

BOBOLINGS

nov 67

jean young lettering (excluding the date) from long ago.



Happy Birthday, Andy Main

Andy, you know how the greeting is meant.. I've used it too long for you to forget. Casual reader, this is my friendly, habitual greeting to Andy, and has no particular connotations other than those expressed in "friendly" and "habitual."

I read the mailing some time ago Andy, and have been thinking of commenting on it. I may yet. Most of the comments I've thought of expressing have for some reason been directed either toward your comments in this or the prior mailing, or toward someone who was commenting on what you had said. The obvious conclusion is that you need your own page(s).

I'm not going to try to convince you overly much, but I'm going to disagree with you a bit. The trouble is that I can't say: "Andy, you're wrong!" I don't know that you're wrong. I do know that I don't agree with some of your reasoning.

About taking life, for instance. About eating, and diet. About whether man should eat meat.

Man, as a species, is unquestionably omniverous. He has that heredity--his teeth tell that story as do his young. Nature permits man to live on a highly varied diet, and equips him to adapt to wide dietary variances. The norm seems to be both meat and potatoes.

You don't like to kill in order to live. To live, of course, you must kill--as must all of life. The whale straining plankton from the sea waxes fat on his vegetable diet just as does the wise wolf who can separate the slow elk from the herd grow fat on his animal protein. And if either the whale or the wolf cannot kill off the bacteria, or the virus, or the other disease organism, or the other external enemy, then they die--as will the American Elm, the Chestnut, or the Angus steer.

There is nothing in man that is as hard as nature. Nature is the complete perfectionist--"live--or die." And all dies. Sooner or later, all dies. Be a Sequoia tree. Live 2000 years--not because you don't have enemies but because you can defeat them--and then just once lose. Be a fig tree or a tortoise and live to be the eldest of your kind. You live that long by winning. Lose, just once: "The eldest is dead, long live the eldest."

One lives by being, by using his resources. Man has a broad spectrum; he can live on meat, on vegetables, or for all I know on fruit. He can't avoid killing if he is to live--your bodily defenses may differentiate "vegetable" from "animal" for defensive purposes--they don't however draw their punches simply because the one is presumed to be sentient and the other is not.

I can feel a certain sympathy for the calf or lamb or steer or chicken that I eat. And a certain gratefulness that I am the eater rather than the eaten. I'm part of the market for the product. Without me, the animal wouldn't not get killed--it would either die differently, or at a different time, or not get born--for we do produce to market rather than kill what is fortuitously there. Consume or not, you're as responsible as I for the life and death of our fellow animals (at least the commonly eaten ones), and I rather think you're missing a pleasure to no benefit.

I disagree much more strongly with you, Andy, on the war in Vietnam than I do on eating habits. I don't have any really convincing arguments.

When Czechoslovakia fell to Hitler, I was around 13 years old. I cried, but not so bitterly as dad, who was in his forties at the time. "Peace in our time" said a man with noble ideas, a black umbrella, and no respect whatsoever for the dignity of a people. A few years later a man with noble ideas, a black cigar, and a deep sense of the dignity of a people showed how to fight to get some peace in our time. That war, at least, was won.

In the states and in Europe during that war, there were an amazing number of guys who had no slightest idea of what the war was all about. Hitler hadn't attacked us. It wasn't our war. Europe wasn't going to bother us. In complete truth, I can't recall being in a single discussion with GI's in Europe on the war where I wasn't the only man who felt he had any business being in that war. From what I could see, the German war wasn't popular with the draftees, though many, as myself, were glad to be serving in Europe rather than in the Pacific.

As a passing thought, I wonder what today's peace marchers think of WWII. It's evident to me (which unfortunately doesn't make it true) that none of them learned a damn thing from world history in the ten years prior to the war, but a poll of their convictions on WWII would be interesting.

Yes, I think Vietnam is a page out of Hitler's book. Or Hirohito's, or Stalin's. It's just another attempt to move a few miles for the political purposes of owning territory and resources, keeping direct control over people, having fewer external enemies, and eliminating land boundaries. And if the South Vietnamese people want and need US support, then I'm for that support. Even when it costs lives. The long term goal must be that none of the big powers get into war with each other. I don't know how we'll avoid it, but I am sure that giving away the world chunk by chunk is not the way to do it.

At times I have the strong emotional feeling that we shouldn't be in Vietnam. If the South Vietnamese people ever say "Go Home, American," then there's no problem. In that case we withdraw as speedily as possible. Say, however, that they don't ask us to withdraw, but that Spock or one of the other leaders of the peace movement takes over as President tomorrow. Can we withdraw?

Rightly or wrongly, the US as a nation has committed itself to helping the South Vietnamese. It's a promise. You don't just say "Sorry about that" and walk away. It doesn't matter whether we should have made the promise, whether we had any legal right to, or even whether we have any legal responsibility under the promise. We have a moral responsibility under that promise, and on that moral responsibility will we be judged by the world.

Getting some kind of peace talks started would help us arrange a withdrawal over time. I honestly don't believe that the administration has not tried its darndest to get anything even vaguely resembling peace talks started, except to refuse to the condition that US troops withdraw first. I won't

even discuss that option--no enemy ever talks peace on responsible terms with a confessed weakling.

And if a decent peace isn't obtained under such a withdrawal, then what are US promises worth to the rest of the world thereafter? We live in the full world, not just fifty States. Return? Multiply present casualty figures by twenty. Or by a hundred. Look at landing casualties in any War. Read Beach Red, or The Longest Day.

If I recall right Andy, you made some comment about the non-complementary terms applied by GI's to the South Vietnamese, implying or perhaps stating that we were helping a people not worth helping. Forget it. Try a WWII or Korean vet someday on recognition of such terms as Frog, Moose, or Gook. Or maybe they weren't worth helping either, I don't know. I do however know that there will be a nickname created for anyone foreign, and that it will usually have a funny sound. Americans don't empathise with foreigners--a funny but true situation, considering that we're all foreigners (at least the members of FAPA that I know of, partially excluding Dan McPhail.)

Come to think of it, isn't it odd that old part-Cherokee Dan should have been partially responsible for the current discussion?

So very often in struggles against the spread of communism the US winds up helping the bad guy. It's natural. New political ideologies have a chance where the people are unhappy with results obtained under the old. When we try to prevent communism in a country, we go to the established government. That's the prime reason that I'm so highly in favor of the Peace Corps approach--it's about the only way of helping the people directly. The Peace Corps in action may not be producing much--it's hard to say, and results will be small in any short (20-year) period of time. A library, a handful of villagers with a year's more schooling than their elders, running water, a mouse-proof granary, a mayor selected by the people. Our Peace Corps frequently runs into trouble with the government of the country. Peace Corps members have been known to convince a village that it should have town meetings. Some countries where the Peace Corps works don't like this; it smacks too much of communism. Mountain tribesmen who lived by herding sheep in another country were convinced that they could farm the vacant land between their high country and the coast; the Peace Corps members responsible had disrupted the way of life of the natives, according to the host country.

But this is getting somewhat far afield of the war in Vietnam. The best thing that we could do would be to help the Vietnamese find a government suited to their needs. The US isn't particularly suited to this task--but neither is anyone else. The Viet Cong think they have the answer to the suitable government problem; the populace apparently does not agree. That's one of the problems, the fact that there are so many shades of political difference in South Vietnam.

There should be a solution to the war. The UN should be able to handle problems. I can't justify to myself the fact that we got into the war, even though how it developed and why. But we are in it, and desertion is to me not possible.

At the ski shop I recently picked up a book of party games. A few were new to me, a few were old, one looked like fun, and a couple were obscene. A buck shot on learning, again, that there are really few "adult" games. They did give me an idea, however, of a variation on Widner's Interplanetary--much simplified, of course, and made into a version of strip poker. Call it Interplanetary Strip if you wish. I'm rather wondering whether with today's accent on freedom, nudity, and sex is fun if there would be a commercial market for the thing among, say, the college crowd. Or is something on that order as old fashioned as making fudge?

My rough notes say two to four couples can play, and the purpose is to obtain a longevity drug (what else?) before losing your modesty. It's a board game, with three paths (orbits) available--the inner planets, the middle planets (which for this purpose are Mars, Jupiter and Saturn), and the outer planets. Movement is controlled by dice throws. The gimmicks are, of course, what happens on route--necessities to jettison cargo, the opportunity to turn pirate, space salvage, and the like. The detail to be developed is how to make skill a significant part of accomplishing your purpose. Widner's creation used too much skill, in that the time required to evaluate all the possibilities made the game take far too long. Monopoly and Careers have some balance of skill and chance.

Maybe I'll work on the game some on long winter evenings. Meanwhile, I'm still looking for a Go partner. Ron Elik, come back.

I mentioned the ski shop a few paragraphs back. It's the one where I work. The Government pays me reasonably well, but I'm moonlighting anyway. Like, I have 39 quarters of Social Security coverage, and I need forty for lifetime coverage. I don't get Social Security coverage working for the Government, but I do working for the ski shop, so long as I earn at least fifty dollars in a calendar quarter. There's another six quarters of coverage under Social Security that I eventually want to get, to enable me to shift some of my time in the Army from Social Security coverage to Federal retirement coverage, but the main purpose for now is just that one needed quarter.

Though the extra spending money can be used, as can the shopping discounts at Christmas time, which run 20% on almost everything sold in the department store of which the ski shop is but a part, plus certain specials on skiing equipment I need--\$100 boots for \$48, \$30 bindings for free, free use of any of the shop's demonstration skis throughout the season.

I'm a routine, poorly-paid sales clerk, and I enjoy it. Living where I do, there's just not enough skiing available on my budget to fill my normal need. This year I'm getting rid of some of the need by talking skiing, professionally, and I'm learning more about equipment than I could in ten years of skiing.

For years I've talked to a couple of skiing fans (like that's all there are) about a ski con. Anyone for Mt Snow, Vermont, sometime between January and April? LeeH? Jon & Joni? Nick? Aren't there any other skiing fans?

## THE UGLY AMERICANS

My thinking on foreign assistance has been influenced, though not shaped, by two recent events. One, a few years back, was the publication, The Ugly American. Another, much more recent, was a fellow at work, we'll call him Ross, who recently collected the last cent owed him by a Chilean on a lawnmower.

I've known Ross for something around fifteen years. I met him when we both worked, as civilians, for the Army, and it was with his help that I found out about the job I'm now filling.

At the same time that I was moving to my current job in IRS, in November 1964, Ross was in training for a job with the IRS Foreign Tax Assistance Staff in Latin America. He thought he was going to Ecuador. How he happened to land in Chile is another story, but land there he did, so he and I didn't see each other from mid-September 1964 to early May of this year. Since Ross is Assistant Branch Chief of the branch in which I work, I've seen him quite a bit since his return to Washington.

About two months ago, Ross and I had lunch with Jim, the Assistant Division Chief at the time, but now a Foreign Tax Assistance Team advisor in Brazil. With Ross's recent experience in Chile, and Jim's forthcoming assignment to Brazil (they actually sent Jim to the place he was supposed to go!) the subject of conversation should be obvious. Latin America, and Ross's experiences there.

One thing that develops clearly is that living costs in Chile are not quite comparable to those in the U.S. Ross estimates that his Chilean home would have cost around \$50,000 in the U.S.--where he lives in a house worth about \$27,000. His live-in maid cost \$30 per month. Manuel, his maintenance man, cost about \$2 a day. Manuel sort of came with the house--the place had been unoccupied, and Manuel had been sleeping in the house on a pile of rags in return for keeping the place from falling apart, being looted, or what-have-you. Manuel was apparently a good man, but he was literally penniless, and had never been employed.

Ross paid Manuel to work about one day a week around the house. Wash the windows and the car, scrub the floors, keep the grounds in shape, and the other basic upkeep which wasn't part of the maid's duties. The \$2 for this day's work helped Manuel, but he was still basically unemployed. There was other yard work in the area, which Manuel could handle except for one thing--the homeowners would want their lawns mowed, and Manuel didn't have a lawnmower.

Ross sold him a hand-operated lawnmower, on credit, no interest for \$50. That's what it cost Ross, \$50. Manuel couldn't possibly buy it. Credit as we know it doesn't exist in Chile, at least not for the working class, and Manuel would hardly be said to be a good credit risk based on his past earning power. So Ross sold him a lawnmower, so much per week, and Manuel went to work. Two months before Ross left Chile, Manuel made his final payment on the lawnmower.

That's the extent of the story. Manuel bought a lawnmower. He also, during the two years, got married, acquired a place to live, and supports himself and his wife on his income from yardwork. He sleeps on his own bed, not on a pile of rags in an unused house. He's in business, and it's a paying one.

Ross gave him a hand up, not a hand out. Well, Ross did forego the interest and take a risk, but Manuel bought the lawnmower. I think that's important. Hopefully, Manuel will be able to buy another one when the present one breaks down, if he's learned a little by having to buy the first. In any case, I'm happy to know one person who did one truly worthwhile thing while he was overseas.

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Thursday comes on Tuesday this week

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THE FANTASY AMATEUR. Peggy Rae is a rat fink. She--and she isn't even on the waiting list for gosh sakes--has met as many Fapans as I. Greg Benford is a rat fink. He was at New York, Peggy's already met him, but I haven't. And he hid from me. Helen Wesson, whom neither of us had previously met, managed to be met by my wife as well as myself. She, too, is a rat fink. The same goes for Don Anderson, who pulled the same trick as Helen Wesson. Next someone like Dan McPhail will decide to visit the east, and Peg will meet him, and she'll have met more FAPA members than I. If anyone is wondering, we've both met 59 as of the current mailing.

KIM CHI. My dad taught me to assume that every driver on the road was a complete idiot, utterly untrustworthy, and devoid of any sense of value for either his or my life. Peg's dad taught her that other drivers were not merely stupid, but were actively determined to do her and her car in. A minor difference, but both obviously of the "defensive driving" school.

TO MOCK AT A SOUL. Or, BLESSED BE THE WICKED, FOR THEY SHALL STEAL THE EARTH. About the only portion of this that I can even faintly agree with is the little line which states that "Forry has a liberal and idealistic side that vindicates, perhaps, all by itself the power of science fiction to achieve good in this world." Even there I have a quibble, for it is Forry that is good and not the power of science fiction. # The fans that fans have picked on are indeed an interesting lot. Ackerman. Degler. GMCarr. Pickering. Ashley. Wetzell. Magnus. White. Eney. Kemp. Sanderson, Breen. Trimble. Martin. Moskowitz (both Sam and Chris). Wollheim. Kyle. Sykora. Dietz. ARBM. As you said, Redd, "Fandom has been clever in its choice of victims to date: Its victims have been so poor or so young or so lacking in power and prestige that they could be made to run like rabbits instead of turning and fighting." Seems to me like a couple of entries on the above list just might not qualify for your definition of the picked-on fan. # Where went the vorpal sword that in SKYHOOK went snicker-snack? I sicken on the pap of civil disobedience.

THE 1966 FAPA LAUREATE POLL. I've voted but once (if at all) in the last few years simply because it takes me several hours to rescan the mailings concerned and come to a conclusion. Results should be printed, in my opinion, even if only a dozen fans vote. I care about the results, but not enough to cast an uninformed ballot simply to make up the quota of 40 or whatever.

SAMBO. Couple of minor quibbles on Social Security. Of the 4.4% deduction, 0.5% is Medicare. From what I know of medical expenses, at least that amount will be required. Thus the amount in your account at the end of 44 or whatever years will be about one-ninth less than the figure you gave. Secondly, there are benefits to widows and surviving junior children of persons covered, even though the worker may have far less than 44 years of coverage. The worker's account quite often wouldn't cover these payments so, as in any other form of insurance, the shortage in one account is compensated by the overage in some other account. I'm not enough of an actuary to even attempt to figure out if Social Security is reasonably priced, but it is far from as overpriced as you implied.

SERCON'S BANE. I fear that in my remarks to Andy I've repeated quite a bit of what you said. The repetition wasn't really intentional, but I did have some things I wanted to say and I couldn't entirely avoid sounding like a replay of you where you and I were in full agreement. # On my 1961 trip to Seattle and back I saw quite a few elk and a couple of mule deer close up, but somehow most of those don't count as encountering an animal in the wild. Those I saw were all in--is it Humber Provincial Park?--Canada, near Banff, and it was almost like seeing them in a zoo. Not that they were caged or fenced in, but that they were so tame. Like the bears in Yellowstone or the Smokies--only tamer. I've only seen two deer that I count as wild. In March, 1963, I went skiing at a place called Big Boulder, which is on the fringes of the Poconos in Pennsylvania. I was winding out the road from the resort to the motel about 9pm one night, and rounded a corner just as a doe and her fawn (well, I assume it was hers) entered the road. They froze as soon as they saw my headlights, and the corner had been sharp enough that I was barely moving, and hence was able to stop the car before hitting them. Ten seconds, perhaps, they stood hypnotized--and then the doe sailed off the road in the effortless floating leap you described, followed like a shadow by the fawn. I've never been back to Big Boulder in the winter, for the skiing wasn't to my taste. I would go back again if I thought I could again find the beauty of those few seconds. # That was an unusual weekend in another way. Peggy Rae had been in Los Angeles on the work portion of her work-study college training, and she picked the weekend that I'd picked to go to Big Boulder to return east. At about a quarter of 7 on Friday morning she called from the bus station, to catch me before I left for work. Ten minutes later and I would have been gone, not to work, but to the Poconos, for I'd taken that Friday off. I had to go near Philadelphia (where she then lived) anyway, so naturally we drove up together. Two weeks later it was my turn to startle her. She

was back in school, at Barre, Vermont, when I gave her a call on a Sunday night. We'd probably chatted for half an hour before she said "This is costing you money. I'd better go now." "Sure. A dime." I replied. Well, Vermont has good skiing, and Stowe is quite close to Barre. And it's only a twelve hour drive, from Maryland to Stowe.

HORIB. I had an idea for increasing the size of FAPA and hence, hopefully, increasing turnover, shortening the wl, and catching fans at their more active stage. Members and waiting lists I've mentioned it to think its a horrible idea. Let's try it again anyway. Create a group, call it FAPA Junior just to have a name, to which the top 35 people on the wl are automatically admitted. The members have the same activity requirements as in FAPA, except that they must publish 100+ copies of their FAPA Jr contributions, which go both to FAPA and FAPA Jr. FAPA members can contribute either 65+ copies, as at present, or 100+ copies, depending upon whether they do or do not want their fanzine to go to FAPA Jr. The same OE handles both FAPA and FAPA Jr. Thus the OE had a harder job, the hard-core 65-member FAPA can remain in a 65-member FAPA, and the few that would like a somewhat larger group can with only minor additional trouble expand their activity to include FAPA Jr as well as FAPA. # The appropriate next comment, considering that I'm reviewing Horib, would be on cons. First, let's reamend the rotation system. At NYCON III a four year rotation was adopted--Western US, Middle US, Overseas, Eastern US, repeat. This has two difficulties: The eastern city would always have to bid overseas, and overseas (from what I can see) might not be ready for a con as frequently as every four years. How about a five year rotation plan: Western US, Midwest US, Overseas, Eastern US, West, Midwest, East, Overseas, West, Midwest, East, West, Overseas, usw? # I'm still more than mildly distressed by the bidding/voting on the next site at the NYCON. One can't perhaps avoid politics and stupidity, on which the SF win was structured, but some control can be achieved. And, of course, I have The Answer. Yours. Sell memberships in the next con before the voting, and restrict voting to those who have purchased memberships in that con. Lupoff, that's the best idea in years. My pardons for quoting your idea back to you, but I want to make sure that this idea is presented in FAPA, and like a good OE I haven't yet read your submissions for the current mailing, so I don't know if you're pursuing the idea or not. For gosh sakes get this in the rules.

SPIANE. Just wanted to mention to Rick that his Westercon report was greatly appreciated. It was far above par on con-reporting Rick, and both Peggy and I appreciated it greatly. The East needs a con that sounds as good as you make the Westercon sound. Or maybe we just need you to report it.

BOBOLINGS, November 1967, was the product of Bob Pavlat, 9710 47th Place, College Park, Maryland, 20740. It may very well be the last of the series, for I'm not satisfied with quite the disorganization permitted by this incarnation.