

Chromium Switch

OCTOBER 1973

FIRESIGN REJOINS FOR STONES ADVENTURE

January or February of next year will see the release of Firesign's seventh album as a group, to be called "THE TALE OF THE GIANT RAT OF SUMATRA." The disc (being produced and recorded by TFT at the studios of RCA) is "the most visual of all TFT albums" according to those who've already heard what's been layed down so far. With obvious influences from A. Conan Doyle, "GIANT RAT" is a return to the absurdist humor of Danger and ties-in with the fragmented details given by Watson in the film, "Pursuit To Algiers." Based on part of Sherlock Holmes' genealogy is Firesign's assumption that Holmes, while touring America in the 1890's with a Shakespearean company, joined with Firesign's genesis, The Firesign Theatre's Electric Buffalo Show, which was also touring at the time. Based on this, Firesign's Holmes character (Hemlock Stones) is the father of Nick Danger, and Danger is the illegitimate son of Irene Adler and Holmes. This gives you an idea as to the complexities of "GIANT RAT."

The album is being made at a much faster pace than before, almost in half the time that it took on previous efforts. The first side was finished in three days and now the second side is nearing its completion. When I spoke with Proctor he said Firesign had established a new record in the studio: Completing 8 pages of dialogue with all overdubbing, sound effects, and extra tracks within 8 hours time. The final mixdown will be critical as all of the overdubbing surpasses even that of "Bozos." The engineer at RCA for Firesign is Peter Abbott, who has worked with such comedians as Stan Freberg. (Freberg created, along with TFT, the Jack Poet Volkswagen radio commercials of a few years back.)

In addition to Hemlock Stones (played by Proctor) some of the other characters are Dr. Flotsom, Boil M. Owl, and the police chief of Chicago, all played by Ossman; Senator Dudley, Frank Acne Jr. (America's new action hero), and the sinister Electrician, all done by Austin; Violet Dudley and Acme Sr., portrayed by Bergman; plus another role filled by Proctor, Dirty Dick Wrench. The record begins with "Not Quite The Solution He Expected," a Baker Street scene in London, while side two centers on the search for the Zeppelin Tube being held by The Electrician at the Concrete Submarine in Chicago.

The cover and back album art for "GIANT RAT" is being done by Robert Schulenberg, the brother of Firesign's attorney. The design will be in the style of a melodramatic detective magazine cover, illustrating the major characters being threatened by The Electrician down at the wharf, complete with the rats hiding in the shadows. The LP credits will be listed as though they were chapters in a book.

There will be a great deal of promotion on "THE TALE OF THE GIANT RAT OF SUMATRA" as Firesign feels it is the first realization of their "movies of the mind" idea. The next project from TFT is to make a movie version of "GIANT RAT" which would, when released, give them wider audience appeal. As Phil Proctor said, "if it makes them laugh they'll come to see it" and maybe then people will realize the genius of Firesign's output, usually being aural comedy/drama, but certainly capable of being visually funny by way of such movies as the proposed "GIANT RAT." If it happens it will turn everyone's head around, and that includes all of us already fond of the "Firesign magic."

Welcome to side six

Hope you enjoy the new format of *CHROMIUM SWITCH*. This is the first issue to go beyond two pages. There's always room for improvement so please write and let me know what you think. If things go well I may be able to print readers' contributions in the next issue, which will probably be out before the end of the year.

As this Firesign news mailing operation began in March of 1972 I really had no idea as to where I was going. Most people considered it a fan club, and indeed that was the image I had given myself. My first mailing was really a bit overplayed and didn't carry any new information. But as time went on I developed my idea into strictly what it is today: A publication carrying Firesign Theatre news before the majority of the other media report it. As long as Firesign exists (individually or collectively)

I will try to continue the production of this newsletter.

Since the previous edition of *CHROMIUM SWITCH* there has been more than the usual amount of Firesign activity. There should be a vast amount of TFT product out within a year's time, so it's something for all Firesign followers to look forward to. The avant-garde comedy of TFT is catching on day by day.

One last message: I try to answer all letters and requests for information that I get, but sometimes they get lost in the shuffle. So if you haven't heard from me (by personal letter, that is) please write again and I'll reply for sure.



OSSMAN CREATES NEXT FIRESIGN DISC: EARTH IN THE YEAR 1999

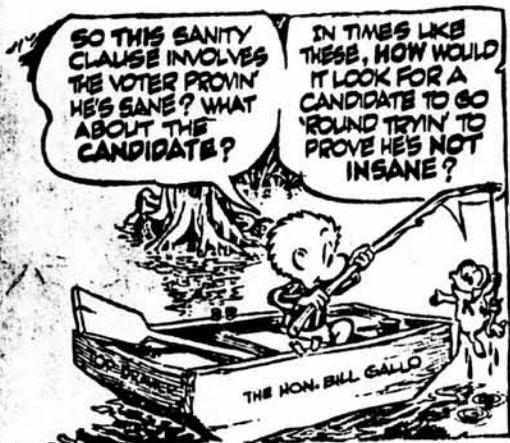
It had been reported earlier in CHROMIUM SWITCH that David Ossman's album "HOW TIME FLYS" would be released by the end of August. But Columbia, in the midst of its hassles over Clive Davis, has held up a lot of album product, including David's. The LP should be released by the middle of October and the wait was well worth it. Ossman noted that the album was fun to develop and record, and that he hopes it can be cultivated as "a legit dramatic/comedic form." "HOW TIME FLYS" comes at you on a continuous cycle as the beginning and ending lock into each other. Mark, the character David plays, returns to Earth on the last day of 1999 after a 20 year voyage to Planet X. He's greeted by Tweeny (Philip Proctor) and a pre-programmed welcome home speech. Mark is drugged and taken away on The Gilda, an aircraft controlled by Mr. Motion (Peter Bergman). The "big scene" on side two proves most interesting with the familiar growl of Wolfman Jack as Jim Dundee. Also heard on the LP are Phil Austin, Tiny Ossman, Sheilah Wells, Harry Shearer (of the Credibility Gap), Freddy Burns, and many more. It's an "all starcast" as David calls it. The "big scene" (where Mark escapes) is the basis for the album cover art. A 3-D diorama is included.

"MAIDENS" LP BY AUSTIN: 50% DONE

Phil Austin's "song with a story in it" called "ROLLER MAIDENS FROM OUTER SPACE" is halfway recorded somewhere in a Hollywood studio. The album will come out on the Epic label, along with a possible promotional movie. "MAIDENS" has something to do with Commander Cody (the movie character) and life on Planet Eggs. The "Crazy As Loons" song from "MSP" may be a part of the recording. Release is thought to be sometime in the Spring of '74.

LAST ISSUE!

Don't let this be your last issue of CHROMIUM SWITCH. If you don't subscribe by mail (which is almost the only way you can get it) then send 75 cents (stamp or coin or dollar bill) to the unlisted address listed in next month's issue. That 75 cents is a lifetime charge, A.C. or D.C.



POGO MEETS PAPOON

FIRESIGN IN PRINT

September issue of CRAWDADDY with Proctor and Bergman.....Upcoming TFT story in HARPERS..... Future edition of ROLLING STONE with story on Firesign in the RCA Studios.

SPACE PARTY AGAIN

New Line Cinema is re-releasing the half-hour Firesign classic, "Martian Space Party" along with "Jimmy (Hendrix) In Berkeley" and "Love Is Hard To Get" which features the Nasi Goring character of Peter Bergman. "Love" won a bronze medal at the Atlanta Film Festival and was directed by Antoine Greene (he's Chef Antoine of the "Dwarf" album.) In Los Angeles, a fourth film is being added to the package: "Sympathy for the Devil."

PAUL HENREID TO MARGARET LOCHWOOD IN "NIGHT TRAIN TO MUNICH," (ENGLISH; DRAMA; 1939) -----
--- "SHHH!...WAIT...DON'T TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES."

ON THE ROAD AGAIN: PHILIP/PETER

Proctor and Bergman will take their cabaret act all over the country once again this fall, starting approximately October 12th. Cities will include Chicago, New York, and Atlanta. The night club routine which runs for about an hour is based on some "TV or Not TV" material, and on P/B's experiences on the road this summer. Philip and Peter played LA's Ash Grove for two weekends as a warm-up to the tour.

Other Proctor/Bergman news: Plans to make a movie called "The Shrimp Deal Is Set.".....Possibility of a second album called "Blue Planet Weekend.".....P/B writing for HARPERS Wraparound column.....Special discs going to radio stations featuring P/B....."Paperback TV" hosted by Philip and Peter, it's a series of video tape pieces produced by Frisco's Video Free America through New Line Cinema....."TV or Not TV" album being promoted again in October.

YOUR WEEKEND COMPANION

"The Firesign Theatre's Big Mystery Joke Book" is the likely title of the follow-up to "Big Book of Plays." Set for publication sometime next year, the paperback will contain scripts to "Giant Rat" and "Nick Danger" plus much more!



FIG. 4

DEVICE FOR PREVENTING HENS FROM SITTING--Figure 4, comprising a breastplate adapted to be secured to the fowl, and a pair of legs projecting downward therefrom, is a device designed to keep hens from sitting.

T. B. GLIDE

[THE IMAGERY AS CREATED BY FIRESIGN IN RELATION TO TELEVISION HAS PROMPTED ME TO PRODUCE THIS "SURREALIST" VERSION OF "T.V. GUIDE." IT'S A MIXTURE OF MANY OF THEIR TELEVISION AND MOVIE CHARACTERS FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT. SOME OF THESE PROGRAMS WERE ACTUALLY A PART OF THE THEATRE'S RECORD AND RADIO SCRIPTS WHILE SOME WERE OF MY OWN DOING. MOST OF IT FITS IN WITH THEIR "T.V. GLIDE"/"T.B. GUIDE" SEQUENCES OFF THE "DEAR FRIENDS" ALBUM AND RADIO SHOWS.]

All channels (except 8 and 85) are transmitted on the UTV System. Channels 8 and 85 are a part of the Dept. of Personal Electricity Cable System.

- 8:00 **5 7 9 13 26** PARANOID MORNING NEWS
(Tape and film; repeat.)
- 8:42 **8** THE FRESH CHEF
- 9:32 **5** SPORTS WITH BOLINGBROKE---Mystery **8W**
Today: Women's Open Canopy Race and The Six Hundred Mile Electric Relay. (5 hrs., 30 min.)
- 7** EDITORIAL---Chas. F. Dudley **8W**
- 10** THE YEARS IN YOUR EARS--- Documentary
- 10:04 **8** DR. GUNDERSON---Serial **8W**
Too much caffeine forces Kathy Koffee into a strange position with the Ersatz man. (Repeat.)
- 11:37 **3 4** YOUNG GUY MOTOR DETECTIVE
10 MOVIE---Western **8W**
'Scalp The Schniffer.' (1935) Rancher Dick Nixon has to make up his mind soon; either drop that bomb on the Sheepmen or lose his daughter to jazz musicians. Frank Roosevelt, Barbara Bobo, Adolph Hitler, Donald Duck. (3 hrs., 10 min.)
- 1:08 **26** MINORITY STREET---Children
1---Letters: varsity, scarlet; Happy Hamburger recites the 'Book of the Dead.' 2---Numbers: six, six, six.
6---Concepts: self-esteem, random selection, suicide.
7---Song: "We're Not On Anybody's Food-Chain." (Repeat; 60 min.)
- 2:01 **2** END OF THE WORLD---Serial
3 MILLION DOLLAR MONSTER CRASSIC
"Anything You Want To." Hosted by Rocomoto
4 HOPELESS TOMORROW---Cereal
7 THE CIRCUMCISION GAME **8W**
- 2:05 **9** MOVIE---Drama **8W**
'Houston House Detective.' (1953) Police lieutenant Scratch Richards and a urologist named Happy try to track down radio active chorus girl Honey Sanchez who has a vial of deadly marijuana taped to her leg. Vince Mole, Darlene Edwards, Elmer Fudd. (55 min.)
- 2:15 **13** ROY ROGERS---Western **8W**
Dale wants to sleep with Pat so Roy gets a room in the All City Motel right next to some juvenile delinquents.
- 2:36 **2** THE GOLDEN HIND---Travel
- 2:44 **10** MOVIE---Musical Comedy **8W**
'Mercedes Savoy.' (1935)
- 3:03 **5** HIGHWAY PATROL---Drama **8W**
An interesting final episode as lieutenant Brodrey Croford goes after his toughest assignment, tracking down lieutenant Dan Mathews who is a character in a middle 1950's television series called "Highway Patrol" starring Brodrey Croford, where everyone drives around in cars on endless location shootings in Fullerton and on Mulhullen Drive in Hollywood, and where Brodrey as Lt. Dan Mathews keeps saying "19-4" and "21-50 Bye" with that surly, mushed-mouth manner that he, Dan Mathews, perfected in his portrayal of Huey Duck, murderer of the South in "All The King's Screenwriters" (1946) a drama of how fascism might even come to this country. (3 hrs.)
- 3 13** NOT INSANE!---Politics
N.S.L.P.P. candidate George Papoon sheds an optimistic skin on burning

- 3:12 **4** OZZIE KNOWS FATHER **8W**
6 WHO DO YOU TRUST?---Game **8W**
Guest: John Ehrlichman
- 3:30 **2** MUTT 'N' SMUTT
Miss Doody finds her daughter buying a thermal throw robe and some adjustable toe regulated from the junk man Mutt.
- 7** DR. BEANBAG
26 THE LES CRANE SHOW **8W**
Phil, Phil, Phil, and Phil of the Fireside Theatre never reveal themselves in this revealing hour. (45 min.)
- 4:01 **2** CHANNEL CITY NEWS
10 DR. WHIPLASH
Your host: Phil O'Steen
- 4:06 **10** BITING THROUGH---Travel
Holy-graphic journeys with Clem/George and guest announcer Floyd Damme. (25 min.)
- 4:30 **10** CHEESE-BOMB SOCCER
Mixville vs. Smoggywood (Live; 10 min.)
- 4:57 **85** SIGN-ON/FRED FLAMM NEWS
- 5:00 **4** FREAK FOR A WEEK
26 HOWL OF THE WOLF MOVIE **8W**
'Highschool Madness.' (1954) Dave Casman, Joe Bertman. (57 min.)
- 5:19 **8** MOVIE---Drama
'Mud-Wrestlers from Outer Space vs. The Mexican Mole Women.' (1964) A nuclear physicist discovers that he has strange desires. Gunther Montez, Richard Baschert. (2 hrs.)
- 13** MOVIE---Sci Fi **8W**
'Space Delinquent.' (1957) A teenage Martian tries to sell some hot marijuana to a federal agent when there is a strange noise from space. Helen Whipple, Maurice Bumstead. (1 hr., 20 sec.)
- 6:00 **7** HAWAIIAN SELL-OUT---Game
- 6:18 **10** CRAZY AS LOONS---Phil Yamamoto
85 CIRQUE INTERNATIONALE
- 7:06 **85** EMERGING FALL OF THE ROAMING UMPIRE
Your host: Freddy Burns
- 7:45 **8** EVERY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES **8W**
'Mother and Child.' Lilly Lamont, Erpo Sweeney.
13 LIVE FROM PANORAMALAND 2000
Historic replay of Time and his escape from the "Gilda."



THE ROXY THEATRE (IN TORONTO) RAN A 26 HOUR NON-STOP SCI-FI AND HORROR MOVIE FESTIVAL THIS SUMMER, PLACED BETWEEN "BARRABALLA" AND "NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD" WITH ONE OTHER THAN MADIAN SPACE PARTNER.

CABLE TV PERSONALITIES HOLD CAPTIVE AUDIENCE!

Smogbank, Calizonia[SCAB] Famed Channel 85 television hosts Fred Flamm and Clark Cable held a press conference here in the "A" studio of Columbia Records on June 7th before a partially live audience of robots and cold sandwich freaks. After downing much champagne, the two award winners awarded the following:

1. Channel 85 is five years old, and broadcasts over a 50 block area.
2. Channel 85 is moving from Smogbank to Smoggywood.
3. Station owned and operated by robots, plus the shows: *Tobor Radio Robot/Minority Bandstand/Dr. Dr./Mz. Information/Declining Fall/and President's All Night Drug Abuse Council.*
4. Channel 85 awards include: Fred for perfect attendance at the regularly scheduled emergency news and Clark for the show *Talking Technically.*
5. Channel 85 exclusive: Recently, when the President was hiding out in the area, Clark interviewed one of them, who said in response to an unmemorable question: "I'll have to kiss Mr. Assin...er...ask Mr. Kissinger about that."

BY THE WAY

Firesign's LP scripts are being considered by Samuel French and Company for release in acting versions. The plays would be available to colleges and other schools.....The possibility exists of the Firesign Theatre getting together a show to tour with.... TFT has been asked to do a Broadway show which they would write and star in, but nothing has been confirmed as yet.....Sheilah Wells (Ms. Proctor) will star in a new series being developed now by NBC-TV.....Firesign have plans for an album celebrating America's 200th Birthday. The "Bison-ennial" album will consist of two discs with a diorama insert. The recording would be TFT's version of the USA's 200 year history..... Now that the Firesign movie "Big Suitcase of 1969" isn't going to be made, they plan on incorporating "Big Suitcase" ideas into future movies.

Thanks to THE LINCOLN GAZETTE for the use of their IBM selectric composer.....Thanks also to "Mark Time" Leviton, E. B. "Bud" Bolingbroke, and 4 or 5 Krazy Guys!



IT'S JUST THIS LITTLE CHROMIUM SWITCH HERE
c/o Tom Gedwillo
P. O. Box 5584
Lincoln, Nebraska 68505

Address Correction Requested