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Scene From Top O' The Hill

By: Jack Kelly

Lots of talk around Washington, and other places too, I guess, about the Post Office Department and Congress doing something about all of the Second Class Mail being sent to people that the people don't want. I am in favor of that but I have another complaint too. I have been getting some First Class Mail that I can do without. This mail was a joke to me, but my girl, Blanche, well, she did not think it was or is funny at all. This mail has been inviting me to purchase membership in a "Bunny" Club and Blanche wants to know how come?

Now, as you all know, various places that sell things send the literature to thousands of names taken from what is known as a "Sucker" list. These lists come into being by virtue of the fact that you buy or have bought something and your name gets a credit rating. Now, in my particular case, since I travel about the Country quite a bit, I have my name on gasoline credit cards, hotel credit cards, Diner Club cards, American Express, and others too numerous to mention. Bouncing about, like I do, I need these various credit cards because no one carries enough cash to pay two to four weeks expenses while on the road, and, lots of places don't want to take your check, so, the credit cards become necessary to survival.

Unfortunately, someone in these various organizations seemingly sells a list of names to advertising firms, from time to time, for a new "sucker" list, and mine gets banded about from place to place. Ergo, I get a first class letter from Playboy Clubs International which flattered me but annoyed my Blanche a little bit.

The letter, with appropriate underscorings of pronouns referring to me, informed me that I could get a fifty dollar membership for twenty-five dollars, if I hurried. It informed me (and my wife) that I could get into any "Bunny" Club in New York, Boston, Atlanta, London, New Orleans, and scads of other places. Then the letter proceeded to enlighten me (and my wife) of the type of "fun" entertainment I could have at the end of the day to lull away my tired-feelings. This letter claimed that I would find live entertainment, sort of a Disney-Land for adults, while drinking "Play-Boy" sized drinks, at a 5-story "fun-city" that was recently constructed in Baltimore.

Another place where I could get rid of my "tired" feelings claimed it had a Play-Boy Club with seven levels of show-rooms with fifteen shows, each different, every night. The letter did not explain what it meant by "seven levels of show-rooms." Blanche said it meant lower

levels.

One paragraph fascinated me. It reads: "As you approach the Club entrance you will observe the sign of the sophisticated PLAYBOY Rabbit which hints at the festive times awaiting you within." Well — it is unfortunate, for me, that my wife Blanche has a brother who raised rabbits when they were younger, so — well, Blanche put the old kibosh on that "festive rabbit bit" that the letter mentioned. She didn't even listen to the part about the "rustle of beautiful Bunnies" or the "comfort of inviting nooks, and cosy corners" or the "Door Bunny who greets you warmly". If Blanche had read the rest of this splendid, four-page letter, she would have seen that a person could also get something to eat in these Clubs.

The person who composed this advertising letter did a fairly good job. Made one big mistake. A check should have revealed to the writer that some recipients might have a wife who knew something about the habits of rabbits. They wasted lots of postage stamps.

MORE FLIM-FLAM AT THE FOKTLIGHTS

On one of those pretty afternoons last week, your reporter checked by the Playhouse again to see how rehearsals for THE PIED PIPER were coming along. Having heard that the P. T. A. and the elementary school kids were whomping up something along Broadway proportions, I dragged the youngster along for a lesson in expert interviewing. This kid loyes the smell of newsprint, beating us all to Peanuts every Sunday morning, and I knew that he would see a Story right away in our Friendly Stage hand's account of the Pied Piper action.

Sure enough, there was Close to the Source himself, soaking up some sun at the rock wall.

"The place looks mighty neat!" I cunningly opened the conversation.

"Oh, it's you again." Which was a remarkable feat of recognition as his luxuriant looks were still draping his eyes. "Clean as a hound's tooth," he agreed. "Everybody's getting in the act. Carlie Rice's boys did the sanitation job, and with P. T. A. mommas bossing the rumble, folks all over town are pitching in. Bob Sparky Hilliard and Paul Short Circuit Biggerstaff have got the lights working after the power company turned on the electricity free. Ken Picasso Laughrun with his crew is painting sets, and Mary Ann Knick-Knack Wampler and her, helpers are rounding up

props all over town.

"Costumes?" this daring and imaginative inquiry opened the floodgates.

"Who else but Mary Pineushion Hess and all her little tailors, Jack Box Office Biggerstaff and Jo Headline Edge are taking care of tickets and publicity. Carolyn Footlight Warner heads up the coaching staff, and Scotty Scritch-scratch Moore is organizing the sound effects."

"Speaking of sound effects, how about the rats?"

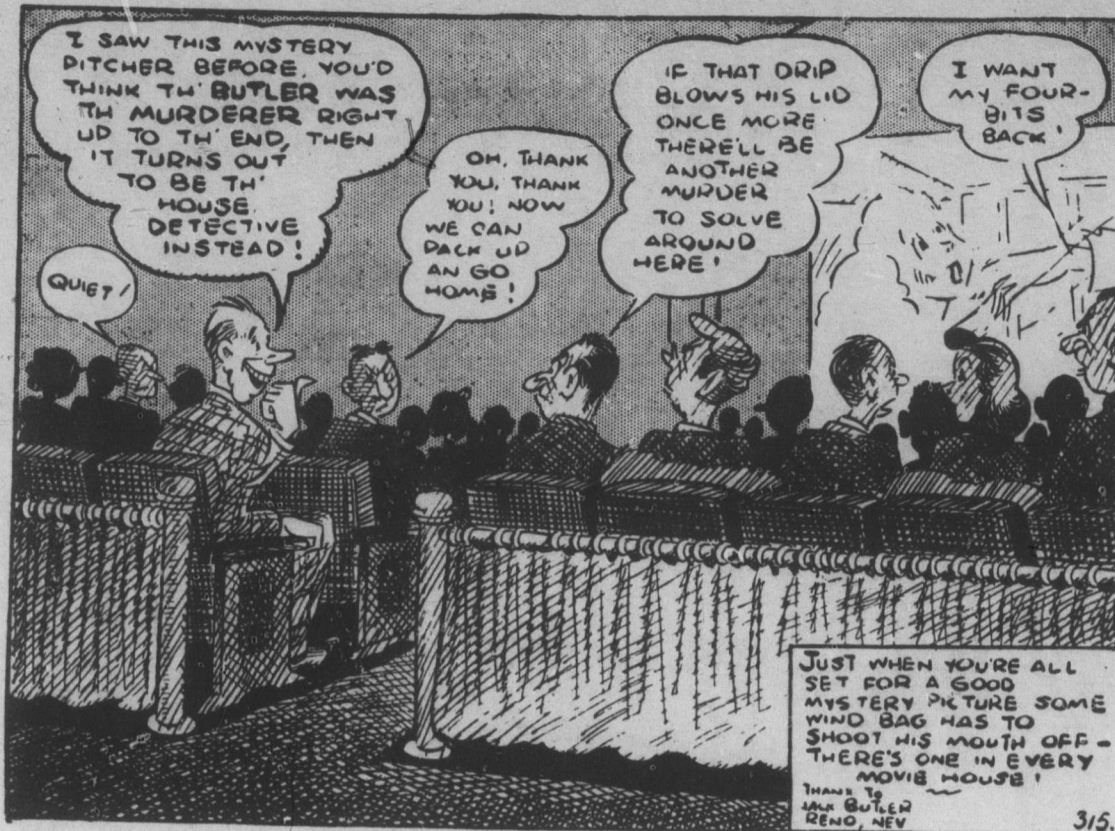
"Oh that's the big secret," slyly dodged the informant.

"My, my there is such a lot to be done for a theatrical performance."

"What extraordinary comprehensivity," effused my friend, humbled in the presence of Genuine Intellect. "I haven't divulged nearly all of the vast talent assembled for this Spectacular Production. Us theatrical people have to be intelligent as well as smart. Culture, you know." He hitched up his blue jeans indicating an end to the interview, and rubbing his foot along his pants leg, covered up the last patch of white on his sneakers with a reddish dirt. "It's a gruelling life for sensitive types."

"Gee, Dad," breathed the boy, awed by true art. "There are really some smart finks around here. Can I go to Elementary School when I grow up? Can I, Dad, can I?"

IT NEVER FAILS



In Memory

In memory to our beloved son, Gary Ray McIntosh, who passed away one year ago, May 8, 1966. Memories are treasures that none can steal; Death is a heartbreak that none can heal.

The months have passed into a year, Thinking of the bygone days fills our eyes with tears.

Some may forget you now that you are gone, But we will remember you, no matter how long.

Forgive us, O God, In tears we pray, He was so precious, why couldn't he stay.

Father and Mother
Sisters and Brother

ABILENE, KAN., REFLECTOR-CHRONICLE: "A news story tells how a generous Congress has pushed the salaries of its top employes to such levels that \$20,000-a-year jobs (staff jobs, that is) are becoming commonplace. There are 494 of them ranging up to \$28,500 paid to the head door-keeper of the House. That sounds like a lot of pay for a 'door-keeper'. In fairness, this job may be misnamed, since it carries much more responsibility than the title implies. However, it is purely a political pay-off type of job. And the salary is only \$1,500 less than a member of Congress."

FORT DODGE, IOWA, MESSENGER: "Social Security, like the public debt, is threatening to get entirely out of hand, and for the same reason—the failure of those responsible for policy to practice restraint. In considering President Johnson's request for (an) . . . increase in Social Security benefits, Congress has been brought face to face with a condition about which early advocates of moderation warned—a threatened breakdown of the system because of intolerable payroll expenses."

PETALUMA, CALIF., ARGUS-COURIER: "We don't like to rake over old coals, but it's important to point out that the controversial textbook 'Land of the Free' has become a 'must' in all California junior high schools. . . . The thing that does bother us about this text is its negative approach to our own glorious history. There are always those among us ready to point out our black marks in history and they completely distort our great heritage by wailing to balance it with the shining moments that have made this country the beacon of freedom in a weary, troubled world."

HARRISONBURG, VA., NEWS-RECORD: "At last report Singapore wasn't at war with anyone. So it came somewhat as a surprise to learn that the United States was selling Singapore 25,000 automatic rifles of the M-16 type. It wasn't long ago that the Defense Department was explaining that the shortage of M-16's in Vietnam was temporary and that replacements soon would reach American

troops who were forced to use World War II types."

ALTOONA, PA., MIRROR: "One of the things that hadn't been said about the Johnson Administration was that its Commerce Department is suffering from a split-personality syndrome and bill-board schizophrenia. . . . Rep. William C. Cramer of Florida has pointed out to his colleagues in the House that at the very time the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration is busily putting up roadside signs to plug its projects, the department's Bureau of Public Roads is just as busily drafting regulations to eliminate roadside signs."

LA PORTE, IND., HERALD-ARGUS: "Reducing the incidence of the major crimes such as murders, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, auto theft, constitutes a social task of magnitude, but it would be interesting and startling, to assemble statistics on infrequently publicized 'white collar' crime, defalcation, fraud, pilfering, shoplifting, embezzlement, blue sky salesmanship and other dishonest and illegal activity which does not involve violence. . . . A large business security firm estimates that business losses through fraud, thievery and related crime by employes rose 15 per cent last year over 1965. Employee theft in business generally is now estimated at \$2 to \$3 billion annually. . . . dishonesty is making vast gains."

CLIFTON, ARIZ., COPPER ERA: "The young aspiring police officer who dreams of someday nabbing a bank robber might even consider it inglorious to arrest a citizen who thoughtlessly discards . . . items of litter. Nevertheless, the litterbug is breaking the law and his crime, statistically, is proving much more costly than the bank robber's. For instance, in 1965, \$4.5 million was stolen in bank holdups and burglaries across the country. But in the same year litterbugs committed a crime worth \$500 million, the amount paid by taxpayers to pick up litter from highways, city streets, parks and other public areas. Furthermore, a good deal of the money robbed from banks is recovered, whereas there is no recovery of the money spent cleaning up after litterbugs."