

WEEPING FOR THE SCARECROW

As you may have heard by now, friend of this blog, and our friend at Firedoglake, John Chandley, aka “Scarecrow”, has died. Let the record reflect that I am freaking tired of being on the memorial duty. Seriously tired. If you are a participant in the discussion at this blog, or a related friend thereto, quit dying. Please. Enough.

John Chandley was a man. He stood firm and resolute on his own, in spite of being known probably to you only for blogging at Firedoglake under the pseudonym of “Scarecrow”. But Scarecrow was much more than that; never a merely a straw creature, but one who definitively stood firm for that which was righteous in the income inequality wars:

Scarecrow on a wooden cross Blackbird in
the barn

Four hundred empty acres that used to be
my farm

I grew up like my daddy did My grandpa
cleared this land

When I was five I walked the fence while
grandpa held my hand

Rain on the scarecrow Blood on the plow
This land fed a nation This land made me
proud

And Son I’m just sorry there’s no legacy
for you now

Rain on the scarecrow Blood on the plow
Rain on the scarecrow Blood on the plow

The crops we grew last summer weren’t
enough to pay the loans

Couldn’t buy the seed to plant this
spring and the Farmers Bank foreclosed

Called my old friend Schepman up to
auction off the land

He said John it’s just my job and I hope
you understand

Hey calling it your job ol' hoss sure
don't make it right
But if you want me to I'll say a prayer
for your soul tonight

"Like a scarecrow in the rain". Aren't we all.
That is the meter of life, and it is transient.
Funny thing was, the real John Chandley, at
least so far as I even knew him, was not
transient in the least; but came out of the
Berkeley swamps, cool and slow, like John
Chandley's friend and colleague at the time at
Berkeley (John/Scarecrow was present at Berkeley
in the moment), Mario Savio, with a backbeat
hard to master.

The musical imagery here is mine; I am not sure
what would be the preferred cocktail de jour of
John. Before I leave, let me offer up one more
paean of my own to the life of the one, and
only, Mr. John "Scarecrow" Chandley":

The world's goin' crazy and
Nobody gives a damn anymore.
And they're breakin' off relationships
and
Leavin' on sailin' ships for far and
distant shores.
You're my brother,
Though I didn't know you yesterday.
I'm your brother.
Together we can find a way.

Scarecrow would have, by every right that I knew
him, been trepidatious in regards for our
future; yet hopeful for the success and
greatness that may await us all.

It is hard to tell where we all go in the
living, much less where we go beyond. But never
let it be said this blog does not care about the
voices who were its friends and colleagues. And
certainly not tonight.

RIP John "Scarecrow" Chandley.