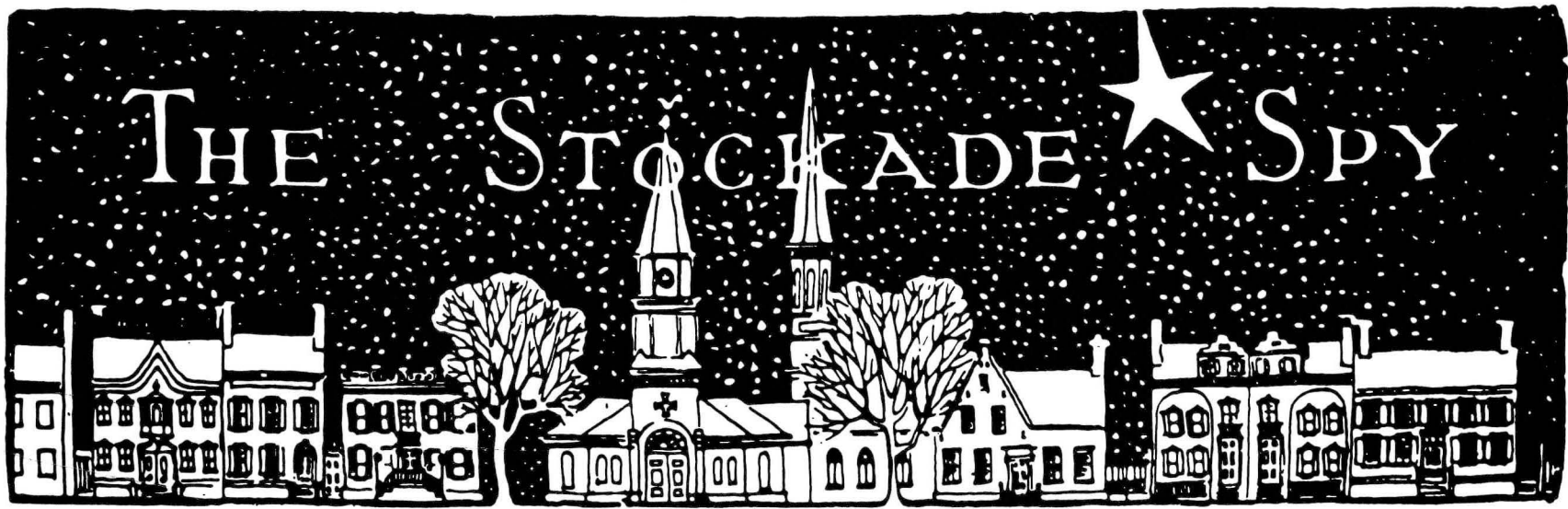


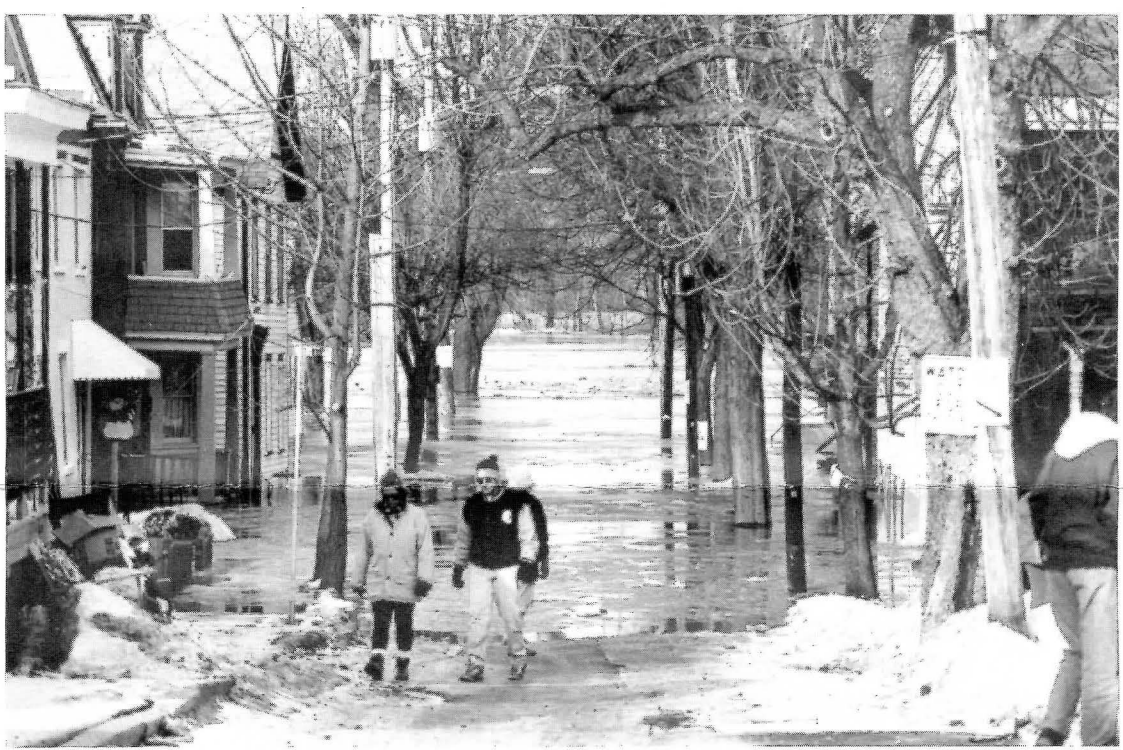
THE STOCKADE ★ SPY



February 1996

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Photos by Michael Bobnick



STOCKADE SPY

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Letter from the editor

Dear readers,

Winter did you say? How the evacuees from snow are chuckling as they read about our weather -- unless they were hit by the unexpected blizzard on the southeast coastal areas last month. Weather has little concern for geography, and if it's not cold, it might be hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods that remind us of the force of nature. Too often we forget that energy -- until it shows us its strength, like causing a total shut down in Washington, one not to be bargained or bullied away this time. We are indeed puny by comparison, despite our hi tech -- which relies on the climate's benign performance.

All this makes me ponder our concern with history. What can we really preserve that will last more than a few hundred years? While I respect and appreciate antiquity in its many shapes and colors, I must also pause in too devoted a pursuit of what is only transient in terms of our planet. Yet I save even momentary images I capture on film, hoping that they will mean as much in a hundred years as the old sepia prints I cherish now. Even so, it is brought home to me that I need to stay aware of what is happening to our world -- beyond the immediate -- to ask if my photos will have any meaning in a life that struggles to survive, not for material goods, but under the weight of what they have produced.

Answers? I have none. Only the renewed concern for my own family, a commitment to relish the here and now, and a further resolve to act responsibly in what I believe in. I shall always find awe and delight in the old cathedrals and the ruins of bygone days, those paltry yet fascinating tokens of might and power. Early in January I saw a movie, Richard III, done so that at first I wanted to protest this bastardization of Shakespeare. However, as I began to realize what message was being portrayed I saw that, indeed, Shakespeare's words could be transformed into the 20th century and thus reinforce the warning they have given for so long. Do we learn from history? It seems not very much, if anything.

Living here, in a historic district, I enjoy the beauty of the old, appreciate the loving care given to the buildings, share in the regard for avoiding destructive elements, and while all this is a part of my adopted self, there is yet that vein of questioning that asks, "What is most important in life?"

Ho hum, all questions and no answers -- a typical philosophical resolution one might say. It's just that I do believe one person, multiplied by one person, can make a difference!

Until the March winds blow -- stay warm.

The editor

Best Wishes To All
Our Neighbors In
The Stockade



Flooding: an update

Helen Witts sent information to the SPY regarding potential flooding of the Mohawk. She then revised the information, however, the revised version was before 1/19/96 which was the day many of us in the Stockade received a recorded warning message on our phones -- an eerie experience. Helen has always been in the forefront in working to organize a flood alert group, and much of what follows is from her notices to the SPY.

She has volunteers from each street who notify their neighbors to move cars to higher places. Her efforts, along with all the efforts of the Stockade Flood Watch volunteers, were responsible for the protection of tens of thousands of dollars of personal property of Stockade residents during the flood of January 19-20, 1996. Plans from 1994 will be carried out from Schenectady county headquarters by Mr. Ken Posson, coordinator of flooding. 2000 sand bags are appropriated for the entire Schenectady County. These are distributed according to emergency need, starting with homes on the lowest level streets. Stockade residents do not live in the lowest level and would not be first priority.

Our last big flood was in 1986, and since then we have had flood threats with the Mohawk rising over its banks into the park. As before we must watch for weather west of us, in the vicinity of the Canada Creeks, Black River, and Schoharie Creeks.

Helen will contact you directly if you call her at 346-5745 with your name and phone number. Call between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. or after 6 p.m.

We should all be grateful to Helen Witts for her thoughtful efforts on our behalf.

Neighborhood Watch Training

A training session/ refresher course for anyone interested in participating in the neighborhood watch will be held on Monday evening at 7:30, February 19 in the Great Hall of St. George's.

A belated "Thank You!"

You have to like that word. "Belated" is our language's way of lending dignity to the totally undignified act of being late. Having thus humbled myself in a dignified way, I'll get on with it. (Nice try, Mike, but it didn't work.)

The "thanks" in this case is owed to a group of people whose efforts brightened our holidays: the people who helped with the Christmas tree lighting. It is hard to say enough here about all this crew did and how well each of them did it, and what a crew it was.

It runs like this beginning with:

Alice Duell, who donated the tree; **Jack Zegger**, who picked out the tree and was also the master of ceremonies for the lighting; **Joe Vitale** of the Department of Parks who saw to the erection and decoration of the tree. **Al Strack**, who oversaw the decoration and provided the sound system for the lighting; **Phil Rodriguez**, who faithfully provides electricity for the lights; **Jim Fisher** town crier and bell ringer; **The Reverend Michael Alford**, Pastor of the first Presbyterian Church who gave the blessing; the children of that church who caroled; **Scott Hefner**, our guest speaker; **Justin Ritter**, who lit the tree; **Marilyn Fisher**, who supervised the setup in the great hall; **Ellen Desmond** and **Chris Angione**, who supervised the kitchen efforts; **Joe and Ann Bernat**, receptionists; **Bruce Holden**, who provided the piano music; **Pete Polachek** of Arthur's who donated the cider (any remaining was donated to the Children's Center); and finally all those too numerous to mention who donated food and effort in the setting up and cleaning up of the hall. I, from the bottom of my heart, thank you one and all.

Mike Powell

President's Corner

Out of Balance: The City of Schenectady has about 40 group homes. This is equivalent to about 36 people per square mile in Schenectady as a whole assuming 10 people per group home. The number for the Stockade area and environs, about 1 block beyond Stockade boundaries, is about 50 people per 0.2 square mile counting 3 existing group homes and one soon to be located at 132 Broadway. If the Mary Hill House and the New Approach Facility are included, the number increases to about 90 per 0.2 square mile. This number is in addition to over 200 other single room occupancy (SRO) units in the Stockade.

There is a high concentration of social services provided in the Schenectady downtown area. The Stockade Association and members of the Schenectady City Council have in the past called for a plan to provide for equitable distribution of support services throughout the City. When the composition of a neighborhood becomes unbalanced, it is good for neither the residents of the neighborhood nor the recipients of the support services. The Stockade Association has again requested the City to give this matter urgent consideration.

With spring just a few months away, homeowners should plan to take advantage of the Stockade Incentive Plan for improving sidewalks and painting houses. If you have any questions, contact Greg Sauer or any other Association Director.

The Association will be initiating a master plan for tree planting throughout the entire Stockade area. Since the plan needs approval by the City Parks Department, we are looking for resident input and suggestions prior to submittal for review in March 1996.

Residents are reminded of the anticipated Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NIMO) work in the Stockade this spring (SPY, October 1995). It will involve excavation of roadways from the substation on River Street south, then west on Front Street to North College, then south on North and south College to Erie Boulevard.

NIMO representatives stated that there will be no service interruption, but that some streets will be inaccessible during work hours. The new cable installation will require a trench 3-4 feet wide and 4-5 feet deep. A street section would be accessible at the end of the work day, and would later be covered with blacktop. Construction notes provided by NIMO will be given in the SPY, March 1996 issue. For further details and/or questions, contact Mike Kane, NIMO Sales and Service Supervisor, 382-2836.

Jack Zegger

Agenda Stockade Association Board Meeting, January 9, 1996

1. Introduction and acceptance of new Board member, Paul LeFevre
2. Secretary's Minutes of December 6, 1996
3. 210 Union street, attorney discussion, Proposed meeting of Stockade Association and Mohawk Opportunities Boards of Directors, January 22, 1996
4. Discussion of Stockade treeplanting plan
5. Details of Stockade Incentive plan, priority homes
6. Walkabout preparation

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In February we celebrate many holidays, including Valentine's Day. This month's story is about Alma Mahler Werfel (1879-1964) who was the wife of composer Gustav Mahler, then architect Walter Gropius, and finally writer Franz Werfel. She was regarded as the femme fatale of turn-of-the-century Vienna. German playwright, Gerhart Hauptmann was a great admirer of Alma's, although he had never been her lover. He said to her, "Alma, in another life we two must be lovers. May I make my reservation now?" Frau Hauptmann was standing close enough to overhear her husband's remark. "Oh darling," she said, "I am sure Alma will be booked up there, too."

Our condolences to Lidia Pasamanick of North Ferry Street, whose husband, Dr. Benjamin Pasamanick, passed away in January after a long illness. Dr. Pasamanick had a distinguished career, both practicing and teaching medicine. He will be sorely missed.

A hearty Stockade welcome to Bob McDonald, president of McDonald Engineering at 5-7 South Church Street. The civil engineering firm employs about 15 people, and Bob is delighted to be in the Stockade where he expects to be looking for a home soon. Welcome to Bob and his firm. Also, welcome to Paul Lefebvre who recently purchased 4 South Church St. where he will make his home. Paul is currently on the Stockade Board of Directors. Welcome one and all!

Welcome back to travellers, John Chequer and Elizabeth Taft of 224 Union St., after voyaging for more than a year aboard their trawler, "Lento." They cruised nearly 6000 miles, north as far as Ottawa, then south to Key West last winter, back to the New England coast this past summer before returning up the Mohawk to Rexford in September. After a year in the sun, they're looking forward to a real Stockade winter (and getting one too, I might add.)

Mike White, our Stockade Community Police Officer, has been reassigned elsewhere in the City. As we go to press, it is not known who will take his place. Residents can call 370-2022 for the name of our new officer.

Finally, ten turkeys were spotted on the frozen Mohawk in December walking from Hog Island, under the Western Gateway Bridge to the Scotia bank, near the beginning of Scotia's Washington Avenue, at the old bridge abutment. At first glance they appeared to Neff Dietrich of North St. to be large crows. Two long time accomplished birders, Clare Houlihan and Darlene Duggan thought the same when they spotted the birds the day before, heading for Hog Island where the turkeys probably roosted for the night. The next day they headed for the Scotia shore, apparently bent on foraging.

Well, that's the news for this month. If you would like to contribute an item for this column, please see elsewhere in this issue for where to send your submissions. Until next month...

The World of Humor

For those of you who are not aware, there are quite a few families in our neighborhood who have emigrated here from what was so recently called the Soviet Union. It has been my good fortune to befriend several of them and I am learning all that they elect to share with me about them and their culture. I find all of it beautiful but nothing is so compelling as their humor. So, as my friend Michael puts it, "I will tell you one Russian joke." A young man asks his much older, sagely friend, "Can you tell me what true happiness is?" The older man says without hesitation, "Happiness is to be born in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, my young friend." After some reflection the young man asks, "And can you tell me what is unhappiness?" The older man shrugs and answers, "Of course. Someone who has such happiness."

At the General Meeting on January 18, 1996, John Botti, introduced to us by Diane Buckley via previous issues of the SPY, presented his plans for the Van Dyck. Along with his colleagues, we heard about the importance John places on the building itself, and how he intends to continue the type of business that the Van Dyck represented for many years: upscale, with modern ideas to bring it into the 21st century. I think that Marvin Friedman, himself a man with a vision when he brought jazz here -- long before it was fashionable -- would have approved. Besides speaking to the variances that are necessary to have a restaurant in the Stockade, John explained the concept of a microbrewery. Essentially it is an evergrowing theme throughout the region, and probably the country, as making house beer increases the profit margin slightly so that, in this case, prices on other items, such as a quality menu, can be kept more reasonable. John emphasized his concern that this be a shared plan, accepted by the residents, who were encouraged to participate in relaying suggestions to John and his colleagues: Peter Olson, co-owner; Jim Moran, whose experience includes the development of other microbreweries (e.g. Brown and Moran in Troy); and Frank Gilmore, architect. Each of them gave us further information about plans and desires they have for this landmark building. Jim Moran explained that the actual brewing process would occur twice a week for two and a half hours, as required by various regulations. At present, an experienced German brewmaster has been contacted for the production. He also noted that service features highly in their intentions. This is good news, since service and a welcoming host are important ingredients to success. Gilmore spoke of the parking lot, with some rather grandiose ideas when one considers what is now there. He sees its importance as a "gateway" to the Stockade -- as we have all so often said it should be. He also had drafts of floor plans, showing where they would like to locate the actual copper fermentation tanks - adjacent to the kitchen area in a small pavilion type structure. This would still leave most of the current

garden space, and is visualized as an aesthetically pleasing addition, landscaped to make it blend in. On the first floor they envision a long bar (perhaps competing with Smith's of Cohoes as the longest bar!), a lobby, and dining areas. The second floor will be the jazz club, with acoustical separation from the dining areas. Other ideas include Victorian fixtures wherever possible, perhaps even some gas lights at the entrance. Fireplaces will be among other features to consider, all to bring about an ambiance of comfort and elegance.

The Stockade audience gave a positive reception to these plans, especially because the co-owners appear to want to cooperate in many ways. John accepted Jim Schmitt's idea of a small committee to work with them as the plan moves from sketch to reality. Anyone who has original Victorian artifacts (lighting fixtures, etc) and would like to contact John or Peter about buying them (if suitable for this renovation) may call any of the numbers listed at the end of this piece.

There was a sense of excitement and energy present at the meeting, something that has been missing in the Stockade of late, as we thought about such a future Van Dyck. No, not the same as the old one, but with promise.

After this peek into the future, a peek into the past followed. It was a documentary made by Lee and Bobbie Bowden, and, far from anti-climatic, it reinforced my enthusiasm for all the Stockade stands for and can stand for again. It was an excellent overview of how the Stockade was rescued from disrepair many years ago, and carried the same energy and excitement I felt earlier. Thanks to the Bowdens for complementing the previous planning discussions. They gave us a look at how others worked to make so much of the Stockade the community it is today. I am glad I was able to attend this meeting.

RMF

John Botti --	428-5850
Peter Olson --	584-2377
Jim Moran --	377-3920
Frank Gilmore --	374-9412


Fixation

This open window
 i stared for days and lost the will to punctuate
 to separate my desires like cracked eggs in a glass bowl
 to designate day and night indifferent besides vision's failure.

the period
 (.)
 is so final
 here i choose to close a thought
 and imagine i move on to another place
 re-arrange the words again while the meanings are identical
 symmetrical
 they flow through me like sweat
 move through me like a radio wave

there is no choice of venue or shifting of muse
 there is no persona to speak for me--
 this chaotic consistency
 this constant contradiction
 is my only truth.

Thomas Nuendel



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We all agree that Americans want clean water and air -- no matter our political persuasion. It's what it takes to achieve that goal that causes controversy. We have made great strides since 1970 when most of us woke up to the condition of our water, and realized that "smog" was not just a funny word connected with California. Yet some, by using names that conceal the real intent of their activities, such as the Wise Use movement, would have us on a regressive path, back to the days when there were no questions asked, when, in the name of progress, we devastated our forests, contaminated our waters, and depleted our ecosystem. Yes, it's obvious if you look at who is promoting such movements: businesses that stand to profit by them. That's it. Ask yourself next time you hear a promotion for "fair play" in the way waste is disposed of or toxic emission standards are lowered, who is really behind it? There are many other subtly titled pieces of misleading ads, sound bites, and slogans designed to distract you from the real purpose of this effort to weaken our hard earned regulations. You will see big moment made out of little efforts -- as if sponsoring a tree planting or recycling office waste can overcome the bigger pollution problems by themselves. Yes, let's recycle, and plant trees, but better to reduce the waste materials that are generated to catch our eye -- and purse -- and stop killing our trees. There are powerful, and immoral forces at work to undo whatever protection the planet has, led by politicians and corporate business leaders (in some cases both under the same name once you begin to look). Even some of those who are sympathetic to moving backwards are shocked by the strategies employed. We should keep in mind that despite the cries about jobs lost because of environmental regulations, studies show that NO state which has enforced strict laws ANY fewer jobs. Companies are finding that public image is enhanced, communities feel more secure, and the bottom line has become healthier.

It is not only today that we have been bringing about our own extinction. According to Harvard University biologist E.O. Wilson, more than 50,000 species die out each year, and 10% of those left will not be alive in 25 years. What happens to evolution? A Republican President saw the danger, and in 1973 passed the Endangered Species Act. It worked slowly, but did work, so that even our national symbol has benefitted

from protection. What are we to believe when we find reform movements to "gut" the ESA are headed by huge corporations who are also major contributors to politicians? Nowhere are so many people given to rhetoric as when private vs public lands is the issue. Since the species in question don't know the difference, they are, now, equally protected. In opposition, at anti ESA meetings people are hyped to contribute personal outcries -- like the woman in California who commented that if half the land is private (which includes planned building development and destruction of forests) and the critters can't live on 50% of the land, "then God is calling them home." Well perhaps you read that as in favor of eliminating the "critters" but I wonder who took the other 50% away from them in first place?

Yes, rhetoric -- on both sides -- will fly as 1996 progresses, but the scientific community, as reported by the National Academy of Sciences in its review of ESA, "unequivocally endorsed the importance ... of protecting habitat on private as well as public land," without regard for partisan opinions (emphasis mine). Science is on the side of protection, for our future as well as that of endangered species. And we?

Excerpts Sierra Jan/Feb '96 RMF

Special Events

February 1996

Crimes of the Heart

February 1-4
Schenectady Civic Players
12 South Church Street \$10 382-2081

Environmental Clearinghouse of Schenectady (ECOS)
Cross Country Ski Trips

February 6
Thacher State Park Albany Co.
Tuesday 9 a.m.
meet at Rotterdam Square Mall near Sears
370-4125

February 13
Saratoga Battlefield
Tuesday 9:30 a.m.
meet at Glenville K-Mart near diner and Route 50
370-4125

February 20
Featherstonhaugh State Forest, Duanesburg
Tuesday 9 a.m.
meet at Rotterdam Square Mall near Sears
370-4125

February 6	Tuesday
February 13	Tuesday
February 21	Wednesday
February 28	Wednesday
March 6	Wednesday

*Waste Collection Pickup Starts at 6:30 a.m.

*Don't put waste on the curb before 2:00 p.m. the day before.

Remember to recycle:

Green, clear and brown bottles and jars; plastic bottles with necks, metal cans and clean drink boxes & juice/milk cartons should be placed into a recycling container marked "Container Product."

Separate magazines, newspaper, brown paper (grocery bags), corrugated cardboard, junk mail, catalogs and telephone books and place into a recycling container marked "Paper Product."

Please note: County residents can now recycle any type of gray cardboard, known as boxboard, from cereal and cookie boxes to paper towel tubes. The material, boxboard, will be accepted at recycling centers throughout the county. City residents who want to recycle boxboard also can place it curbside with their other recyclable materials.

For answers to recycling questions call the Recycling Hotline 382-5060.

Call for Submissions

As always we are happy to receive your comments, news, literary works, etc. Without them the Spy is dead! Just a few reminders, along with my thanks.

All contributions must be received by Friday, February 16, for publication in the March 1996 issue. Please be sure they are typed, double spaced, signed with the writer's name, address, and phone included. You may mail materials to Riverside Condos, 137 Front Street, #105, clearly marked for the Spy editor, or leave them in the SPY basket in the open foyer in back of the building. Thank you for your cooperation. In case of undue hardship in getting information typed, we will consider clearly written letters (not articles). We would appreciate finding your submission on an MS-DOS disk in WordPerfect or ASCII format, so we don't have to typeset. Disks and any original material will be returned upon request; otherwise no responsibility for them is taken by the Spy staff.

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