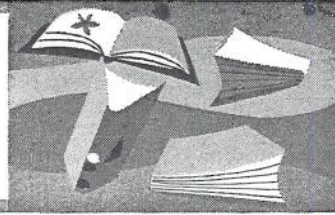
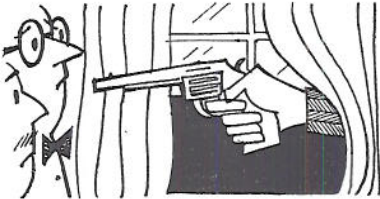


Trade Winds



As I was saying in this space two weeks ago, the annual convention of the American Booksellers Association in Washington brought together a variety of entrepreneurs—as two Yankee publishers, Bob Bell and Bond Wheelright, discovered one evening. They were rest-



ing in their ground-floor motel room facing Rock Creek Park when a man stuck a gun in the window and said, "Give me your wallets."

That would have been a good time for the appearance of Norman Ollestad, a fellow who has been through the FBI training course. He was elsewhere in the hotel, however, plugging his new book *Inside the FBI*, in which he draws a humorous and yet pathetic picture of this one-man agency.

"The system is very efficient for catching petty criminals engaged in minor crimes," ex-agent Ollestad declared, "but they never catch the big criminals. Dillinger and all the crooks that Hoover made his reputation on were small potatoes. That's the winning formula, so why change it."

Ollestad gives Director Hoover credit for throwing out "the scalawags" when he took over the Bureau in 1924. Those scalawags were interested in money. Today, he says, "the scalawags are interested in power and they must be thrown out, too." Maybe what's wrong with the FBI can be traced back to the fact that among the 36,000,000 rejected applicants for special agent were Richard Nixon and Robert Kennedy. They were turned down for different reasons, Ollestad was told: "Kennedy because he was too cocky, Nixon because he wasn't aggressive enough."

Years later, things were slightly different: Kennedy was Attorney General and Hoover's boss. That status in relationship to Hoover was technical, according to Ollestad, but Kennedy took the hierarchy seriously and did something no other Attorney General had ever done. Instead of going to Hoover's office, Kennedy summoned the director to his! The first request was ignored, as was a second. The third time, Kennedy made the call and *ordered* the director

to report to his office, which he did.

All the phones in the Department of Justice are tapped by the FBI, says Ollestad. (Careful employees used to go to the building next door to make private calls, but *those* phones are tapped, too.) Ollestad tells how, when Robert Kennedy was Attorney General, before he realized that there was no privacy, he foolishly said in a phone conversation that J. Edgar Hoover was too old to run the FBI. That didn't help the two men get along, nor did the occasion when Kennedy walked into Hoover's office unannounced and found the director fast asleep on his office couch.

Nobody but nobody who listens to Bernice Fitz-Gibbon, or who reads her new book, *Macy's, Gimbels, and Me*, can fail to be impressed by the straightforward, plain approach to advertising and promotion that this lady has. Of course, she is an inexhaustible well of terrific ideas, too, as well as an enemy of highfalutin' copy. She hates pompous institutional ads containing "the deadly words, *rewarding* and *challenge* and *dedicated*." That's why she objects to the Consolidated Edison slogan about "serving the community for power and progress," and the General Electric slogan about "progress."

"How can you picture progress?" she asked. So she has offered GE a better slogan, which the firm hasn't accepted: "If I had to choose between an indoor john and a dishwasher, I'd take the dishwasher."

Miss Fitz-Gibbon advised the booksellers that her interest in words comes from her father, who always told her to write or speak in sentences that would evoke pictures, and to be specific. One day as a child she ran into the house screaming, "I've been stung by a wasp!" Before he put mud on the sting, her father corrected her, explaining that it had been a yellow-jacket. Later, when her brother Wayne was attacked by a sheep, Bernice ran to the house to report carefully, "Wayne is being rolled over the ground by a big black and white woolly ewe." Her father hurried to the scene, looked it over, and was impressed by his daughter's description. But, he pointed out to her, the creature was a ram. Then he rescued Wayne.

Sharps and Flats: Elia Kazan said the success of *The Arrangement* is not due to the sex in it, for there are plenty

of nonsellers on the stands "that go much further."

► Public Affairs Press is reissuing Nasser's *Egypt's Liberation*, said to be his *Mein Kampf*, in which he outlines his plans for domination of the Middle East. I haven't read it and I wonder who gets the girl—Abdul Abulbul Amir or Ivan Skavinsky Skavar?

► Christopher Lofting, Hugh's son, told the convention that when the Dr. Dolittle books were at the height of their popularity in the 1920s, Hollywood turned them down as movie possibilities because of the difficulty of training animals such as pigs and mice and giraffes. In the current film, they had 165 creatures on the set at one time and they seemed to enjoy it.

► The last manuscript by Langston Hughes will be the text for *Black Misery*, with Suzanne Heller. It reflects the gentle humor of the late Negro poet and writer as well as anything he did.

"Misery," he wrote, "was when the teacher asked you who was the Father of Our Country and you said Booker T. Washington."

Or, "Misery is when you like watermelon and you are not supposed to."

Or, "Misery is when you go to help an old white lady across the street and she thinks you are trying to snatch her purse."

► A group of conventioners tried to get into the Sans Souci Restaurant in Washington on short notice and were unsuccessful. "Why, I just had to turn away Mr. O'Brien, the Postmaster General," declared the *maitre d'hôtel*. "What did he do," asked a humorist, "send in his reservation by mail?"

► A bookseller from Tyler, Texas, on dirty books: "I tell the customer, 'This is a book filled with sex and I don't recommend it for that reason,' and she says, 'Wrap it up. I'll pay cash. I don't want my husband to see it on the statement.'"

—JEROME BEATTY, JR.

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