

CLEAR ETHER!

Commentzine of Samuel Edward Konkin III for APA-NYU. Address all correspondence to
New Libertarian Enterprises, Box 1748, Long Beach, CA 90801; Personal: SEK3.
Volume 5, Number 2

October 1980

CONZO!

GONZO-STYLE
CON REPORTS

NOREASCONZO II!

Thursday, August 28

Wednesday midnight in the off-off-center terminal of El Cheapo Airlines, Vic, Sondra and I awaited the loading of our plane and the winding of the rubber band. I thought of Charles Gray describing Brad & Janet's drive as a journey they would not soon forget. But, what the hell, the damn thing took off and we were off to a con. The Big One. Worldcon. *Conzo!*

While the day-people crashed around me, and no movie to distract, beautiful women in uniforms brought me refreshments and smiles. I quickly raced through most of *The Number Of The Beast* that I had left before we hit Baltimore. Yes, geography fandom, Bal'm'r is on the World Airways geodesic from L.A. to N.Y. None of us chose to disembark, but that's okay; the crew decided since we were running late (fan and libertarian time combined) we should stay in our seats for the quick unloading and loading. *Yawn.* Anyways, I was the only person for whom six ack-emma (whoops, Gay Bounce!) was "mid-afternoon" subjectively and would have gotten anything out of it. Jet lag? Time-zonewise, I circumnavigate the globe every month in Long Beach.

The moment we stepped out of the plane in Newark, we keeled over from the humidity. Sondra's raised hairdo went *pfft* and flattened. Vic spent the rest of the day being alternately spacey and snappish—and he was doing the driving. Neither of them had been further east than Tennessee before; for me, looking at that yellow smudge in the distance with a skyscraper or two protruding obscenely, it was an unpleasant return to an area in which I spent five mostly miserable years.

None of us could wait to be out of such close proximity to Ol' NYC, but the rental agency was in no hurry. Two hours later, we were ready to roll. Oh, Ghod, the air-conditioning! Praise Allah, Yaweh, Ghu, Jesus, Roscoe and Ozmuhd.

"Next time someone mentions L.A. smog disparagingly, remember this scene," I said, pointing at Manhattan. "Thank God the AAA map says we're going to bypass it." AAA lies. We quickly found ourselves unable to turn off from the George Washington Bridge and we clipped Manhattan, driving through the re-enactment of Dresden 1944 staged by the friendly tenements in the South Bronx. I don't have to guess how Winston Smith felt in the rat-room after my being forced to come so close to the center of Dis-on-Earth.

I finally unclenched when we hit Connecticut and we refueled ourselves at Howard Johnson's. For what it's worth, the numerous East Coast HoJoes are superior in cuisine (though not in friendly service) to their sparse Western counterparts.

Boston turned out to be not nearly as bad as I remember it: the depths of non-mild Boskone winters and the swelter (and humidity—it never lets up in the East!) of Noreascon I summer. "Please come to Boston." We said yes! At least this part of this year, Boston was passable.

After blowing a couple of hours looking for closer hotels, we gave up and registered at our reserved hotel, the Boston Park Plaza. Ah, the stimulating eight-block walk to and from the hotel every day at least once, with the glorious view of Boylston Street shops. Well, we can at least say we saw something besides the con hotel.

By the time we unpacked in the room, I had had a full day and was getting fairly gonzo. But there was a Worldcon already going on, so I headed over to the Prudential Center and the Sheraton to register. Not a bad little enclosed shopping village one passes through, definitely a lot more complete and together than when I was last here at Boskone '75.

As soon as I registered I ran into people. Kees Van Toorn and Angelique, whom I said goodbye to a week earlier in Los Angeles, were about to go for dinner, so I unnotched my girded loins for a fourth meal and trekked with the motley crew of LASFAPAns and fellow travellers to the basement of a Chinese restaurant, wondering when the Si-Fan would white-slave us Sci-fen. Besides Laurraine Tutihasi and the Van Toorns, I knew nobody, but the Dutch-Canadian faction formed our own smoking and Tsingtao™ bbeer-guzzling caucus and split some decently-hot Szechuan fare brought us while the others opted for communal cool Cantonese and Mandarin.

By the time we split up at the hotel and I had checked the innovative "message board"—finding a strage message for me from some unknown lady promising word of the legendary Mike Moslow, and putting up my own message for NYUSFS fen to contact me—I was ready for bed. I trudged back, timidly knocking and waiting for Vic and Sondra to stuff hankies and pankies and entered to find all asleep.

Me too, real quick, I betcha.

Friday, August 29

Ah, the glories of tryptophan, no hangover and a moderate amount of sleep—and the last I would get even in that modest amount. Actually up in the morning, before the exhausted anarchocouple in the next bed, I devoured the exotic newspapers around, and found the one carrying *Doonesbury* which would supply my fixes to satisfy my news addiction for the next four days. I also scouted around for likely restaurants.

The three marketeers decided to try *The Great Gatsby* for breakfast, getting our act together by committee just in time for the 11 o'clock deadline. The waiter, obviously a Don Rickles understudy, helped us greet the morning with insults and patter. Not your "Have a nice day" Angeleno experience, to be sure, but we were on holiday and enjoyed the novel.

Soon after getting back to the con site, I ran into people I hadn't seen in years. Marc Glasser and Donna Camp and various other NYUSFSians appeared all over. Then Rich Friedman and Judy Goldstein Friedman from an earlier age of NYUSFS. Somewhere around this time I picked up the Fan Tarot decks which had been delayed for re-collation. I acquired six packs for having typeset the accompanying descriptive booklet—and found that all the neo-wiccans and mystical ladies I had intended to surprise with said presents had already got theirs or had them on order. (I managed to sell two to cover some expenses and found people back in Long Beach who had not yet had the opportunity to acquire their own.) I finally got fed up carrying them and returned to my hotel to drop them off.

I spent the rest of the afternoon getting some flyers

printed up advertising the Frefan Party and posting them. Then a meeting with the delightful and talented APA-NYUan Nina Bogin whom I bribed for artwork and the mysterious lady who had the message from Moslow (that he wouldn't make it—Moslow not at a Worldcon?—*paranoia*) led naturally to a luncheon across the street at a less than palatable imitation of a New York deli crossed with a Philadelphia Hoagie stand.

The evening saw me delivering on my duty to fre-fandom, running into John P (for Paranoid; no last name will be given), an old anarchobuddy and counter-economist from my New York days who needed a shower (and used mine), enlisting him to the cause, and then picking up bbeer and lesser beverages for the party.

Jack Shimek, another agorist now based in Nashua, New Hampshire, arrived with wife Judy and new child Courteney, and the enlarged gathering reserved downstairs (at the Park Plaza) at the Legal Sea Food Restaurant. This naturally led us libertarians to remarks like, "I wonder if we can get *illegal* sea food there?" and other sophisticated witticisms. Downstairs we met Tom Locke, a conservative libertarian from L.A. who deigned to join us. And then, although we were reserved and ready, we had yet another 45-minute wait until they sat us. But, surprisingly, it turned out to be worth it.

At midnight, we returned to an all-too-small Frefan Party, an annual Worldcon event I started at Torcon in 1973, but the quality made up for it a bit as Richard Onley and Ed Zdrojewski showed up (from Frefazine). Never again, I decided, would I hold a party off the con site. And so the party decayed down to those actually living in the room. We still had some fine Mackeson's Stout and various junk U.S. bbeer left over which we eventually abandoned to the maids.

Saturday, August 30

The day got off to a less than perfect start as we broke fast at Howard Johnson's. By this time, cumulative sleep deprivation had begun, my memory deteriorates, and "I gave myself over to absolute pleasure." Besides, I had naught left to organize, run or recruit.

But there were others organizing and I could groove on being a participant. Today was my NYUSFS nostalgia day. That afternoon I attended the APA-NYU collation, with Rich, Judy, Marc & Donna, Nina, Arthur Hlavaty and Adrienne Fein (met at last!), Dan Lieberman and Maria Markham. Most fascinating were the new members of NYUSFS that I had not met before—mostly young and mostly female.

Dinner was held across the street (Boylston) with Vic and Sondra for pizza better than expected out east. Just beforehand I went up to a small room in the Sheraton where Danny Lieberman was staying with



five other people and trying to throw a party for 'nuans. The size made my Park Plaza room look luxurious. When I checked back there later, even the two who were there before were gone. Meanwhile, I gathered with Vic & Sondra to watch the masquerade.

I really have little to say about the costume competition save that I think it's not very competitive to put those with a presentation up against those without, and I didn't bother to stay for the final selection. I had no favorites save perhaps for the whimsicality of "The Man In The White Suit."

The parties were particularly good this night. Little is remembered save the ready accessibility of bheer. I vaguely remember looking for someone and not finding him/her/it/them . . .

Sunday, August 31

We gorged ourselves on Sunday Brunch, champagne and all, only to find that the incredible deal for \$4.95 was actually *gulp* \$9.95 and we'd read the wrong elevator poster for the wrong restaurant or whatever. Then we waddled up to our room and wallowed with the Sunday paper. Then I took the two neophytes on a whole two-stop subway ride to the Sheraton. The tunnels were as dingy and graffiti-ridden as New York's, but the "trains" were not trains. And it was hot and humid—of course.

Finally, it was about time to go to the Hucksters' Room to meet Rich and Judy for the tradition of NYUSFS kosher dinner. (V&S passed it up for a romantic seafood dinner for two.) We indulged Rich Friedman's Peculiar Habit just like the old times. I ran into Barry Walden in the Hucksters' room who related the latest atrocity of Harlan Ellison perpetrated on his girlfriend ("Would you spread your legs for this autograph?"). Then John J. Pierce appeared and we waited at the snack area in the Hucksters' Room (a most enjoyable innovation, bheer and all) and soon Richard Onley and John P. joined us. Finally, Rich and Judy and Ira Kaplowitz of the old crowd and a couple others joined us.

Probably the most gonzo part of the con was going to the restaurant for Fen Of Deli by piling into John's grey anarchovan (which looked like a paddy wagon) with the exhaust inside the back. We amused ourselves with comparisons to Nazi victims allegedly carted off to camps and being exterminated en route.

Never having had kosher moussaka before, I considered the expedition a success, even though when we ended up no where we drove to . . . because of too long a wait in line there. Many were in a hurry to return for the Hugo Awards Ceremony.

Silverberg was in fine form and repartee, right down to the Harlan Ellison giving Isaac Asimov a belated circumcision, and he was right. Things were so different now I couldn't recall the Noreascon I banquet proceedings save dimly and by his references. Richard Onley, Ed Zdrojewski, John and I formed a Frefan phalanx to cheer and jeer appropriately, but as was to be expected, we disagreed almost as much as we found temporary unison.

The less said about the results of the Hugo balloting the better. Some categories I had read/seen too little to judge, but save for one, all those I did know enough about, I disagreed violently. Alexis Gilliland's victory as best fan artist was the one bright spot. Pro Bob Shaw beating trufen Dick Geis and Arthur Hlavaty for best *fan* writer rankled. (We must make sure not to split the frefan vote next year!)

And more parties, one in particular striking my attention: a rock 'n' roll party, mostly New Wave (prefer the label *punk* for obvious fannish historical reasons). Many old familiar but near-forgotten faces pass in kaleidoscope. Which night was it that I was sitting on a bed with the various *amis* and *amies* and partyarchs would appear wearing the hated Clark/President button. I would jeer; they would stop to argue; they would leave confused or converted; and the next one was up. Richard O's friend Faruk seemed to be impressed by the process which discomfited Rich (a paid LP organizer).

Ah, but the bheer kept flowing and I refueled again and again for the long flight.

Monday, September 1

Morning *gaagh* found us truding to keep an appointment at a weird but large and popular deli on Boylston twixt Park Plaza and Sheraton. The name escapes me but I remember now that I had run into Spencer Pinney the previous night (another old NYUSFSian and frefan) who, it turned out, was currently co-shacking with an old friend from L.A., Rita Prince Winston. Both were staying in the Park Plaza, so they dropped down to our room, and the five of us went off to meet Marc & Donna at this doomed to remain anonymous but fine deli. I had a lox and eggs and cream cheese and bagel breakfast, the first and only, and waxed nostalgic, plotted, conspired and babbled.

Then Vic, Sondra and I drove to Nashua, New Hampshire, to visit Jack, Judy and Courteney and plot nefarious counter-economic anarchist deeds which I obviously cannot relate in print. By nightfall, we stopped to pick up large quantities of *real* chocolate milk and some appropriate munchies. Fortunately, as V&S dropped me off (remember that rented car?) at the Sheraton with two bulging bags of contraband (hotels don't like groceries), who should I spot from the elevator on the way up but Marc & Donna who joined me up to their room.

The first chocolate milk orgy, long planned but finally attended (some went on without me, I hear tell), was joined by Cyndi and Jim, Nina, and a couple others briefly met and instantly forgotten. Modesty notwithstanding, I was the last one to take a slug of chocolate milk after all others had o.d.ed, while at least one other had passed out on the bed (probably from undersleep and the milk's tryptophan).

The party night was paranoia-ville, with shushing at the main parties (L.A. in '84 and the Chicago Victory Party—I supported Chicago; see **CE! IV/5** for reason) and foul rumours of the Sheraton checking hall cruisers for room keys. All too quickly it was down to me and Donna, Laurraine and Nina—a ratio I never expected to live long enough in fandom, even with Life Extension, to see.

I bid a final, fond, touching farewell to Nina, the last besides me still up, at the elevators, and tripped off contentedly and buoyantly into the night, stumbling to my hotel. A quick four hours later, soon after dawn cracked loudly, I awoke for the Return.

Tuesday, September 2

Our farewell breakfast was held at The Great Gatsby with the insolent waiter there with a revamped routine. After a last-minute search by V&S for some artifact, we drove non-stop to Newark, arriving three hours early. I called a couple of libertarians up who lived in the area who managed to cram a 45-minute visit to us at Newark Airport (Vic scoring his only sale of Sons of Liberty medallions).

The Fan GoH, Bruce Pelz, and his wife Elayne, shared the flight back with us a few rows up. We were all too zonked to commute much. Vic & Sondra enjoyed the film I had already seen (*The Final Countdown*) while I finished the Heinlein special issue of Jim Baen's underrated *Destinies*.

Neil Schulman picked us up at the airport and it was all over but the debriefing. Denver next year? But of course. Denvenconzo!
—SEK3



REVIEWS IN CAPSULE

BOOK REVIEW—*The Number Of The Beast* by Robert A. Heinlein (British hard-cover ed.)

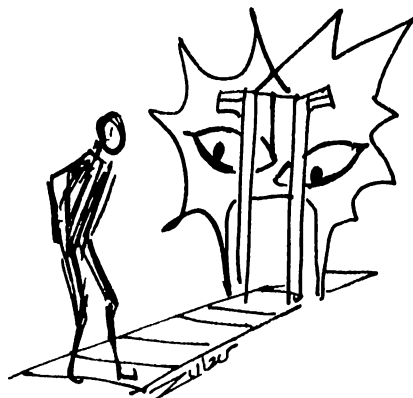
Negative reviews from the second-handers and the ideologically twisted have already appeared but Heinlein is still Heinlein and rises above it all. Though admittedly weak on world-at-stake plot, Heinlein's trend towards taking individual concerns as primary seems to continue. And this is certainly his most fannish, even faanish, delightful story ever.

A tough old lady (for a change, though the feminists will find other things to quarrel about if they want to) and her scientist consort, the "mad scientist's beautiful daughter" who is an ace programmer, and the younger, heroic male traverse time and space and additional dimensions, real and fictitious (yes, even "fictions" are used here), and have a rollicking good time, learning as they go as all Heinlein characters do.

In a fan review, one must mention the superb conclusion. Not giving too much away, it is a sort of multi-dimensional "worldcon" and the mixture of the real and imaginary characters, pros and fen is simply a *tour de force*. If for no other reason, every BNF will have to read it to find out if he or she is mentioned. Even the SCA and Trekkies figure into the story!

The most fun character, as has been the case for Heinlein's last four books, is a computer—this time, it's a car *cum* spaceship *cum* time-travel device called "Gay Deceiver." Undoubtedly, "Gay Bounce!" and "Gay Termite" will be a standard fan cliché when fen are in trouble in a vehicle-ride for some time to come.

Everything from Oz to Lensmen and the kitchen sink is thrown in, along with most of Heinlein's famous characters from previous works. Should the master consider this his final work, it is a perfect conclusion to his work. But, everyone knows, Heinlein will never die. And as long as he can keep his stories coming, neither will those of us who follow them have reason to give up on living. *Bravo and encore!*



All artwork this issue by Bernie Zuber.

NEXT ISSUE: catch-up on comments for sure, I promise!