

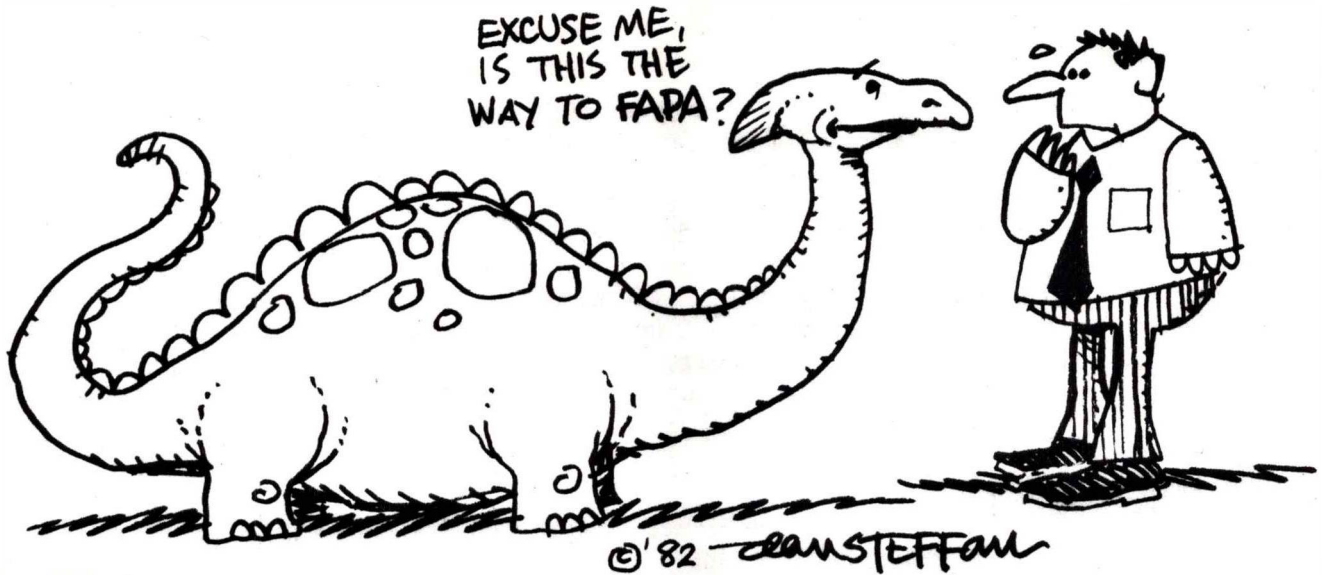
the

RAMBLING

FAP

89 - fapa 179

gregg calkins - may 1982



well, didn't he ramble...

THE ROAD TO FAPA, like that to another famous scenic spot, is paved with the very best of intentions. The appearance of this issue in the May mailing, for instance, appears mostly through the intervention of Dan Steffan, for whom you may also give thanks for the illustrations in this issue. I don't know what Rotsler will think--this may be literally the first issue without one of his illos in decades--but Dan, after all, is a youngish sort of fellow and possibly not yet prepared for the long duration of the slush pile. (I don't think any of my Rotslers are two decades old, but they might be...and yet Bill and I know that I'll Use Them Eventually, Every One Of Them!)

It was Dan's letter and accompanying illos that reminded me that May was close at hand. May has always been an important month for me, ever since I first learned a big of doggerel going "Hooray, hooray! the first of May! Outdoor fucking begins today!" Something else kept nagging at me, though...not the quaint Russian rituals, world peacemongers that they are, or the ribbon-bedecked poles on the greensward (refugees from Solidarity, no doubt), but something else...

Afapamailingogod!

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One of my (recent) ideas which hasn't worked out is my "hold" pile here at home. At the office I have a 3-story file on my desk. The top holds a nice potted plant, even though chronically suffering from lack of water and attention, and the outgoing mail or papers to go to the board of Realtors, or whatever is destined to the outside world that day. The bottom level holds current activity--strictly speaking, by the time I leave each day it should be empty. The middle level holds longer-term projects and problems and gets reviewed every few days for action needed.

It works well at the office where the files sit on top of my desk and hence under my nose. I didn't realize the importance of location when I set up the system here at home. My desk sits out in the open and I decided I wanted to keep it clear and uncluttered, so I set up the "in-hold-out" on one shelf of the bookcase immediately

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behind my desk. This has admirably served the purpose of keeping my desk-top clear (which my wife appreciates since then she can use it for her purse, odd garden tools, her lunch sack, occasional laundry items, and generally anything which fits into "my" domain as contrasted from "hers") but it has also served to perform a similar duty for my mind. Out of sight, out of...and so forth.

Untouched at the bottom of the pile, for instance, was the February mailing, as was my vow to do regular mailing comments. On top of that was...well, let's not go into detail when time is short. Now that I know that the system will not work in this fashion, I'll describe my miracle cure to you in August.

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One of the notes to myself entombed therein was a one-liner saying "In defense of elephants" followed by some numbers. I don't know how you do it, but when I get an idea that I can't possibly forget in detail but need a general reminder eventually, I jot down just the few words necessary to bring the whole matter into sharp focus at some later date.

Somehow this note became separated in time and space from the February mailing, rather like the various levels in an archaeological dig, and thus when I found it the message was somewhat obscure. Actually, I think the note probably dates back to the previous November, having been previously unearthed by the me of a succeeding generation only to be reburied. A happy reshuffling brought it into contact with the mailing from the elephant's graveyard, at which point the relationship brought back that of which I desired to be reminded.

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Uh...oh, yes, I was going to tell you about it, wasn't I? Well, we all know that FAPA has been called the elephant's graveyard, where old fans go to die, and there is undeniably some truth to the generalization.

I just wanted to point out that the February 1982 mailing was the end of my 30th year in FAPA, marking me at least an old fan if not an elephant.

During my first decade I produced 284 pages for FAPA. The second decade brought 356 pages. The third had 377! (Split 50-50 is even more pronounced: 363 pages the first half, 654 the second.)

Don't put the headstones up yet, boys, some of us are still twitching!

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Dan, while I'm thanking you for your "promised" artwork I also want to remind myself to thank you for the reminder that I had been going to send you some old OOPSIA's from back when I forgot. I knew I had promised them to someone, but...

As soon as I can find them, I'll send them.

More on this subject in "tailgate ramble" if we all get there...

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Out of the blue came this surprising card in an old, familiar hand:

Yes, Sixth Fandom does seem to be rising again, like some lost Atlantis. When my present term as president of the California Writers Club expires, I will no longer be an officer in any organization. Five years ago I was president of 12 mundane organizations at once. At that time (this fall) I plan to attempt to launch The Second International Beanie Brigade, devoted to the enjoyment of fannishness and free love camps in the Ozarks, or at least the use of some of the so-called leadership skills I've picked up in Mundania for good fannish purposes. Or maybe I'll just draw a lot.
--Ray Nelson

I'll settle for that! I was just joking (wasn't I?) about reviving OOPSLA! but maybe if all of my old artists and writers come back...

Like this one:

Yes, the years do pass, but there are times at conventions when I can still be found at the bar with a bosom companion. And when autumn rolls around, you can inform puzzled people that you just got a card from the author of PSYCHO II. I don't know, Gregg--after thirty years, we have to stop meeting like this...
--Bob Bloch

Gosh, I remember conventions. I was right about that first CHICON II of mine, though--nothing has ever come close to its equal since. One of the reasons I have attended so few since has been my reluctance to see the rest of you age as poorly as I fear you must have. I well remember you with jet black hair... and Ellison when all we could handle to drink were sloe gin fizzes...and Bea Mahaffey as a young girl...and Tucker as, well, he didn't count, anyhow, having died some years earlier and remarkably well preserved even at that.

Still, I must admit there is a temptation and the Westercon is coming. Will your attendant allow you to be there this year, Bob?

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I run off around 90-100 copies of TRF and send most of the non-bundle copies to people on the waiting list. The response isn't exactly overwhelming, which I figure is my fault not theirs, but I was pleased to get a recent letter from Patrick Nielsen Hayden thanking me for their copies of TRF while on the w-l and returning the latest since they had finally made it through the doors and thought I might well send the copy to another waiter. Irwin Hirsh it is, then, and thanks.

PNH also urges me to revive OOPS, which just goes to show that as well as being a courteous gentlemen he is also a bit of a nut.

Also from the great rainforest came:

Sure, I'm nostalgic about Life In FAPA (stormy times and all) but that was then; I tried rereading and it didn't work. I couldn't (as they say) relate to the changed atmosphere of the group, and I'm sure it's changed a lot more by now. However, if I ever come up with any ideas that would

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make a good column I'll take you up on your offer to print it. // I'm not sure how long you were in the Seattle area (Renton, actually) but for sure you were here during part of 1964, and one of our photo albums proves it. ((Do not show that picture to poor old Bob Bloch.)) Another recall is that we first met at Boise in 1960, when you and Elinor helped invent Bounce Fandom in the swimming pool. At the Owyhee Hotel, no less. Andy Main helped, too. // It wasn't merely that Burb's Golden Treachery was souped up somewhat but that he made it with grocery-store sugar, which has about twice the Hangover Quotient of corn sugar (which in turn has about twice the HQ of honey, which I took to using). And I didn't brew mine "extra light," but merely went by the standard recipe instead of slugging it (4 lbs of sugar or equivalent, and one can of malt, for seven gallons). ((So you say now, but I remember it differently. One reason for my being so sure is that I remember thinking how rational was your explanation, despite the claims of others to the contrary...)) // No, it was Jim Caughran, not Jim Webbert, who carried a sort of poltergeist aura around with him so that things fell over when he passed by them a few feet away. Jim Webbert, who had mellowed a lot from Chicon-2 days when he moved to Seattle in 1959, was still not a good risk for china shops, but the effects he caused were perfectly straightforward. His later history (you asked)? Well, about twenty minutes after he met Doreen Erlenwein in 1960 in this very room, he had her handcuffed to a chair and tried to put the both of them into the trunk of Wally Weber's car, but I insisted that he give me back my chair. A couple of weeks later, at the very same Boise Westercon mentioned above, Jim and Doreen got engaged, and were married in 1961. They were two of our six-person ConCommittee for the Seattle Worldcon that year. Around 1970 Jim got caught in the Great Boeing Layoffs; he and Doreen and their two chillun wound up in Akron, Ohio, for maybe 2-3 years and hated it a lot. Somewhere along in there they were OE of SAPS for long enough to break Bruce Pelz' rocker of 5 years. In (perhaps) 1973 they moved to Phoenix and are still there; they were instrumental in tapping me for Toastmaster of LEPRECON 2 in 1976, which gig got me the same job with the Phoenix Worldcon in 1978, the only time in my life when I got to ad-lib off-and-on for nearly 3 hours in front of an audience of 2500 persons. That's what friends can do for you! // Yeh, I'd like for us to get together again, too, but (a) Westercons are (like Worldcons) getting Too Damned Big, and (b) a team of horses couldn't haul me to Phoenix in July. However, we have a lot of great cons here in the Pac NW in recent years, most of which still have attendances in 3 figures rather than 4. There are, for instance, two in Portland, OR, and one in Moscow (pronounced Moscoe) ID. I mean, if you liked Boise you'd love Moscow; Bounce Fandom ain't in it with nekkid Jacuzzi parties.

--FM Busby

Sir, you have revived my somewhat flagging interest in conventions. I must admit that you have caused



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me to reconsider my invitation to Bob Bloch since I don't care for Phoenix at any time of year, having long ago voted it and Houston as the cities most like Los Angeles than almost anything. Portland is interesting, inasmuch as my wife's family still lives in Portland and we get up 1-2 times a year and a convention could easily be included. I haven't made up my mind about Moscow yet...it is rather out of the way, and I fail to see the attraction of a nekkid Jacuzzi over one filled with warm water, which at the very least can overcome stiff muscles should one have such a problem. Perhaps you can explain this to me when you let me know about Portland...I really am interested in those dates, Buz, and aside from FAPA I really am out of touch with fandom these days.

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I have just skimmed through the February TRF and as a general thing I would not recommend it to other publishers. For instance, I found on page x that I already said some of the things I put on page iii, herein. Sheesh.

I was also ready to recount some boat adventures, I think, but there won't be time this issue. I want to get in a few mailing comments and then I have a current update, and that will be all I can manage. Ed Cox managed to work me in last time but no sense pressing my luck. Not as a lame duck.

Following up on Super Bowl Sunday, though...my favorite local bar/restaurant here has a full "special" day for superbowl. A pool of 100 people is made and the place is closed to non-participants. Squares were only \$50 this year, reflecting the depression (some say recession, but they aren't in real estate) conditions down from \$100 a year ago. Prizes are \$1000 for the winner of each quarter score, including final, plus \$500 in miscellaneous prizes and the last \$500 goes for snacks, etc. I had a party of four attending this year--Sandra and I plus two friends--and we decided to share our four spots. We won the first quarter \$1000, missed the half-time by 12 seconds on that absolutely ridiculous fumbled kickoff, weren't close on the 3rd quarter, and missed the final score by less than a minute on a meaningless touchdown by Cincinnati allowed by the stalling 49er defense. Of the miscellaneous prizes we won the #1 and #2 spots. What a day! Needless to say, Sandra learned a new appreciation of football...I don't believe I've ever seen her get quite so excited.

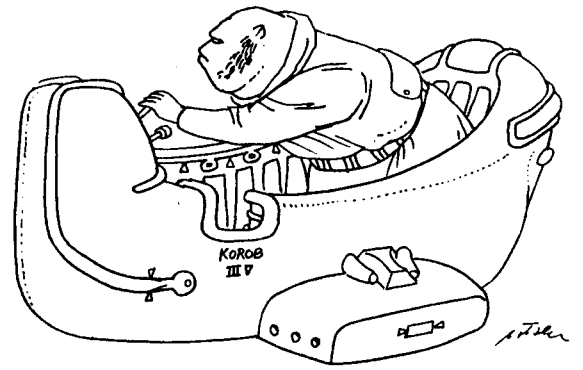
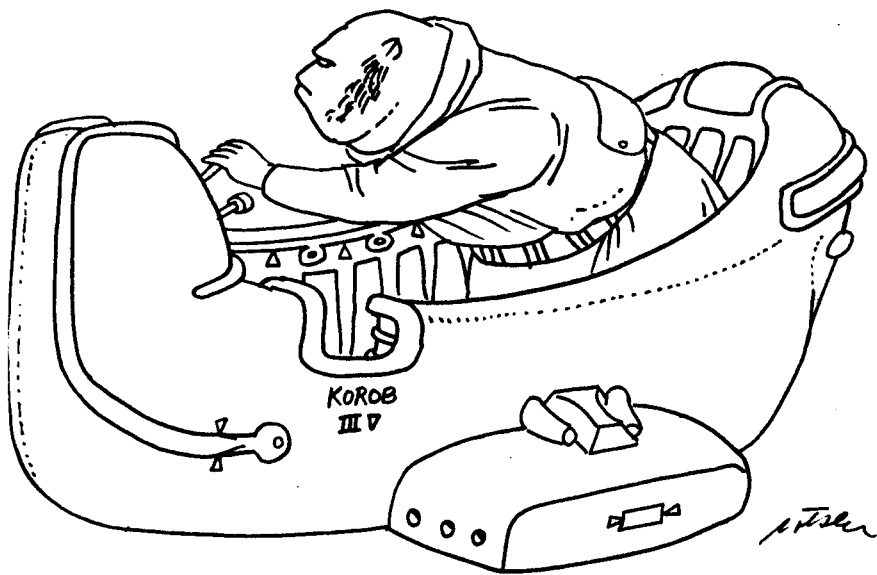
Naturally, I was clam. Er, calm.

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My typewriter is finally in the shop for a general tune-up. I've been putting it off for almost two years now, maybe more. I brought home the office IBM Selectric II for the weekend and it is difficult to imagine a more well-built machine. My Remington is a cheap toy by comparison, even at twice the price. It allows a choice of 10 or 12 pitch and the correction ribbon is built in, but otherwise this machine is much more solid and the ball strikes with a great deal more precision...hmm, maybe the other one should be at the office and this one at home?

Moving right along...

mailing comments



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THE FANTASY AMATEUR (Officialdom)
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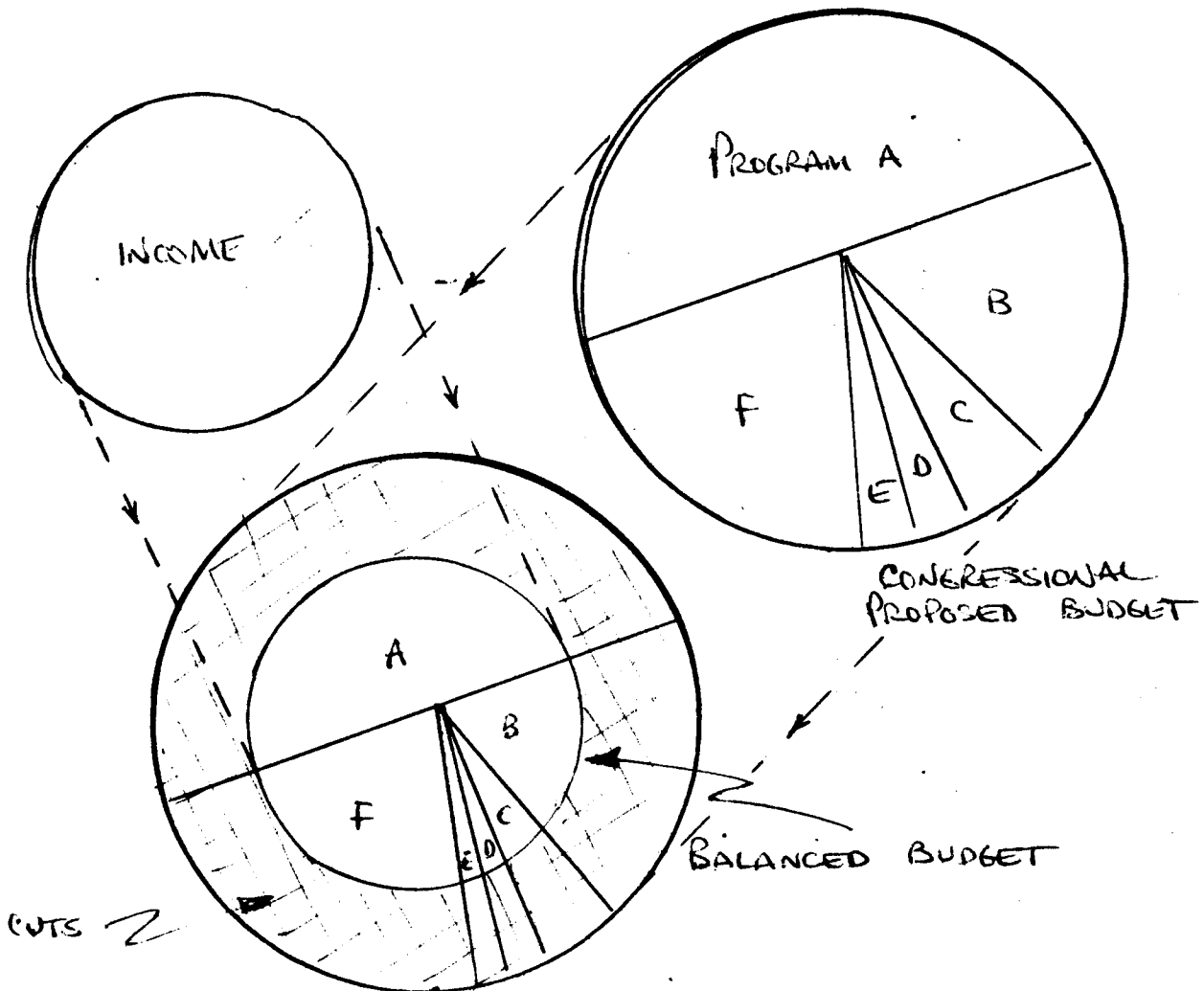
So much for my stirring President's rpt:
I haven't heard a word from anyone about
anything. :::: I am not in favor of
SHADOW FAPA as a personal thing, but I
can't help pointing out a couple of things. You say that FAPA's membership
would be de facto increased if a number of people regularly participated in
SF--not to worry, FAPA members don't regularly participate in anything, and
these are at least embryo members, Ed. As for the quality or nature of the
material, since when has that been a requirement? The last try in that dir-
ection aroused the Ed Martin thing and Harry is still simmering. :::: Sorry
I am not going to be there this May to remind you and Burbee how to play the
game of poker. He'd probably warn you I was a talker, anyhow, thereby doing
me out of at least one fat pot. Maybe come August...

YHOS (Widner)

Electric typewriters are a fantastic invention...until the
electricity fails. Then, since they have no fall-back
capability of manual operation, they just sit there and
laugh at you. I first ran into this problem when I moved
aboard my boat: I typed only when the generator was running. The most recent
reminder was our early-spring snowstorm last month which dumped a foot of snow
and assorted trees across power lines throughout the foothills. We ran on
candles and propane for two days during one stretch, and I had lots of time
for typing but... :::: More con talk and complaints about the size of World-
cons...but why not just stick to the smaller regionals? Your "give fandom
back to the fans" movement will never succeed, I'm afraid. :::: When you re-
ferred to escargot as gourmet food I raised my eyebrows, but then I pondered
that they are not available at any of the local restaurants, as good as the
food is in these parts, so maybe you are right. One interesting thing--we
have to go all the way to Stockton to get Chinese food! We've been trying
to get our Stockton hosts to move up and establish a branch...a good Chinese
restaurant would go over well here, and the good restaurants are still making
money despite the recession. :::: If I could choose a place to live in the
US strictly on the basis of climate and location, I'd still pick somewhere
between Durango and Moab depending on whether I wanted to opt for snow or not.
:::: "Bleeding heart liberals throwing money at problems" isn't all that un-
fair, which is possibly why you are tired of it. Like the term "do-gooder"
the reference describes persons who understand the problem (or at least part
of it) but don't really want to get personally involved and prefer to spend
money to hire others to implement the solutions. And not their own money,
either. Get it from Washington. In this very issue in which you correctly
identify some of our major economic problems you also have a line about "Uncle
Ronnie runs us into complete economic disaster." By coincidence, today's
paper contains a plea from Reagan urging enactment of a constitutional amend-
ment to require balanced federal budgets--that means NO DEFICITS for those of
you who somehow misidentify Reagan as being pro deficit--and he also urges
the people to tell congress to "stop asking for more and more spending and
more and more taxes." Reagan said the balanced budget is the only way to
"stop government's squandering and overtaxing ways" and I agree with him.
The man you myopically identify as running us into disaster has proposed the
greatest reduction in government spending ever proposed! The deficit included
in his budget WOULD NOT BE THERE IF CONGRESS WOULD ALLOW THE ADDITIONAL SPEND-
ING CUTS PROPOSED BY REAGAN! They won't...and I doubt if you would, either,
since you'd no doubt balk at further reductions of social programs and gov-
ernmental giveaways, no doubt with the same argument used by congress--if you

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won't cut your favorite spending program, I won't cut mine. Now where does the deficit come from? In part, then, it comes from Reagan's desire to cut TAXES and reduce the amount of money government subtracts from the economy which might otherwise go for jobs and products. Congress doesn't want less of your money, it wants more--otherwise they might go out of business themselves. Horrors. The Reagan tax cut is based on the premise that the money thus available to the people will be used to buy new products, create jobs, create investment capital, and so on, and thereby increase government revenue over and above the tax cut by GREATER VOLUME AT A LOWER RATE! I don't know why any taxpayer would fail to support such a program. Perhaps your attitude is that it won't work, and possibly you are correct (although don't tell it to a manufacturer or salesman with an overhead of \$1000 and a choice of making his nut out of one unit per month or 1000 units per month, or the purchaser of same) but what is your solution? Raise taxes or cut spending? Reagan says cut spending. Congress says no. And you blame Reagan. Sheesh--how about "fuzzy-minded liberal"? Now try to distort the issues by introducing arguments about Reagan being a friend of big business or hard-hearted towards the poor, or similar smoke screens. The issue is simple: government taxation from the people vs government spending. I say both should be reduced. So does Reagan. :::: Would you like to know how I would balance this year's budget, disregarding the problems of where it came from? Let me try a diagram...



the rambling fap x

Sure it is simplistic...waiting for the perfect, the ultimate solution will take forever, just like the search for the Holy Grail. (Of course, lots of do-gooders thought that was an excellent project, so I don't have any real hope...) We have to reduce the congressional budget to percentages, not dollar amounts, to begin with. If defense should get 40% and social programs get 50%, so be it. That is up to the people to decide, through their elected representatives. First decide how you are going to split the pie...then see how large the pie is. If the pie isn't big enough, increase revenue to suit. But you can't have more pie than there is, and you can't have anyone else's slice. Will Reagan go for this? He's already on record as being for it. Will congress go for this, either raising taxes or reducing spending to fit? Ho ho ho. Congress, of course, doesn't want to come out and admit this--it is much easier to point several hundred fingers at Reagan and "his" budget, and so far I must admit it seems to be working. Ronnie wrecking the economy, indeed. You can fool some of the people all of the time. :::: "Inflation" is a term congress would likewise have you believe is very complicated and requiring immeasurable solutions...but it isn't. In the first place, inflation is not higher consumer prices: those are a result of inflation. Inflation is not more money chasing fewer goods: that is a result of inflation. Inflation is not any of the other bullshit you will hear that it is. Inflation is simply the creation of additional dollars via the printing press --the literal printing press--not justified by increased products or services produced by the economy but necessitated by the government's overspending of its budget over income--i.e., "the deficit"--and thereby monetizing the debt. Isn't that simple? Inflation is not caused by high interest rates, nor does it cause high interest rates. Some of the greatest inflationary regimes of history have been accompanied by record high interest rates...oh, you never thought of looking at historical precedent? :::: Eliminate inflation by eliminating the deficit. Eliminate the deficit by increasing income or else by cutting spending. :::: The fight comes over the last two. I believe that Reagan is outspoken in his attitude towards the reduction of taxes and the reduction of government and the elimination of the federal bureaucracy. I agree. He says give the power to spend and the power to tax back to the States --and immediately a fuzzy cloud jumps up and cries "civil rights" and all the other b.s. to obscure the issue--and I agree. Did you read California's big "problem" in a recent editorial of the Sacramento Bee newspaper? It seems that the State does not have enough income to support its expenditures and the State budget is constitutionally prohibited from running a deficit! That was presented as a PROBLEM. Reagan and I think it is the SOLUTION. Notice what the lawmakers did not want to do...increase taxes OR cut expenditures. Guess what their solution will be, if we let them make the change.

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DISINFORMATION (Hlavaty)
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It is when you use "girl" to describe a human female who has passed the time of puberty that the term becomes offensive...to some. Where the feminists err is equating this with sexism ...calling a mature human black a "boy" is equally offensive and for precisely the same reasons: i.e., an intentional reduction in status by the speaker of the person in question. Feminists prefer to find sexism in everything, however...it certainly is easier and requires less time spent contemplating possible alternative explanations. Freud thought so, too.

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FLYING APAZINE
and SHADOW FAPA
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"Franking" is one thing, but when the major work is that of the FAPA member then I

don't see any question that the zine can be included in the bundle. :::: I must admit that you caught my eye with your statement that "unfortunately, when you stopped editing OOPSLA you stopped being good." I am sort of choked up over that one, but I can always take it as a compliment and that you liked OOPS. Now that you mention it, I can sort of see the top of a hill stretching 'way back behind me...

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DORMOUSE (Ortlieb)
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Since I've always considered adaptability to be the ultimate survival trait --probably taken from Heinlein in his glory days--I am taking your remarks as a compliment. I don't know about "incredible equanimity" but I have to admit that it takes a lot to get me really excited these days.

INTERJECTION (Chalker)
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You say, regarding moving out of Baltimore: "Even so, you know, I really wasn't aware of the day-to-day tension I was living under until I moved out here." That is interesting to me because of the change I've noticed in moving from Walnut Creek to Jackson. Until I moved, I had always considered Walnut Creek out in the country. When we originally moved there I worked in San Francisco, so the difference was pronounced, but even after I went into real estate and seldom saw the real city again, I still felt that I was living in the country. There were lots of trees, and empty lots, both residential and commercial, and not that much traffic, and so on. However, now that I live in the foothills, what a difference! We have two stop signs within a 30-40 mile radius of my home, both in Jackson, and no traffic lights! That needs amplification, excuse me. We have two flashing red traffic lights at stop signs...obviously there are other stop signs in the county when a minor road meets a major one. The signals only flash red in three directions, though --they aren't even four-way intersections--and we have no green-yellow-red. No noise, no smog, no traffic, very little crime, no waiting in lines...like I said, what a difference! Last week I had to go to Stockton on business with my partner and we couldn't get out of town fast enough (after our fantastic Chinese lunch at Dave Wong's) and were appalled by the number of cars and the traffic lights, even during non-rush hours. Talk about hicks from the sticks, and glad of it...

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BOSH (Sjolander)
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Fascinating. :::: As for Anders Bellis, all I can say is if you publish a fanzine which does not draw sufficient response to please you, whose fault is that? I'll just add that the FAPAZines most likely to elicit mailing comments are those with mailing comments, and not articles and stories. :::: You are awfully quick to condemn the Haydens on no evidence, particularly since more than one national post awful is involved.



