

Tidbits and Outrages

Q.E.D.

We have in the past complained that too many of our best and brightest are becoming lawyers. "Anthropologists of the next century," we predicted, "will look back in amazement at an arrangement whereby the most ambitious and brightest members of each generation were siphoned off the productive work force, trained to think like a lawyer, and put to work chasing one another around in circles." Now comes the proof in "One Thousand Men of Harvard: The Harvard College Class of 1971 Five Years Later." 257 went to law school, more than did anything else.

Courting Disaster

Do you sometimes wonder why every few years there is some terrible tragedy in a coal mine? One explanation came to light recently when a UMW survey revealed that only 13.7 per cent of newly-hired miners are given training in mine safety by their companies.

Checking Up on CREEP

Nixon's Committee to Reelect the President lives on today, as the 1972 Campaign Liquidation Trust. Most of its spending has gone to the legal fees of CREEP's former employees.

The Trust started this year with \$1.6 million in the bank. Its single largest expense since 1972 has been \$471,390 for the defense of Maurice Stans and John Mitchell in their New York perjury trial. In addition to that, Stans has asked the Trust for another \$157,697 in fees, including \$18,600 for his own time (at \$30 an hour) preparing evidence for the trial.

We're All Choked Up

Writers seem to become unstrung when they are writing about other writers, at least when they are striving for the telling detail. We have previously reported Mary McCarthy's revelation that Hannah Arendt had never had a corn. Now comes John Hersey in *The New Republic* to tell us that Lillian Hellman "has not vomited since May 23, 1952."

Down Home at the Library

Elsewhere in this issue we comment on the unfortunate tendency on the part of people who have moved to the Northeast to look on the rest of the country as a hopelessly dull cultural wilderness. In Washington this attitude is particularly strong, as can be seen in this article by Mike Causey in *The Washington Post*:

"He may be a nuclear scientist, super successful businessman and master politician. But Jimmy Carter wouldn't get to first base if he was after a certain \$3-an-hour job at the Library of Congress, instead of a better paying post at the White House. The library, which does all sorts of interesting things besides filing books, has been looking for a narrator in the reader services section, which provides audio material for the blind. The job is a temporary one, paying from \$3 to \$6.75 per hour, depending upon the qualifications and experience of the person selected.

"One qualification in particular has intrigued some library staffers. It says that the man or woman who gets the job must possess 'nonaccented or nonregionalization speech.'"

The Case for Government Meddling

Another case of virtue rewarded was reported recently by *The Washington Star*:

"... Jerry Thomas, an undersecretary of the Treasury, wears a second hat, as a member of the U.S. Railway Association board of directors. Since last April he has represented Treasury Secretary Simon on the board of the government-financed corporation, formed to restructure and to help rehabilitate the bankrupt Northeastern railroads.

"Shortly after Mr. Thomas became a board member, he saw some things that bothered him; he had an auditing team from Treasury come in and look around. The audit showed the association had used tax money to finance memberships for its top executives at lunching and country clubs, including a \$5,000 initiation fee for USRA chairman Arthur D. Lewis at Burning Tree Country Club. And the audit disclosed also that the association had given lucrative consulting contracts to USRA officers after they left the corporation. . . . Record-keeping was so sloppy that the auditors couldn't tell on whom some \$35,000 in entertainment expenses had been spent during the first nine months of this year.

"Mr. Thomas's initiative did not draw rave reviews. At the first board meeting after the audit, Mr. Thomas's fellow directors voted to censure him and, as well, refused to adopt his proposals for association documentation of who spent what on whom.

"Well, clearly, an obstreperous fellow, this Thomas. Not at all good company on a tax-financed board of directors.

"A funny thing happened after all this. An amendment was inserted in a railroad financial aid bill. . . . The amendment would disqualify Mr. Thomas as a member of the board of the U.S. Railway Association."

The Business of Education

A few months ago we commented, in an article called "The Firemen First Principle," on the tendency of administrators, faced with a budget cut, to fire the people who actually do the work, the firemen or the teachers, instead of reducing the number of administrators. David W. Ehrenfeld of Rutgers recently wrote about these administrators in *The New York Times*:

"... I have watched the chairman of one of our departments smuggle his state vehicles out to a local gas station to be winterized, because our university maintenance division, up to its neck in administrative red tape, charged his account a \$15 'labor' fee to install a quart of antifreeze.

"I have found out that there is another set of administrators part of whose remarkable job it seems to be to guess (for Federal administrators) the race and color of each job applicant to the university, on the basis of such revealing information as their names. And there is always that wonderful administrator, a vice president I believe, who sends to every person who has had an accident in a university car a pamphlet explaining how not to have any more accidents."

Lobbied

The toughest lobby disclosure bill in years was passed last spring by the Senate, 82 to 9, and in September by the House, 307 to 34, in only a slightly different form. Yet it died because neither house bothered to accept the other's version. The newspapers reported this was because of "the parliamentary situation." Every legislative body has rules that excuse inaction on the basis of controlling legislative traffic during the final hours. The rules are the lobbyists' best friend in avoiding legislation they don't want while letting legislators get on record voting the right way.

Grubby Democrats

In "A Kind Word for the Spoils System" in our September issue, we discussed the unfortunate fact that American intellectuals tend to feel "above" politics. Here is an example of that attitude in an article by Philip Terzian in the September 18 *New Republic*:

"The pursuit of power is fundamentally a philistine occupation, and it is not likely that a genuine intellectual, mindful of history and human nature, would find the transient glory of public affairs worth the trouble."

Why People Like You

by Brock Brower

A lot of people under thirty-five don't seem to have the foggiest why anybody ever joined the CIA. I happen to be only a few more days under forty-five, was never in the Agency, did only a very minor stint with the Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, but I once had a close acquaintanceship with an ex-agent that maybe says a thing or two about really why.

Never mind whether I first knew him in high school, at college, or abroad, since he would prefer to keep all this a little vague. Suffice it that we roomed together briefly in the early 50s, that we kept up a correspondence, that we saw each other once more between continents, that he then disappeared for five years. If I didn't know exactly where to, to do what, I knew who for. Who else? In those long bygone days—when nobody ever dropped out—there was only the one secret life, and that one was highly official. Not being able to talk about what you were really doing in Washington, D.C., was a first step up in its *sub rosa* hierarchy. But the greater awe was reserved for those who altogether absconded, went off, under deep cover, into the chill, hard-shadowed oblivion of the Cold War, for the sake of the country. Through the Company.

So he partially vanished for half a decade, and in a way, never surfaced again. Not five but fifteen years later, I got hold of an address for him, in another country, and wrote. He did

not write back. Once he'd written very funny letters, mocking the Ivy-League editorialist in me, hellbent on "christenizing Europe," as he put it, "a messiah in an M.G." An old argument between us over the Evil Men Could or Could Not Be Let Do, as Nation States. But he'd gotten out of the habit of writing letters, he told me later, because he hadn't been able to explain, didn't want to pretend, why not make things easier all around by an indifferent silence?

When he didn't answer, I telephoned. I was, I admit, ferreting him out. A typical 50s phrase. The McCarthyites (Joe, not Gene) used to boast they were ferreting out the Commies and homos in the State Department, and my roommate and I delighted in turning the zoological description of a ferret—a really despicable animal—right around against them. But it fits me here, a little too well. I was after him, a bit weaselly, red of eye, related to the polecat.

He finally said okay, come ahead, but bear in mind I could cause him trouble. He'd just won an award as the best political science teacher at his university, by vote of the students, and a couple of finks in his department, in typical backbiting academic style, were threatening to expose his past ties. He was determined to put all that far behind him, for job security in a strange land, and didn't discuss the Company with anybody, ever.

We talked for two days solid, on a verbal ramble that sent us stumbling, again and again, into tangled, too-familiar pasts. He was surprised I could name so many mutual acquaintances whom I knew as well as he did

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