

NULL-F 34½

is written & published by Ted White, 339 - 49th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11-220, shortly before Christmas, as a postmailing to the November, 1963 FAPA mailing. :: NULL-F #35 was destined for the aforementioned mailing, but apparently arrived too late. It will be found in the next mailing. :: QWERTYUIOPress

THE MARTIN CASE - AGAIN: I want to thank Al Lewis for suggesting I circulate this brief flyer with his postmailing; I had rough-drafted my comments on the subject for inclusion in the next regular NULL-F, but his petition makes their presentation here more timely.

You may wonder why I am returning to this subject after having been one of the first to raise it (in NULL-F 27) and then letting it drop. It is largely because I am sick and tired of hearing the bleating plaints from brand new members about FAPA's "Grandmothers", and I find the comments of several older members about "do-nothing bleeding hearts" to be in the poorest taste. I think it's time we took stock of the situation and tried to arrive at some definitive conclusions.

The original case can be summed up as follows:

John Trimble, acting as Sec-Treas, refused to allow needed activity credit to Martin's GROSTESQUE. It appears that in so doing he was acting as part of a group which found Martin an objectionable deadwooder and had been searching for a valid technicality to excuse his being dropped. Unfortunately, the technicality in this case -- as is now agreed -- was not valid.

Trimble was called on his action, after Martin printed his letter to Martin and circulated it to most of the membership. Trimble then admitted being in error.

But Trimble did not reinstate Martin, nor make any move to rectify the consequences of his error. The Vice-President, Bill Evans, refused to consider the case, first upholding Trimble's original action as right and proper, and then -- faced with Trimble's admission of error -- refusing to consider any appeal from anyone but Martin. It was his stand that an officer is not compelled by the Constitution to rectify his errors, and, if I understand him properly, that an officer's actions are, de facto, proper actions.

This curious stand was largely overlooked, even by Warner and Boggs, the two most vociferous critics of the Martin case's handling. No concrete action has been carried out on any official level since the original Trimble action, and, indeed, nothing concrete was done until -- over a year later, Ruth Berman circulated her petition.

Unfortunately, the petition -- Berman's and Al Lewis's as well -- is not the answer here. The answer lies solidly with FAPA's officials, who can at any time they choose undo the damage done by Trimble and condoned by Evans.

Significantly, the largest burden of guilt for Officialdom's silence in the situation must be laid upon the shoulders of F.M. Busby, first President (in the administration following the one in which Trimble served) and now Vice President. As President, Busby had the power to force a reconsideration of the affair. As Veep, Busby could still make a ruling -- the matter has been "appealed" a considerable number of times since Martin's own original letter.

However, Busby has been content to answer Boggs and Warner with "put up or shut up", pointing out that they have not specifically init-

iated any action for Martin's reinstatement. This is buck-passing of a rather high order, and I think it time Busby was called on it.

The question resolves itself around one rather significant difference of opinion regarding the case. On the one hand, I maintain that the officership of FAPA is obligated to follow the constitutional requirements regarding the administration of their duties, and that when an officer is derelict in this his dereliction must be put to rights by the officers themselves. On the other hand, several of these officers have suggested resorting to petitions of one sort or another by the membership, and they have repeatedly pointed out that they do not feel obligated to do anything as long as Martin himself does not appeal the ruling or show interest in the situation.

Trimble's ruling was unjustified. It was, in plain fact, illegal according to the rules of FAPA's constitution. It requires no appeal. The very admitted fact of its illegality is in itself requirement that it be voided. Why has this not been done?

The petitions to which Busby has referred are not valid, from several points of view. First, in legitimate cases, these petitions -- excepting the 33-signature variety which is in actuality a by-law -- are restricted by time limits. They require that notice to petition reach the officers within a month of the mailing in which the member is dropped, and that the petitions be in within the following month. (I recall this well; as President in 1957 I made those rulings.)

More important, these petitions refer to situations in which the member has not had activity requirements in on time. But Martin did fulfill his activity requirements.

I cannot help recalling a situation in which I found myself four years ago. As outgoing OE, I was to issue a postmailing. When I did not do so promptly, the incoming OE sent out the already assembled postmailings, and withheld my own copy of the next mailing until I repaid the treasury the \$10.00 I'd been advanced for that postmailing. In his actions, OE Andy Young was upheld by the other officers, and none of these officers showed any restraint in reprimanding my evil ways, nor any resistance to the idea of setting my misdeeds to rights.

It seems curious to me that one of these same officers -- Bill Evans -- has so reversed his attitude regarding official derelictions, and in a far more important case: the illegal ousting of a member.

Obviously I'm not pleading this case from any lofty Holier Than Thou pinnacle. As an officer I've trespassed -- and been brought up short for it. As a member, I expect consistency. I expect to see other trespassing officers held equally culpable. I expect to see FAPA's officers set -- and keep -- their house to rights.

Put up or shut up, F.M. Busby and Bill Evans.

--Ted White

PS: Vote for me for Veep next year and -- if this whole thing hasn't yet been cleared up by then -- you can expect to see some action on it from me. That's a promise.