

Today's Excursion or "Babylon-by-Bus"

Started on 09/15/21. Finished on 09/23/21

Driven by hunger, I ventured out today. I exaggerate here; I merely had not eaten all day.

The visit to Costco was surprisingly uneventful (in itself ominous as, while there, I usually encounter "atmospherics" that would severely try the patience of Job. This does *not* make of me a *jobnik*, I don't care what you say, dammit), as was the trip home until, that is, the very last bus, the eastbound #37 on Adams Blvd. and Fairfax at around 7:30PM, 9-15-2021. Approaching the stop, I noticed a young woman walking abreast of me as I crossed Adams, she matched my speed and reached the curb just as I did. Sometime later, an overweight man coming from the same direction, sat down on the bench I stood near, and began occasionally muttering to himself. There were several others at the stop, also waiting. By then, it was dark and increasingly cold. After quite some time, a bus, it had to be my 37, appeared but made an unexpected right turn onto Fairfax instead of continuing eastbound to where several of us were waiting. Immediately, the peculiar man with histrionics on display, took off after it as did, more quietly, some of the others. Seemingly disappointed when the bus still did not stop (how could they expect to catch up to it ?), they returned before beginning to trickle away with the peculiar man in the lead, loudly calling out to anyone within earshot that he was giving up... The young woman I had noticed earlier soon followed suit. Sensing something was possibly amiss: I. Stayed. Put. And, taking a leaf from Soviet-era Gulag *zeks*, began stuffing whatever paper I could find in my backpack down my shirt in an attempt at warding off the increasing cold (not kidding 'ere. Steadfast, I was). Sometime later, a bus, coming from the direction the earlier one had taken, miraculously rounded the corner and stopped, kindly consenting to pickup what was left of the, by now, cold and weary trade (what are some of these LA Metro bus drivers smoking ?). There were, by then, only 2-3 of us left, the others having scattered to the four winds. The "*clou de la soirée*"? If I may express myself thus.

For over a year, I have kept a solar panel on the lawn outside my bungalow (see pictures in the attachment I sent a copy of to AFJ Investment). During most of this time, it was mounted on a bike trailer allowing it to be moved with ease and used as part of a solar-electric bike I am working on. Unfortunately, some months ago, the base was stolen, forcing me to lean the panel against the bungalow until I could figure out what to do. There were no complaints from the landlord until I lodged one with the City complaining of the inaction of AFJ Investment concerning low water flow in the bungalow. Tiffany Anderson, though she has visited my complex several times over the last year and had to have noticed the offending panel, chose to say nothing until the City became involved.

The inspection, when it came, proved to be a letdown. While the inside of the bungalow passed muster, the inspector noticed the one solar panel I had left outside, the one actually connected to my solar electric system. A lively discussion ensued, partly fueled by my misunderstanding. I had assumed the original inspector had given me a pass on the active panel, merely requiring me to remove the three others (not connected) stacked up outside for lack of space. The second inspector was adamant: I was to remove this last panel as well.

When, a couple of days later, I spoke by phone with Tiffany Anderson, she confirmed the inspector's request, adding that the owner had requested immediate compliance. I asked for clarification and suggested other possibilities which would allow me to retain the panel as source of electricity. I also repeated what I had said to the inspector, that the panel was an essential part of my business. She was unimpressed, adding with some urgency that there was a three day notice requiring me to comply. At

times she was so loud, I could not understand what she was saying and had to ask her to speak more quietly.

The next day, relating the incident to my sister, Irene repeatedly emphasized, again with quite some urgency, that my fulfilling the rental agreement for the bungalow *to the letter*, with advantages including an astonishingly low rent (nearby apartment are, I hear, going for five times what I pay) was crucial to my remaining in LA. I agreed. After all, this solar business is, by comparison, a sideshow. Later in our conversation, Irene volunteered an answer to my unasked question: “The landlord may be retaliating for your keeping the apartment in such poor shape.” Puzzling. This from a woman who once, in a Skype conversation with me, courageously uttered the fateful (?) word CIA. *Peccavi!*

The text of my reply to AFJ Investment’s Tiffany Anderson (daughter of the owner(s) ?), sent by certified mail with signature confirmation, is included as another attachment. Irene seemed satisfied with it.

I am now tentatively exploring other avenues, checking with both AFJ Investment and the City of Los Angeles. Avenues including:

1. Mounting the solar panel on top of my car, parked nearby, to charge a battery pack in the car which, after charging, I will exchange with a second pack in my bungalow. There would then be no direct connection from the panel to the bungalow. With the panel to be removed and stored at home whenever I make use of the car. I call this “ping-pong diplomacy,” mixing a technical term (ping-pong buffers – referring to the alternate use of two battery packs) with an attempt at humor, alluding to the “sensitivity” of the situation.
2. Parking a tricycle, solar powered (they are in the general category known as eBikes), on the street and using it to charge a battery pack during the day, swapping it in the evening for another in the bungalow. With, again, no electrical connection to my bungalow.
3. Mounting a planned solar water heater (a derivative of which has been proposed to a potential customer) on a electric wheelchair base or behind the aforementioned solar tricycle, the 50lb load occasionally being moved to my bungalow using the same base. The electric wheelchair base to be parked on the street nearby with, again, no physical connection to my bungalow.
4. This base would also serve to move other heavy objects such as batteries and the solar panel from car to bungalow and back daily as I am unable to lift much myself due to injuries sustained in various accident lately; accidents which may have left me in need of surgery.

As Churchill is reputed to have said to his French counterparts (in his execrable French), sometime during the debacle “*en quarante*”: “*Ne m’obstaclez pas!*”

Meanwhile termites are ravaging the property while I cannot interest poor Tiffany in the problem. Oh, and as of this morning (9-15-2021), I am told the City of Los Angeles does not have any record of the complaint which triggered this mess or of the findings of the housing inspectors.

In other news, my sister Irene reports that lately, on several occasions, when I call, my location is reported as coming from, variously, England, France or Germany. Likely concerned that I may have gone off my rocker once again and decided to spoof my location in an attempt to somehow ward off the ever-present evil spirits, Irene has expressed concern... A-and that’s the best-case scenario. Another possibility which *may* have momentarily occurred to the poor woman is that I have finally thrown in the towel and left these fair shores for other climes. Perhaps (heavy, heavy irony here) *¿para luchar en*

otros frentes? As the phrase goes. Could this be *Sassenach* up to 'is Yankee tricks once again (if I may mix metaphors), do you suppose...

Coming home yesterday (9-21-2021), bus-weary, with only a few of the day's tasks accomplished, I chanced to stop by my local auto shop located a few yards from my bungalow. They know me over there, sometimes even bringing me computer stuff to fix unbidden. I wanted to know if they could weld some fixtures to my car to ease the mounting of the solar panel I plan to install. With everyone busy, I soon sat down next to the office, near a corner of the shop. And sat. And sat. And sat. As I had had the foresight to bring a book, *The End of the Megamachine*, I was not unduly troubled... I even managed to get through about 6 pages, in Geerman, before a kind soul eventually materialized, asking if I perhaps needed anything. I think I had previously noticed him walk by, pulling along a welding machine. Looking up from my book, I quietly replied I would consider his (kind ?) offer and get back to him. Adding: "Do you understand?" At which I walked away. He quickly followed, asking if I was there to pickup a Prius. Being a bit hard of hearing (likely due to the overly loud music I often play; after diagnosing tinnitus, some months ago, my doctor at Kaiser suggested I reduce both the volume and my consumption of coffee, suggestions I have since followed up to a point – but I digress), I neglected to answer. Outside on the street, sedately making my way toward my bungalow, he pursued me (perhaps hoping to rustle up some business – *zélé, ce garçon*). Asking if my car might be in need of repairs. My hearing unfortunately *not* having significantly improved in the intervening 30 seconds, I continued on my way; eventually making good my escape. Jesus. (Auto Repair and Body Shop) is the name of this business.

And this is "the belly of the beast" as my one-time friend, poor Subhash Sharma, once called America? Increasingly Nigeria-lite, more like.

A-and what of my plan for a private tilapia/vegetable aquaponics farm, Eh?

A fine kettle of fish, this.

In the early part of the night, as I try to sleep; A Thought: the next time one of these ~~creatures of the~~ *Securitate* nincompoop-provocateurs calls me "Brother," I have a ready retort: "Right on, Brother, a-and my regards to Sister Kamala." That'll bitch it, wot? Though I must confess, the *Securitate* certainly seems to have found the range... Eh? (See my categorization of myself as "The Brother from Another Planet" among other put-downs in my book).

P.S. To my sister Irene (upon whose enemies, confusion – this bears repeating): "May our tears prove invincible."