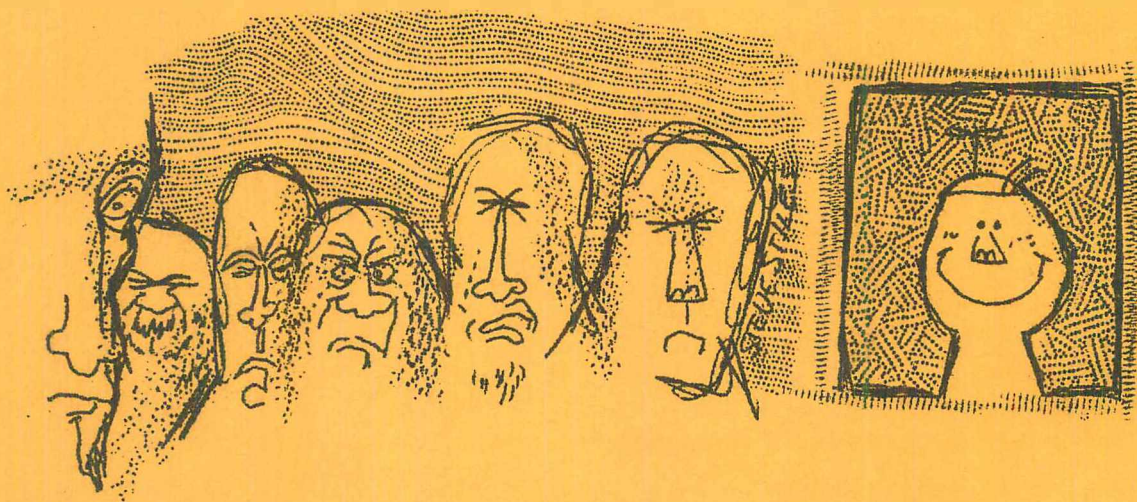


THE NEHWOON REVIEW

Summer 1971 No. 8

Warning: The Surgeon General Has
Determined That Fanzine Reading
Is Dangerous to Your Health.



THE CHOLER OUT OF SPACE

A SCAD OF HURRY-NOTES ON...

THE ART OF LEAVING A SUBJECT :: INFINITY DOTH LURE US ON ::
BIBLIOPHILY IN FLORIDA :: PATRIOTS ON THE MOON :: BRAIN WAVES
FROM THE VOID :: IS EMPTY SPACE THERE? :: THE NEW SPACE APOLO-
GISTS :: TIRADES AND DISQUISITIONS :: HOT TEARS FOR MILLION-
AIRES :: WORRIERS GONE TO GRASS :: A LAST-MINUTE RETREAT ::
AND OTHER THEMES, NOTIONS, AND CROTCHETS ALONG THE WAY

I. I GUESS that, unlike D. D. Harriman in "Requiem," I've never really wanted to be buried on the moon. In fact, I'd rather die first. I remember the time I went into Big Dee's liquor store for a consoling bottle of Kahlua and beheld a copy of the Chron with the headline, "APOLLO TO LAND FRIDAY." Having clean forgotten that a "space mission" was up at the time, I bemusedly misread "APOLLO" as "ALIOTO," and wondered what the controversial mayor of San Francisco had done now.

Although I'm an old fan, and tarred -- as someone, that is, who "lost my sense of wonder when I lost my virginity" (dashdash Ted Johnstone) -- merely because I took a darkling view of the space program in "A Clown on the Moon" (The Nehwon Review #6, spring 1970), I don't really feel inspired to defend myself from critics, mailing commentators, and Bob Silverberg. Topics from the past, indeed, fascinate me but little when fresh subjects for "invective" and "namecalling" -- after which the hunter may dash headlong with whoop and holler -- swarm over the horizon like traffic on the Hollywood freeway. Therefore, I haven't made answer to most of the comments I received on "A Clown on the Moon," although I snuffled them like catnip, especially Gregg Calkins' pageful, and thank you for them, one and all.

Space itself, of course, is an uplifting subject. The starry universe is so majestic in its essence that we might wish for a barrel of it for the cellar, to haul out and immerse ourselves in when life doesn't seem worth living. It appeals to all our elevating emotions, like a strain of music from Beethoven's Ninth. But luckily space is unbarrelable because of its unhandy size, its extremes of heat and cold, the sizzling radioactive stuff of stars, the gaseous nebulae that are light-centuries across, and above all the blazing mysteries which, like purloined letters, are in plain sight out there.

It would seem, for example, on the evidence of "black holes" in space, as well as the possibility of "white holes," that the concept of a finite universe (a shattering concept at best) will have to be discarded once again. An astrophysicist named Robert M. Hjellming suggests that when an extremely massive sun collapses at last under the pull of its own gravity, leaving only a black hole in space, it emerges into another universe as a white hole, acting as sort of a funnel between worlds, keeping matter and energy in balance. ("listen:there's a hell / of a good universe next door;let's go") The universe, then, not only has a mouth but an anus (or rather, many of them), and this universe and others are coupled together in a glorious cosmic daisy chain. It is all very splendid and fascinating to think about.

In commenting on "A Clown on the Moon," Harry Warner (Horizons #123 August 1970) got side-shunted from more important issues by theorizing that I am dismayed that space exploration "removes part of the mystery" about a topic long reserved to science fiction. This was, I suppose, the theme of my story, "The Craters of the Moon," written more than 20 years ago, but was not a primary aspect of my essay in 1970. Space exploration can only deepen the mysteries of the universe, its origins, its composition, its size and complexity. If it is mystery we want, then let space exploration proceed full tilt. But of course it was not the loss of the "mystery" that I lamented, but rather the loss of the pure motives for space exploration that science fiction mirrored in the past, and their replacement by the profit motive of monopoly capitalism.

One would suppose that everybody, not just me, would be dismayed and horrified to watch such a lofty thing as a "space program" demeaned at the hands of profiteers, falsetto patriots, blatherers, and canters, to see it conjured as if by magic into a fantastic green melon containing around \$26,000,000,000 to be divvied up by a handful of American capitalists, to perceive it, at the same time, cut down to size as a subject for rockheaded Republican newspaper propaganda and blithering fanzine articles -- to see it, in fine, transformed to the status of a commodity that can be vended along with cigarets and soft drinks, or, worse, presented as a simpleminded story for children, like a popular movie starring the Beatles (in crewcuts), a rock opera, or a comic book adventure. A Stradivarius out of tune bleats as sickly as any other violin, but the sour notes from such a fine instrument are even more disappointing than those from another.

My lament is plain. What more can I say? No! I am not Jeremiah to mezzo-America, and was not meant to be. It seems ridiculous now to labor the obvious when even school children want to defenestrate the space program, and put remarks like these on record: "I think the moon shot was a waste of time. ... If the moon trips are successful, then a lot of these oil companies will go to the moon and pollute it. ... Besides, every time a rocket takes off for the moon, there's a million pounds of pollution in that one takeoff. ... We could have spent the money on more valuable things that could have benefitted the country such as solving poverty, improving education and scientific research." (These are quotes from a student forum at Emery High school, Emeryville, California, reported in the Oakland Tribune, 17 February 1971, page 21.)

Yet it sometimes seems that in fandom I am nearly the only person with an ear aflap for discords. Aside from the astronauts themselves,

science fiction fans and writers may be the last apologists for the U.S. space program left in the world, much in the same way that the editors of journals published for dentists and the dentists themselves might be the final upholders of tooth decay. As F. Towner Laney would say, it figgers, it figgers. And it hardly seems worth commenting on.

Abstinence, however, should always (as the saying goes) be practiced with moderation. If I continue to abstain from writing anything further about "space," I will miss the opportunity of savoring a few of the choicer morsels from fanzines and elsewhere that have tickled my palate as a gourmet of human folly. The sweetly sappy flavor of Jodie Offutt's remark in Outworlds #7, for instance, about "one rude, vulgar man" she observed at the orgies attending the "launch" of Apollo 14 cajoled the stomach juices like a greengage plum fresh from the orchard. The man had "the discourtesy to read a book" when "liftoff" was 32 minutes 43 seconds away (if I translate correctly from "space" jargon), and there was no visible activity at the launching pad. Some people in the same area were listening to radios, others were dozing in the sun, but one man was obscenely "discourteous" and "vulgar" because he was more intellectual! Jodie adds indignantly, "He is from South America, a guest in my country, in my spaceport. (I hope we have the good taste not to invite him again.)"

Space, it seems, has become the last refuge of scoundrels. All the worst in patriotic blather gets turned into blinding red, white, and blue cornpone in a UPI story printed in the Oakland Tribune, 27 May 1971. The item begins, "Apollo 15, the next U. S. moon landing mission, sports an emblem designed by Emilio Pucci /a fashion designer!/ in patriotic colors picked by astronauts David R. Scott, James B. Irwin, and Alfred M. Worden." The choice of colors was explained by astronaut Worden as "deliberate flagwaving." He added, "It's just pure and simple Boy Scout-ism. That's all it is. But you get tired of hearing people run the country down. We kind of felt if you didn't like the country, you ought to leave it. If you're going to live here, you ought to be proud of it." (The colors originally chosen for the emblem by Pucci were green, blue, and -- lavender!)

And space seems also to harbor the old hobgoblin of magic that has haunted even the best of science fiction down to the present day and that once inspired even staid scientific expeditions sent forth to study rocks or fauna to take a stab at discovering Mu or Symmes' Hole. I stumbled around in a happy glow all day, salivating like a hyena within nostril-shot of fresh meat, after reading a report that Edgar Mitchell, one of the Apollo 14 astronauts, conducted (without any direct sanction of the NASA warlocks, it is true) what were termed ESP experiments en route to the moon last February. I read the newsstory eagerly to learn whether Mitchell might not also have smuggled a pint of LSD aboard in order to heighten his cosmic consciousness (and that of his crewmates, of course) or had his horoscope cast by a professional astrologer, or at least had his backbone whumped resoundingly before takeoff by a Houston chiropractor in order to tune him up for space and magic rituals. But apparently none of these was the case. He may not even have downward-slanting eyes. Give the boy time, though. Astronauts are slans.

Mitchell is said to have solemnly telepathed from space a series of symbols in random sequence to four different people on Earth, and to

have managed to score 51 hits out of 200 -- probably not the same hits on all four charts, although the two accounts I have read didn't bother to go into such esoteric details. Time (5 July 1971) claims that these results were "significant" by "normative statistical measurements.... According to the laws of probability, the odds against such a score are 20 to 1." It is fascinating to note, however, that Mitchell himself seems to have been embarrassed by his showing, and (according to the story in the Examiner, 22 June 1971) was "convinced his extrasensory perception tests from outer space succeeded, not because his 'receivers' got a lot of right answers, but because they got so many wrong ones." His "receivers," it is claimed, "got far more wrong [answers] than they would have by normal operation of mathematical chance." Seldom does one encounter a more striking example of the old "Heads you lose, tails I win" game. By the laws of probability, in an exhaustive series of tests, someone would get all 200 right, and another all 200 wrong -- and I ignore here the possibility of cheating, conscious or unconscious, in recording and comparing results. The scores made in a single experiment are not significant.

The grotesque fannishness of the whole affair was caviar to me, and I can only hope for further helpings in the future. Someday, perhaps, a space probe will be made even more memorable by an attempt to lift the spacecraft into orbit by telekinetic power alone.

2.

MEANWHILE, back in the fanzines, Andy J. Offutt, who (judging from his name and a certain ranting note in his spiel) must be a sibling or consort of the above-mentioned Jodie, defends the space program in Gran-falloon #12, with a spate of juicy prose: "Once again there is the sound of thunder on and above the Earth, and once again it is the sound of construction." Verily, a better world's in birth, but what Offutt heard must have been justice thundering condemnation. At any rate, Offutt credits the space program with "the fantastic advances we have made" in technology, ignoring the fact that we are evidently in a steep technological decline. "I cannot name the many new aircraft safety devices that have come out of the space program. I can remind you of this: there was not one accident in 1970 involving a scheduled airliner. Not one...." There has not been one accident of this kind in 1971, either; so far, there have been two. Perhaps the "advances" are not quite so "fantastic," after all. I should think it would be more rational and productive to fund directly a \$26,000,000,000 program for air safety rather than let such research fall heir to the byproducts of the space program. But probably the lives of millions of air travelers aren't quite so important as those of a handful of astronauts.

The main burden of Offutt's defense of spatial endeavor, however, is contained in this delectable passage: "Caesar crossed the English Channel to Britain because it was There, and Columbus crossed to the new world because it was There, and we climbed Everest because it was There, and we're going into space -- because it's there." I cherish the bland "we" in the mention of climbing Everest, and worry about the overtaxed pronoun in "Caesar crossed the English Channel to Britain because it was There" -- the Channel or Britain? -- but I reprint this passage largely to point out that Offutt, carried aloft on his own gaseous rhetoric, is

too busy scanning misty horizons to glimpse what is directly before his nose. Caesar himself gave a better reason for invading Britain than the one of "it was There." In De Bello Gallico he writes, "Caesar in Britannium proficisce condendit, quod omnibus fere Gallicus bellis hostibus nostris inde subministrata auxilia intellegebat..." More significantly, there was the prospect of great wealth on the island: slaves, of course, and timber, cattle, and minerals. "Britain yields gold, silver, and other metals," Tacitus reported a little later, "to make it worth conquering." Columbus, if I remember my history correctly, did not "cross to the new world because it was There" -- he didn't know it was -- but because he was trying to blaze a profitable trade route to the Orient.

In like manner, space fans are usually blind to the operation of the profit motive in the space program, and the point I made in "A Clown on the Moon" about "the owners of the aerospace industry, a mere handful of swindlers and robber barons," was just too anti-idealistic for astronautical aficionados to swallow. Till about the time I wrote my article, the great amount of money being squandered on the conquest of space was a marvel to people, and the NASA budget was spoken of in awed rather than shocked tones. It was as if space were a costly diamond necklace and the people were a bride, on whom some generous and affluent bridegroom sought to bestow the dazzling gift.

But in the last year or two, the tune (once so lilting and merry) has changed, and the dancing has stopped. Instead of a dance tune, we now hear a sad little threnody in a minor mode, with a few emphatic words in the tender lyrics: "...really the NASA budget is a teeny drop in the bucket...plus [sic] the greatest expenditure in the space program HAS ALREADY BEEN PAID FOR.... It's like paying zillions for a Cadillac, and as soon as you start seeing daylight putting the thing up on blocks and refusing to drive it any more because it's too expensive." (dashdash Juanita Coulson, in a letter printed in Starling #17, January 1971).

Aside from the Cadillac analogy, this is a representative example of what's being warbled these days by the sweet singers of space. We notice that by now the space apologists have retreated to the position of admitting, albeit tacitly, that the space program has indeed been disastrously expensive, costing "zillions," and (at least in this example) even implying that it is a useless luxury, like a big car whose chief value is in dazzling the Joneses. But Juanita's apologetic is remarkable for the bland assumption that, having been ruthlessly propagandized not to react any differently to a mention of millions and billions than to one of dozens or hundreds, we will readily admit that \$3,400,000,000 (the figure she gives, a year's budget for NASA) is only "a teeny drop in the bucket." Think of it. That's almost a dollar apiece from every person on the face of the earth (3,551,555,000 people in mid-1969, according to UN estimate). One year's budget for NASA, and it would pay someone a fairly opulent salary of \$60,000 a year for 50,666 years, if he lived that long and the next ice age holds off till then. At a more modest wage-slave rate, a mere \$5 an hour and a 40-hour week, it would take you or me or Juanita 320,600 years to earn that much money (before withholding) -- and civilization itself has been going on only about 5000 years. I suspect that even Winthrop Rockefeller or H.L. Hunt might consider that much money a rather big puddle of capital. Drops in the bucket the size of the national budget may turn out to be about the size of the Pacific ocean with the Bay of Bengal splashed in too. A whole nation might be washed away by such a "teeny drop."

I wonder about the bona fides of a financial expert who thinks that after foolishly splurging on a monstrous hunk of tin like a Cadillac you should continue to turn out your pockets to keep it in fenders and high-octane fuel. Wiser advice might be to cut your losses after making such a costly blunder by getting rid of your white elephant as hastily as possible. But the opinion of other highly qualified financial experts seems to me just as dubious. They tell me, speaking from the topmost pinnacle of their towering knowledge of corporate America, that I am grievously in error about the giant companies involved in the space program. There are no wolves among them, I am told; there are only lambs with pretty ribbons around their necks and innocent smiles on their gentle silly faces.

Harry Warner hastened to set me right, first telling me (impersonally, of course; his mailing comments are breathed into the air) that I don't "seem to realize that all the big aerospace firms are not privately owned but rather corporations," and then complaining that I seem to imply "that there is some way to spend \$24,000,000,000 without profits eating up a substantial portion of the sum." The latter remark makes it seem that Harry is arguing on my side rather than against me, but no doubt he is just being solicitous of the public that "owns" the aerospace industry. Maybe space addicts ought to vote socialist in the next election, however.

(Incidentally, Harry also says I "trustingly accept that Kennedy Space Center cost \$875,000,000,000." The figure quoted in the notes to "A Clown on the Moon" was a typo for "only" \$875,000,000; I grew dizzy at all those zeros. The error, which had nothing to do with trusting acceptance, was almost an inevitable consequence, I suppose, of my decision to write out all figures with all their endless zeros. I did this in order to give a better inkling of their size than is given by writing them, as Time and other publications do, "\$875 million," or even as expotential numbers, "\$875x10⁶.")

I did use the term "private industry" in my article -- the usual term to differentiate business from socialized industry or other governmental enterprises -- but in a legal sense, bien entendu, corporations are publicly owned, since certain shares are indubitably offered for sale to the public. But -- as Harry says -- "let's be honest about this." A large corporation may have, let's say, 100,000,000 shares of stock outstanding, and perhaps a million owners (including, it seems, a couple of fapans). But about half the stockholdings in U. S. corporations are held, not by private individuals, but by other corporations, fiduciaries, stockbrokers, security dealers, and other corporate entities. Already the public owners of corporations are at least once removed from control, and the vote at the annual meeting of an aerospace company is manipulated, not by Dick Schultz and other private investors, but by U. S. Steel, El Paso Natural Gas, Merrill Lynch, the Ford Foundation, and other such entities. Who controls these corporations? Well, other corporations, of course, but at the back of it all, somewhere in the receding background, there are a few individuals or families pocketing a lot of cash. Who controls Standard Oil of California, as well as Standard Oil of Ohio, Socony, and other huge oil companies? The public, the little stockholders? No, the Rockefellers own the controlling interest in all these corporations, just as the Du Pont family owns the controlling interest in General Motors, which dominates the automobile

industry and is one of the leading "defense" manufacturers. These capitalists are not losing money. Business profits are larger than ever, up from a lowly \$10,100,000,000 in 1941 to a modest \$50,500,000,000 in 1968 (the last figure to hand), a five-fold increase. Surely some of the money disappears into a Cockayne not easily discerned from this distance. Most of it does not dribble down to the lower depths, to you and to me.

3.

THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY today presents an oddly ugly aristocratic countenance -- sort of a Habsburg face. (The Habsburgs, no strangers to the high art of shaking money from the public treasury into their private purses, ruled countries only because the countries were There, I suppose.) The lordly aerospace firms, or some of them, are said to be nearly bankrupt, despite all the billions squandered on the space program, not to mention the billions for "defense." As I write, Lockheed is in the process of negotiating a federally guaranteed loan of \$250,000,000 (a "teeny drop," to coin a phrase). The space apologists never let one forget this. Bob Silverberg, for instance, in the May 1971 FAPA mailing, says in Snickersnee that of late he has been "out of phase" with the mailings, a serious malady that has discouraged him from writing mailing comments, "though," he hastens to add, "I yearned to stomp on Redd Boggs for his silly tirade against the space program -- full of a lot of misplaced fury over the colossal profits our bankrupt aerospace companies are supposedly making...."

The "fury" I will not gainsay, believing with William Blake that "the tygers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction" -- there would be fewer suckers if we were all quick to anger instead of phlegmatic and gullible even when somebody knocks us down and reaches for our wallets. But my essay was, I think, hardly a "tirade." Though edged in sarcasm and scorn, as is inevitable when dealing with such a matter, "A Clown on the Moon" was elegaic in mood, starting out with a nostalgic quote from my journal intime, and ending with some poetic thoughts about this "heaven and home," the Earth. When I write a tirade, it will be slightly more violent. Silverberg, Warner, Jack Speer, and others misjudge the restraint I have exercised, and underestimate my capacity, when the mood descends, for (as Warner calls it) "invective" and "name-calling." It grieves me to find my calmest and most reasonable discourses referred to as "tirades"; it means that even friends I honor and admire must read with tin ears.

All that aside, I am certainly overwhelmed to learn that the aerospace industry is only "supposedly" making "colossal" profits -- though the Hollywoodian adjective is Agberg's, not mine. Even Warner seems to think it is making profits, since he claims in his otherwise enigmatic remark that one cannot spend \$24,000,000,000 "without profits eating up a substantial portion of the sum," and every other sane person in the world must surely harbor a sneaking suspicion that somebody just might be making a huge profit out of "space." In my essay, I made it clear that I was thinking of individuals, not corporate entities, as the ultimate recipients of all that money. More than \$25,600,000,000 -- considerably more by now, due to annual accumulation of "teeny drops" -- has been pumped into the space program. Where did all that money go?

Just as in a depression, when suddenly most of the money in circulation disappears, all that moolah winds up in somebody's buttoned-down pocket. The only thing that happens is that the pockets that jingle are reduced in number by some mysterious process. The money still exists.

The power of big business has expanded hugely, and one can read in the financial pages of the newspapers and in Time's "Business" section that the trend in mergers now far exceeds the pace of the 1930s, when, having broken the market, the big operators were able to scoop up the wrecks of unlucky smaller businesses that were caught in the crash. Indeed, our poor aerospace corporations may be bankrupt. But this must be because someone among the corporate rich has scummed more than the usual amount of capital off the top of the golden wave, and invested that money elsewhere, or squirreled it away. I was wrong in suspecting that "space" was being set up as an "open-ended bonanza"; at least it hasn't happened as yet. Instead, other investments have appealed more to the former barons of aerospace; they have taken their capital elsewhere. Some day they may come back.

Meantime, what does it matter to the men behind the scenes that the aerospace firms are bankrupt, or nearly so? They are not broke, they are not bankrupt. New aerospace companies can be set up under new names when the situation warrants it. Furthermore, bankruptcy does not mean total disaster; it can be used as a means of directing a fresh stream of money into a company. Unlike the capitalists themselves, the government doesn't want a big company to collapse, for obvious reasons. The national economy can't stand the blow of unemployment, investment losses by the smaller stockholders, the effect on subcontractors and suppliers dependent on the bankrupt firm, and so on. Hence the government is willing to consider a guaranteed loan and other bailing-out procedures which will pour fresh millions into the aerospace gullet.

The poor aerospace industry! It is not even dependent entirely on the space program for its business, but receives a good hunk of the \$44,000,000,000 per year of industrial work that is parceled out by the Defense Supply agency of the Department of Defense. Lockheed, in fact, is the top supplier of war material among all U. S. corporations, and among the top 25 are other aerospace firms: McDonnell Douglas, United Aircraft, North American Rockwell, Grumman, Hughes Aircraft, and Boeing. (I won't mention other corporations such as Honeywell and IBM that are prime contractors in the space program but operate in other fields.) These firms are among the 1300 important corporations, running alphabetically from Aetna Life and Casualty to Zenith Radio, that dominate American industry. Indeed, they are among the 200 that control 80 percent of the business resources of this country. They are closely interlinked and the power is becoming more centralized all the time by mergers and takeovers. A small number of American capitalists runs this incredibly vast and opulent empire and reaps most of the profits. These giant corporations are in the hands, not of the American public, as Harry Warner implies, but of one or another of our super-rich families.

The super-rich are not only still with us, but growing richer day by day, as C. Wright Mills and Ferdinand Lundberg thoroughly document for us. In The Rich and the Super-Rich, Lundberg reports, for example, that J. Paul Getty's holdings in the Getty Oil company nearly tripled in value between late 1965 and late 1967, from a mere \$438,000,000 to a

tidy \$1,200,000,000. He owns 12,558,489 shares, or 80 percent of the stock, of Getty Oil. Getty Oil, in turn, owns Tidewater Oil and Mission Development corporation, which owns the majority interest in Skelly Oil. Holdings in these companies are not considered in the \$1,200,000,000, nor are his large foreign holdings. Getty started out in 1916 with only a couple million bucks.

The source of such continuing prosperity among our capitalists is corporate America, including the aerospace industry. Our laws are made or interpreted (or circumvented) for their benefit, and the American taxpayer shells out for projects that are ultimately intended to enhance the wealth of the corporate rich. Mills mentions the federal highway system paid for by taxes that in effect made Henry Ford a billionaire. The space program is a similar boondoggle that is making somebody ever wealthier as new space missions are sent up.

But I forgot. Of course the aerospace firms are only "supposedly" showing a profit and are indeed nearly bankrupt. Nobody, therefore, could possibly be squeezing a battered nickel out of spatial endeavor. Presumably everybody is losing millions in the \$26,000,000,000 effort. You can believe that if you smoke enough pot to befuddle the next world-con; at least you can try, with Agberg's help.

But if you want to believe it, you had better not consider the fact that these corporations have managed to lose money for every investor despite the most favorable and generous conditions for profitmaking that any government can provide. They were given tax breaks aplenty, top priorities and allotments, and loans for building new plants and enlarging the old so that the cost was borne largely by the federal government. Of course these plants could be, and are, used later for production not connected with the space program. How is that for lagniappe? All the risks of failure, in short, are merrily underwritten by the U.S. government. To top all this, these aerospace firms pay no income tax, though corporations are legally taxable, just like individuals. Their products made by federal funds are sold back to the government for the space program at prices that increase in exact proportion to the rate of taxation.

As for the individuals and families who derive their wealth from monopoly capitalism, I need hardly point out that the rich are given innumerable loopholes unavailable to you or me that were created for the exact purpose of allowing them to retain most of their income. It is well-known by now that a super-rich capitalist may pay less income tax than his chauffeur or valet. They make use of such delightful dodges as long-term capital gains, trust funds, depletion allowances, and many another method. The very complexity of the sources of income for a rich man like Getty would daunt internal revenue investigators even if they wished to tackle such a problem. (Take another puff, man.)

What I propose here is ridiculous, Marxist, and even realistic. I frighten even myself by my remarks, which look pretty feeble when put up against the authority of such experts as Warner and Silverberg. John Kusske, on the basis of a comprehensive knowledge of my views gleaned from reading at least one article by me last year, says in Euphoria #1, FAPA mailing #133, that I see "the world...as a collection of interlocking plots." C. Wright Mills of course remarks that "To accept either

view -- of all history as conspiracy or of all history as drift -- is to relax the effort to understand the facts of power and the ways of the powerful," and he quotes Richard Hofstadter as saying, "There is a great difference between locating conspiracies in history and saying that history is, in effect, a conspiracy." One would suppose that this were hardly an original notion and were instead a fireproof, 100 percent asbestos commonplace, a suffocating platitude, but who am I to seek to refute a great mind like Kusske's? Or, for that matter, even John D. Berry's? The latter great mind, on the basis of an even more thorough acquaintance with my life and works -- two articles, not just one! -- tells Amazing's readership that, far from being "funny or perceptive," I am actually "paranoid." The latter is one of the most misused terms in popular parlance, but such squeaky protests from the younger generation really crush me utterly. It is all too much, so here at the last minute, I will have to back down and recant, banging my forehead repeatedly on the carpet as I retreat on my knees.

What happened to all that money channeled in golden torrents into the space program? Nobody pocketed it, oh no! What really happened to it is that they are holding it for all of us, to be given out in great handfuls on the streetcorners when the Apollo program is successfully completed. (Watch your local newspaper for details.) Meantime, for safekeeping, they have converted the \$26,000,000,000 into hundred-dollar bills, and the various space missions have been taking it, a few bundles each time, as part of the payload (sic), and burying it on the moon.

Berkeley
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FRONT COVER ARTWORK BY STEVE STILES.
