

UNASKED
OPINION

FAPA # 58



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WHAT KIND OF 'AMERICA' DO YOU WANT?

Since Jack Spear saw fit to use FAPA as a bouncing board for his political opinions, fine, I'll use it that way myself. I am referring, of course, to the King County Young Democrats platform that Jack submitted as his FAPA contribution.

I don't like Communism. Neither the Karl Marx version that a man shouldn't be allowed to own property and use it for his own gain; nor the Stalinist version that snatches property by force from its owners and turns it into Government "collectives"; nor the home-grown American version that tries to cut everybody down to the same size so that nobody can have any more than anybody else. The Democratic Party in this country has been trying for two decades to smother individual enterprise in a combined socialism of taxes and so-called 'Labor' privileges. They've done a darn good job of convincing a lot of people that the Government is next to God when it comes to handing out free 'blessings'. Just what are these 'blessings'? What kind of civilization do we want to live in? Orwell's 1984?

Our government today, under the so-called 'Democrats', has developed, like Diana of the Ephesians, a hundred teats to suckle its citizens into a stupor. Unlike Diana of the Many Breasts, it also has developed economic whips to compel the citizen to suck whether he wants to or not. This force-feeding is more insidious and more dangerous than C.L. Moore's BLACK THIRST. It crushes individual initiative and feeds the economic lifeblood of our businesses back to the non-producers in a dope-like dream of "Welfare".

This administration has made every effort to compel the ordinary citizen to become dependent on it. It has coddled and encouraged Labor not for the benefit of labor -- i.e., better or safer working conditions, fair wages, kindlier hours -- but for the enslavement of labor. Now an ordinary man cannot find a job at his trade without a union card, nor hold a job if the union says 'no'. In many cases neither he nor the employer have the right to express a preference in hiring. If he wishes to strike out for himself he immediately becomes a 'capitalist' -- proscribed from the union hall and hunted out of existence by pickets or strikes. The labor union that men and women fought, bled and died for as a Cause more Righteous than Justice, has become another teat for incompetents to suck.

The various welfare agencies, Federal, State, County and even City, have suborned the decent citizens who come in contact with them until they no longer can recognize right from wrong. This easy benevolence has become an enticing teat with hidden teeth. Say that George and Mary have a family spat. George is tired of working at an uninteresting job, doesn't like the foreman and can't quit because the Union has two men waiting for every job that opens. Mary is tired because there's never enough money left in George's take-home pay to cover the increasing needs of a home with 4 kids in it. She's more than a little bored, too, so they fight to break the monotony. George slams out of the house headed for parts unknown, and before she's even had time to stop bawling, wash her face and wonder what to pack to go home to mother, there's a kind neighbor ready with advice.

"You don't have to go home to your mother, Dearie, that's what we've got Welfare for. You go right down and apply for ADC and you won't have to worry a bit! The State wants mothers to stay home with their children... you won't even have to get yourself a job. Just you go down and apply." So she goes down.

Sure enough, a nice little Welfare woman comes and hears all about how mean George was, and counts the children, and looks in the cupboards -- oh, very discreetly, of course, just as nice and pleasant as can be -- and then the checks start coming every two weeks. It's not as much as there was when George was home, but they get along. The only thing is.. she misses George.

George misses Mary, too, so he comes home sheepishly and -- well, the divorce isn't really final yet, so... besides, the kids need their father. What harm if he should move in as a 'boarder'? They're married... it's no sin. So George moves in. With his paycheck and the money from the Welfare, there's enough to get along easily so they are happy. Nice Government! Such a kind Santa Claus Government... Then the nice little Welfare woman comes to call. She spots George's slippers under the bed, and notices his pajamas hanging beside Mary's nightgown. Suddenly it isn't the 'nice little Welfare woman' any more, it's a couple of severe looking detectives wanting to know how long George has been home. The next thing Mary knows she is in jail, the children in an orphanage, and George facing jail, too, as an 'accessory'. Sure, George and Mary are not very bright - but they weren't criminals, either, until this Administration dangled its 'Welfare' in front of them.

Or take that nice old gray-haired Grandma living by herself in the old home. She could rent the rooms out, but she is just too tired to bother. She sees old Mrs. Biederman up the street, and Mrs. Jones across the alley, and hears all about their pension. Grandma gets the idea in her head that she wants a 'pension', too. She wants to be able to splurge herself to new teeth or new glasses or a week in the hospital any time she feels like it without being a 'burden on the children'.... Her sons and daughters are grown, married, with families of their own to work and worry over. Oh, she knows, of course, that they will see that their mother has a roof over her head and food to eat... but Grandma would like to enjoy all the privileges her cronies have... the weekly checkup at that nice young Welfare doctor, those flattering inquiries how her diabetes is coming along... So, she applies for Old Age Assistance. Her children realize helplessly that they couldn't possibly afford to give their mother all the fancy medical and social 'benefits' that the State is so willing to bestow on her, so they swallow their pride because they love her, and swear that they are on the edge of bankruptcy and that she is a pauper. And, after a while, it feels so nice to be relieved of all worry about Grandma, that they even come to believe it. "After all," they rationalize, "the State owes something to its Senior Citizens. She's worked hard all her life, been a good, upstanding citizen. She's raised a fine family of citizens and the State owes her a living!"

You think those cases are far fetched? You don't read your papers closely, do you... A few mink coats in the Nation's Capitol make the headlines, but wholesale bribery of a citizenry is conveniently overlooked.

Where do you suppose all this money is coming from? All this 'easy money' - the 'Rocking Chair' handouts, the 52-20 clubs..? What's putting all this nice, sweet, milk in those Government teats? Santa Claus? Don't kid yourself. Most of you who are reading this may still have only an academic dis-interest in Economics and Sociology. It is just another course you have to take in college in order to get your degree. But in another ten years, 'Economics' will mean, "God, where am I going to find the money to pay these taxes!" and 'Sociology' will mean, "No, thanks, I'm not interested in a factory job. I'm making more money just staying home drawing my Unemployment Compensation..."

Let's take another aspect of it. No doubt many of you do not yet have to pay income taxes, and many of you who do pay them, never really notice what is done to your paycheck. You philosophically accept your 'take home' pay as your actual wages, and if there is a bonus coming back at the end of the year, "Fine, another present from Uncle Sugar!"

But have you really looked at an income tax scale of taxation? You laugh at stories of the millionaire who is down to his last yacht...very funny, ha ha. It is also a joke that the 'big shots' have 95% of their income confiscated... the 5% left being still more than you get. Just because you never expect to earn a million dollars yourself, you think it is a good idea that nobody should be allowed to get rich? Is that what you want to do to America, the land of promise? Where a poor boy could rise to the top and become a millionaire? Right now, if you sold a story

to Hollywood and they were willing to give you a million dollars for it, this Administration says you have no right to that much money and you would have to give them \$950,000 of it. They say nobody has a right to be smarter than anybody else, or to earn any more than anybody else. Is this our "American Dream"? What has happened to the idea that a man was entitled to as much as his ability and initiative could get him? Has it been swallowed up in this Administration's insistence that the intelligent citizens should be milked to support the stupid, and that all should be expected to support not only the non-producers of this nation, but as many other nations as will accept our free handouts?

11/28
The citizens of this nation would do well to examine closely what the so-called 'Democrats' - some of them, that is - are trying to do to this country of ours. Stalin has made the statement more than once in his speeches of the past 20 years that he will have no need to fight America, because our overtaxed economic structure will collapse from within. Most citizens snort with anger and toss this statement aside. Very few seem to realize that he means it. Why is Stalin so sure?

11/28
The spy trials in Washington have shown how cleverly the Stalinist agents have penetrated into Government service. They find every small niche they can, no matter how apparently irrelevant. For instance, here in Seattle a man was dismissed from his job as Health Inspector for the City as a Communist. You may well wonder, as I did, how he could gain anything for the Communist Party by inspecting garbage disposals, or sewer outlets. But don't let that fool you. He also inspected restaurants, club rooms, beer taverns, small businesses of all kinds. Everywhere he went he could speak favorably about certain 'front' organizations and 'invite' the owner to attend. Those that did - particularly down in Jackson Street, our oriental and negro section - maybe got health clearances and easy permits. Those that argued back, or refused to show interest, maybe all sorts of repairs or alterations were necessary to be allowed to continue in business.

11/28
Put that on a big scale and what have you got? You figure it out. Use those brains of yours for hunting something a darn sight harder to find than Kinnison's Arisiens. Hunt for systematic sabotage of our American Enterprise, of systematic and continual propoganda for weakening American resistance to the insidious Communism that is shaping tomorrow's economic pattern. If you really want a world where you are cut to fit the niche you have to fill -- well, it is your privilege to ask for it. I, personally, do not like Communism nor the idea that it stands for. I think a citizen should be more than a mindless, spineless, puppet that exists by permission of the State. I think a citizen should face responsibility and be prepared to accept it - taking his chances with fortune on the basis of his ability rather than his pull with the Welfare Agencies.

11/28
I have no doubt that Jack Spear is a sincere American citizen, genuinely disturbed about the same Governmental disorders - graft, extravagance, stupidity - as I am. He is a lawyer, educated, supposedly intelligent, married, the potential head of a family. He conducts his own law office, drives his own car, lives in his own home -- all of which he presumably owns or at least has purchased the right to use. This makes him a Capitalist. An ordinary, American-citizen type Capitalist. He has no need nor inclination to line his pockets with Government 'easy money'... And for the life of me I can't understand why he is playing around with a group that has been openly castigated by Seattle Newspapers as "seeking to provide a protective front for Communists". It certainly isn't doing FAPA any good/be accused of circulating propoganda. But whether it is propoganda or not, at least it does bring to your attention - and I do mean yours! - the fact that it is your responsibility to figure out what kind of a Government you want to live under for the next century.



DMCarr



UNASKED OPINION



The most noticeable thing about the 57th FAPA Mailing was Lee Hoffman's SCIENCE FICTION FIVE-YEARLY -- which, in turn, brought up the second most noticeable thing, the incredible amount of work some of our members are capable of putting out. For instance,

LEE HOFFMAN, in addition to the Science-Fiction Five-Yearly, gave us the delightful CHATTAHOOCHEE, OKEFINOKEE, & OGEECHEE OCCASIONAL GAZETTE.

REDD BOGGS, likewise, turned out Sky Hook, Skip-Rope Rimes, Gafia Press Style Book, and The Fantasy Amateur -- all beautifully done, all interesting.

WALT COSLET, bless his heart, not only produced his own Astounding Letters for the mailing, but Ed Cox's Telsh, and Laney's Fandango, as well. In my opinion hekto'd zines are much harder to do a good job on than mimeographed material. Nevertheless, he does it.

LES CROUTCH submitted not one, but two 'Lights' - Nos. 47 & 48, and some of the editors of Slothful Thing also contributed far in excess of their requirements. Vernon McCain and Walt Willis, for instance, and me, too. What is this, anyway, a marathon publishing contest?

This mailing was interesting in that it was neatly divided in a 2 to 1 ratio between big ones and little ones. Let's take the little ones first: SKIP ROPE RIMES: Gad! They sure don't sound like the ones I jumped to! Style Book: I don't necessarily agree with your spelling, but then, this your idea and you are entitled to it.

STEFANTASY: Great minds and all that.... I thought I was thinking up something original with my 'Stuffy' Thanksgiving and my backwards format.

WASTEBASKET: Some more of this perfectionist stuff, guaranteed to give everybody but Danner & Willis an acute inferiority complex.

LARK: Awrrk! Just now noticed this is by Danner, too. Sure is a glutton for punishment. Must enjoy setting type.

C.O.O.O.GAZETTE: That doesn't fool anybody now, Lee. We all know you are much purtier than the illo on the cover.

SHADOWLAND: This is particularly welcome since it introduces a set of new talent. They may not be new to fandom, but they are new to me and I am very pleased to meet them. I especially liked Fred Sawyer's poetry. The fiction was good, and, best of all, the hekto was neat. Didn't care too much for the alternating purple and green. The differing intensities of color made it hard to read.

And while we are on hekto, we might as well continue with the hekto'd big ones:

STAR ROVER: This was a beautiful job, I thought. Liked the front & back covers.

TELSH: I liked the illustrations and the book reviews best. Seems to me Ed is passing up a wonderful opportunity to talk about Japan and give us something really current. Probably appeal to the rest of us more than this slightly homesick nostalgia for the good old days of stf.

FANDANGO: I thought my lack of interest in Laney's phonograph article was simply due to own lack of knowledge of matters mechanical. But, on reading further, I see that this is not so at all. Laney had no business whatsoever in writing an article that was not highly interesting in every way to me. It is indicative of his general poltroonery that he would have the effrontery to publish something I could not immediately comprehend. He says so himself in his 'Mezrab' review. I quote: "An article in #5 (MEZ-RAB) completely lost me. I could not read it in its entirety. I tried hard. I came out of it with a whirling muddle in my noggin...then I... realized this was just some stuff by a fan and why should I puzzle over it?" Therefore, I lay Fandango aside with a shrug. "Just some stuff by a fan and why should I puzzle over it..."

Ast. LETTERS: Couldn't enjoy them as much as I'd liked because of the crowded format. (Look who's talking!)

SKY HOOK - Competently, even beautifully, mimeographed. Virginia Blish's little sketch was nice, but Redd's defense of Pederson's poem is just a lot of empty words. If it is good poetry, you don't have to ask what it means. If you have to ask -- it isn't good. Why waste 2 1/4 pages defending it.

FANTASY AMATEUR - I like the copious information and the inclusion of the constitution.
SCIENCE FICTION FIVE YEARLY: Gosh. What can you say about something like that?

LIGHT: I liked that cover on #47. Seemed to make some kind of sense or other.

FANTASIA: The cover was new, but seems to me I've read the contents a couple of other places already.

DUCKSPEAK: Remarkably recognizable cartoon. Page 6. Uncomfortable, isn't it?

JABBERWOCKY: At taht, it looks better than some of the 'modern art' I saw at the Seattle Museum display last Sunday.

SNULBUG: Even without a cover, this turned out to be one of the most interesting. That 'Hints as to the nature of Mama' was devastating. I dug up the Aug. 1950 and read up on the Pinch of Culture for double enjoyment. Glad you included that info. Saved me leafing through a dozen-and-a-half Asf's.

REVOLTIN' DEVELOPMENT, GENTLEMAN, & TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY came out first in SAPS. Consequently, as far as I am concerned, they got reviewed in SAPS.

SLOTHFUL THING: Hoagglund Aardvaark Pedernelson -- Ah! My hero!

HORIZONS: I still like 'em better with covers. Even when the contents are as good as this was. I think I'd have burned to a little black crisp if that had happened to me. Losing those pictures of the thing in the sky, I mean.

IRUSABEN: Why, Bob, I didn't think you cared! Sure, I'll review your fanzine if it means so much to you! First of all, the mimeographing was much better, I could read all of it. Also, running only one side of the paper helped. I think you've probably got the same trouble that I have, a typer that cuts a wide letter-cut, consequently lets so doggone much ink through it is either a flood or a drouth. However, this issue (or at least the copy I got) is completely legible -- and for the first time I have had the pleasure of reading what you wrote. Your analyses of SS, FSM, TW, and AS were interesting. So much so, that I am tempted to hunt up a copy of AS and see if maybe I can stomach it now. Yes, I have a copy of "Prevalence of Witches". Enjoyed it very much -- even considered writing a review of sometime. It captures a relaxed and placid mood perfectly. Maybe that's why I never got around to writing the review. Every time I picked it up I placidly relaxed to the point where I just put it down again. I agree, also, with your estimate of Campbell 'since Dianetics'.. but have not been able to figure out just what the difference is. The individual stories are still good, the covers beautiful (covers again!), the illustrations inside are attractive, but the magazine as a whole seems strangely dull. For one thing, the letter columns have been taken up with long-winded letters from Phd's or something -- at least I cannot get het up over them. I do not quite agree with your comments on OW. It seems to me that it is falling into the same rut that AS suffered from. Too much FATEful credulity. Whatever happened to the cover contest, I wonder... 'Madge' seems to be feeling around before settling on a policy. It jumps around between off-color sex and nuclear physics and whacky humor until the readers don't know what to expect from it. But that is all to the good. Keeps us guessing. Well, Bob, was this enough review for an 'unpretentious' FAPAzine?

