But if a man bites a dog—there's real news."

However, just a few weeks ago, we have to report, the New York Times fell down on the job. A K-9 guard dog used by police to put down a riot at a high school football game was bitten by one of the enthusiastic rioters. The headline "MAN BITES DOG" was nowhere to be seen. The fact was buried in the fourth paragraph, last sentence.

NEWS OF INTERIOR DECORATING

omes from a visit we made recently to the very elegant reception room of an office on Fifth Avenue. It was tastefully paneled in pecky cypress, with thick pile carpets and antique coffee tables. On the latter were expensive-looking metal ash trays. We reached out to move one closer, only to discover that each ash tray was permanently screwed to the tabletop.

EARLY NEWS ON A FORTHCOMING BOOK comes from John Henry Faulk, who told us that he is writing a volume for Simon & Schuster on his harrowing experience in being blacklisted by Aware, Inc., the self-styled patriots who ruined many innocent careers in radio and television. His battle in the courts to bring the perpetrators of blacklisting to justice is one of the most heartening

in modern times. But the loss of his only means of support is a less heartening story. Even winning one of the highest awards in the history of libel law has failed to remove all the scars.

"Louis Nizer, who represented me, was magnificent," Mr. Faulk told us. "He worked on the case with a passion. I can't tell you the unbelievable feeling I had when I learned I had been black-listed. I was absolutely innocent—yet I was being fired from my job at CBS. I was stunned and dazed. I determined right then and there that I would help everybody to understand what these forces were, and exactly what was happening to traditional American liberty through them. If the book does that, I'll be gratified."

NEWS FROM THE LANGUAGE FRONT—(Slang Division) comes from Professor Allen Walker Read, of Columbia University, who wrote an article twenty years ago for SR on the origins of the

expression "O.K." Having completed further studies on the subject, he attributes the beginnings of the phrase to a craze in Boston in 1839 for using initials in place of words. This elliptical telegraphy became so exaggerated that newspapers were barely understandable. "It shall be done" became "I.S. B.D." "O.K.K.B.W.P." meant "One kind kiss before we part."

But things got even worse. The Boston papers of the day decided to use *incorrect* first letters to make their esoteric shorthand even less intelligible. "O.W." was first used for "Oll Wright." N.S.M.J." was the symbol for "Nuff said 'mong gentlemen."

The innocent but durable "O.K." came in to outlast them all, standing for "Oll Korrekt."

IT'S NO LONGER NEWS that T. S. Eliot has become a special literary consultant to Wesleyan University Press, putting the press in touch with British authors and publishers whose works are scholarly and meritorious. As a director of the British firm Faber & Faber, T. S. Eliot is no ivory-tower poet alone. He's been an excellent businessman for many years, knows a good manuscript when he sees one, and is now extending his consulting services to a sound, five-year old press here. —JOHN G. FULLER.

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Next Christmas, Mary being nearly six years old, she spent at Ditton with her own household, and her own Lord of Misrule, one of her valets. For the jollities, painters had to gild the Boar's Head; there must be ready parchment for "subtleties," a whole cargo of properties.