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6/29/72

Blabbermouth Reporting:

SHE has begun the Ma Equilization Project. It is to be a jacket with a tweed-like effect, accomplished by the simultaneous knitting of two different fine yarns. The materials were selected on the basis of scientific study, i.e., what was on hand and suitable. We have to spend two hours on the road tomorrow, which is generally beneficial to such ventures, and the Dirtiest 'rickiest is on tonight, which provides time but endangers the purity of the work through the blood pressure.

Ultimately, The Feeling Of Full Equality might require the adding of a special touch, such as a character of an initial. With all the professional incompetence he can summon, Blabbermouth suggests this decision can best be made after on-site testing, which gives the Equalized a voice, his parents a choice and other vested interests time ofr meditation and design concepts.

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Taint a fit night out, which would be the best weather for the trip to DC from Camp David were it not that Agnew lurks in the wings. There appears to be nothing stupid of which he is not capable. Yesterday he went to flood ravaged (in this case hardly a cliché) areas near his home and didn't see any of the damage, speak to any of the people. There were plenty of pretty babes to kiss, but he didn't shake a single hand! People were shovelling mud, including middle-aged business-women, and there is as yet no sign of federal help - THAT close to the seat of government, less than an hour's easy drive. This has to be one of the more inept and less giften men in public life, quite separate from more serious disqualifications.

Anyway, by copter or car, it will not be a good trip. We haven't had any summer yet. Bgeinning an hour ago, as though in the past two weeks we didn't get enough, the rain fell so hard the gutters couldn't carry it.

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Another seeming futility has panned out, in time for temporary rescue from depparation. We have a black man living on the farm rent free (he was supposed to have paid \$10.00 a week, which wouldn't pay taxes and insurance) for keeping the place up. Instead, he set the house afire. The fire marshall's estimate of damage was \$10,000, including personal property. The insurance company got a prominent DC area contractor to give them an estimate. It was not much over \$2,000. I got an independent one covering what was visible after the tenant, who works in construction, agreed to make the repairs. It was closer to \$5,000 and at that didn't include such immeasurable items as heat-damage to the roof. The insurance company has played games with us for more than a year. A month ago I told them to cough up or I'd not only sue but charge and prove fraud. Fortunately, in their crookedness they did cross the line. They made a face-saving formula offer, I get any reputable local contractor to give an estimate and they'd pay on that. While this had the disadvantage of costing the repairs already made and covered, it had the advantage that I'd get paid promptly. Signed the forms today and we'll get about twice what they offered and they have already paid for the cost of getting the estimate.

If I can't think of a worse way to make our payments to the bank and governments for property taxes, the overdue fuel-oil bill and other such items, it accomplishes that and we hope will leave enough for a necessary plumbing repair. As I mentioned before, I don't keep a journal, so such trivia substitute for entries in the non-existent journal. There is a bit of irony in this in the present feuding and its more unkind accusations from the 9both ways) overstuffed. This business with the insurance company serves to remind me that in so much of our lives those with whom we have to deal are so often corrupt, crooked without being good or subtle crooks, the most successful getting away with it because of the cost of doing anything about it. In this they are buttressed by their knowledge that even if I would spend as much as I could get to recover, I haven't the to spend to begin with.

n a more personal level, sanless-man to son-less man, let me boast of a minor accomplishment in a field I have entered for the first time as the beginning of the 7th decade nears. Lil's sisters 250 -lb, 19-minus son has been spoiled and undisciplined all his life, has

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emotional and identity problems, has never had occasion to be ~~xxxxxx~~ responsible or assume responsibility, and during his father's last days got into a series of criminal acts that could have had more serious consequences than they did. He has two convictions, one in Florida during a runaway involving a minor girl and her black adult boyfriend, the other as the driver of the getaway car in a heist at some kind of store. He ~~xxxxxx~~ began by balking at everything, including me. After puberty, when his interests changed, I saw little of him and had to establish a relationship again, under difficult circumstances. I have no means of leaning on him. Knowing he would realize this I began by telling him that, but accompanied it with assurances that my imagination has improved with accumulating years. It was not easy, but I have earned his confidence and trust and he is beginning to shape up. He is now at the point where he is getting proud of it. I talked my sister-in-law, a rather timid woman to begin with, into letting him have a runaway move in and pay rent of his own choosing. She agreed. Having done this behind the back, we invited them for supper and I began what appeared to be an honest-broken negotiation of the set deal, which permitted the seeming negotiation of conditions. This kid, if the story is true, has a father who whaled him with a 2x4. When I heard of him he was living in the woods but electing independence. He was otherwise totally unknown and worked in the carwash where our nephew does. Now the two kids have each other and the stranger is beginning to feel like part of a family. I find I can now lean on him and more, that I really don't have to lean, can reason. Yesterday they goofed off. When it rains they have no work. The Sears serviceman was due to repair the washer, having somehow avoided it on the first service order. The kids, instead of waiting for him, goofed off and left a note saying they'd left the door open. Naturally, he left a note saying no deal if nobody home. When I heard of it I told my sister-in-law to have them call me when they got in, regardless of how late, and for the friend to be on the extension. I took it from the top and by God those two figured it all out, with a little leading, the whole thing, beginning with the error of advertising absence, their responsibility for the lack of linens, etc., and what a man does when he makes a mistake. Today they went to the laundromat, did three loads and dried them, brought them home, stored them properly, then attacked the cellar and did the best cleaning-up it has ever had. And called me to let me know. They also found and completed a few minor repairs, all on their own. We don't have too much to feel good about, but this does raise the spirits a bit. I don't know how long it can last, given the existing and real problems and the separation of 20+ miles, but at least there is a start. This has been one of the unusual things that has taken some time. I suspect that one of the more common causes of youth troubles today is that adults didn't find time.

All's quite on the complaint front. None of the recipients of my letters has yet reached me with a complaint. I expect at least one letter. Nothing new from the ungilded cage. But if I haven't, let me ask you what you would think were you so quartered if you got a letter saying someone was sending you four cigars and a pack of matches? It was sent and instead of delivered, forwarded to the lawyer. I haven't figured anything enabling me to query through censorship, but I have asked that a letter of inquiry, fairly direct inquiry, go on the legal stationary. Best, HW