



CONNIPTION

"All the News that's Print to Fit"

April 1, 1986

Fears of Terrorist Attacks Limit Inter-Building Travel

Chelmsford (Pander Press) The recent spate of hostile actions against Apollo employees has severely curtailed travel between buildings, say sources at Apollo Computer, Inc. Terrorist raids on Apollo vans and hijackings of strolling employees have made Apollo personnel reluctant to move outside of their own sites during the day.

"It's criminal!" laments Apollo van driver Louie. "Ever since those guerrillas smeared the seats of my van with copy machine toner, no one will ride with me."

Employees traveling on their own haven't fared well, either. In last week's raid on the Elegant Farmer, seven Apollo employees were pelted with artichoke hearts, covered with lo-cal salad dressing, and left, bound and gagged, in shopping carts. Two weeks ago, employees driving into the Building 15 parking lot were appalled to find their car wheels sliding uncontrollably on banana peels. Security personnel are still searching for the technical writer from Building 270 who decided to walk over to the Copy Center in Building 330 one afternoon last week. The manuscript she intended to deliver to the Copy Center was found behind Building 300 with the following message scrawled on it: "DSEE is Satan's instrument. We will not rest until we have rid the world of the DSEE pestilence."

Authorities say that most employees can travel in Chelmsford safely if they take the following precautions:

Never travel with Tom Vanderslice. "You're askin' for trouble if you're seen with the Big Guy," says a security official.

Don't make your affiliation with Apollo obvious. Remove Apollo bumper stickers from your cars, don't carry gym bags with the Apollo logo on them, and don't wear your badges prominently while outside. Better yet, get yourself a phony Wang or DEC badge.

Take the van. Even with the raid, it's still the safest form of inter-building transportation. Louie has tightened security measures and plans to acquire a police dog that will sniff out dangerous cargo. Note, however, that Louie has had to institute a \$5.00 surcharge for each round-trip fare. "It's to defray the cost of the Magnum," Louie says.

Don't visit spots popular with Apollo employees. "The Elegant Farmer is a hotbed of terrorist activity," says a security spokesman. "If you've got to have a salad, go to the salad bar in the Purity Supreme."

Security officials note that the odds are in favor of your continued safety. "More employees were injured in half-way football games last year than in terrorist attacks," they point out.

Wall Street Week

by Sharky DeBullion

Wow, am I a star yet! — If you look real carefully in the background of the latest Ozzy Osbourne video you'll see Digital C.E.O. Ken Olsen biting the head off a bat. Look for Edson de Castro to appear in a video soon...Fleet Street's all abuzz over the rumor that *The Conniption* will soon be snatched up by paper tiger Ruppert Murdoch...Sharky is bullish on America and asks that the term "french fries" be replaced by "victory potatoes" until our French *allies* get their derrieres in gear...The bond rating of Kiev Power and Light has dropped from TripleA to B...With the plummet in crude prices, things are just plum awful in the Lone Star state. That's why the Texas Government has introduced their version of the welfare state — Ford stamps. On the first of every month, beleaguered oil execs receive coupons which can only be redeemed for LTDs and other Ford Motor products...Congrats to Charmin Co. who was low bidder to supply our fighting forces with toilet paper. This taxpayer was darned glad to learn that they're going to supply it for only \$45 a roll. The prototype roll should be available by 1993...Execute pirate T. Boone Pickens announced plans for a leveraged buyout of Czechoslovakia...

Moving Right Along...

Note: Since so many Apollo employees are in the midst of buying or refinancing a house, or are thinking about doing one or the other, the following is presented as a public service. For those of you who have made forays into the housing market, this will let you know that you weren't alone in suffering. And for you navelites out there who haven't yet plunged in, perhaps this will make you think twice.

It seemed so simple. Natalie Jacobson and Chet Curtis kept telling me that interest rates were going down and that this was the perfect time to buy a house. Rates below 10 percent! What could be nicer?

I took the bait. I figured out how much owning instead of renting would save when Uncle Sam came to call, and it seemed downright criminal not to call a realtor. So I did. "Show me some houses," I said recklessly. "I'm tired of throwing my money down the drain in rent; I want to become a home-owner."

The realtor was only too happy to oblige. She started talking about features, and lot sizes, and assessed values. She extolled the virtues of just about anything her company was listing. However, I was no fool. I knew there were some euphemisms out there that I wanted nothing to do with. Like "handyman's special." Being a firm believer that if God had intended mortals to fix leaky faucets He wouldn't have created plumbers, I knew to steer clear of those "specials". Ditto "fixer-uppers" and "must see to appreciate." No, I wanted something that a normal human being could look at and say, "gee, that's a nice house. Nothing fancy, but nice."

I said as much to the realtor. She nodded understandingly and said, "I have just the thing." [Note: When a realtor says she has "just the thing" it usually means, a) you can't afford it, or b) it's really a dump. The first place we went to was a b.]

The house loomed into view. It had a slightly seedy air, as if in the 70s its Me Generation owners had spent far too much time on Me and not enough on it. The realtor was busy pointing out the "features." "You said you didn't want to do much yard work," she chirped. "Notice that there isn't much lawn to mow."

Strictly speaking, she was right. But that was because the back yard had long been used as a substitute parking garage. Faced with the prospect of a daily assault from several sets of Michelens, the grass had long since pulled up roots and moved to greener pastures. Even the dandelions had thrown in the towel. It wasn't all bad, though. I had to admit there were a few nice trees and shrubs. A few.

So I was still optimistic. "You can't judge a house by its shrubs and shingles," I thought. "It's probably just fine inside. After all, they want \$159,900 for it. No one in their right mind could ask that many thousands of dollars for something that looks on the inside like this looks on the outside."

The owners weren't in their right mind.

The inside and outside were a perfect pair. There was the kitchen, with its bizarre L-shape. The wallpaper that only could have been chosen because the store was having an Ugly Wallpaper Clearance Sale. (*No unreasonable offer refused! Take this off our hands — please!*) The teeny-tiny closets. The cellar — need I say more?

And then there was the staircase. You see, back in the office the realtor had said this was a two-story house. But all I saw as I looked around was something suspiciously like a ladder. The realtor was still bubbling along, and she finally said, "now I'll show you the upstairs." She marched toward the ladder. I said doubtfully, "But where are the stairs?" "Well, right here, of course!" "That looks like a ladder to me." "No, no," she assured me. "It's just a little steep." Up she went. I tactfully didn't point out that her knuckles were white from where she was gripping the "bannister" to haul herself up. I followed, but somehow I already knew this wasn't my Dream House. I didn't look very carefully at the second floor. In fact, I tried to end the tour as quickly as possible.

In the days that followed, I saw several more b) and a few a) houses. Just as I was beginning to think I understood why any house on the market was on the market (the owners were trying to dump the loser on someone else), I found my house. It wasn't a palace: one wouldn't mistake it as belonging to someone with a lot of stock options, for example. But it was okay. I was so relieved; I thought all the trauma was over.

Next time: *Getting a Mortgage or Discount Points? Discount for Whom?*

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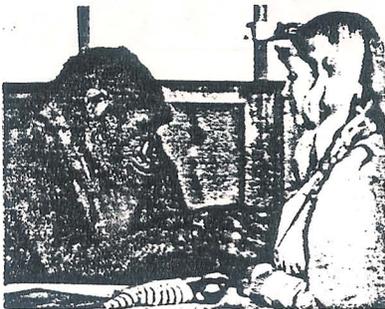
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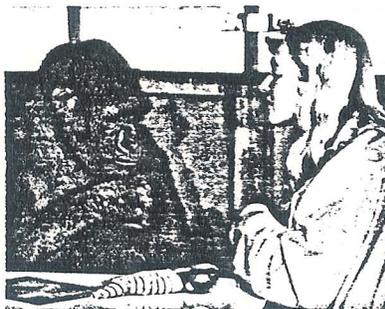
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