

8 March 1972

Dear Harold:

A couple of weeks ago we did what we've been meaning to do for some weeks -- call Hal. It took some doing, as he seemed never to be in, but we finally got through and arranged to have dinner with him in SF the night of Feb. 28, partly because he said Gary Schoener was in town attending a convention of some kind and he wanted to bring Gary along.

He said he had found a job a couple of weeks earlier -- at a large printing company in SF. Says it's working out very well and is a better job than the last one he had, which he says he lost because a salesman wanted to quit the road and was given the job Hal was doing. In the meantime, during his several weeks without a job, he says he began working up a small business buying up old books and comics and selling them on weekends at a flea market in San Jose. He is still doing this in addition to his regular job, which accounts for the difficulty of getting hold of him by phone. He apparently knows quite a bit about this field, enjoys it and appears to be one of the few involved in it.

Hal brought Gary along to the dinner, and we all sat and talked for a couple of hours afterward, until Hal decided he'd better get some sleep because he had to get up early the next morning. We brought Gary out here for some more talk which lasted until around 3 a.m., after which we took him back to his hotel in SF, finally hitting the hay at 4:30 a.m.

An extremely bright guy, and we liked him very much. You'll be interested to know that he's among those who have been unduly impressed by the way the Chinese in Peking sweep the streets clear of snow -- the Nixon visit still being very much on everyone's mind at the time of the conversation. We explained that there is plenty of precedent for this sort of thing in China, as well as the point you make -- that there's plenty of precedent in rural America as well. He'd never heard of it, of course.

Another, minor point that might amuse you. I brought up the question of ~~acupuncture~~ acupuncture, more or less to test him, and his reaction could have come from the AMA itself -- it's all suggestion and hypnotic influence. No one in his right mind questions the probable presence of both these factors, of course, and I said so. He just dismissed my suggestion that acupuncture could be a residual science, a mere vestige of what it might once have been, and that it is illogical to assume a purely empirical science could have developed out of such an exotic idea as sticking needles into people.

During the time Hal was with us there was no opportunity to bring ourselves up to date on anything except what would be of interest to Gary too, but we hope to see him again before too long.

More elsewhere,

jdw