

# Rolling Stone

## STING LOSES HIS COOL

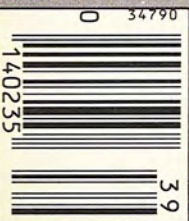
ROB LOWE & COMPANY  
Running Scared

RICHARD AVEDON'S AMERICAN WEST

HIGH SCHOOL VIGILANTES

SPRINGSTEEN IN CONCERT

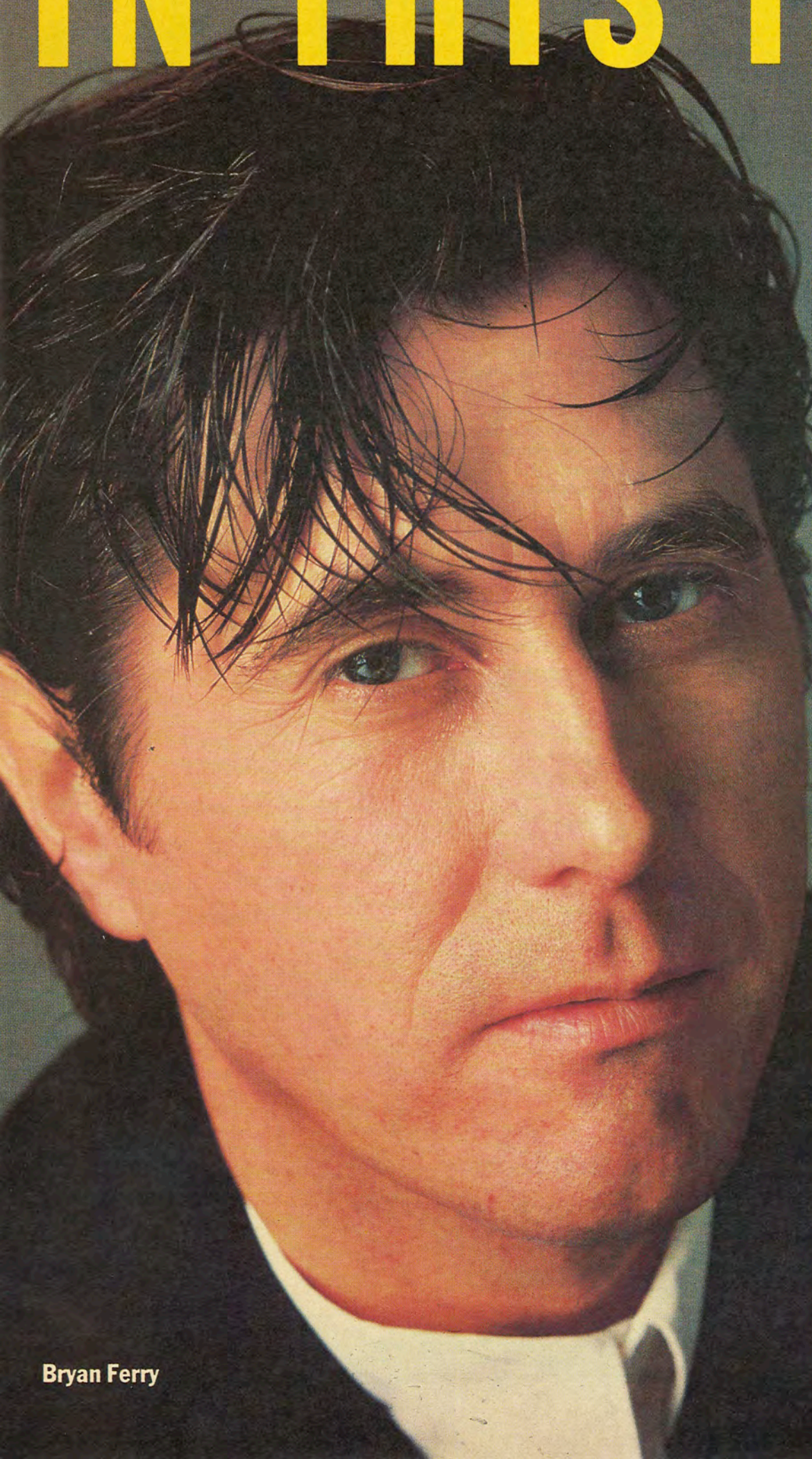
JOHN COUGAR 'TIL TUESDAY





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Bryan Ferry

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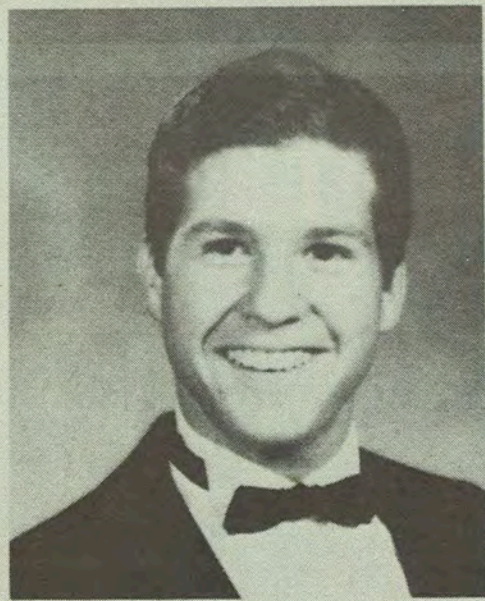
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**COVER:** Photograph of Sting by Eric Boman, New York City, February 1985. Hair: Julien. Grooming: Rumiko.



David 'Beaver' Norman was voted Most Spirited at Paschal High. He was also pretty feisty outside of school. There was plenty evidence of that.



David Norman

# LEAVE IT TO BEAVER

A grim tale about some very nice boys who did some really mean things

BY DAVID BRESKIN

There once was a city by the Trinity River, deep in the heart of Texas. And in that city was an old and revered high school, which in its time produced astronauts and business tycoons and politicians, even pro quarterbacks. The school, Paschal High, like the city, Fort Worth, had come to be a melting pot — half the students were white, the rest equal numbers of blacks

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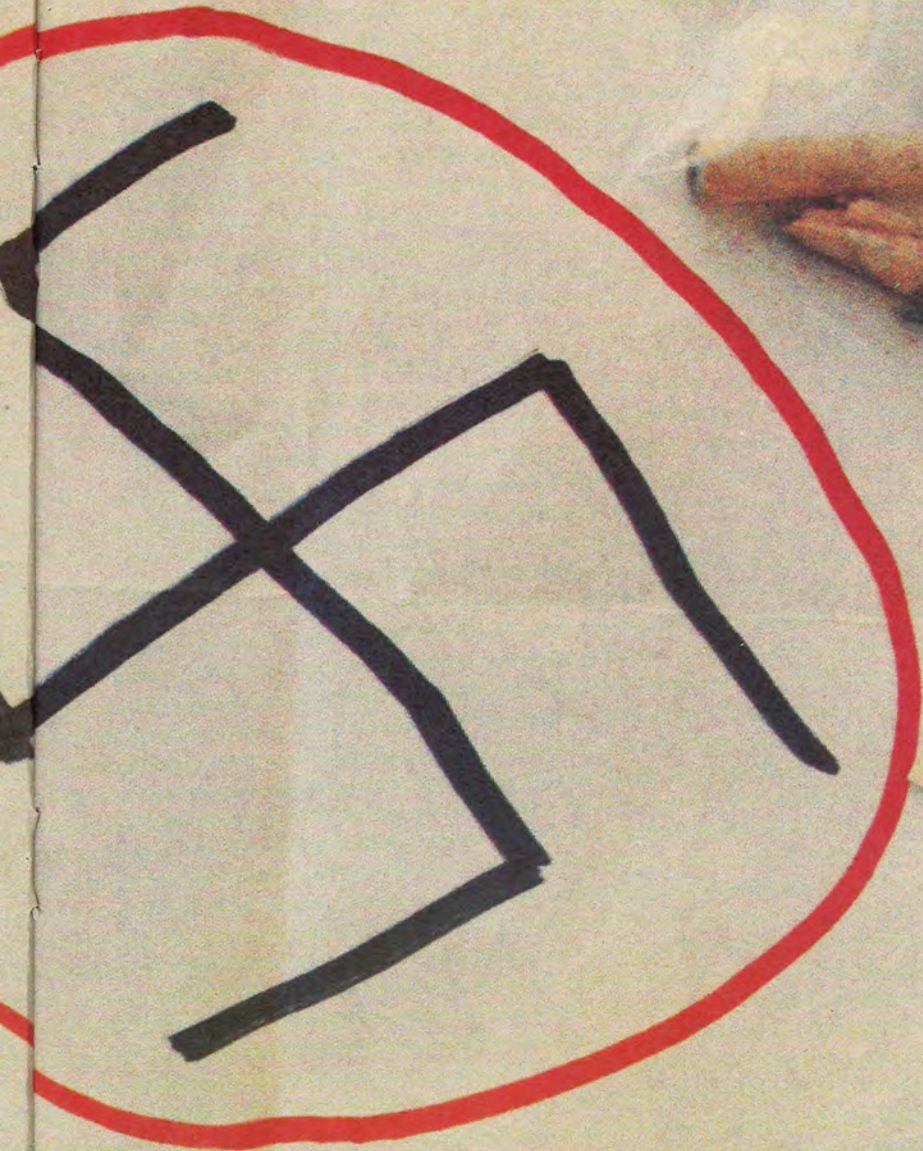
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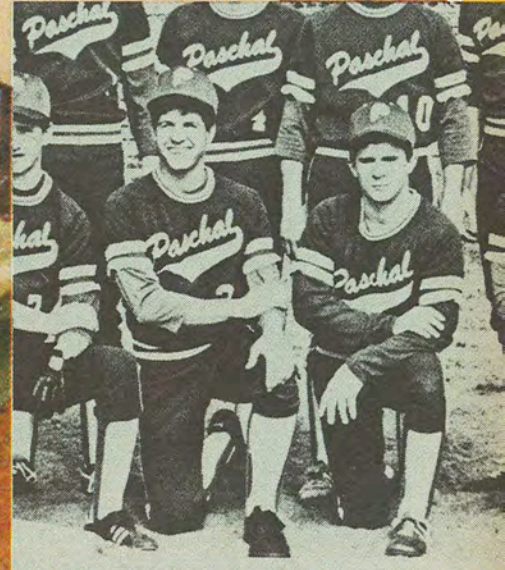
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slow to learn. You must now suffer our SOLUTION.



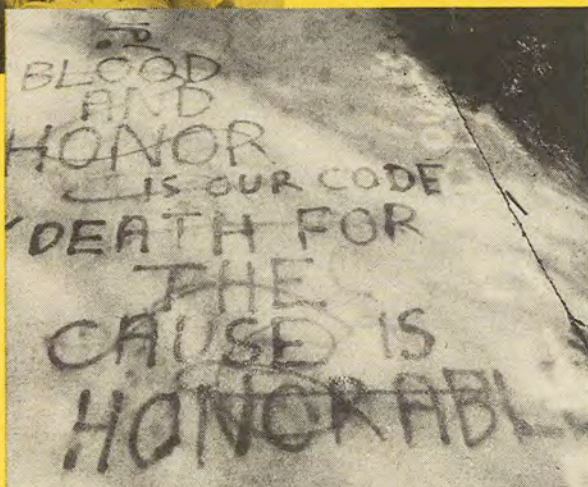
Beaver and Brad Biess played baseball. Many of the guys were big in sports; some were honor students. They all were white and conservative. They all had a secret.



# They called themselves the Legion of Doom.



Beaver's mom was always helping him out. She was there after his knee surgery — and on his birthday. She innocently had his cake decorated with a skull and crossbones.



and Hispanics, with a smattering of Asians, fresh from the long lost war. At the school, which sat next to Texas Christian University and across the street from Wendy's, McDonald's, Taco Bell, Kentucky Fried Chicken and Dunkin' Donuts, were both the very rich and the very poor, Lacoste shirts and food stamps side by side, and there were all the variations: preppies and cowboys and freaks and low-riders and jocks and academics and incorrigibles, and it was just like America.

Now, in the fall of 1984, the Paschal Panthers had a bad year on the gridiron, winning two games and losing eight. Despite the wimpiness inherent in such a record, not to mention the shame — for this was high-school football in Texas, a religion by any other name — a number of players took for themselves a designation even more fearsome than Panthers. They called themselves the Legion of Doom, after the comic-book coalition, and they fancied themselves Bad, be they in or out of their purple Paschal Panther uniforms.

One day after practice Coach Somsy saw LEGION OF DOOM scrawled across his locker-room blackboard. He told his boys he did not approve, and furthermore, he was the one in charge of nicknames. But the name stuck, and soon the boys organized a field trip.

One fine fall night twenty players and friends rode down to the park where the homosexuals gathered, which they called Fag Park. The kids went for the purpose of harassing the homosexuals, just because they were homosexuals. And when they had encircled a dotting couple and were about to rough them up, the lovers drew pistols — for they were undercover policemen — and so scared the Legion of Doom that they went running and burning rubber out of Fag Park.

This first scrape with the law was enough to convince most of the boys that the Legion was better left on the playing field, but others carried on after the season ended. Only two football players remained, offen-

sive linemen Jim Turner and David Dorris, both extremely large people, even for people grown in Texas. Turner was the sort of fellow who could tell a teammate with long hair to get it cut, or else, and who could tape a picture on his locker from *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, showing a man whose chopped-off head lay on the ground a few feet from his body. Dorris was the sort who could announce, amid girls practicing for their Powder Puff football game, that his life would not be complete until he had seen someone die in front of him, slowly, in pain.

But in those modern times no organization could live by muscle alone, and these enforcers were joined by seven other young gentlemen. There was "Born Again" Bubba Mathis, who wanted to be in the air force, or to be a member of *something*; there was Brad Biels, a cocky baseball player; Darren Dietrich, a sailor and follower; Mike Guthrie, a yearbook staffer and actor voted Most

Talented by his classmates; and Richard Williams, a baseball-playing 4.0-grade-point genius, a future valedictorian.

At the top of the Legion was chubby-faced Chad Fillmore, a superpatriot with a thing for Vietnam, who'd transferred from an exclusive private school. And above him, above everyone, was David "Beaver" Norman, of the National Honor Society, the baseball team, the Paschal Society of Academic Excellence and the cheerleading squad. Beaver drove the senior-class car, a purple Cadillac, was the Panther mascot and was even photographed with principal Radford Gregg for *The Paschal Pantherette* after being voted Most Spirited by his class. Everyone thought of him as Mr. Paschal.

These nine young gentlemen — two of them juniors, seven seniors — had a few important things in common. They were good students. They were good Christians, the kind that went to church. In their button-down shirts and madras shorts, in their cords and Top Siders, they were preppie, jocky, clean-cut Socials, as such students were called in Texas. They were well-off, from families comfortably middle-class to flat-out rich: their fathers were doctors and lawyers and bankers and ministers, their mothers given to the PTA and such, one indeed president of the hoity-toity, all-powerful Junior League, which was as high as you could go in Fort Worth. They were conservative. They were white. And they had a secret.

There were no formal rites of initiation into the Legion of Doom, but you had to demonstrate the ability to raise hell without turning skittish, say, by coolly throwing a soft drink through the window of a fast-food joint. Early Legion activities were carried out in the pleasant, long-admired tradition of teenage troublemaking. They turned the fire hose on the diners at McDonald's. They smoked cigars and drank beer, underage. They took for their symbol the old standby, the skull and crossbones. They winked at the frequenters of Fag Park and exposed their rear ends to them, "to get them all aroused," a Legionnaire said, and then they would end the game by yelling, "Fuck off, fag," and

throwing a firecracker or a beer bottle as they sped off in their Mazdas, Saabs, Chevy Blazers or Suburban four-wheel-drive trucks. This was part of growing up in Texas.

So, too, was the fun they had going to their Young Life meetings. Young Life was an organization whose stated purpose was "to introduce adolescents to Jesus Christ and His relevance to life today . . . a Young Life leader invests a lot of time in finding common interests with young people. Leaders go to athletic contests and school events and mingle over pizza and Coke and in other informal settings, wherever the kids are."

Before the Christmas holidays, their Young Life leader, a man named Patten, often took the boys and their friends out to play war games at a nearby commercial war-gaming facility. The boys got to dress up in fatigues and shoot canisters of paint at each other. Once they wandered off the "battlefield" and shot grazing cows full of blue spots, just for fun. But the more they played these war games, which were becoming popular all throughout the land, the more serious about winning them they became.

They were also growing serious about theft at Paschal High. Two of the Legionnaires' jackets, one Izod and one leather, were stolen from their lockers, and stereos of their friends were regularly being ripped from cars in the parking lot. Stealing a car stereo from a high-school student was like stealing the saddle off a man's horse in the Old West. This was serious business, an affront to personal dignity. Honor and masculinity were at stake. The Legion placed a note in the school's office that found its way to principal Gregg's desk. It said, YOU AMERICANS ARE SLOW TO LEARN, YOU MUST NOW SUFFER OUR SOLUTION, and was signed with a swastika. Then the boys went off to enjoy their Christmas vacation.

When they came back to school for second semester, they found that principal Gregg had instituted a new program, called the Senior Male Ambassadors. The program's charter listed four goals for those who would be Ambassadors:

1. Intellectual Development. Having achieved a level of intellectual growth by becoming a senior, the student should help others attain a similar level of achievement.
2. Moral and Ethical and Spiritual Values. The student must by example display these qualities and encourage others to follow a wholesome code of conduct.
3. Citizenship and Civil Responsibility. The student must practice good citizenship, especially in his school environment, and provide leadership to insure that other students understand and develop the same.
4. Social Development and Human Relations. Adjustment to and improvement of society, as it is related to school environment. Ambassadors must be able to understand needs of other students and help them understand the changing society.

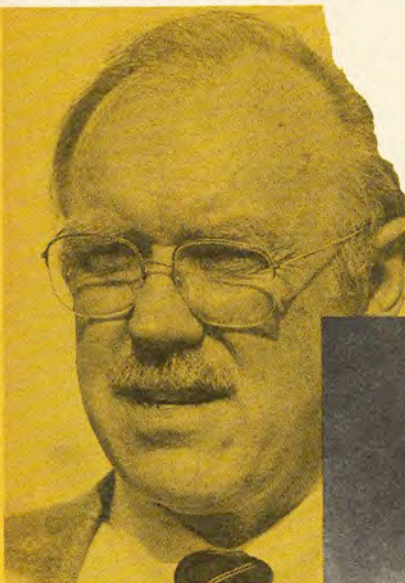
To members of the Legion of Doom, this sounded like a pretty easy way to earn half a course credit one period a day. But what got them most excited were the particular duties spelled out in the Ambassadors' charter:

1. Hospitality. The members of the Senior Male Ambassadors will station themselves at strategic areas on campus and greet students, teachers, parents and visitors.
2. Security. Patrol the campus, especially the parking lots, lunchrooms and hallways. Encourage students to get to classes on time and refer all non-students to

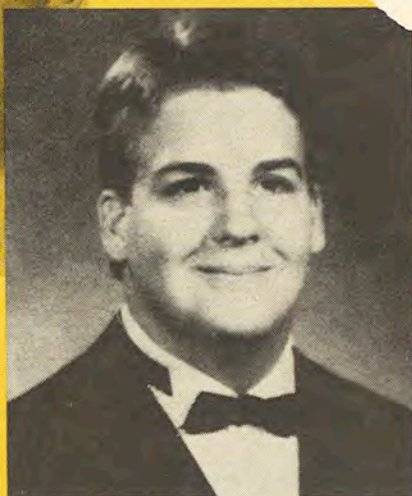
DAVID BRESKIN was nominated for a *National Magazine Award* for his story on teen suicide in RS 434.



# Poor principal Gregg. What a tight spot.



What's a principal to do! One of his brightest students, Chad Fillmore, wrote a paper on how to make a pipe bomb – and the teacher gave him an A!



Chad Fillmore

So, in short order, a few of the thirty-two Ambassadors began scuffling with students. They bad-mouthed kids they didn't like. They "busted" dopers, reporting them to the principal. They spied on suspected thieves, sometimes vandalizing their cars in the parking lot – a dent here, a flat tire there – and then reported the vandalism to the principal in their role as Ambassadors. If they saw a student without a pass, they might chase him down the hall, tackle him, bring him to the office.

One day Turner, Biels and Beaver ran outside in their trench coats and stood in front of a student's car as he tried to leave campus. They forced him to the attendance office, whereupon Beaver announced, "We found this young man trying to leave campus, and he says he has a note of dismissal, but we thought we'd better check." For other students – often light-skinned Social friends – they turned their heads the other way. Most students hated the Ambassador program, but the boys didn't care, because they were above it all. They were

across the street from a church and next to the upper-crust subdivision where some of them had homes. They shot their bazooka at a group of snowball-throwing kids, but the charge fell short.

They preserved all these moments on videotape and gave themselves high ratings, watching replays again and again. The videos were almost as good as their favorite movies – *Escape from New York*, *The Road Warrior*, *The Deer Hunter*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Red Dawn* – which they watched to psyche themselves up for Legion of Doom action.

There were some assignments too risky for the camera. One Monday afternoon after school in mid-January, five Legionnaires sneaked into Paschal with ski masks over their faces. They had come to avenge the locker theft of their jackets by some of the Polo Boys, a group of black students with a fondness for Ralph Lauren merchandise and a reputation for taking unusual steps to acquire it. The Doomers walked past three janitors, broke into the lockers of a number of "suspects," repossessed the at-large alligator (or so they claimed) and took the rest of the lockers' contents – clothes and books mostly – to Beaver's house, where they promptly burned them. Late that Friday night Legion members drove to the house of one of the suspected blacks, Varney Clarke, and fired six bullets at a window. Varney and his mother happened to be in the window at the time but were not hit by the gunfire.

Two weekends later the Legion decided to finish what it had started with the locker revenge. They headed out for the house of another black "suspect," Leslie Howard, with Beaver driving his Suburban and Dietrich, blitzed, steering Biels' truck. Bubba and Turner had finished a twelve-pack earlier in the evening, and now in the trucks were a number of beer bottles filled with gasoline, with rags for wicks. But there was a problem. Beaver could not find the house.

Both trucks pulled over in a church parking lot, and Beaver looked at a map. Soon a policeman pulled up, and Beaver asked him for directions. The policeman said, "Follow me, I'll take you there." And he led them until they were two blocks away and he could point them in the correct direction, and two blocks later the Legion of Doom was yelling, "Niggers suck," and hurling Molotov cocktails at the house. Fortunately for the Howard family, the boys threw their cocktails at the wrong house and had terrible aim, at that. The only things set on fire were the Howards' car and their next-door neighbor's yard.

As second semester rolled on, the Legion of Doom found new targets. It would act against not only dark-skinned individuals but white guys, defilers of their own race, as well. These lowly whites were called scum. A student who had made the mistake of previously dating a girl who now went out with Legionnaire Chad Fillmore had the doors of his house broken down and his car repeatedly vandalized. Threats were becoming common. Death threats were reserved for special cases. LEJUN UV DUME graffiti began to turn up at school. There was a circled swastika on the breezeway to the cafeteria. And there was a circled swastika on principal Gregg's desk, in a second letter that read: STOP THE THIEVING OR WE'LL TAKE CARE OF IT.

With the coming of spring, Beaver was interviewed by the local newspaper for a piece on student motivation. He was an obvious choice, being the biggest man on a big campus. He told the paper, "I want to be either the richest man or president or king of the western empire." He said, "I see myself in [Cont. on 105]

the office.

3. Peer Advisor. Talk to students about problems and refer them to appropriate personnel to help them.

4. Truancy Monitor. Identify students on or off campus who refuse to attend classes and refer them to appropriate vice-principal.

5. Absentee Monitor. Adopt homerooms with serious absentee problems. Encourage students to come to school.

6. Homeroom Resource Personnel. Talk to students during homerooms about problems common to school environment. Talks or topics must be approved by administrators.

7. Assembly Helpers. During assemblies the Ambassadors will station themselves in assigned homeroom areas. They will encourage the student to be quiet and attentive.

This was a terrific opportunity. They would get to wear purple laminated AMBASSADOR identification tags. They would get to roam the campus with the principals' walkie-talkies. Despite what the charter said about helping students "understand the changing society," the Senior Male Ambassadors were really the revival of a similar group, the Paschal Posse, that walked the halls years ago, and the Legionnaires understood this. The goal was really to stop theft and drug use on campus. Of the six Legionnaires who were eligible – Dorris and Williams were juniors, Chad Fillmore had graduated early and was now taking community-college courses – five of them signed up: Dietrich and Turner and Biels and Bubba and ringleader Beaver.

"And they started thriving on the authority," said Roger Woodard, Paschal's professional hall monitor, who worked with the boys. "They thought, Hey, we have the authority. We have the PTA, we have the administration behind us." The boys began wearing army-style trench coats to school. They began talking about machine guns. One said they were told by a vice-principal, "If you have to, use brute force." (The school administrators would later deny this.) Another Ambassador understood, "If you were touched by another student, you could beat the shit out of them."

the elite.

With the Ambassadors going strong in school, the Legion of Doom stepped up its extracurricular activities. They spray-painted their skull and crossbones and name about the neighborhood, writing LEJUN UV DUME, which they thought was German. Other graffiti further explained their feelings: BLOOD AND HONOR IS OUR CODE, DEATH FOR THE CAUSE IS HONORABLE; ARYAN LORD, I WORSHIP HITLER; SMOKE YOUR POT AND DIE, ARYAN LORDS; WE ARE THE FUTURE; BLACK DEATH, LEJUN UV DUME; STAR OF ETHIOPIA NIGGERS; or, simply, NIGS DIE.

At night, the Legion would cruise into Blacktown in Dorris' Blazer or Beaver's Suburban, armed with a JVC video camera. They'd stop a black man on the street and ask, "Excuse me, sir, can you tell me what it feels like to be a nigger?" They'd throw things at black prostitutes, taunting them with insults, or they'd drive over to Fag Park to beat up the queers, occasionally dropping pumpkins off a bridge to smash the fags' windshields as they drove underneath. If they had the good fortune to spot some Arabs, they would scream "Sand niggers" at them and laugh.

They also brought the video camera out to Beaver's family's ranch, not far from town, to document their training sessions. The boys would dress in camouflage fatigues and line up their weapons for the camera: .357 Magnums, .45s, .38s, 10-, 12-, 20-gauge shotguns, deer rifles, an HK-91 semiautomatic British assault rifle, on which they had filed down the pin to make it automatic, and, for tradition, a crossbow. They had some thirty guns in all, and with the help of the *Anarchist's Cookbook*, they had made a number of pipe bombs and a rocket launcher. They would take some fully dressed dummies or some plaster casts from an orthopedic shop in town and paint them like blacks and write NIGGER on them and then just fire away. This made for good video.

With their pipe bombs they exploded trees and television sets and free-standing brick mailboxes. They built and then burned crosses in a field called Equitable,



## Legion of Doom

[Cont. from 70] public office. I think I can run it better; too many things are going wrong now." He said that most minorities "have no motivation" and that some people were poor because "they don't have the intelligence. Intelligent people do go higher up the ladder."

The week of spring break was capped by all sorts of festivities for the Legion of Doom. On Friday night, they shot out the windshield of a BMW parked near Paschal. It belonged to a black former Paschal student who they thought was selling pot. They left a note on the car: PASCHAL IS NOW NAZI TERRITORY. YOU ARE SHORT-LIVED IF YOU RETURN. HEED OUR WARNING, THERE WILL NOT BE ANOTHER.

The next day was even better. A wonderful party was thrown for Beaver's eighteenth birthday. "It was an all-American picture," said a neighbor. There were barbecued hot dogs, balloons with LEGION OF DOOM on them and a cake, innocently presented by Beaver's mother, Judy, complete with skull-and-crossbones decoration. It was a magical time.

After the birthday party, the Legion came down with some kind of Saturday-night fever. They began by firing a metal arrow into the front door of Jason Sear's house. Jason was a white Paschal student whom they considered a user and seller of narcotics. On the arrow was the swastika and the words FIRE IT UP JASON. Fire It Up was the name for a loose group of acquaintances at Paschal who thought the cheerleaders' ritual chant "Fire it up, Paschal, fire it up" was amusing in view of the sort of firing-it-up they did.

It was unusual for the Legion to hit more than one target in a night, but this night would be different. Graduation was coming up, "and there were so many people to do," as a Legionnaire said. For their next hit, they would do something with an animal. "It's cruel and all," said a Legionnaire who claimed his great-grandfather was Hitler's psychiatrist, "but the people that have it done to them *know* it's cruel and that we're crazy - 'the savage beasts!'"

On someone's porch they found a cat. "Cute and cuddly" is how one Legionnaire described it. First they attempted to smother the cat, but the cat would not smother. Next they tied a rope around its neck and dragged it behind their car, but the cat would not be dragged to death. So the boys finally took the cat and smashed it up against another car.

With the dead cat in tow, they drove to the house of another white Paschal student, Markham Page. Markham's crime, the Legion figured, was that he smoked pot and they didn't like him. In front of the house was Markham's car,

which they managed to unlock with the help of a hanger. Then they sliced the cat open, straight down its rib cage, and wrapped the cat's body over the steering wheel so its blood and guts would drip down on the front seat, and when Markham approached the car in the morning, it would look like the cat was mooning him. They left a note, FIRE IT UP '86, with a large swastika, and threw the cat's collar, with tags and a little bell, onto Markham's driveway. They also left bloody fingerprints.

By now it was nearly three in the morning, but these boys were used to staying out late - curfews being passé and parents so trusting. They moved on to their next target: Trey Hill, sixteen and already scared. Trey was accused of showing the wrong finger to the mother of one of the Legionnaires and of being a car-stereo thief besides, and his little blue Datsun had borne the brunt of these accusations ever since November, sometimes on school property: it had been kicked, dented, broken into and left with flat tires, busted windows and a destroyed stereo. He'd been shot at with a pellet gun while driving home one night.

This was only child's play, and more recently the Legion had mysteriously sent word to Trey that it was going to blow up his house. When the Legionnaires came to Trey's house, they walked into the bushes next to his bedroom and put duct tape on his window, as if to hold a pipe bomb. But when all was said and done, they chose to put the bomb on his car windshield instead. Nails and screws from inside the bomb sprayed everywhere, flying across the street, through a neighbor's carport and car, and damaging his house as well as the Hills'. A metal shard tore through a bedroom wall, not far from where Trey's fourteen-year-old brother slept. The note they left, under a large red swastika, told Trey, WE DO NOT LIKE THIEVES. THIS IS YOUR LAST WARNING.

The Legion of Doom celebrated the explosion at a nearby shopping-center parking lot, where they whooped and hollered. They could not rest, though, not just yet. So they drove back to the house of the boy who had dated the wrong girl and, as a coda to the evening, shot out the porch light.

Though the Legionnaires could not imagine it at the time, this was the parting shot for the Legion of Doom, for they had attacked too many people on the white side of the tracks in a single evening, and the cat was out of the bag. In a matter of days, they were discovered by the police. Six of them came in voluntarily for questioning. Three of them - Fillmore, Dorris and Turner - did not. They were already slick with lawyers and were politely arrested for probable cause of possessing prohibited weapons and quickly released on their own recognizance.

The six who came in [Cont. on 106]

# Your best friend may be a Walkerschnapper.

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## Legion of Doom

[Cont. from 105] to chat up the police told their stories with gusto. They told detectives how tired they were of theft and drugs at school, how they wanted to "clean up the neighborhood" and how their intentions were pure. Beaver was the proudest, a beaming boy on top of the world, without the slightest hint of shame. And none of the six was arrested, because the police wanted them to keep talking.

The police did some talking, too, and the local papers were full of it. The police said: "We have a group of kids who became discouraged with the school administration and law enforcement not being able to control the criminal element at Paschal. They took it upon themselves to form an organization called the Legion of Doom, which has been admittedly a self-proclaimed vigilante group." And because the kids called themselves vigilantes, the press called them vigilantes.

The police also said, "This is not an ordinary situation because most of the kids are honor students and athletes who thought they were doing the right thing by the offenses they committed." And because the police called them honor students and athletes, the press called them honor students and athletes.

The police also told the press the boys were against drugs, and the papers dutifully reported this, though they did not report that some of the Legionnaires were known by classmates to have used pot, crystal, Locker Room, gone on a steroids kick over the previous summer, sniffed Freon out of air-conditioning units and regularly gotten wasted on alcohol. The police said, "Their intent was to scare the criminal element and not harm them." And after the police told the press these things about the Legion of Doom, a gag was placed on their mouths from above, and the dark-skinned people on the wrong side of town grew angry.

And in the next two months of splendid springtime, when the police detectives put in 438 hours of overtime, and the district attorney pondered the case, and the grand jury called its witnesses, strange and memorable things occurred in this city by the Trinity River, deep in the heart of Texas. Women's bodies were turning up dead, one after the other, sometimes floating in the river, and the killer could not be found. A child-molesting teacher was discovered in the schools. The district attorney was secretly caught on tape saying that he had done "favors" for a white policeman who had killed a fifteen-year-old black boy and that he had "to shut up the black community." A

well-known civil-rights attorney, long a supporter of gun control, shot a sixteen-year-old boy into critical condition after catching him trying to burgle his barn. One of the city's ruling Rockefellers, Ed Bass, got caught up in allegations that strange cultists were beating employees at an arts center he ran. The city's schools superintendent was called "a greedy coward" by a state legislator. A black city councilman was refused membership, not once, but twice, by one of the city's prestigious country clubs.

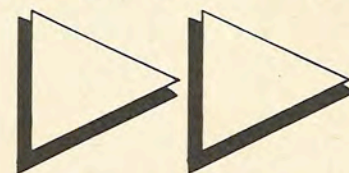
Things were even stranger in the land as a whole, where a president named Reagan seemed like a movie star named Eastwood, who seemed like a subway hero named Goetz. Things were happening so fast it was easy for the boys to get confused. "Shootin' things," said a former Legionnaire, "is sorta on the Reagan side of things." And as their beloved leader traveled to a faraway land to place a wreath by the graves where elite Nazis slept, uneasily, Nazis close to home lauded the boys' efforts. The message on the Aryan Nations Liberty Net computer network read: "You are the best, you expect the best. So why is everyone so surprised when you try to rid your school of the scum? Instead of arresting you and persecuting you, the 'authorities' should be helping you. Thanks for caring about your fel-

low students . . . Thanks to the Legion of Doom."

But the Aryan Nations were mistaken, for the boys were not being persecuted. Their weapons had not been taken away. They were not in jail awaiting trial. They were, in fact, going to school, as if nothing had happened.

Poor principal Gregg. What a tight spot he was in. These boys had been his friends, his best and his brightest. He had shepherded them through middle school before he and they moved on to Paschal. He was elbow-rubbing chummy with many of their parents, so he praised the intelligence of the boys and the sanctity of their families: "They have been outstanding students, participating in many school activities. They are churchgoing people. They have strong family support. Their families have been members of our PTA." Poor principal Gregg. He tried to downplay the racism when he said, "There probably was some prejudice involved." He tried to downplay the swastikas when he said, "There are two symbols that are very similar, a swastika and an earlier version of the Christian cross," and when he said, "I don't believe the boys truly understand what the swastika means." He tried to downplay the violence when he said, "There are acts of violence in high schools all over these United States."

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Poor principal Gregg, he was in over his head. There were whispers among students and staff and faculty that the old man had even *known* about the group. Weeks before the Legion was caught, a boy who had scuffled with an Ambassador told the vice-principals about a group of students with heavy ammunition and the wish to use it, but because he was a boy often in trouble, he was not taken seriously. And, first semester, Chad Fillmore had gotten an A in his business-management class for a flow-chart paper illustrating "How to Make a Pipe Bomb." Chad distributed the paper to all his classmates, and the teacher pinned it to the bulletin board. There was Legion of Doom graffiti everywhere, but apparently Radford Gregg had not seen it. *Poor principal Gregg.*

Now the public was calling for action, so principal Gregg promised the school would act. It would punish the Legion for any actions committed on campus. It would research a Texas state law barring any student from public school if he or she belonged to a fraternity or secret sorority. The boys could be thrown out of school by virtue of this law. An emergency PTA meeting was held in the Paschal auditorium, and Gregg assured the multitudes that these boys would be treated like any others, rich or poor, black or red. The multitudes were asked by a school administrator to stand and show their support for Gregg. They stood and applauded for sixty seconds.

But, for some reason, the school chose not to investigate the matter. It decided to wait until the police had finished their investigation, whenever that might be. In the meantime, principal Gregg puffed out his sunken chest and did two very easy things. He disbanded the Senior Male Ambassadors, as if out of embarrassment. And he charged Brad Biells with an unrelated crime — bringing a gun to school — but only because a teacher was involved, a baseball coach named Crowder, and it could not be so easily ignored. He fired old Crowder from his coaching duties, for he had seen the gun and not reported it, and sent young Biells off to another school as a scapegoat to the public's appetite.

And when the police had finished their investigation, the D.A. advised them not to turn over information to the school, for it might "compromise the investigation, have a chilling effect on students and teachers." And lest things get too chilly at Paschal — in the way of parents threatening lawsuits and broken friendships and the like — the Legion of Doom continued going to school, right through the day of graduation.

All this was like the Twilight Zone to the black and Hispanic kids, and the poorer white ones, too. [Cont. on 109]

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## Legion of Doom

[Cont. from 107] who knew how easily they could get sent to in-house detention or be suspended from school or at least paddled, girls and boys alike, in the principal's office. For the arrival of computers in the math department at Paschal had not ended the good old days, when students were "popped" three times across the buttocks for misdeeds. But the Legion of Doom did not have to worry, like the commoners, about even taking a popping.

Richard Williams, the future valedictorian, and Bubba Mathis, future air-force man, were upset that they might have ruined their lives, but most were confident everything would turn out all right in the end. A Legionnaire told a friend, "We're gonna get off on probation because Mr. Norman has so much clout in this town." And so they went about their merry way, though their evening activities were momentarily suspended.

First thing every morning, they headed out to the 7-Eleven to buy the local papers so they would not miss any detail of their exploits. They watched the commotion on the local news, sometimes appearing, with their voices electronically altered and their faces shadowed. They were thrilled when a local rock band, the Agents, wrote a song about them, "The American Way," and performed it around town.

They play with guns  
But it's all in fun  
Still if you're outside and get too  
much sun  
When they come around you'd better  
run  
From the Lejun uv Dume  
They don't like no stealin' and robbin'  
and such  
Little foreign cars why they blow  
them up  
Robin Hoods of yesteryear living to-  
day  
They're just protecting the American  
way

And so on.

Of course, the boys had time for a good laugh. "What do Yoko Ono and Ethiopia have in common?" asked a Legionnaire. "They both live off dead beetles!" Or, holding out the sides of his throat as if he had swallowed a pencil, a Legionnaire asked over dinner, "What's this? An Ethiopian with a piece of rice stuck in his throat?"

And when they weren't laughing, there was time for political discourse. Central America? "I'd send a lot of troops over there and clean the whole thing up." The American way? "Everything being perfect. How it used to be. Abraham Lincoln or something. No crime all the time. No drugs. Nowadays you got to watch for your life, like there's no authority at all." The cold

war? "The Russians could rule us if Reagan starts to cut back." The rights of "thieves"? "Trey Hill does not deserve to live. I can't stand him."

If you were president, what would you do to change the country? "I would hire as many more people as I could to be on the police force. Instead of having one cop to try to patrol one neighborhood, it would be so nice if you could have a detective every three blocks. Also, tougher laws against marijuana and stopping busing. I understand they're trying to make the black people, and the races, converse and get along together at the school. But if they start stealing and doing everything, it's just gonna get this group over here just *totally* POed."

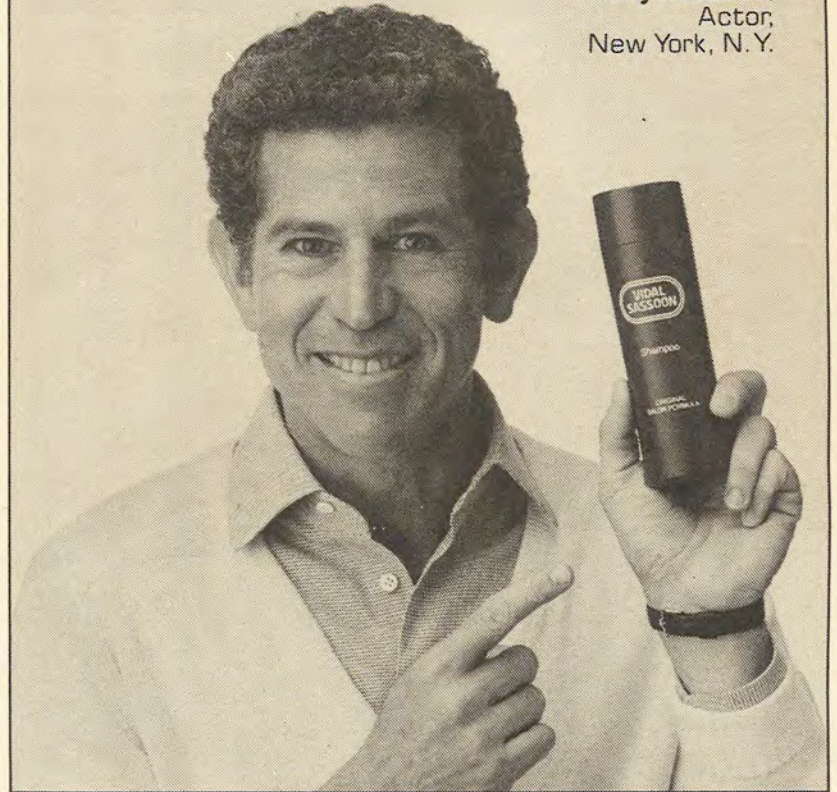
And when they weren't talking politics, or laughing, or bragging to friends about the niggers they had killed or the houses they had burned down or the M-16s they had hidden, they fielded movie offers over the telephone from Hollywood bigwigs. Twentieth-Century Fox, Lorimar, Universal, Paul Michael Glaser, Gross-Weston and at least two networks were interested. The boys were talking about how one of the companies was offering them \$10,000 apiece for rights to the true story. And the boys figured they were gonna make some good money off the Legion of Doom and have the last laugh on everyone.

Sure enough, there was plenty of sympathy and understanding for the Legion of Doom. Sarah Brooke, a counselor at Paschal, said: "For me, the issue is naiveté and an uncontrolled sense of responsibility. I really believe these kids wanted to do good. The reason they used a pipe bomb instead of a crowbar or a sledgehammer is that there is some excitement in seeing a car blow up." Ray Janes, an English teacher who sponsored the *Pantherette* — which featured an ad for a stun gun — said that he noticed from student book reports a growing fascination with Hitler and World War II and that "this neighborhood *does* need to be cleaned up" and that "every time you turn around, somebody is accusing somebody else of being racist. What's racist? Some of the blacks are the most racist I know."

Joe Martinez, a vice-principal at Paschal, said of the boys in the Legion, "We're still friends, regardless of what's happened." And Coach Somsy, who told his players not to speak to the press, was worried about the boys' future. He said: "What if one of them wants to be a lawyer? Or even a real-estate salesman? The livelihood of these individuals is gonna be affected. What's their earning power gonna be for the rest of their lives? It will take them a long time to recover from all of this. If the jury finds them guilty of a first-degree felony, when the sentencing comes, the emotional destruction [Cont. on 110]

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**Tony Roberts,**  
Actor,  
New York, N. Y.



## "Vidal Sassoon Finishing Rinse— I give it a perfect '10'."

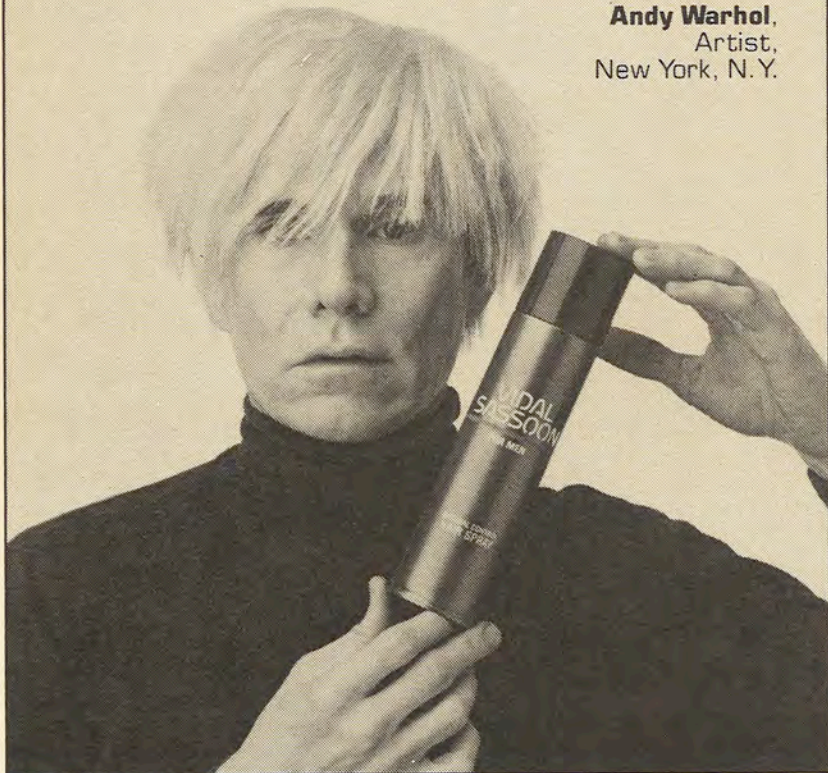
**Mitch Gaylord,**  
Olympic Gymnast,  
Los Angeles, Ca.





**"Vidal Sassoon Natural Control Hairspray for men—the art of style."**

**Andy Warhol.**  
Artist,  
New York, N.Y.



**"I wish I could control my fans the way Vidal Sassoon Grooming Gel for men controls my hair."**

**Bill Wadhams,**  
Lead Vocal, "Animotion,"  
Los Angeles, Ca.



**Legion of Doom**

[Cont. from 109] of these individuals will be so severe that there is nobody who can measure it. These kids were just trying to correct some evils that they thought had manifested themselves, for the benefit of everybody. We are not talking about street kids who don't see their parents or from split families. We're talking about parents who care about their kids and want them to do good and to be good. And have done everything in life to try to make them succeed."

Oh, the parents of the Legion, they had their say in the papers. "If these kids are guilty of anything, it's acting out their fantasies," said one. "All the kids have seen *Death Wish*. Charles Bronson took the law into his own hands, and he was a hero." Mrs. Biells, mother of Legionnaire Brad, talked to a paper for a story headlined, **LEGION CASE CREATES ORDEAL FOR FAMILIES: 2 SUSPECTS' MOTHERS REFLECT ON SHOCK, STRAIN.** She said, "Those kids are about as much a criminal as I am." And in another article, Mrs. Guthrie, mother of Michael, said, "I know them all. They are darling children."

When the police investigation of the darling children went to the district attorney's office, it was more than two-hundred pages in length. It listed fourteen "provable" offenses, the most serious being the pipe bombing, the fire bombing and the shooting at Varney Clarke, which they filed as Criminal Attempt Murder. To round out the picture, the police included thirty "unprovable" offenses about which they also had information. There was only one major charge against the Legion, but it fit like a glove and included all the offenses. It was one count of Organized Crime. Legionnaire Bubba called up the police and hollered, "Hey! Organized crime? That's some heavy shit!"

Too heavy, concluded the district attorney and his grand jury. And they decided not to call the police to testify, which was a bit odd in a case so complicated. And they decided that the boys shot at poor Varney Clarke to scare him and not to hit him. And when all was said and done, the grand jury did not hand up its indictments until two months after the boys were first discovered, and by some kind of magic, it was the very morning of the very day that the senior Legionnaires were set to graduate from Paschal High School.

And the indictments, thirty-three all told, were but the bare bones of what the police had discovered and what the Legionnaires themselves had told. Richard Williams, the future valedictorian, would be spared, being only sixteen and a minor in Texas. But the other boys had felonies and misdemeanors to account for, from killing the cat to throw-

ing the bomb to shooting the arrow. And by some magnificent stroke of luck, with only hours to spare before "Pomp and Circumstance," the powers that be at the school could finally discipline the boys, for the indictments told of their ski-mask locker theft, which they had known of all along, of course. But now it was official, and the five seniors involved were not permitted to walk across the stage to gather their sheepskins. Legionnaire Mike Guthrie, who had not raided the locker, did stroll across the stage. But the other Legionnaires, who attended the ceremony, were mailed their diplomas.

And summer vacation began. The police tried not to show their disappointment over the indictments. They did explain that they questioned many of the Legion's victims and even went so far as to give one a lie-detector test. But they found no evidence that any crime had been committed by any of the Legion's "suspects."

**Mrs. Biells, mother of Legionnaire Brad, said, 'Those kids are about as much a criminal as I am.' Mrs. Guthrie, mother of Michael, said, 'I know them all. They are darling children.'**

And while the hot Texas sun beat down, the boys of summer stayed out of court while their lawyers, some of whom were elbow-rubbing chummy with the D.A., did their maneuvering and their continuing and their postponing. A few Legion of Doomers were sighted throwing water balloons at cars, which was a big comedown from the days of beer and Molotov cocktails. And in those dog days of "keeping a low pro," while Legionnaire Dorris pumped iron to prepare for next fall's football campaign, he told a friend, "There are stories, a bunch of stories, I could tell, but I have to wait until after sentencing."

There was this one small matter of sentencing. There did not seem to be much chance of a trial, so great was the evidence against the Legion of Doom. Everyone expected the boys to plead guilty. And though convictions for the felonies could add up to many years in jail, nobody expected any Legionnaires to spend even a day behind bars.

And if they pleaded guilty, the boys would be eligible for a special type of probation. And if they kept themselves clean during this probation, their crimes would be eventually wiped from their records, and their slates would be clean once again. And it would be as if the entire thing had never happened. ●