



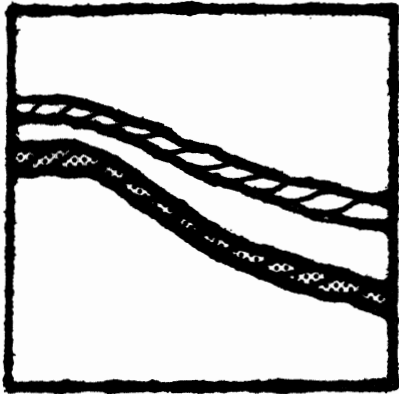
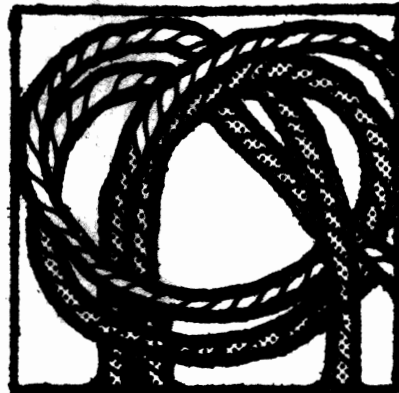
WE'RE ALL TIED UP

On January 1, 1978, a completely new copyright statute came into effect in the United States. This new law has brought many changes including new application forms and new registration and deposit regulations.

Prior to the new law, 85% of our business could be transacted, without correspondence or difficulties. The complexities of the new law, particularly as it affects copyright registration, has revised that situation dramatically: less than 20% of the applications received can now be passed without corresponding to correct errors or elicit missing information. The results have been a tremendous increase in workload, not matched by a corresponding increase in staff.

Much of this extraordinary crush of work is due to the unfamiliarity of the public with the new copyright forms and—what may be less understood—the novelty of examining these applications and the distinctive problems they have brought to the surface. In short, both the public we serve and the Copyright Office are going through a painful period of adjustment to the new law; therefore, we need your cooperation and your patience.

The main purpose of this announcement, however, is to reassure you that the administrative inconvenience the Copy-



GETTING IT STRAIGHT.

right Office is undergoing will not in any way affect the validity of any copyright under the new statute. Most people, unaware of the details of the new law, confuse registration of a copyright claim with obtaining copyright; hence there are anxieties expressed over delays in receiving a certificate.

In fact, copyright exists from the moment a work is created, without the need of any registration. Registration is required for the bringing of a suit to enforce rights under a copyright, but not to acquire a copyright. The date of registration in the Copyright Office may become important in certain situations but it is not pertinent in determining when copyright is secured. Also, the effective date of registration is the date when an acceptable application, fee and deposit have all been received in the Copyright Office; the date we mail the certificate or the date it is received is irrelevant.

We hope that you understand our predicament; a new law always means disruptions of business as usual, for the public and for the bureaucracy. We like to think that we're different at the Copyright Office, oriented toward careful service to a wide variety of creative individuals and enterprises. For this year, however, doing our work as carefully as we can will take more time.

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