

Now, who's rattling my cage? It's Tom Perry's fault, really. Here I was counting bits of sand on the beach, when this letter arrived from the Vice President of Fapa informing me its waiting list was dire condition and if I acted on his suggestion to apply for membership I would soon find myself back in the hallowed halls, prowling the dusty belfreys, staring from the high ramparts of that sinister old Gormenghast of fandom.

I declined. What, publish a fanzine? Again? And for an amateur press association? The very thought of obligating myself to produce at least 8 pages once a year filled me with the enthusiasm with which one would greet a letter from the attorney who reviews Ted White's incoming fan mail.

But after the passage of a few tons of monotonously inventoried sand and another note from Tom, I reconsidered and asked Bob Lichtman to add my name to the waiting list. After all, I mused, the man who published some of the finest fanzines is still creating examples which answer many of the questions raised by oblivious British theorists in their seemingly endless quest for enlightenment through explication of the viscera of crudzines. Yes, a return to Fapa would put me back on Redd Boggs' mailing list without the inconvenience of having to write the several dozen letters of comment I owed him.

And so (dispite Simon Ounsley's warning that apas are, for some reason or other, "ideologically unsound"): an apazine. I wonder if Simon knows at least three apazines (Skyhook, Grue, and Light-house) rank among the best fanzines ever produced and that another (which modesty forbids naming) is generally acknowledged to have actually merited the Hugo it was awarded. Even at risk of lecturing someone who publishes better fanzines than I, I'll remind Simon that it's what one

brings to the form and not the form (and certainly not any ideology) which makes a fanzine sound or of merit.

It's the success in achieving the aim an editor has in mind which creates excellence -- if the editor bothers to take aim. The form is merely the target. But, of course, our Brit brothers and sisters know that. Don't they?

Pardon Me While I Laugh, Department:

"Obviously, something called 'Taff' should be won by a Welshman, and as the only Welsh candidate I'm your man!"

--Rob Hansen Taff Platform, 1983-84, nominated by Ted White.

"Only the ignorant would think of Taff as a race between regional areas. Knowledgeable fans see any Taff race as a race between individuals valued as individuals and not as symbols of any area or type of fanac."

--Ted White, egoscan #10, January 28, 1985.

Sotto Voce (comments on Fapazines): Hita Pfushana (Mal Ashworth): Easily the wittiest item in its mailing and a welcome entry for the egoboo poll's Best Humorous Writer category. I'd despaired over a choice between Bellis and Engholm -- without whom, I'm forced to agree with John Foyster, Fapa would be a bit dull. The piece on Alhazred's Fish&Chips establishment was worth its weight in gold (though considering it was so light, I should make that platinum). This is the sort of thing Lee Hoffman once loved to publish in the early 50's. I'm surprised anyone still has the creative drive and inspiration to produce work on this level. I thought such energy was all being devoted to nostalgia. :: I'm bemused by your denunciation of 'Cafe Society Fandom,' "with the same group of people partying, conventioning, gossiping and rumour-mongering," as opposed to your conclusion that "fandom as a forum for (experimental, exciting, lively, maybe even original) writing" did not exist. And then there's your fascinating hope that Redd Boggs turned down an invitation to join Chuck Harris' "Quinsyclicue" which I presume is an invitational apa or multicopied correspondence group. Surely, (a) invitational groups have long been institutionalized in fandom and (b) Harris is one of the proponents of "experimental, exciting, lively, maybe even original" writing in fandom? Why would you prefer Redd avoid such an association? Please tell us more about this Quinsygroup. Or is it all DNQ?

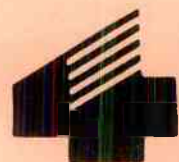
Undulent Fever #11 (Bruce D. Arthurs): I think you're correct about the Pickersgill Taff candidacy, but foolhardy in agreeing with me. Of course, Linda Blanchard was "wrong" in criticizing my remarks in Wiz on grounds that my critique was based on Pickersgill statements which were "dated by about a half decade." My (1986) quotes from his comments in 1981 on Taff only established a context which wasn't repudiated before or (as far as I know) after he announced he was running. The moral points on which the Pickersgill candidacy founders in a sea of expediency are found in the 1984 Greg and Linda Pickersgill petition to freeze British funds in the event Martha Beck had won the 1984 election. Taff usually bills itself as an exchange between North American and European fandoms, but G&L overlooked Europe for the purposes of their petition. Their petition materialized only months (not "years," Linda) before Greg Got Religion. In fact, only months prior to his announcement of candidacy, Greg Pickersgill was reported by British fans as saying, "I don't give a fuck about Taff, but I'm not letting this bunch of fucking Yanks tell me what to do..." (Inasmuch as Greg's only previously expressed interest in Taff was of a negative nature, one asks in what sense those "fucking Yanks" were telling him what to do?) Linda was certainly aware of this from Time & Again if not from Wiz. How did she manage to stretch a few months into "about a half decade?" Even overlooking that, how does Linda swallow Pickersgill's opposition to the Taff candidacy of someone "who does not have any personal history of Transatlantic fan activity" or his (and his wife's) statement that "It has always been assumed fundamental that persons standing for Taff have taken an active interest in the fandom of the proposed host country..." The Pickersgills said (in 1984 in their petition), "This very essence of Taff is presently being undermined in the United States" in reference to the Beck campaign. Questions: Can Linda Blanchard, or anyone else, cite a single letter of comment (let's not even mention a single article) by Greg Pickersgill in any North American fanzine? Ever? And doesn't Pickersgill normally set aside unread (and unopened?) most fanzines he receives if they are from someone he doesn't know -- like, for example, the fanzines of the Haydens? Wasn't, then, Pickersgill's candidacy undermining that "very essence of Taff" which

B he warned was threatened by Martha Beck? And where was "this very essence of Taff" in 1981 when Rob Hansen and Malcolm Edwards were prepared to nominate Pickersgill while fully aware of his negative attitude toward Taff and his avoiding of North American fandom -- an aversion which is remarked on by Pickersgill in a quote in Blanchard's fanzine! (GP is famous for not sending his fanzines across the Atlantic.) Recall that Langford (Taff administrator in 1981) saw nothing wrong in accepting Greg's candidacy (in 1981) though it would have undermined this 'fundamental assumption' on the nature of Taff. Apparently this fundamental assumption was hatched in the minds of G&L Pickersgill and bought by British fandom as an excuse to oppose (on a level of High Principle, naturally) the Martha Beck candidacy. But matters of high principle and fundamental assumptions were forgotten when Pickersgill ran for Taff. Then, like so many "unwritten rules" of Taff, fundamental assumptions were found inconvenient to the new purpose and junked -- by the Brits. Clearly, it was assumed fundamental that active interest in the fandom of the host country is necessary for North American candidates, not British candidates. Does this doublethink "conform in every respect to the highest Standards of [Taff]" as the Haydens informed North American fandom after 'inspecting' Greg Pickersgill? Well, if they say it does I'm inclined to agree with them, though I'd hoped they had a higher concept of Taff Standards than that.

In December of 1984, the Pickersgills' wrote, "Up until now Taff has been run by and for fans who make the effort to maintain contact with the alternate community." Less than six months later, in 1985, Greg had decided that this principle did not apply to himself. When I point out that his principles are obviously based on self-interest, Linda replied that my criticisms are based on material dated by half a decade. Why? Does she consider GP's lack of interest in US fandom an "effort to maintain contact with the alternate community?"

In the first issue of The Caprician, Lilian Edwards and Christina Lake's excellent new fanzine, LE raises her eyebrows over the 'appropriateness' of the appearance of Greg Pickersgill in an anthology of post-79 fanwriting -- given that his "written contribution to the fandom of that period has been very slight." (LE's underlining.) Elsewhere in the issue, CL mentions, "'I don't write,' said Greg Pickersgill in his recent Taff platform. 'I just perform.'" Given that GP's written fanac even in Britain was so negligible that inclusion of a portion of it in a representative anthology is cause for wonderment on the part of a current British Taff candidate (LE&CL are in the running this year), and that his Taff platform conceded that he made no attempt at activity which would have exposed his personality to the host country (unless he was spending more money on telephone bills than the Beck campaign raised); how then, in the words of Avedon Carol protesting the Martha Beck write-in campaign, is Taff to be construed as "a reward for transAtlantic fanac" if GP is an example of its Highest Standards? Avedon, former US administrator, was, of course, one of Pickersgill's nominators.

I also note your recollection of "circumstances" which "destroyed that element of trust that made friendship possible" in regard to Teresa Hayden. I would imagine that you were referring to Iguacon, however I recall much more recent events. In Tafflivia #1 the Haydens solicited discussion of Taff. On 6 May 85 you asked them to "consider some of the points I've raised in this letter as being addressed to Tafflivia" as well as listing some specific questions addressed to "Patrick & Teresa." The Haydens ignored your letter though they dismissed "one other letter" which "proved to be a feud-letter written to a third party" and "filed it accordingly." When the Haydens invite discussion and then consign responses to the wastebasket, they, regretfully, create "circumstances" not conducive to the flourishing of "trust" or friendship. They also claimed they sent out 500 copies of their invitation to discuss Taff and "got back exactly four letters of comment." Contemporaneously, Jackie Causgrove was conducting Ettle as a forum on fan funds. She received and printed many letters on this matter. One (or both) of the Haydens mocked her for "incomprehensible drivel" on the subject -- while they complained about the "keening overtones of axes being covertly ground." Covertly in full view of the readers of Ettle, I guess. Jackie sent out about 200 copies of Ettle #1 and got back dozens of replies from people who seemed to find her comprehensible. I still haven't figured out most of what Patrick and Teresa were



trying to say about Taff in Taffluvia #1 -- a classic (and understandable) case of stage fright, it seemed. Perhaps there are another 492 fans still trying to decipher that issue, too. Or a lot of people think it's futile to discuss Taff with Taff administrators. Especially when they junk your mail. In a Dave Locke discussion group, through over 80 pages of correspondence on Taff and fan funds, the Haydens had nothing to contribute...on paper. In view of the above, I can't imagine why they would be the least bit surprised at the meagre response to their invitation to talk about Taff and fandom's feelings about how the fund should be administrated.

Richard Brown once wrote (5 September 1984), "Taff doings and Taff administrators are not accountable to individual fans. Nor ... are they accountable to fandom at large." In truth, Rob Hansen, as a Taff administrator, would refuse to take mail on Taff if you had the wrong postal address. Rob also turned back requests for copies of his decision that he wouldn't honor the results of a Taff election. He also advised Avedon Carol not to respond to inquiries from Dave Locke about whether she had attempted to influence the Taff voting in Hansen's favor (a simple "No" would have sufficed, but evidently she couldn't remember). I mentioned that "neither Avedon Carol nor Rob Hansen have the right to stone wall the legitimate interests in Taff of any fan. To follow such advice would be to flaunt an arrogance of overbearing obnoxiousness. Taff belongs to all fans. Not just a few." To her everlasting credit, Avedon continued to discuss Locke's misgivings about her conduct of Taff. Hansen announced he had no time to deal with the matter further and, in another context, told fandom he would no longer accept correspondence from Puerto Rico. I think he was upset because he thought I'd accused him of stone walling. Puerto Rico was, at that time, home to several fans. I wondered why the British administrator would want to boycott them, but strange are the ways of those who say "Taff is about friendship" -- a point Rob made to Martha Beck's supporters shortly before he blocked her nomination. Avedon said that decision was "unfriendly." I think she was wrong. After all, Martha's nominators had almost two weeks to get their act together and there's absolutely nothing in the Taff rules saying illness is forgiveable. Or that an administrator has the least discretion to make a friendly decision in order "to increase voter participation" -- a mandate on the Taff ballot which Hansen chose to ignore while invoking nebulous "rules" not on the ballot. Inasmuch as Hansen was writing letters in Avedon's house after the deadline for nominations and hadn't returned to England, his invoking of that deadline was a technical device. In a recent previous election, British administrator David Langford had called nominating deadlines "entirely arbitrary" and Chuck Harris had shortly before reminded fandom -- speaking as, I kid you not, "The Fountainhead; the source of all Taff wisdom" -- "We wanted Participation and Involvement; anything that will interest the mass of fandom and get them to fill in a voting form." Precedent and freshly enunciated dogma and the Taff ballot itself were as nothing in the face of Rob's determination to run a friendly administration. The question never asked was: friendly to who? Perhaps some of the above bears on the reluctance of fans to accept administrative invitations to discuss Taff.

But, you were talking about "trust," weren't you, Bruce? Ah, yes. Trust...a fragile hummingbird which once frightened needs build its nest elsewhere. "Your letters aren't being discussed with all fandom," Patrick Hayden once assured me with, what I assume must have been, a straight face. He also said, "your letters are safe with me." I had been disconcerted by the arrival of other people's replies to my letters to Patrick. Shortly thereafter, Patrick wrote to Dave Langford saying "[Bergeron's] correspondences with us ... are stunning in the width and breadth of their lunacy ... literal, clinical paranoia on a truly awesome scale" and misrepresenting the content of one of my letters. He may have been right about the paranoia. Around this time I began to suspect Patrick might be cutting me behind my back, while pretending to be a friend to my face. Langford published all this (and more) in a fanzine. Later I was to discover (from Terry Carr) that Hayden's letters to me, which discussed in detail his (to put it mildly) flawed comprehension of my letters, were being exhibited all over fandom while I was unaware of this and unaware to whom they were being shown. Gary Farber showed part of this correspondence at LACon -- at Hayden's request, I presume. How many other people have been shown this material, deponent knoweth not. Around this



time Ted White had been circulating Eric Mayer's correspondence and his own bitter and abusive replies unbeknown to Eric. Some words Ted wrote in egoscan #7 are applicable to both situations: "This is some sort of covert war, fought in the jungles of private letters to willing believers, sneaky and unanswerable, known only subsequently by the fallout and perhaps untraceable to the source." This passage, which could be used with no changes by anyone writing Ted's biography, drew a sympathetic and comforting note from Walt Willis. (Hell, Ted even wrote to Dave Locke and urged Dave to request for himself a copy of Patrick's correspondence to me! I saw no protest from Patrick that his correspondence with me was private.) But this is rough outline. No more. An exegesis of these squalid machinations would, without doubt, rival Warhoon 28 in length. Its details would exhaust gallon cans of quinacra violet and chrome yellow. Just one more grisly footnote, however: In the letter to Langford mentioned above, Patrick claimed I'd cited Terry Carr in support of my charges against Avedon (I could have,* but I hadn't). Actually, in that section of my letter (over half of it) I had cited Terry's defense of my participation in Taff (against the negative opinion of Ted White). In point of fact, the central discussion in that letter concerned Patrick's attack on the honesty of Ted White! (!) and Patrick's detailed disparagement of White's character. In my letter to Patrick, I reminded him that he had written about White, "In many ways Brian Earl Brown is right" and "the fact that so many people including good and sensible ones like Eric Mayer, have had such negative reactions to our brand of fandom, is not merely due to mysterious fuggheadedry." It was my response to this correspondence which Patrick chose to misrepresent to David Langford, a man who had nominated the Haydens for Taff. Talk about "the jungles of private letters ... known only subsequently by the fallout and perhaps untraceable to the source!" It's no compliment to be included in White and Hayden's "brand of fandom." And no privilege to be included in their festering Vietnam of correspondence. You see, I thought fandom was a place you could trust your friends -- not a sweltering mangrove swamp in which one must take care for the occasional python lurking overhead or learn to distinguish between the sound of a distance mongoose kill and a Cong garrotting. I should also note that although I and my publications are referred to several times in Izzard #9 (once in an oblique complaint by Patrick), the Haydens evidently didn't think it necessary to send me a copy.


Argh! Undulant Fever. Not Undulent Fever. Now you can devote your time to correcting me on other points. And I've saved myself from Ted White scoffing at all my arguments because I've misspelled the title of your fanzine.

Other People's Mail: As usual, a Bergeron apazine will include a letter column. Since none of you rose to the challenge of commenting on something which hasn't been published yet, I'm forced to pilfer the regular correspondence.

Around the first of April I received an amazing letter from Taral which ran about three pages. It was in reply to a third of a page note I'd sent him saying I liked his fanzine reviews in the last Mainstream and warning I still intended to publish "Roach Motel" any year now. I always find three page letters amazing. One of the horrors of fandom is I occasionally am forced to write a letter myself. Writing has always been something I only get caught up in because it feels so good when I stop. When I receive a long missive full of insights, graceful turns of phrase, interesting opinions, and writing I couldn't equal after a fourth draft, I'm not only amazed, but guilty as well. Even if I had the inclination, there's no way I'd force myself to the effort a letter like the following would entail.

Taral concluded with the suggestion, "you'll understand that I've a chunk of work on my hands this evening ... the other letters I have to respond to are seven and twelve pages, respectively." I don't know how you people do it. Or why. If I tried, I'd be burned out for the next month or so. "What to do with his letter," I asked myself. "Send him a ten line note and consign it to the files where no one will ever see

* Terry had written to me, "I also agree with you, at least provisionally, that Taff administrators shouldn't let any partisanship they may have become a factor in an election over which they're presiding." Avedon had told me she'd intended to use her Taff report to destroy the candidacy of D. West. (West called this "impolite," in an apparent bid to displace The Wimpy Zone from the Midwest to Bingley.)



it? Or present it as a piece of fanac in the raw, a sort of cinema verite on Fandom '88 by a writer whose command strikes me as becoming more engaging everytime he sits down at his word processor?" He spins at least one sentence I think is a classic. You'll find it. It's the only one in that paragraph. So, even though he doesn't know it, I'm going to give you Taral: Live. I apologize in advance if he finds the publication of anything in it embarrassing. I can't imagine he will. There's nothing here he wouldn't include in his Mainstream column, which is equally as candid.

Taral Wayne writes: The reviews I wrote for Mainstream were pretty old by the time they went to print. Jerry and Suzle had been publishing almost often, and it fooled me into thinking another Mainstream would be along in another six months or so. Silly me. It took eighteen. In that time my premise fell apart. While it did seem as though there was a small resurgence of genzines, the situation now is more hopeless than ever. Since Leslie Smith moved out of Pa., Linda hasn't had the energy to publish another Duprass. Marty has one more issue of HTT left before he switches to a smaller personalzine. Brian can't afford Sticky Quarters regularly. About the only genzine still going that comes to mind is Pulp, which for reasons we won't go into you aren't likely to get. There are some other, British, genzines of a sort, but by being British they aren't quite the same thing. Also, they're so irregular it's like counting cosmic rays. About all one can do is wait for another generation to grow up, providing there is another generation to come, and it isn't diverted into computer bulletin boards or video-taping

With fandom fulfilling so few of my needs of late, my feelings toward it are changing rapidly. There's a big difference between how I felt six months ago and now. Now, I'm beginning to feel acutely impatient with the whole business, as though it were a nuisance and an unwanted drain on my time. As though none of the purported "rewards" -- egoboo, Hugos, Taff, cons, trades -- could possibly make the effort worthwhile.

For instance, allowing the remote possibility I could win Taff, why would I want to spend my travel time hanging out with a bunch of boring British fans? I'd be off in Scotland, trying to find the ancestral lands of the MacDonald clan or something. I want to see obscure henges, climb over the narrow neck of land to Tintagel castle, shoot a brace of hobbits with my gillie, stuff like that. Not sit around in a smoky pub talking about West's latest bit of hand-me-down street theatre and shoddy existentialism.

(Poetic license for the above exaggeration pending.)

Moshe Feder asked me if I was interested in joining Fapa again last year, during the hemi-centennial. I thought about it for a while, five minutes, maybe, and wrote back to say no. My reasons then were lack of funds, lack of interest, lack of time. Nothing much has changed since then. As an academic question, what about Fapa would make it interesting? I asked Moshe this too, and never got a satisfactory answer. There are a few old hands like Silverberg who are still members, aren't there? The problem I had, when I was a member in the late seventies, was that I couldn't interact with them. For whatever reason, they only had eyes for the zines of their old cronies. For that matter, they didn't have all that much to say. I usually enjoyed Harry Warner's zines, Silverberg's (when it appeared), and most likely a few others even though their names don't come to mind right off. Art Widner was an exception. I felt he was receptive to all the members, and we remain in contact to this day. Then there were the newer members. Even though they were eager to comment on your zine, most of these people were a bore too. Perhaps the problem wasn't anyone's innate boringness so much as the size and episodic nature of Fapa. There wasn't much continuity to it. The mailing would be as thick as a telephone book, and take nearly three months to read it seemed. Of course it didn't. It just took longer to read than it could keep my interest up. I was also somewhat unimpressed with my standing in the Fapa poll. It was too good! I made an effort with my first two Fapazines, but thereafter took it easier. I sent some drawings to a couple of the members for their zines. As a result I shot up to #1 artist, and #2 in overall standing, just under Harry Warner. (At least I think I have that right -- it's been a while.) This seemed too easy, on the one hand. On the other, I doubted Harry could be displaced at all, so what could I set as a goal after that? Just then the waitlist had a dozen or so Swedish fans wanting to join, so I took it as an omen to leave.



I have a theory about fanac, that says that a neo enters fandom and grabs onto everything that goes by. He finds himself on concons, in apas, publishing a newszine, a clubzine, and a genzine, he runs for office in three separate organizations, joins a half dozen crusades, writes twenty locs a month, and conscientiously votes for every award and fan fund he hears about. In time, he learns that some of these things are a lot of hassle for no return, and then other things are simply unrewarding, and that a tiny proportion continue to interest him for pretty much the same reasons that fandom attracted him in the first place. Eventually, the neo focuses on the one true form of fanac for him, and discards the rest of the baggage of zealotry. I'd say that it was a good theory, except that too many old-timers in fandom don't ever seem to follow that scheme. But it does at least describe me. The one thing about fandom that remains of interest to me is publishing/writing/drawing. It was what attracted me in the first place. (Actually, I began publishing my first fanzine before I knew there was a fandom. Unfortunately, I've learned that there are other ways of publishing than publishing fanzines.)

Involvement in the small press, small as it's been, has taught me that I can probably sell enough copies of what I make to pay back a substantial part of my cash outlay. I'm thinking of advertising the next New Toy in the small press, for \$5. (Which would probably have been the cover price of NT3 anyway, given the offset costs, and recent postage increases.) Since I don't want to publish more than 175 copies, this means cutting back on my fannish mailing list by at least 25 copies. I haven't been getting much of a thrill out of letters of comment anyway, so the obvious lambs to the slaughter are the letter writers. There are also some well-meaning, but frankly dull Aussies bound for the axe as well. But sometimes I wonder if there's much point in having the Gary Farbers of fandom on the list either. However supercharged and hyper-fannish Gary may be, however fabulous his fanzine collection is, however deeply emmeshed in smoffish conspiracies he's alleged to be, what does Gary ever actually do? Nothing. Nada. Zip, to finish off the cliché. Having published 3½ issues of Drift is not exactly what I'd call an exemplary fannish career. His co-editorship of Tweek and early issues of Telos don't add much lustre to the cheap tin.

And there you start to get to the true hub of my disaffection with fandom. I'm beginning to feel above everyone. While there are plenty of people capable of impressive fanac, hardly any of them produce more than the merest trickle. Too many of them, though masters of style, were devoid of content in any case. Hyphen 37, for example, had a considerable amount of superior style, but it was the same old "fandom was so golden in 1954" story. Who wants to read this anymore? The only thing in Hyphen 37 I enjoyed at all was Mayer's "Babylon IF," which contained a deeper layer of meaning. The surface gloss of Berry's and other sentimental pieces was so cheap that it may well have been that the pages turned green in delivery. Most of Terry Carr's recent writing was of the same nature, and left me similarly unimpressed. For all that I can't equal the ease with words many fans have, I feel that at least I'm not writing drivels.

Well, doubtlessly I've offended you. It's a periodic disorder I succumb to, wild flights of the ego and irresponsible contempt. It usually happens when I'm feeling burned out in something, ie: fandom. (1812-415 Willowdale Ave., Willowdale, Ontario)

RB: To reply to your academic question about Fapa: I find it considerably more interesting than the cross-section represented by the desultory generally circulated publications finding their way to Box 5989. I hoped this was a product of my own ennui (how could things be that bad?) until I stumbled across Christina Lake's plaint in The Caprician, "Nowadays fanzines seem to be sinking without a trace in a morass of lethargy ... the fanzine scene seems almost invisible. All that's left, it's beginning to seem, are a few people revisiting their past and a few people (like me) labouring under the illusion that fan publishing still matters." The percentage of people who care about publishing in Fapa are a much larger part of the whole than those who bother in general fandom. Out There a fanzine appears to be something you do while marking time before the next convention. Even Christina, I see, wonders "Did Lilian and I really put out an issue of This Never Happens for Conspiracy?" I suppose she did. For a convention. Where it was handed out, buzzed over, and forgotten, because the recipients dealt with it in a social context. A convention isn't the way to get feedback



for a literary medium. You can get feedback on it, but not for it. The publications of Redd Boggs were the strongest attraction for my return to Fapa. They represent a refinement of the ajay urge in its purest form. Also, I've sold myself the argument that with a quarterly dose of Fapa, I may achieve regularity. Warhoon appeared every third month for years in the early 60's because it was published for Saps. And there's fine material in Fapa. In the last mailing, I especially enjoyed Ashworth, Boggs on Ursula LeGuin, John Foyster's witty comments, Ben Indick's report on the auction of Ackerman treasures, John-Henri Holmberg's elegant rambling through the Engholm minefield, and other items.

Hyphen 37 struck me as refreshing. A good deed in a naughty world. In a fandom where power politics are a spectator sport in which anyone can leap into the mud, hypocrisy marketed like the latest brand of cigarette, anti-social climbing, and backstabbing in the name of friendship, it was good to be reminded there's a light side to the farce. Yes, it was a retrospective and evoked a time when everything in the garden seemed to be lovely (or, at least, people weren't turning over too many stones), but what are the alternatives? Bloody hands, wearing a clothespin on your nose, blindfolding your ethical sense, a bemused examination of fandom as a study in moral and intellectual delinquency, or murdering the messenger? Not a very congenial fandom to contemplate, I'm afraid. Nor one I envision the father of Irish fandom finding much room for enjoyment in. One doesn't expect to find a gentleman at a slam dance.

Fans Are Slans (an exercise in nostalgia): "If we're not an elite, what business do you have joining fandom?" asked GoH Teresa Hayden of the convention assembled at Corflu in 1985. Or maybe she didn't. There's some question she may have been misquoted. Through her own fault. If you are concerned about being quoted accurately you don't tell your audience "to turn off [their] tape recorders and put away [their] notebooks," as Tom Perry, in attendance, later reported Ms. Hayden having done. Actually, I presume she didn't want to be quoted at all.

Her husband, Patrick, who in my experience leaves much to be desired in simple reading skills, is equally enthusiastic in reassuring fandom we aren't as lowbrow as some might think. "We are smarter, more intelligent, more articulate," he protests in Flash Point #7 in a burst of inspiration following, I conjecture, a perusal of advertisements for speculative literature in the pages of Science Fiction Chronicle.

Pausing to light a fresh candle in uncle Claude's shrine and reflect for a moment on the wages of overcompensation, I went into the library and took down a well-worn copy of "The Immortal Storm." Turning to the chapter on the first WorldCon (July, 1939), I found this paragraph in an address by Frank R. Paul:

The science fiction fan may well be called the advance guard of progress... he is intensely interested in everything going on around him, differing radically from his critic. His critic is hemmed in by a small provincial horizon of accepted orthodoxy and humdrum realities and either does not dare or is too lazy to reach beyond that horizon.

This was the benediction of our broad mental horizons. A blessing from which fandom has never recovered. The reality, of course, is that we are not only tolerant of mediocrity, we are complacent in uncritical acceptance of it while proclaiming our genius. What we specialize in is escapism; not brilliance -- escapism from the sad truth that we are no more wise than any other cross-section of the population. "We really couldn't be as unremarkable as all those slobs, could we?" is the unstated doubt in Patrick's self-congratulation. The best uninterrupted view for looking into the mirror at a painstakingly retouched self-portrait is just slightly over everyone else's head. The understandable inclination to elevate ourselves above the common herd was tellingly demolished by Francis T. Laney long before me and thee were thought of in this asylum we call fandom:

If we fans had the necessary ability to be New Order leaders, we would be demonstrating that superiority in actual research and inventions, rather than spending our time reading escape fiction, publishing fanzines, and writing whacky letters. There are mighty few fans with the real ability to be any more than mere ciphers in our civilization. If fandom could take over and lead the way to the New Age, just what sort of an asinine, screwball world would it give us?

A world not much different from the one we have now, I concluded with disillu-



sionment back in 1962 when a number of fans I otherwise respected were supporting Richard Nixon for President. I thought Nixon's abilities as a con artist were as persuasive as the cosmetics he wore in his first debate with JFK and saw with chilling clarity if the cosmic-minded would follow him they'd probably have been pushovers for somebody really appealing like Adolph Hitler. (Poetic license for this exaggeration pending.) Decisive proof for these forebodings that things would be no different with the steady hand of a fan in charge appeared recently in the letter column of The New York Times. A group of letters was published under the heading "Airline Deregulation Creates Massive Problems" and illustrated with an engraving which proves George Washington, the first President of the United States, was a science fiction fan. I rest my case.

Elevating our gaze to the level of The Cosmic Circle, it's self-evident in a fandom where agile minds burn themselves out with drugs that we are most deluded when we sell ourselves on the notion of our transcendence.

The vista from cloud 9 is spectacular, too.

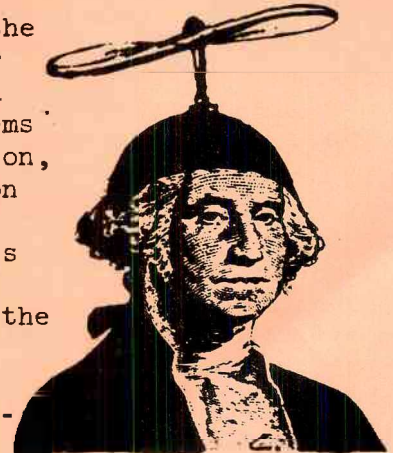
I cross the library (which exists only in my mind) and unlock a metal filing cabinet where a bound volume is stored. I keep this tome wrapped in layers of plastic for protection from whatever humidity may remain in this lair. A dehumidifier hums and drips every few hours. I remove the first of a two volume set of Hyphen bound many years ago in wine leatherette with gold stamping on the spine. I open the incredibly rare book to the perfectly preserved first issue. A postal cancellation mark on the back page tells me it was sent to Eric Bentcliffe on the 28th of May, 1952. I look at the front cover. Bob Shaw's cartoon, worthy of The New Yorker, brings a smile to my lips. It is full of affectionate self-mockery.

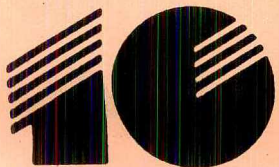
The drawing depicts a disheveled fan in shabby clothes with a two day growth of beard. Model rockets hang by threads from the ceiling. The walls are covered with erotica. A banner urges "Stick With Ghu!" Books, magazines, and liquor bottles litter the floor and all horizontal surfaces. The fan is reading a copy of Lilith Lorraine's poetry magazine Different. I see the caption blurred through a tear:

"We are the builders of brave tomorrows,
We are the dreamers at last awake..."

Roach Motel (by Taral Wayne): Milford Zunk was the superman. He stood five-foot seven-inches, a hundred and thirty-one pounds in front of the mirror, pondering his own species' superiority. No ungainly meat on his aesthetic frame. Musculature was for the labouring lower order. The high forehead and thinning hair reflected in the mirror betokened an expanded cranium to house his expanded IQ. Last week he'd taken the Mensa test again, after two weeks of grueling mental excercises, and scored two whole points over his previous best quotient. By such mental leaps and bounds, Milford Zunk was ushering in the new age of scientific man.

Satisfied with his outward appearance, Zunk stretched open his mouth in a grimace of agony, the better to examine his back molars. Yes, he was certain they were receding into his jaw. Gradually, over the years, he'd watched them retreat into obsolescence like evolutionary glaciers. The weak chin that he was born with had been his first clue, when he was twelve, that Zunk wasn't constituted like the ape-jawed, brawny, boisterous other children of Brooklyn P.S. 38's seventh grade. They stayed at school and tossed inflated bladders to each other, as if such activity were meaningful. Milford, however, went home as fast as he possibly could to immerse himself in revelation after revelation about the very woof and warp of the Sevagram. The first revelation had come while he waited to have his hair barbered by the odious man with the animal body odour. (His mother had said that those people couldn't help it.) There were magazines for the waiting customers that included the usual women's journals and sports magazines, but also one digest sized pulp with a painting of a rocket ship raying a space station. It had the unlikely title of "Amazing Stories", and was well-thumbed. No wonder. Here were the secrets of science; pearls cast before swine in a barber shop. Milford's eyes were opened, and within a week he'd found a dozen more issues. Each one advanced his education at a rate possible only to such as he.





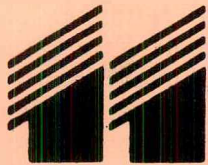
He quickly learned that space was four-dimensional, and time was the invisible dimension. At school he secretly revelled in knowledge denied to the kids around him. Milford rapidly became acquainted with force fields, lost civilizations beneath the ice caps, elder gods, and alien intelligences to which we were as ants to us. There were concepts so fantastic, so arcane, that Milford had to make an effort not to be skeptical. One issue of the magazine in particular had been especially important. It changed Milford's life, and the history of the world, by introducing the lad to Homo Superior.

Man had evolved out of the Neanderthal brute, as would Homo Superior one day evolve from ordinary Man. Superman would be smarter than Homo Sap. Milford was smarter than anyone he knew. Superman had a smaller body, only four toes, had lost his vermiform appendix, and could communicate by mental telepathy. Anxiously, Milford prodded his lower left abdomen, but couldn't tell if he had an anachronistic vermiform appendix or not. He didn't even need to remove his shoes to know that his feet had five toes apiece. Concentrated thought directed downstairs at his parents was so much wasted effort. They simply weren't receiving, but that might be explained easily if Homo Superior could only communicate telepathically with his own kind. So was he, or wasn't he? His mouth felt dry as he weighed himself in the balance, and found his case weak. Milford bit his tongue in his anxiety. In a flash, he realized that he'd found the proof he sought. Yes, the text had said that primitive features atrophied. That Milford Zunk had only twenty-eight of the normal thirty-two teeth was a fact verified by a certified dentist. They'd grow out, said the dentist to Milford's folks last year. Now Milford knew why they hadn't. The remaining four teeth of normal dentation had atrophied!

The more Milford read over the next few years, the more it became a habit to run his tongue over his back teeth, subconsciously counting and measuring. The more he read, the smarter he knew he was too. Eschewing exercise, his body grew unnaturally lean as he got older, adding inches to his height but none to his chest or arms. It was plain that jealous classmates in highschool envied his spare form. They called him "runt", and the physical instructor added the comment that Milford Zunk was in his opinion dangerously emaciated to every report card. Milford's eyes were becoming as highly evolved as well, so that at the age of nineteen he was hopelessly myopic. The optician that fitted him for his first pair of bottle-end glasses blamed his reading, and Milford smugly agreed.

Now he was a young man on his own in the world. It was risky, he learned, to fraternize with the common man. Particularly young women, whose instincts unconsciously bristled when they met a rival in the struggle of the species for supremacy. In the past, Zunk had naively hoped to pass unnoticed. Invariably the young lady had reacted to his advances like a bleating lamb confused by an amorous shepherd. On one fey date he thought he'd found a sympathetic ear. He allowed himself to confess how lonely it was to be a Milford Orin Zunk, ahead of his time, and when the stunned woman misunderstood everything, she treated his candor with scorn. Since that day he kept to himself, returning to an anonymous boarding house room every day after work. Until morning he locked himself in among his papers and magazines. There was also a tarnished brass microscope that he'd rescued from the trash at the Bureau of Weights and Standards where he worked and had nearly repaired, a few library books that were already overdue when he'd made each of his last three moves, a model of a tesseract he'd built out of piano wire but which refused to collapse into the fourth dimension however he twisted or pulled it, a box of discarded vitamin bottles from his attempt last spring to substitute them for his bulk diet, a week's accumulation of empty Ni-Hi bottles and soiled laundry, a picture of Albert Einstein cut out of a newspaper and over-written with Zunk's disproof of Relativity, a small pile of letters just arrived that day, a considerably larger pile of envelopes waiting to be mailed, and a roach trap. Of all his possessions, only the roach trap reminded him of the unpleasant facts of life.

At this time every evening, Zunk finished with his meal and performed his mental exercises. These usually began with rereading certain passages in books that he'd underlined with a carpenter's pencil he kept for the purpose. Among those he returned to regularly were the brilliant works of J.D.S. Haldane, particularly "The Inequality of



Man" and "The Causes of Evolution." From the point of view of beneficial mental exertion, though, Hale's "Beyond the Milky Way" and Eddington's "The Nature of the Physical World" were more of a challenge. Zunk especially liked to pit his wits against the greatest mind of his day, John W. Campbell, who not only had better ideas than most scientists, he published Zunk's corrections and criticisms of his ideas in the letter column of *Astounding*. It was this way, in fact, that Zunk began corresponding with other readers who he hoped might be members of his own super-race.

Following a half hour of reading, Zunk did lightning sums and multiplications in his head. It took fierce concentration to add three four-digit numbers without using pen and paper, or fingers, and Zunk was nearly always right. He'd clamp his eyes shut and sweat for five minutes sometimes, then grab pencil and pad to jot the answer down. Whenever there was a mistake, it was only that he'd misremembered a figure in the column he'd just added. The sum was never wrong. Rather than waste time on the way to and from work, Zunk practised adding the numbers on subway cars, dollar bills, street signs, and even advertising. T 01108395 A = 27. Or "suit & two pants: \$7.99, jackets \$4.99, shirts \$1.19 each, free alterations" = \$14.17. The trick wasn't to add up the figures one by one, but all at once without thinking.

Next Zunk played the game of "what if..." He thought of a pivotal point in history, such as the battle of Waterloo, then supposed that Napoleon had won. Would we speak French today? Would there be such a thing as a Crookes Tube? Would Nabisco shred Wheat for Zunk's breakfast cereal?

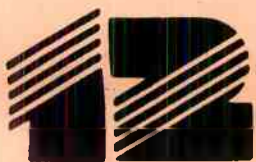
His last exercise was to develop his extra-sensory powers. For five minutes each day Zunk thought palpable waves of mental energy at a small device he'd made from instructions in a magazine. Once he thought he'd made the tiny paper vanes slowly turn the straight-pin he'd stuck loosely through a bit of cardboard. Then, as if getting the knack of it, they whirled round and round. But it was only a bit of draft from under the door. He'd been so delighted at the seeming success that when he stepped in front of the draft, felt the cold air, and saw the vanes slow to a halt, he nearly rubbed his tongue raw that night feeling for his disappearing wisdom teeth. The disappointment was short-lived, however, and Zunk returned to his telepathic exercises the very next day, more confident than ever.

You see, he made a fantastic breakthrough that day that overshadowed the trivial failure to levitate a bit of scrap paper. He contacted Martians.

It was just after the early dark of New York winters. Zunk was hesitating at his exercises, still smarting from yesterday. Instead, he prolonged examining himself in the mirror, consciously holding his tongue still while he studied his forehead for some sign of development. He found no reassurance. The mirror was a cheap floor model that tilted from the middle, and stood near his over-night table. Zunk couldn't concentrate. He was distracted. His tongue was sore. So his eyes wandered from one reflection of the other furniture in the room to another. There was only a shabby chest of drawers that held three clean shirts, one not-so-clean shirt, and the years 1929 to mid-1938 of his magazines. There was a typewriter missing the "d" key on an orange-crate next to a four-poster bed whose brass was rubbing off the posts. He'd seen it all before, and it was suddenly unsettling, alien, to see it in reverse. Suppose it wasn't the same room at all? Directly behind him was a window, the panes permanently nailed shut by the landlady or a past tenant. (Perhaps the one who'd labeled a snaking crack in the ceiling's plaster with all the villages along the River Niger. The one who'd also claimed to be the rightful heir to the Hohenzollern throne, but was nevertheless evicted when his rent was in three weeks arrears and the only excuse he had for it was the war reparations.) At this time of night the window formed a dark frame around Zunk's head. That night, however, it was bright.

Zunk turned around, but the window was the familiar domino of darkness. Seen in the mirror it was bright. Turn around -- dark. In the mirror -- bright. He tilted the mirror up and looked behind it, finding nothing but the yellow cardboard box that he'd put there last month. Zunk kicked it aside so that it tumbled, and spilled tiny corpses of insects, then lowered the mirror again. The window behind him still showed daylight. Then he saw someone green step behind him.

Zunk whirled around at least three times before he was convinced that he was



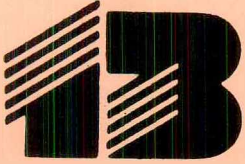
alone in his room. Only in the other room in the mirror was he receiving a visitor. Green the man was, alright, with a flowing olive beard and robes of emerald metal scales. He had an enormous expanse of cranium between his olive brows and bald pate. Where he should have had ears there were two stiff looking antennae with shinning ball-like ends. Human though he seemed at first sight, the more Zunk looked, the more he tallied discrepancies. The green man stood slightly taller than Zunk's five seven, but a lot of his height was that huge green brain-case. His body was smaller than normal for a human being of that height, and his legs shorter. He wore sandals. Sure enough, Zunk counted four toes on each foot. Whoever he was, the green man was highly evolved, and might have even fewer teeth than Zunk! Then, one by one, five other green men stepped into sight behind the first one, and stood in a formal row.

The leader -- he was clearly the leader of the other five -- held his hand up, palm facing out. "Greetings, man of Earth," he said. Then the rest was garbled, dream-like.

Over the next several weeks, Zunk learned the trick of concentration that brought the Martians to his mirror, and how to listen so that their words were clear. His mirror wasn't an ordinary one he was told. With great expenditure of mental energy, the beings of Mars had switched the second-hand relic Zunk was accustomed to for a cunning replica. The old mirror had only reflected light. The replica reflected positrons, said the Director for the Guidance of Solar Intelligences. Positrons travelled backward in time, and therefore faster than light, establishing instantaneous communication between Mars and Earth. The beam passed through Zunk's room, and carried its image to Mars where it was projected in three dimensions. To communicate with Earth, the Martians entered the force-stiffened projection as they would walk into a normal room. Then their image was beamed back to Earth to appear in the reflection in Zunk's mirror. Zunk was mesmerized by his sense of wonder whenever he watched the stately green Martians move around in the non-existent room. All the more so when every now and then one of them would perhaps lean on the night-table, or bump into the typewriter. At first, there was no contact. Then, the leaning Martian would begin to encounter solidity in the phantom table, sunk an inch or two below the indistinct surface. Or the typewriter would be jolted a moment after the encounter. Once, one of the Martians threw a bundle of inscribed gold-foil tablets on the bed, and they were gone when he looked for them again. Zunk knew where they were. He'd watched them sink slowly through the insubstantial mattress like a hot nail through ice. The tablets were plainly visible as they sunk.

Why Martians should single Milford Zunk out from all the people in the world was no surprise to Milford Zunk. They'd patiently watched Earth for millenia, waiting for its people to cross a threshold, and Zunk was the first Earthling who was evolved enough, intelligent enough, to receive their teachings. It was a new era, now. Soon, Zunk would know secrets of wisdom thousands of years ahead of Earth science. Then he could use his powers to reform the corrupt politics of the crowned heads of Europe, re-organize the economy scientifically, feed the starving millions, and usher in an age of unparalleled technical achievement. It might be necessary at first to make a show of power -- perhaps demolish London or Paris. That would make world leaders listen to him, and in the long run justify itself in the eyes of history by preventing greater bloodshed later. Zunk could hardly wait.

Other workers at the Bureau of Weights and Standards noticed the change in the young man who tested scales. Usually Zunk arrived in the morning as untalkative as ever, took his place at the work-bench, and examined one scale after the other from the shelves. If the instrument tested out heavy, he'd tag it with a red ticket, and put it back on the shelf with a work order. If it tested out light, he'd tag it yellow, and put it back on the shelf too. But if it tested out just right, he wouldn't tag it at all. That was the job of his superior, who had the sole authority to issue a statement of compliance with the requirements of the Bureau of Weights and Standards. In that case, it was Zunk's duty to carry the unoffending instrument to another department. In a day it was routine to carry out measurements like this on well over a hundred scales, after which Zunk and his co-workers on the bench left for home. Zunk would hardly speak to any of them, and only seemed to find his tongue when addressing



his superior. Even then, he hardly knew what to say but "Yes sir, no sir" and made up for his lack of fluency by saying it too often.

Lately, however, Zunk talked like a convert to anyone who'd listen to him even as a novelty. All the more so since Zunk sounded vaguely threatening. He dropped hints about a day of reckoning, a better order, or the survival of the fittest. Then whoever he'd button-holed by the water-cooler excused himself, he'd like to stay and listen but he had work to do...

At home, Zunk and the Martians discussed the problems of the world and made plans.

The Martians, for all their superscience and vaunted intelligence, seemed a little dumb to Zunk sometimes. They suggested courses of action that Zunk could plainly see wouldn't work, such as disseminating knowledge through hypnotic rays, or making the world's deserts bloom by diverting underground aquifers. Other times, Zunk stood in awe of scientific principles he never dreamed of, but that the Martians had known since primer school. The universe isn't running down they said. As space expands, matter falls into holes in the continuum, and pops up through the surface of space-time everywhere, beginning the cycle over again. They said that beams of energy were easily projected from a container of dye in water, as long as the energy was allowed to build up between mirrors first. And they said you could make electricity flow one way through a material that had small impurities of rare earths. Once, Zunk tried an experiment after talking with the Martians. He bought a large glass jug from the hardware store, and filled it with cleaning fluid. In the dark, Zunk taped photographic paper around it, then wrapped several layers of butcher's paper around that, protecting it from exposure to light. Then Zunk left the jug in his closet for several weeks. At the end of that time he found several dim pin-points in the developed photo-paper. The wrapping had been a little worse for wear when disinterred from under the curry comb, bunsen burner striker, old shoes, paper-clip chains, lengths of pipette glass, jackets with snarled zippers, window screen, and bent curtain rods that Zunk had variously thrown in the closet over the last few weeks. But the Martians assured him that nevertheless the spots on the film could have been the proof that unknown cosmic rays had passed through his apparatus.

Wise in the ways of science as the Martians might be, they were naive about human affairs, in Zunk's opinion. Their discussions of the best way to improve humanity's lot came to a turning point one night a year after the Martians first appeared in his boarding-house mirror. Action must follow soon, they argued, as the world situation appeared volatile to say the least. Zunk agreed in principle, but insisted that they must not let haste force their hand. So far the Martians had proposed many courses of action which Zunk thought unwise. In deference to his native expertise they had withdrawn plans which they themselves thought excellent. What should they do, they begged of Zunk. It came to that. Rather than delay any longer, Martian science was at Zunk's complete disposal to do anything with that he saw fit.

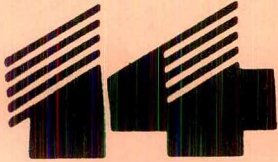
As much as superman had waited for this moment, he was caught unprepared, and hadn't an immediate answer. He said that he'd outline his ideas to them in a week's time. They had little choice except to nod their sage heads in resignation, and they bade him farewell until then.

It wasn't that Zunk hadn't any ideas. The exact opposite was the case -- he had too many ideas. Choosing a practical number of them was the difficulty. He listed them on a piece of foolscap, and ran out of space after filling both sides and some of the margin as well. There was more foolscap, but one sheet was already more than enough to think about.

Six days passed in which his co-workers noticed that Zunk had changed again. Now he was untalkative again, but pre-occupied with a far look in his eyes, as if there were the wearyness of the world's pain behind them, and weighty issues to be resolved. There were, of course, and much weightier than they could have imagined. The very fate of the Earth isn't a responsibility anyone would have guessed was in the hands of an employee of the Bureau of Weights and Standards. A blue-collar employee at that.

The list was gradually winnowed down to a more manageable number of options over those six days. Zunk considered:

(A) Introduce a new, free source of power that could be beamed to anywhere in the in the world from a central power station that he would control, and turn off at will



to enforce the law against war, trusts, police states, shoddy merchandise, etc.

(B) Destroy all the world's guns, cannon, bombers, battleships, and so on, except for an arsenal of futuristic weapons to be used by Zunk against aggressor-nations that refuse to comply.

(C) Create a world government in which all the scientists would choose the most intelligent man in the world to rule over Earth as perpetual President, and serve as his administrative council. Until the new government could be formed, Zunk would see to it as his duty to provide interim leadership. And if nominated he would serve as first World President as well.

(D) Cure human evil with a drug or ray that made people have only decent, altruistic thoughts. The cure would be administered to everyone on Earth except those, such as himself, who had proven they could be trusted with freedom of thought.

(E) If that wasn't possible, then eliminate crime at least, by implanting a device in everyone's head that reported what they were doing to the World Police. Tens of thousands of monitors would evaluate the criminal actions reported to them, and dispatch officers to make the arrests. The monitors would in turn be supervised by administrators who would determine what was a crime and what wasn't. To be certain that their laws were just, Zunk would be Police Chief.

(F) Supermen such as himself would be bred or raised in vats. Every last member of Homo Sapiens would be allowed to live out his or her life in a retirement reservation, while humanity is replaced by Homo Superior. Until other supermen were available, management of world affairs would have to be placed temporarily in Zunk's hands.

There was more, but fortunately Zunk saw the common thread running through them, and was able to reduce his plans to one...

When the week was done, the Martians appeared in the mirror on schedule. They were more than ever dignified and pontifical in their robes and green beards. Zunk would swear that they wore built-up shoulders and elevator sandals for the occasion, but he believed that they were beyond vanity or other frivolous vices. The costumes must be ceremonial. Zunk rubbed his teeth with his tongue. Would they accept whatever plan he presented, as promised? If they didn't there wasn't much he could do about it, and he agonized over his powerlessness. Only let them do as he asked, he vowed, and he'd never be in such a position of dependence again. Zunk's word would be law, justice, and progress in one. Even the Martians would have to abide by it.

"Greetings," the Director for the Guidance of Solar Intelligences intoned. "Have you reached a decision?"

"I have," said Zunk. His nerve threatened to break at the moment of truth. "Give me the power to run the Earth!"

"Power? Is that all of your plan?" said the Martian, obviously expecting more.

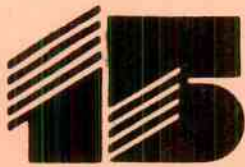
"The problems are too complicated to solve by any one change," argued Zunk. "But if I have broad powers to do whatever is necessary to ensure peace, prosperity, and progress, I think the Earth can be saved."

"But surely we can discuss whatever measures are called for in each case as it comes up," temporized the Martian. He fiddled with the end of his nose -- a rather large nose for a highly evolved race -- as if he were struck with uncertainty. The five Martians in the row behind him also seemed fidgety. Had Zunk's suggestion failed? He was suddenly horrified that it had. They'd abandon him and mine the oceans for dissolved minerals, or something silly like that.

"No, no!" he said. "You'd only be able to do what I advise you would work, wouldn't you? You wouldn't just do whatever you wanted? You don't know about Earthlings at all, and you might do more harm than good!" Zunk sweated like an old stick of dynamite, and actually bit his tongue twice in nervousness.

"No, we'll not make irresponsible decisions without your co-operation, we assure you. But we are reluctant to abdicate our involvement, as your suggestion just now would imply. We are ignorant of Earthmen's ways, that's true, but are you fully schooled in our technology? It's clear that we must work in concert if anything is to be done."

Zunk's heart sunk, and he nearly bit his tongue in two. He had failed. Then the Director wilted too.



"Yet we are dangerously short of time," he continued. "Your world is armed against itself, and already there are terrible mass crimes being committed by your nations. We must act fast! We've no time to wait until you prepare another course of action. If you have an alternative plan, we must hear it now, and accept it."

He didn't. Zunk was allowed a few minutes to decide how he'd spend the biggest blank check he'd ever be given, and thought harder than he'd ever thought in his life. Everything that came to mind, though, was a slight variation of something on his first list, which came down to the same plan he'd presented not five minutes ago.

"If you have no alternative at all," the Martian moaned, "then we must act unilaterally whatever the cost!"

"No!" The word was a badly controlled scream. "I have an idea." Zunk's eyes lighted on a yellow box, five inches long, surrounded by the dried husks of dead cockroaches. He detested the vile things. Icky, crawly, lower forms of life! The box read "Roach Motel" and it was the best he could do on the spur of the moment.

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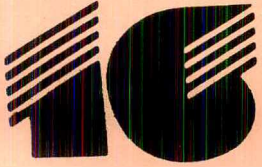
It would have surprised any lesser intellect than Zunk's that the Martians agreed to the plan. But they were desperate after all, to prevent even more horrible things happening to the green planet than their misgivings led them to expect from Milford Zunk. It should be kept in mind, too, that they knew very little about human beings. Mostly they had taken Zunk's word for what we were like. They'd committed themselves unwittingly, and only awaited Zunk's signal to begin.

Winter was beginning to wear thin on people's patience, but wore anything but thin on the ground, where soot crusted snow still clung to the sidewalks and stoops like an industrial scab. The winter was a cruelly cold one, especially for the unemployed, who found inadequate relief from the soup kitchens and missions. Almost every morning Zunk read in the newspapers that some destitute bag lady or tramp had been found frozen to death lying on a park bench, or huddled in a doorway. In such a winter, such people weren't equipped to take care of themselves, he pondered. Even at the best of times the poor were ill fit to survive. Zunk pitied them, but in the long run knew that there was only one solution to their plight. That night he communicated with the Martians, and they promised him that the appropriate lures would begin to appear in a few days.

On the way to work Zunk passed by a store-front that had been closed for alterations for several weeks. Or months. (Who remembers the slow changes of the street?) On that day, however, the boarded-up windows were down. Behind new plate glass were printed pamphlets, a few notices pinned to a bulletin board, and photographs of hard-working labourers in bib-pants and smocks, earning their livings by the honest sweat of their brows. Taped to the inside of the window was an emblem of an eagle printed on cardboard. It read W.P.A. Sure enough, the lines outside the soup kitchens in the neighborhood were now lining up outside this office. They stood patiently in line, filing in slowly for jobs. Only Zunk knew the truth. They never came out. They were being painlessly gassed, one by one, and processed for their chemical value. The numbers of hungry and helpless people on the streets were sharply reduced, and by winter's end no one was frozen either. The lure had worked wonders.

Similar operations would begin all over the world, the Martians promised. But it wasn't enough, objected Zunk. Eliminating poverty was only a skirmish in the attack against the broader front of stupidity. Eliminating the poor only made the human race wealthier. It was the nobler aim to make Man smarter that they were concerned with. Not all fools were poor. The Martians took note of this, and stepped up their campaign.

Zunk noticed their new operations almost immediately. In fact, he began to use his spare time by walking the streets to spot them. A block away from a building Mark Twain once lived in, a small school opened in a bankrupt poultry shop. It offered courses in the new science of "Lawsonomy". Zunk read the testimonials in the window with real curiosity, but had no intention of going in. Not even when a rather attractive young woman came out, and said she'd noticed his interest, would he like to see some brochures inside? He preferred to remain outside, thank you, he said. He did enter a bit of casual conversation, however. No woman had ever talked to him so nicely



before, proving beyond a shadow of a doubt that his instinct had been right. This was the Martians' next step. Nevertheless, the woman's attention was a pleasant novelty, and "Lawsonomy" was a brilliant lure. It fascinated even him. Before the next bus came, he learned that the Martians had imbued the lure with a university in Des Moines, Iowa.

Its purported founder, Alfred Lawson, had simplified the laws of nature into three complimentary forces, zig, zag, and swirl. What nonsense! The universe was made of mass, energy, and the aether. But suppose the Martians had carelessly told more than they should, and zig, zag, and swirl were something they'd hitherto kept secret from him? Maybe he should look into this more closely... But his bus came, and Zunk was saved from the trap of his own making.

He realized later how close a call he'd had. Rubbing the back of his teeth he vowed never again to get so close to a lure, they were obviously hypnotic and indiscriminating. Perhaps he should even speak to the Martians about it. Gassing good genetic material with the bad wasn't very efficient. Furthermore, how many supermen like himself could the Earth spare? If he were the only one; then none!

There was nothing that could be done about it, confessed the Martians when they appeared in Zunk's mirror again. The attraction was strongest the more one took the bait, but Zunk was perfectly safe as long as he kept his distance. Only those whose minds were susceptible to the lure approached it to feel its attraction. This didn't wholly satisfy Zunk, who wanted less passive protection. Wasn't there a signal, or a force field, he could wear that would give him immunity to the operators in the death stores?

"No, Zunk. The elimination centers are not in fact there at all, and have no operators. They are merely reverse projections such as the one we've made of your room here on Mars. The operators are likewise illusions."

"What happens to people who go in, then?"

"They enter a region of space-time which has been partially destructured by a cusp-point in the positron beam before it is focused into the image of the center. This separates them into their constituent parts. We now have \$125,637 and a few cents worth of calcium, phosphorus, and nitrides stored in an interstitial space until you want it. May I remind you that you still haven't explained why we are saving the chemicals for you, or why you ask to know its value in your local currency whenever we talk. Would this be a good moment --"

"Another time," said Zunk, changing a sensitive subject. "Can't you do something about my safety?" He couldn't stand the sense of powerlessness the situation gave him, however far he stayed from "Lawsonomy" places like the last one.

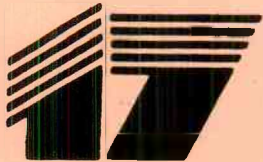
"Nothing material," answered the Martian. He sounded almost peevish as he continued. "Haven't we been clear about our limitations? It nearly broke the budget of the Institute for the Guidance of Solar Intelligence to teleport the mirrors."

Zunk groaned. Wrung his hands. Felt his teeth. Stared piteously at the mirror.

"Oh, very well," said the Martian, after conferring with his kin. "When we begin our next fiscal year -- in fourteen of your months -- we can send you a warning device which will light up whenever you are near a cusp point. In the meantime we can only offer this moral assistance. Whatever most appeals to you is most suspect. If you come upon something that seems impossibly good fortune, it is. Remember that and you will be infallibly safe."

With that, the Martians filed out in solemn procession, leaving Zunk's reflection alone in the reflected room.

Zunk saw no more "Lawsonomy" places. Even the one he'd found was gone when he went by a week later. For good measure, the Martians had changed the lure again, to be certain of his safety. But now, here and there, Zunk began noticing small signs next to doors that led to dingy second floor offices, or into even dingier stores. "Esperanto, taught easily. First lesson free. Speak the Scientific language of the future," Zunk read from the other side of the street. He never crossed to get closer. Language of the future, he thought. Ha! He wouldn't be caught that easily, but afterward it might be a good idea to make the world speak a single, scientifically based language at that. Meanwhile, Zunk noticed a gullible looking subject on the other side of the street stop and read the sign. He was thin, with thick glasses, and weak chin,



and took a full minute to make up his mind. Then he tried the door twice before he discovered that it opened inward. Although Zunk watched for an hour, the dope never came out. Zunk came back the next day, and watched from dinnertime to dark, seeing people go in and not come out. He made it a game to guess which of the passers-by would stop and go in, and rarely made a wrong guess. When occasionally someone left, it puzzled Zunk. Then he realized that they were "operators" leaving to allay suspicion. Next morning, Zunk read with satisfaction that there was an item in the classified ads. "Esperanto" schools were operating in several places in the city now, cleanly, efficiently improving human racial stock.

All the while, the Martians reported that Zunk's fortune in chemical assets grew.

After "Esperanto" came "Dianetics." A Dianetics center opened in Brooklyn, near the bridge where Al Capone was born. In short order there were more of them, each digesting a daily meal of the unfit to survive. At work, Zunk discovered his supervisor with a hand-out that claimed to rid pupils of the mental blocks that prevented them from getting ahead, and Zunk smiled. Blocks were a sure sign of mental feebleness. The sufferer who took up Dianetics sought deserved elimination. Zunk rather liked his superior at times, but the man had no one to blame but himself for taking the bait. If he was unfit, the common good demanded his removal. Besides, there was always a bright side. Maybe it was his superior all along that kept Zunk from getting ahead.

In quick succession, Theosophy, Astrology, Homeopathy, and Spiritualism appeared in the streets. Zunk was handed a flyer for palm reading, and ran away as fast as he could. There were more fortune-telling parlors than he remembered. Even the number of bookies in the neighborhood seemed suspicious. A modern art studio opened on Zunk's street, though 14th and 7th Avenue was hardly the neighborhood for one. Modern art was pretty stupid. He never understood what high society saw in it. The new gallery was for the uptown trade, he guessed. It was good to see how his plan was expanding to take in the stupid from all walks of life. Any day now, Zunk expected to see offers of free money, cars, minks, trips around the world, and... yes, even wanton women in black garters.

Waiting for the final solution to mankind's problems was hard on Zunk's nerves. Every day he poured over the papers, clipping out stories, classifieds, and oblique references that shed light on how well things were going. Judging by the news, they were going very well indeed. Zunk could take just pride in himself. Yet somehow he was tense. It made him nervous to miss even a single one of the lures laid out by the Martians. So far, at least, he'd discovered them all. When the Martians described to him their latest traps, he had had preknowledge of every one. Still, it was telling on his system, and he was rapidly approaching a state of nervous exhaustion. His tongue refused to heal. Tell me in advance, he demanded. We cannot, they replied. The illusion of the lure wasn't shaped by them, but by the mindset of the first victim, who saw what he most desired and set the trap in that form. The most the Martians did was to interpret his vague thoughts as a concrete image. When an unformed lure was projected, there was no telling what shape it would take in advance. Nor could the positron beam be aimed in reverse as accurately as the beam to his mirror. This rules out giving Zunk the location. The Martians could, however, inform Zunk how many new lures they intended to place in his vicinity every week.

"How many?" He wanted to know.

"Seven hundred and ninety-four, starting Monday. Only counting those you might reach. Worldwide we have one hundred and eighteen thousand, six hundred and forty elimination centers operating at this moment, increasing to three hundred and thirty-seven thousand nine hundred and one starting Monday. By the way, Zunk, your stockpile of chemicals has reached a value of one hundred and ninety-two million dollars, more or less. The mass is beginning to form a cyst in space-time, and we'll soon have to either move it to a deeper interstice, or distribute it more widely where it is. Either way is awkward and puts a strain on our budget, but it's dangerous if nothing is done. If the moment is convenient for you, might you tell us now how you want these residues delivered?"

"Soon."

Right now Zunk had more important worries than the soundness of mathematical ab-

stracts such as space-time and cysts that the Martians could never make sense about. Why hadn't they told him how unpredictable their lures were? As it was, half the streets in mid-town were off limits to Zunk. The streets he could travel safely were nevertheless a maze of crossings from one side to the other that ended at random inter-sections, forcing him to take a circuitous route up one block, down another, even back the way he came, to get from one place to another. The simplest safe route was three times as long as the direct way. Going to and from work had become a drunkard's walk that grew by ten minutes extra travel every few days, as new lures appeared in his path.

And what was going to happen when the sudden drop in population became obvious to the authorities? The Martians projected fake images of people to replace the ones they eliminated, but how long could that go on? To Zunk, at least, the fakes were obvious automatons. Like the room in his mirror, these positron people were less than completely solid. So far, no one seemed to notice, but there were already four fakes at the Bureau of Weights and Standards. Several others, whose closeness to the insubstantial -- such as the nice girl from the cleaning department who kissed the smelly old janitor, Mr. Schirmeister, in the lunch room -- were suspect as well. Sooner or later the deception would be discovered. Then there might well be a panic. Detectives might notice Zunk's odd behaviour. Scientists might somehow detect his communications with the Red Planet. Then they'd look at his teeth and know everything! What were the Martians going to do about protecting Earth's benefactor?

All the pompous green ancients would say was that there was nothing to worry about for the present. They'd take care of difficulties as they arose. It was so much like his boss treated him at work. Who was, by the way, as much an obstacle to Zunk's career as a projected illusion as he had been in real life. The Martians only seemed to shrug at this, then filed away for the week. One of these days, Zunk grumbled to himself, he'd smash their damned mirror, and not save the human race. Maybe then he'd get a little more respect. If not, then he'd have the peace of mind of knowing he could walk down any street again in perfect safety.

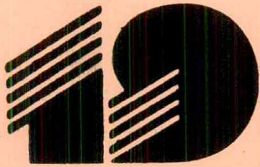
He drew his foot back, experimentally. Zunk didn't actually dare follow through. When it came right down to it, he wasn't willing to give up his role as the harbinger of the future age of supermen.

He lowered the threatening foot. Then he noticed something he could kick. There was an insect crawling on the yellow box in the corner where he'd kicked it, months ago. It wasn't poisoning the little buggers anymore, was it? He'd show it, and gave it a kick instead. It wasn't too late yet, so if he cared to put on a hat he could still pick up a new roach motel from the five-and-dime.

Shopping wasn't as easy as it had sounded back in his room. The number of lures had proliferated even while Zunk talked to the Martians. He had to go far out of his way, over to Park Avenue, then north almost as far as Central Park. He doubled back along 59th Street. By that time he was tired and hungry, and had given up any idea of finding another roach motel for the night. Instead, he went in to an automat that was still open, fishing in his pockets for change to work the vending machines. Between mouthfulls of a ham and lettuce sandwich that still tasted of the wax paper it'd been wrapped in, Zunk noticed that the place was busier than normal for this time of night.

There were a half dozen young men at one table talking, smoking cigarettes, and occasionally putting a nickle in a slot for a piece of pie whose meringue mostly came off with the cellophane. They seemed to be talking a form of English in which every third or fourth word was gibberish, and the rest commonplace. Whatever they were talking about, something across the street plainly excited them. Then another young man burst through the door, dressed in grotesque polo-pants and a cape whose shoulders were held up by cardboard. The bunch at the table noticed him and laughed quietly, as if the idiot were a private joke. The idiot left and they dismissed him from their conversation. Zunk thought he overheard the word "future" or "futuristic" several times. In the next half hour, several others came and went, including one young woman. Zunk was intrigued. He decided to follow the next one to leave the table, and see what was going on for himself.

His opportunity came when one of them, the skinny one with the bow tie and glass-



es, left the table and went outside. Zunk followed him down the block, and across the street to a nondescript building, then up three flights of stairs to a rented hall. Whatever was going on had attracted a lot of attention. There were people standing around the door, and inside was packed. Zunk saw rows of chairs with people sitting while someone was conducting an auction from the head of the room. Around the walls were hung -- no! But yes! Paintings that Zunk had seen before on the covers of his magazines. He grabbed the nearest person by the elbow and practically screamed into his face, "What is this? What's happening?"

It was the idiot in the cape. "Don't you know? How'd you get here then?" he said, not unkindly though his elbow was fiercely pinched. He saw the desperation in Zunk's eyes. "This is the Science Fiction Convention. The first one in the world. John W. Campbell is here, and Jack Williamson, and Frank R. Paul, and Willy Ley... Hey, would you like to join?"

Zunk's heart skipped a beat. A. Science Fiction. Convention? Like a cloud lifting and letting the sun into some fevered nightmare, he felt a surge of joy through his trembling frame. As he dove through the door he thought, "this is wonderful. It's... it's much too good to be true!" --Taral Wayne.

Inside The Roach Motel: The moral of the parable of Milford Zunk is that things aren't always what they seem.

The Martian disposal system for the unwanted of Earth wasn't very efficient. Being nothing more than a misshapen mushroom grown on the dim underside of a mind illuminated by miracles, all it could do was create a poisoned atmosphere in which trust is bombarded by the polarizing forces of paranoia. The world Zunk found his way into is chronicled in awesome detail in "The Immortal Storm," a history of fandom which does not read like an anticlimax to World War II -- as Harry Warner said.

While I have noticed no evidence of anything more than an endearing benign dementia (possibly a merciful by-product of my inclination to avoid personal contact with the star-begotten), I do think fandom is a fascinating opportunity for a study of ethics. The raw material for which arrives in my mailbox with shameless candor. Fandom is a rich field for analysis of the way in which words can be used to say one thing while actions point in the opposite direction.

The true study of fan is fan.

Just the other day, between the flashes of lightening which occur when trust encounters paranoia, I saw Redd Boggs ask, "Why the hell NOT?", in Taffliles #2, Jeanne Gomoll's Taff newsletter.

This innocuous enough question led to an unexpected insight.

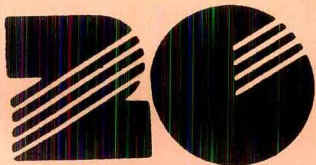
Redd was puzzled by the request on the Taff ballot "Send entire sheet as vote. Do not detach this portion."

"Not even a 'Please' attached to the warning. Has Taff been taken over by a government bureau?" asked Redd.

Jeanne's explanation came as a surprise to me (and I've been surprised a few times). The reason why Taff administrators want to see the entire piece of paper on which the ballot appears is so they can determine if anyone has tampered with the ballot on behalf of one of the candidates. "We also know that you have seen the same list of candidates and the same version of their platforms, and the same list of nominators seen by everyone else who votes" and, Jeanne went on, that no fans voted using a ballot "on which all the platforms but one have been edited so that they tout the candidate's admiration for L. Ron Hubbard and firm belief in scientology."

Well.

I'd noticed the warning when it first appeared and knew it was a recent addition (not something deriving from "the very same statement of purpose and ground rules created by Walt Willis" as Jeanne describes the current ballot). It surfaced on the form prepared by the Haydens for the 1987 race -- the election Jeanne won. I don't for a moment believe the thought that phony ballots might be printed would have even occurred to Walt Willis and if it had have no trouble visualizing Walt hesitating a long time over whether or not an institutionalized popularly voted transAtlantic fan fund would be a good idea. I've seen 34 years of Taff and other fan fund ballots. To the best of my recollection the Haydens' was the first to imply the participants and/or



voters would not be above Sabotage. In Taffluvia, the Haydens used the phrase "Trust us" so often I thought of it as the motto of their administration. It's a rueful irony that while asking for the trust of fandom they would make clear after 34 years Taff's administrators no longer had similar confidence in the voters.

"I believe that this warning has been on previous Taff ballots, and I could never think why," Redd said. The motive hadn't occurred to me, either.

Redd and I are just naive. But I suppose one should look on the bright side of the situation. It's good to know that the administrators of a public trust are fully aware of the Depths To Which Fans Can Sink. I knew these broad mental horizons would come in handy one day.

D. West, once a Taff candidate, informed me "Taff is run on a basis of trust" and elsewhere referred to "the (unwritten) rules of confidentiality and impartiality." Don hadn't read the same unwritten rules as a Taff Founder named Chuck Harris (who has written more unwritten rules of Taff than D. West). Harris informed me "we don't want your steenkin impartiality ... and no such concept was envisaged by the Taff founders". Harris wrote, "I APPLAUD all of Avedon's efforts to pull the votes in for Rob [Hansen, who was running against West] and whip up interest in his favour. He's lucky to have a girl friend like that." The Taff Founder thought it fundamental that an administrator had the right to bias the electorate of Taff. Chuck's statements appeared in the publications which contained the material West was commenting on, so D. had not the slightest basis for thinking he had better references on "unwritten rules" than a Founder of Taff. West's candidacy was derided by the North American administrator ("she dared to take sides," Harris told the readers of Science Fiction Chronicle).

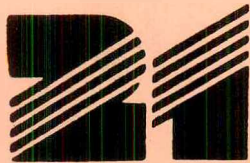
Where did West derive his "basis of trust" in Taff administration based on the "unwritten rule of impartiality"? Teresa Hayden, one of West's nominators, was credited by Patrick Hayden, another of West's nominators, with making the distinction, "Avedon was hardly impartial, but certainly fair." What West's nominators might have thought "fair" would take some discussion, but it's clear they had a concept of "unwritten rules" more in line with the North American administrator's idea of impartiality (and fairness) than West's. But, the candidate is usually the last to know. And, since to do so reveals himself as the biggest fool of all, the last to admit it.

Does anyone else suspect the idea that "Taff is run on a basis of trust" was/is little more than a delusion in the mind of D. West?

In The Name Of Taff: The latest Taff ballot was sent to me by Dave Wood, Lilian Edwards, Joyce Scrivner, and Mark Digre -- in just the opening onslaught. I guess they hadn't heard that Ted White said my opinion on who should win a Taff race is irrelevant, since I wouldn't meet the candidate. A US administrator also once asked why I'd voted for a particular British fan, since I wouldn't be meeting that fan and his trans-Atlantic fanac had been negligible and unfriendly. "You really think his slings and arrows deserve such reward?" she asked. The fan in question was D. West in case you didn't know. That was the Taff vote heard round the world. But the shocking thing isn't that my irrelevant opinion is being solicited (after all this irrelevant fan has even nominated candidates), it's the Taff ballot itself.

The ballot was prepared by Greg Pickersgill as British administrator because it covers a Europe to North America trip. I wonder if it was drafted in consultation with Jeanne Gomoll? Or if he just sent it to her as a fait accompli? I suspect the latter.

Jeanne says in Taffiles #2 that she released the ballot as soon as she received the "master copy" from Greg. She sent it out "immediately" not noticing a number of typos, which people soon informed her they would be happy to correct on their editions. (A friend even produced a spiffy type-set version for Jeanne and in so doing managed to exchange the misspelling of Stu "Schiffman" for Linda "Blandchard." There'll always be a fandom.) Did Jeanne miss something else or, when she saw the ballot, merely gulp and remain silent in the interests of getting it out? Jeanne says it arrived from GP "near the end of January." North American fans, nominators, and the like, were beginning to wonder where the hell it was. Taffiles #1 had announced it would be available on January 15th. The nominations deadline had closed on December 31. Did Pickersgill really need two weeks to transcribe platforms? Or did he have to extend the deadline for one of the candidates? When Jeanne "immediately" dropped copies in the mail, North



American Taff had already lost two weeks, it would take another week or so to arrive at the addresses of supporters and news magazines, etc, and another week or more in production before it could be returned to the mail. This resulted in the ballot not being generally available in the host country until around the middle of February or later (assuming all went like clock-work -- and this is fandom). 30 to 40 days after it was supposed to be out. 30-40 days from a three month, 15 day campaign is practically a third of the election when the ballot wasn't in circulation in North America and a period when North American voters were effectively disenfranchised (to use the word correctly for a change). Not good enough. This cut Jeanne and North America really close to the wire (hell, way over the wire), so she had no choice but send out the ballot as she received it, even if she had noticed.

You see, the new ballot doesn't carry the same rules wording as the one sent out in the most recent North America to Europe race -- the last ballot prepared by the Haydens for the election won by Jeanne. The text has been altered in several respects. Sometimes the changes look like the hand of the preparer running on automatic edit. In other places the alterations read like Greg Pickersgill extemporaneously rewriting Taff. And this was sent to you for your endorsement (by adding your signature) too late to question the additions/changes. You'd think the host country would be given 10 minutes to discuss a rewrite of the Taff rules, wouldn't you?

The changes range from streamlining (The Haydens' "votes from fans not resident in either Europe or North America will not be counted toward either 20% minimum (but are almost certain to affect any given race anyway, so don't let this stop you from voting)" becomes "Votes from interested fans not resident in either Europe or North America will not be counted towards either 20% minimum, but are otherwise encouraged" in the new version.) to a complete rearrangement of the passage on donations. The new rendition of the shaking of the tambourine to collect drachmas ends with "Persons either ineligible or feeling themselves unqualified to vote are frequent givers to one of fandom's worthiest causes. They sometimes become Taff winners in time."

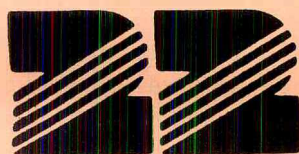
That final sentence is a new tease having no relation to any ballot in the memory of this fan. It also seems in questionable taste when one remembers the numerous administrative roadblocks which can be strewn by the adroit administrator when mere contributors or convention fans get delusions they might want to move up to The Big Time and run for Taff themselves. The new come-on is 'give, and give frequently,' even if you don't know that in the present case the person doing the exhorting has participated in arranging it so your chances of merely being a contributor and then being elected are only slightly better than the possibility you'll walk on the surface of Mars first. The implication that contributions of money can lead to the honor of winning Taff is an enticement one might expect of a used car salesman and hardly reflects "the very same statement of purpose ... created by Walt Willis." It's presence on the ballot is unworthy of the institution.

I think.

But, I suppose, the donations pearl had to be dangled in view of another change earlier on the ballot. The final Hayden ballot read, "'Write-ins' are permitted," which was a change from previous years' "'Write-in' candidates are permitted." I guess the Hayden change was to signify write-ins were OK, but if it was determined that you were a candidate (ie, by getting Too Many write-ins) then you could be blocked from assuming office. Probably on the grounds that you weren't properly nominated. Maybe. It wouldn't do to have Taff rules too clear, as one or more of the Haydens have told us. The new version on the Pickersgill ballot reads, "Write-in votes are permitted but not encouraged." The write-in posed a problem. If it was eliminated, you eliminated the contribution. Couldn't have that. Thus the move to strengthen the donations passage, discourage the write-in, and finesse the acceptability of write-in "candidates." The intent is to do away with threats to The Chosen by a mere "write-in candidate."

Too clever, by far.

(In Avedon Carol's karate exhibition, which she titled "Taff Official," she asked, "is there any point in keeping a 'write-in' line which is now being used only to circumvent the nominating process?" Taff voters should have replied, "Yes, as a last, desperate, futile recourse for redress against Taff administrators who use the nomin-



ating process to limit participation to their friends by posting nominating deadlines too late for convenient filing by anyone other than the administrator's cronies." As Avedon did. But her exasperation was misplaced. She might have asked, "What does one do about a Taff administrator who withholds the Taff ballot from a particular candidate while releasing it to her friends?" As she did. Everyone knows there are many ways to skin a Taff candidate.)

This love/hate relationship toward the write-in vote on the part of Taff administrators is one of the Seven Wonders of Fandom. Taff exists through "the continued generosity of fandom" according to the explanation in the Taff rules. Eliminating a reason to vote would work against that idea, ie, the opportunity to get some money. The task is to encourage this generosity without appearing to be a Three Card Monty in the doing or showing evidence of taking money from people whose expectations are falsely played upon. As Pickersgill does in suggesting that "frequent givers ... become Taff winners." "In time." "Sometimes." Don't you get the impression he could do a more convincing job selling snake-oil? The problem is one of motivating the voter to act without thinking, as politicians the world over could tell you. It's especially amusing to see the pitch used on behalf of "friendship," since it fathers contradictions, ethical pitfalls, double-binds, and hypocrisy. In other words, betrayal of self and others.

It comes with the territory.

For instance, the author of "write-in votes are permitted but not encouraged" was the single greatest financial beneficiary of write-in votes in the history of Taff. Pickersgill spent a large share of the funds contributed by supporters of Martha Beck -- a write-in "candidate" whose voters swelled Taff's treasury to record levels, but to whom Pickersgill (with no record of transAtlantic fan activity) and numerous British Taff nonvoters objected as a Taff delegate (because she had no record of transAtlantic fan activity).

As candidates, the Haydens protested the write-in campaign on grounds the British had a right to dictate "what qualifies a candidate" (thus abridging Taff rules in the middle of a campaign). As administrators, they would later write in Tafflivia that candidate Pickersgill (with no record of transAtlantic fan activity) exemplified the "highest Standards" of Taff. Teresa Hayden tells us she is a master of debating skills. Perhaps she could explain the logic behind these conflicting positions. Unless her true specialty is evading the issue.

(This may have been merely another Hayden fey witticism aimed at the cogniscenti, like their observation which accompanied the announcement of Greg's election. Referring to auction material they came up with this thigh-slapper, "Langford's donation this time is a bound facsimile volumn of Twll-Ddu, his great fanzine of the 1970's that no one in North America ever saw." Dave must have spewed his tea half-way across the room in appreciation. Taff voters who had never seen Twll-Ddu probably wouldn't be aware that it contained many letters of comment from North American fans, most of whom, presumably, saw what they were commenting on. What the Haydens are really signalling here is an allusion to Greg Pickersgill's Stop Breaking Down ("his great fanzine of the 1970's"), which from issue #1 (March, 1976) to #6 (March, 1978) may have been sent to as many as three fans in North America. The only issue of SBD published in the 80's (#7, August, 1981) featured Greg's call for the dismantling of Taff as a farce which had outlived its purpose. Many Taff voters didn't realize the Haydens were being ever so precious and winking to those in the know that Taff had just elected someone who opposed transAtlantic contact. And wasn't that a neat joke on Taff? The Haydens have a subtle sense of the ridiculous. Pickersgill won his majority by one vote on the second ballot. First place preferences in North America totalled 49 votes for Pickersgill, 87 votes for all others. You might even say he had "disenfranchised" the majority of first place voters. If you were a demagogue.)

Rob Hansen, British administrator at the time, served "notice that we will not recognise a US Taff administration run by Martha Beck." This was in response to a petition which had spoken only of freezing British funds in the event Martha had received the most votes. There was no suggestion that funds contributed by Martha's supporters should be refunded. The British were only concerned that a US fan might spend their money who had fairly won the right to be so entertained.



The funds given by Beck voters were freely donated in the best spirit of Taff in an understood agreement they would be spent for the benefit of whichever candidate won. If Beck's supporters had been told, "Taff will take your money, but if Martha wins she won't be allowed to make the trip and the money will be spent by persons objecting to her presence in the campaign," I doubt many would have been charmed into participating in so pointless an exercise.

The Beck funds, then, were tainted by the violation of the Taff contract. This was a point lost on Avedon Carol, Greg and Linda Pickersgill, Patrick and Teresa Hayden and Rob Hansen. And British fans not interested enough in Taff to vote. It's called accepting money under false pretenses. According to Tafflivia, \$1500 was spent on the trip of the Haydens to England and another \$1500 on Pickersgill in the US. The joke is that the portion spent on GP went to the person who opposed the Beck candidacy on grounds which applied to himself perhaps even more strongly than to Beck. As one whose editorial and literary skills highly qualified him to engage in transAtlantic fanac, Pickersgill's only excuse was lack of interest. To this day, I see no evidence his interest in North American fandom was/is greater than Martha's in British fandom. (Actually, Martha's involvement in fandom has been distinguished by genuine affection for all fans and I can't conceive she wouldn't have been a delight in England, whereas Pickersgill, according to Dave Langford's Taff report, referred to US fans as "cretins" and, while an ambassador of good will and a guest in our country got into a big fight with George RR Martin at Contradiction in Niagra Falls. I've been told they were fighting over whether or not Taff is about "friendship.") What evidence is there that Pickersgill's interest in North American fandom went beyond a desire for a free extended vacation at Taff's expense (his trip was longer than any delegate's since 1964 we were told by the Haydens)?

It gets even more bizarre: The coffers which contained the contributions of Beck supporters were used to finance Taff Official, a report to the voters by Avedon Carol which attacked Beck supporters themselves. In Taff Official, Avedon denounced the Beck candidacy, argued that Taff was a reward for transAtlantic activity (shortly before nominating Pickersgill), and accused Beck supporters of fraud -- while presenting no documentation and naming no names, so the charges could not be investigated.

Martha's friends were treated with contempt and their money spent.

Paul Skelton has criticized Taff for its pursuit of contributions on terms which have not been frank with the contributors, "we only say its for them too so that they'll give us the money." I don't think his lengthy analysis perceived the ethical dilemma implicit in the betrayal of the Taff compact itself. Few did in their eagerness to divide 30 pieces of silver.

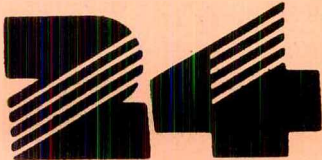
"Write-in votes are permitted but not encouraged," is a warning. And one with unfriendly undertones. It suggests "a fan and his money are soon parted, if you insist on it, but if we perceive you've transformed a 'write-in' into a 'candidate' we may be forced to Take Steps. We'll still spend your money, though."

The question is, "Do the ends justify the means?" In other words, "Does the praise of friendship justify going to any length in order to finance it?" Failure of nerve to confront that question places not merely Taff on trial, but fandom itself. If the answer (for fandom is "Yes," as I believe it will be by default, then the judgement of history is upon us.

If the answer is "No," then the write-in line should be eliminated entirely. This provision was not mentioned in the first "statement of purpose and ground rules created by Walt Willis." It could be eliminated without infringing on original intent. A quick glance at the results of several elections reveals it hasn't brought in more than \$10 to Taff except for the year when voters thought its false promise was suggested by administrators as a serious option.

What purpose does it serve except to parade double-standards and provide an opportunity for exhibition of mean-spiritedness on behalf of an organization which is assumed to be about "friendship?" Duff survives very well without legitimatizing the write-in.

(Let's face it. If the administrators want to dispose of a candidate, all they have to do is not open their mail. Or is it preferred to open their mail, take their



money and then refuse to recognize their votes on specious grounds? Isn't using a gun easier?)

Does Taff want the money or does it want its integrity?

It's this cross-road at which the soul of Taff finds itself.

"...We Will Do All In Our Power..." "Sometimes I wonder if

the worst dangers to Taff aren't its friends," wrote Dave Langford to Jackie Causgrove. Dave was (a) deploring Jackie's attempts to increase Participation and Involvement in Taff through her efforts on behalf of the Martha Beck write-in campaign and (b) tacitly conceding that Jackie was a friend of Taff.

Dave's remark flashed through my mind as I stumbled over a footnote to the preceding article. The annotation grew to be longer than the piece it was annotating. I began to wonder if the footnote shouldn't be the article and the article the footnote as it expanded like some ominous cancer, automatically writing itself in a process reminiscent of Willis' description of how he transcribed "The Enchanted Duplicator" from mental notes.

I'd used the word "illegal" (since edited out) in the above piece to describe Rob Hansen's recognition of the Pickersgill petition to freeze British funds in the event Martha Beck won the Taff election. My ruminations on that one word lead to thoughts on the relationships between British fans and the throats they were willing to cut in the name of friendship.

Illegal?

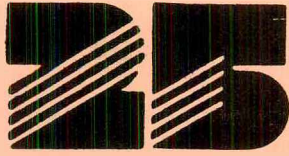
Let's examine that. The Pickersgill petition opposed "the use of funds collected in the UK in support of any candidate ... who does not have any personal history of Transatlantic fan activity."* Hansen, as European administrator, responded to this by declaring, "Since British fandom has indicated that they are not prepared to accord them such trust and respect I'm afraid I have no alternative but to serve notice that we will not recognize a US Taff administration run by Martha Beck or by her campaign managers (Locke, Causgrove, Hevelin) or by any other individual nominated by them."

Hansen's announcement was made on December 13, 1984. Scarcely five months prior on July 25th, 1984, in Wiz #11, Chuck Harris said Taff "is a democratic process. If you don't like it, go screw." The Taff Founder's hosanna (if I may borrow a dab from his rhetorical palette to touch up this highlight) on behalf of democracy was ignored by Hansen and, strangely, was not heard again in the face of the announcement that Hansen would set aside the results of a legally constituted vote if Martha Beck won.

The Pickersgill petition referred only to the freezing of "UK" funds. However, from its earliest days Taff has solicited the participation of European fans, its purpose has been to send "European fans to North American conventions," it has accepted contributions from all over Europe, and has presented itself as the European half of Taff. The question of whether nonBritish Eurofans who had contributed to Taff might want to meet a convivial US Midwestern fan was irrelevant to the Pickersgill/Hansen calculations. They preferred to cut off the tail rather than let it wag the dog. Didn't Pickersgill and Hansen think Europe was owed consideration for supporting Taff all these years? Is the characterization of Taff as "European" merely window-dressing, lip-service whose purpose is a convenient fund raising scheme to be disregarded when British fandom decides the colonies have to be whipped into line? The lack of gratitude implied by the Pickersgill petition's dismissal of Europe and its upholding by Rob Hansen (who was, after all, the European administrator, not the British administrator) was insensitive and revealed a lack of a sense of moral obligation.

* The complete statement of intent on the Pickersgill petition read: "We the undersigned, holding the belief that the Transatlantic Fan Fund was instituted for the exchange of popularly voted and funded members of US and British fandom who are both known to, and have an expressed interest in, the activities and personalities of the recipient nation, protest against block voting by parties uninterested in and unconnected with British fandom, and the use of funds collected in the UK in support of any candidate who might win as a result of such block voting, and who does not have any personal history of Transatlantic fan activity."

Hansen announced that 121 fans signed the petition; of whom 78 voted in the election referred to.



Hansen extended the thrust of the Pickersgill petition. In the name of British fandom, (but not EuroTaff) he announced he would strip Beck of the responsibility conferred by Taff voters. The petition he was responding to addressed only the matter of the British hoard of gold bullion stored in the Taff treasury. Petitions have no legal standing in Taff, nor are there procedures allowing an administrator to disregard Taff votes en masse. The only recourse is for an administrator to turn his back on the people who elected him. An equal number of European fans preferred D. West as voted for Hansen. Rob's mantle of office was conferred by North Americans -- many of them club and convention fans who knew little of West's credentials in British fandom except insofar as they became aware of them through the North American administrator, West's nominators and supporters. Jackie Causgrove voted for Rob Hansen. And yet, with a blind eye for those who had voted for him, Hansen pointed to a demagogic petition as justification for a course of action not urged by that petition. Someone had to be responsible for his decision. It might as well be "British fandom."

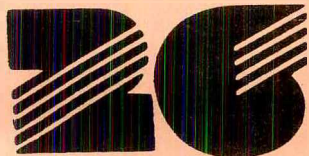
The word "disenfranchisement" had been incorrectly and extensively used by the Haydens, Avedon Carol, and some British fans to mean one side out-voting the other by a large margin. The losing side, it was argued, was disenfranchised. (?) Jackie Causgrove pointed out in the last 13 Taff elections the sending country has out-voted the host country -- once by 3-1 -- but this was the first time the discrepancy in totals was called disenfranchising the host country. (In the first Taff election, 71 ballots were cast on the European side of the Atlantic vs. 8 on the North American side. In the second election, 44 ballots were cast in England and 14 in North America. "Disenfranchisement," in the sense of the scare-tactics used by those who opposed the write-in campaign, had a long and distinguished lineage.) If Hansen had trouble figuring out the meaning of the word and no trouble ignoring inconvenient history, it was clear he had no difficulty in applying it in practical terms. In defiance of Taff Founder Harris' recent pronouncement on the sanctity of the democratic process of Taff, Pickersgill and Hansen, with all the panache of a cadre of generals in the Philippines, were plotting a revolt against a democratic institution.

Before we move on to the next phase of this putsch in a tea-pot, let's pause for breath to speculate on what all this leave-taking of sense might be about. Pickersgill's squealing about "UK funds" was actually a not very good joke. Hansen had been the most recent Taff delegate to spend some of that money. Three months prior to the petition (while he was at Avedon's), he revealed his "air fare came out of Taff UK funds (and took about 50% of them)." I would have thought his air fare came out of Taff European funds, but perhaps this is a British vestige of the Dream of Empire we have to make allowances for. I assume Rob spent the funds with traditional prudence, went tourist class and took advantage of special discount fares associated with advance booking, hailed passing rickshaws and the like. I also assume European funds were intermingled in the amount remaining, so presumably the "UK" funds which would be sent to the antarctic circle might have amounted to three or four hundred dollars in our currency -- or as much as Rusty Hevelin (JoePhan Moneybags himself) could have raised at a couple good fund raisers on behalf of fan funds in the US Midwest.

My, my. What a to-do over a bit of loose change!

Or was the contretemps about the Power and Glory (!) of Taff administration? Hansen said "Since British fandom has indicated that they are not prepared to accord them such trust and respect I'm afraid I have no alternative but to serve notice that we will not recognize a US Taff administration run by Martha Beck or by her campaign managers (Locke, Causgrove, Hevelin) or by any other individual nominated by them." If it helps you to consider this as a matter of principle, just eliminate the three names in the parenthesis, imagine this statement was made by a North American administrator, and replace the name of Martha Beck with that of a British fan, say, Chuck Harris. Sounds like megalomania beyond the call of duty, doesn't it?

What was Hansen (and "British fandom") not prepared to trust Martha Beck with? Access to the poverty stricken European fund? Access to funds she had been instrumental in generating in North American fandom? Counting North American votes? Releasing ballots to candidates promptly? Setting an adequate nominating deadline? Preparing a Taff ballot on time? Releasing the ballot to the host country on time? Not releasing



sufficient North American money for the entertainment of a British delegate? Or did they suspect she would rewrite the Taff rules without informing British fandom? What?

If the administration of Avedon Carol was considered acceptable and trustworthy by British standards, I fail to see how they could object to the administration of a lamp post.

Avedon neglected to publically express any appreciation of contributions to Taff until I complained. Avedon, you may recall, has yet to formally announce to the North American electorate who won the West/Hansen race (my assumption that she had was a case of giving her far too much credit). Not to mention the fact that she had attacked a British candidate behind his back during an election while she was the administrator. In the face of such gross dereliction of duty, how could Hansen dare raise a false issue of trust and competence?

This was the first time the host country had the gall to attempt to impose views on the conduct of administration in the sending country -- the country to which in following years they will send an honored fan who is expected to be politely received. This concept of the separation of the delegate from her duties is an insult unique in my experience. It raises thoughts of considering the source and what might be going on there. Who is running European Taff? Linda Pickersgill? Anyone?

The Pickersgill petition named no names of North American fans other than Martha Beck (in the sales pitch on the obverse), so there was no mandate by those signing it to oppose participation of Locke, Causgrove, and Hevelin in a Beck administration. And why would "British fandom" assume "any other individual" Martha might ask to affix mailing labels would be untrustworthy? "Any other individual" is a lot of people. Did Hansen think, or did he think this anonymous "British fandom" thought, all North American fans were not to be trusted or respected?

And who is "we" Hansen spoke for? Malcolm Edwards disagreed with the decision to disallow Martha Beck from the Taff ballot and had no objection, in principle, to the write-in campaign. Neither did Peter Weston, European Taff administrator, 1974, who saw the Beck write-in campaign at first hand at Windycon and was reported as saying it was "great publicity for Taff" and "one of the best things I've seen happen." Martha was nominated by Roy Tackett, North American administrator, 1976. I'll take Edwards' and Weston's and Tackett's recommendations about who could be trusted with Taff administration over Hansen's or that of any anonymous group of fans any day -- most of who didn't vote anyway. How could they rationally be cited in support of anything?

And what did the attempt to destroy the reputations of Locke, Causgrove, and Hevelin have to do with the price of eggs in China or Taff administration?

Where did "British fandom" get the idea Beck, Locke, Causgrove, and Hevelin were not to be trusted?

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The Pickersgill petition was clearly illegal in its intent to find a justification to deprive voters of just fruits and expectations from participation in what Harris had called "a democratic institution." Its recognition by EuroAdministrator Hansen was illegal on the same basis, but went further in setting the precedent that an administrator could be administrator in name only and someone else appointed to fulfill the administrator's duties. This thorny decision may well turn out to be Taff's Achilles' heel in the future. Since this fiat was without sanction, it was not only illegal, but dictatorial. The mandate of the petition as signed and submitted was flawed in itself, having derived from false premises and justifications as we will see.

A major figure in the British Taff Establishment wrote to Jackie Causgrove concurrent with the petition and warned "If you continue to try to drive a rift between our two fandoms we will do all in our power to oppose you." A coterie of British fans were prepared to go to any length to block the election of Martha Beck, destroy the reputations of good people, and pull Taff from its European mooring.

"...we will do all in our power..."

A segue into an obscure passage of the timewarp: the gentle reader is asked to recall that from around the first of September, 1984 onward had been The Year of Baiting Bergeron. This firestorm was a result of my admittedly hyperbolic charges and revelations about Taff administration. The basic reply had been that I was "sick," "in-



sane," "a liar," and "gay." Since I declined to discuss the matter on that level or to submit a photo of myself without an IV terminal in my arm, outside a mental institution, not lying, and having sexual intercourse with a woman while shooting a homosexual, fandom went on its merry way. I went back to the beach, wiser but not sadder; in fact, considerably amused. I thought fans had done their worst.

I was still naive.

As I sit here considering this Martha Beck crease in the folds of the history of fandom, I realize just how naive. My mind drifts back to a letter to Joy Hibbert in 1985. In reply to her's of August 2 that same year, I wrote:

My eyebrows rose at your line, "Then here's the attempt by certain British fans (don't know who, but the rumour must have come from somewhere) to blacken Beck's name by suggesting her candidacy was your idea." When I heard that Hansen refused to accept Beck's candidacy because her nominating papers were late, I started drafting a comment, but Cesar Ramos advised me against saying anything about the Beck situation. "They'll hang her with you," was roughly how he put it. I didn't believe they could be that cynical or monstrous, but the possibility was disquieting (not for myself but for an innocent victim like Beck), so I decided to have absolutely nothing to say about the Beck campaign during the voting period. ... I should have realized a little detail like my total noninvolvement (as a deliberate policy) would have little effect on people like Avedon Carol.* I understand she had been telling British fans [or a British fan] that my (nonexistent) involvement in the Beck campaign was calculated to "disinfranchise" [!] British fandom in Taff. I've heard this from one source in Britain. How could I "disinfranchise" British fans when I had nothing whatsoever to do with the Beck campaign? (15 October 1985)

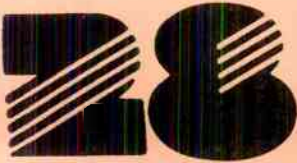
The tom-tom network which interlaces our steaming jungle of fannish correspondence informed me from three sources that my shrunken head was being exhibited in Britain as proof I was campaigning for Beck. Cesar Ramos was the local fan who turned out to be awesomely presentient in the matter of Patrick Hayden. "He'll twist what you've quoted from Terry Carr," Ramos predicted. See Wiz #12, October 1985, for the gory details. We need more Puerto Ricans in fandom. Ramos had an uncanny instinct for the political intrigue of the microcosm (what he sensed he found repugnant, but that's another story). Much about fandom reminds me of newspaper reports in El Mundo of power struggles in the local state assembly. Ramos was right. And it was no idle threat Causgrove had received: "...we'll do all in our power to oppose you." An insignificant circumstance like my total noninvolvement in the promotion of Beck's candidacy didn't stand in the way. I don't think even Ramos thought they'd go that far.

The administrative effort to rid Taff of the Beck incubus was to result in many a convulsion before the exorcism was complete. The basic argument against the write-in campaign was summed up by EuroAdministrator Hansen in these words:

"In their substitution of regional chauvinism for internationalism and their list of names to use to rubber-stamp ballots, the flyers [urging the write-in vote] offended a lot of people over here."

(1) I presume "regional chauvinism" is a reference to the Wimpy Zone factor which was raised in the campaign. When I first saw the phrase in a newszine in September, 1984, before the write-in campaign, I immediately named a stray cat "Wimp." Each time I call this inoffensive creature to dinner, I get a big chuckle. Rob was/is perfectly aware anytime you give fans a hobby horse of humor to charge about on, they're going to do it. It ill-behoves him to object to this sort of schtick when his own Taff material played on the same impulse. "Obviously something called 'Taff' should be won by a Welshman, and as the only Welsh candidate I'm your man," Rob wrote in his Taff platform. Epsilon 15 contained an impenetrable three page article by Hansen on "The Secret of the Gwerin," about "this secret brotherhood of Welsh fans," which plotted "Taff candidacies" and other strategies for the aggrandizement of Power and Glory. This was apparently an attempt at the sort of juvenile humor popular in the

* Avedon, of course, was the administrator in the Coad/Beck/Hayden race and was, presumably, working within Harris' Guidelines for the Administrators, so I can't fault her intervention. It was meant in the best interests of Taff, as she saw them.



Spectator Amateur Press Society in the early 50's (but not as inspired). Harry Bell nominated Hansen with the remark "I disagree that being Welsh should be an impediment. Well, hardly at all." Rob published this and circulated it far and wide in Epsilon. Langford, in his nominating statement, referred to him as "a deserving (ie, Welsh) Taff candidate." Rob published this and circulated it far and wide in Epsilon. Ansible #35 urged "Vote for a Welshman, folks" and Ansible #36 warned "one last desperate chance to save the world for truth, justice, Welshfandom and baked beans by voting for Rob Hansen for Taff." What did I miss? The flotillas? The sound-trucks? The television commercials? What was the joke? And could it have influenced enough votes to have resulted in the tie between Hansen and his opponent? Hansen and Langford set the example for the Wimpy Zone appeal and did so extensively.

(2) "Internationalism?" And the lack thereof in the Beck flyers? Surely this is merely rude coming from one who was ready to nominate Pickersgill in 1981 when Pickersgill was studiously avoiding North American fandom, who remained silent when Pickersgill stood, and who did not protest that Taff was for "those on one side of the Atlantic to meet those they've communicated with so long on the other side," though this was the first thing to occur to Hansen when he heard Beck was going to be nominated. West was not well known in NA and it may be that Warhoon was the only fanzine he was published in prior to his nomination. Harris was aware of this because West wrote to him and made the same point! West's platform hardly extolled internationalism ("D. West would be quite happy to stay home" or international friendship ("he considers that most of American fandom falls into two categories: Worthy but Dull, or Worthless and Dull"). Did Hansen think it OK to substitute international sarcasm for friendship -- Beck's decision to run wasn't based on a desire to go to the host country to determine if the inhabitants were bores or "cretins." None of this seemed to bother "British fandom."

(3) The reference to "their list of names to use to rubber-stamp ballots" is unfortunate. It suggests fraud. Did Hansen mean that Bowers, Cavin, Coulson, DeVore, Edeiken, Glicksohn, Hevelin, Laskowski (George and Maia), Smith, Stopa, and Bob Tucker, were in collusion with Beck's "campaign managers" and had agreed to automatically validate the votes of anyone who gave their names to the North American administrator? Or did he mean that North American voters would give one or more of these names though they weren't actually known to the person named? Or did he mean that this potential for abuse existed because he assumed Avedon wouldn't check out a reference if the voter wasn't known to her? Did Hansen assume that at the end of voting Avedon wouldn't make a list of those she didn't know (did she know every fan in North America?) who had given (for example) Coulson's name and place a call to Bob to check? This might have taken all of five minutes. Did Hansen assume Avedon was incompetent and that's why the list of names would function as a "rubber-stamp?"

I have an original copy of that list of names and addresses and a reproduction of it which appeared in Causgrove's Wimpy Zone Warrior. The text is identical in both. At the bottom of the flyer appears two disclaimers:

This list of names and addresses is not meant to suggest that the above-named fans necessarily endorse Martha Beck as write-in candidate for Taff in '85. It is being published and distributed so that conventions fans, unfamiliar with addresses of fans who they feel would be willing and able to vouch for their participation in fan activities prior to april 30, 1983, can more readily obtain the information.

NO ENDORSEMENT OF MARTHA BECK SHOULD BE IMPLIED

TO ANY PERSON BY PUBLICATION OF THIS LISTING.

This is a "rubber-stamp?" The only way that list could be seen as a "rubber-stamp" would be in the absence of the disclaimers. Or unless it was generally assumed the North American administrator would not do her job and North American Taff voters were liars.

Great care was taken in the preparation of the list of validators that it not be seen as a "rubber-stamp." Or open to abuse. Avedon Carol in Taff Official, referring to this list, said "A Midwestern fan sent me a flier he felt was Not Kosher, and I must say I concur." She did not reproduce the sheet but called it "questionable electioneering." It was neither. How is it electioneering when "No Endorsement Is Implied"



was repeated twice on the page? Avedon opened the possibility that the copy she was sent may have been a fraud. If she, in all innocence, passed this sheet on to British fandom, it's possible they were shown an electioneering flyer which was a rubber-stamp and quite different from what was handed out in the Midwest.

Was Beck campaign material sabotaged? This would definitely be "Not Kosher."

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In all the comment devoted to the Pickersgill petition, I have not seen a single comment on or protest of the fact that the signatures of trusting British fans were obtained with the use of false statements. The absence of the veracity of which was readily apparent to Dave Langford, Rob Hansen, and Chuck Harris. (British fans were being handed printed material by their friends; why should they not trust it?)

As a historian himself, Hansen should have been particularly sensitive to what the public record would reveal when viewed by posterity. Historians should be mindful of the judgment of history.

Posterity is about to take a look.

The petition's sales-pitch stated, "Neither Martha Beck nor the orchestrators of the campaign have any history of involvement with British fandom." The "orchestrators" are unnamed on the petition, but are identified by Hansen as "her campaign managers (Locke, Causgrove, Hevelin)." One should reserve an opinion as to whether the Pickersgills knew they were lying. Perhaps they didn't ask Hansen who these "orchestrators" were. Perhaps. In that event, the petition was making unfounded charges against anonymous "orchestrators." If that was the case how could the Pickersgills know they had no "history of involvement with British fandom?"

It doesn't look good for the Pickersgills, but it looks even worse if they had been warned by Hansen, Langford, or Harris. This would mean the Pickersgills had proceeded in contempt of them and British fandom. If they didn't warn the Pickersgills, nor potential signers, it looks bad for Hansen, Langford, and Harris. British fandom would trust the hierarchy of Taff would have warned them their support was being solicited with misrepresentations. In the absence of such warnings, British fandom would have taken such silence as legitimatizing charges which were untrue. Since the petition appealed for support with false information (of which the European Taff administrator was fully aware), its mandate was prejudiced and should have been disregarded or withdrawn.

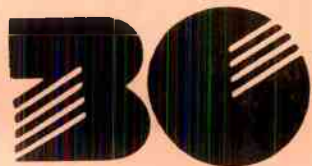
The Pickersgills stacked the decks against the "orchestrators" of the Beck write-in campaign in the following terms: "Up until now Taff has been run by and for fans who make the effort to maintain contact with the alternate community," a history which was threatened, they claimed, by "convention-going fans in the Midwest of the US" and "orchestrators of the campaign" who had no "history of involvement with British fandom."

Let's see how this applies to Locke, Causgrove, and Hevelin.

Dave Locke is primarily a fanzine fan, has traded fanzines for years with British fans, publishes contributions from British fans, writes to British fans, and has commented on British fanzines. Locke wrote and had one or more letters published in Dave Langford's Twll Ddu years before the Beck campaign. Also prior to that campaign, Langford was involved with Locke in preparation of a dialogue/interview for Outworlds. Locke's fine dialogue with Walt Willis had been published long before to general acclaim. Chuck Harris, in Hyphen #37, December, 1983, praised the Willis/Locke exchange:

I thought it was the best piece of fan journalism I've seen since my resurrection... it's Superb, Polished, and ...here's the Ultimate Criterion....fun to read ... Anyway, Locke has certainly found his forte here. Quite unintentionally he projects himself as a thoroughly Nice Bloke, full of admiration but not worship, with an enviable knowledge of Fandom.

Dave infrequently attends conventions. He doesn't especially like them. He attended no conventions during the weeks of the Martha Beck write-in, wasn't involved in any of the canvassing, and prepared none of the written material. Any representations about his activities or "orchestration" of activities on behalf of the write-in would not be true. (What Hansen, Harris, and Langford may not have known is that Locke's involvement in the write-in campaign was minimal. About all he did was suggest it; however



I suppose that might be analogous to raising the baton to signal the woodwinds to start playing and could be worth beating him up in a dark alley for.) Dave had far more involvement with British fandom than Pickersgill had with North American fandom at the time he decided to stand for Taff. How Dave Locke's mere suggestion of a write-in (when the Taff rules did as much) would make him untrustworthy is something Rob Hansen should explain, unless he is willing to let this unfortunate smear (which was circulated internationally to hundreds of people) remain uncorrected on the public record. If Hansen is content with this, that says more about Rob Hansen than I wanted to know.

Chuck Harris, while the flames of anti-US-Midwest-Convention-Fandom were being fanned in England, asked Jackie Causgrove what she had contributed to Taff. I'll quote her reply, which was sent to Harris in December, 1984, while British fandom was being set-up:

What have I contributed or done for Taff? Voted in 4 or 5 of the past 13 elections, contributed every year since 1974 (amounts total in the \$200-250 range), and publicized Taff in my fanzines (Dilemma, pubbed 1973-76 -- 14 issues; Resolution, pubbed 1977-80 -- 5 issues; also various apazines). May I ask what you have done in the past 15 years (January of 1970 was my first month in fandom) to push Taff?

I've traded zines with, locced, been locced by, and/or contributed artwork to over 21 British fans/fanzines since the mid 70's -- Charnock, Lawrence, Roberts, Sandercock, Boak, Stewart, Bell, England, Jackson, Langford, Maule, Edwards, Jeeves, Hansen, Meara, Pardoe, Piper, Walker, Skelton, Williams, and Rowe.

Jackie Causgrove's remarks on fanart appeared in Rob Hansen's Epsilon before the Beck write-in. Perhaps Jackie's name was intentionally left off the petition because too many of its potential signers would have known its representations about "orchestrators" who had no "history of involvement with British fandom" were nothing more than demagoguery. The Pickersgill petition (and Hansen, Langford, and Harris) takes as a given that someone who had made no "effort to maintain contact with the alternate community" and had no history of involvement with North American fandom had more authority to speak on the subject of transAtlantic fan activity than someone who had extensive contact with British fandom. If Causgrove's name had been used to identify the primary "orchestrator" of the Beck write-in, those aware of her extensive contact with British fandom would have known that by signing it they were transforming it into a personal lie.

And Rusty Hevelin? Why did Rusty merit Hansen's accusation that British fandom was not prepared to accord him "trust and respect?" Since Rusty is singled out as one of Beck's "campaign managers," it will be instructive to take a long look at where Hansen picked up this particular virus and what he did with it.

Hansen was an observer and participant in an open letter forum organized by Dave Locke to discuss my accusations about Avedon Carol's administration of Taff. A suggestion was made to include Rusty Hevelin in the distribution list. Dave asked if anyone objected. Hansen's response was written from Avedon Carol's home. To side-step Rob's accusation that he was quoted out of context, I'll quote him in full:

Jesus! You talk of smelling something bad in Avedon's response to you but it seems to me that there's a distinctly rotten odour beginning to rise from all this stuff of yours. Looking further I see that when it comes to distribution of these various missives you are "...bringing in: Rusty Hevelin. Can anyone possibly object? (Besides Rusty...)..." Yes -- I can. At first I was somewhat puzzled by Rusty's inclusion. I mean I have only the vaguest idea who Rusty is (he's not terribly well-known in Britain) and I couldn't see what any of this could possibly have to do with him, but then, I remembered having heard that the Nielsen Haydens had publicly fired Rusty from the Iguanacon committee. As is widely known, the Nielsen Haydens are among those caught up in this affair and are standing for Taff this year. For someone who seems so deeply concerned about the ethical implications involved if Stu [Schiffman] did indeed try to drum up a few face-saving votes for Taral you appear to be remarkably unconcerned about letting someone who may have a grudge against the Nielsen Haydens into a forum where he can gain access to material by them on the subject of Taff that could be used against them in the forthcoming race by means



of the quotation-sans-qualifiers method so beloved of Richard Bergeron. Or is that the real reason why you insinuated yourself into all this in the first place? Understand me, Dave, and understand me clearly. I have no evidence at all that you're anything other than a concerned bystander in all this but what with the way this current Bergeron-inspired mess seems to be pulling in all manner of people with axes of their own to grind any apparently inexplicable action on the part of someone who has chosen to involve himself in all this is open to misinterpretation. Like your inclusion of Rusty Hevelin.

As someone from overseas, I don't care about your petty squabbles and find this whole thing too depressing for words. However I do care that unnecessary games may be being played with Taff by people with grudges of their own to work out, grudges that could jeopardize the future of the fund. I hope this isn't the case and I hope that you aren't one of those working out a grudge. (19 September 1984)

This ad hominem blather was replied to by Jackie Causgrove:

It was my idea to bring in Rusty Hevelin. I wanted someone I know to be impartial regarding Avedon and Bergeron, who has worked as a travel fund administrator and who has raised hundreds of dollars year after year for some 8 years now, for Taff (as well as Duff and Guff) by doing dozens of auctions throughout the country on their behalf.

I've known Rusty for over 13 years. He is the most scrupulously honest fan I know. I had forgotten all about the Iguanacon thing -- Rusty never talks about it at all. He never says a bad word about the people involved, nor has he ever given any indication that he bears a grudge toward Patrick about it. Even immediately afterward he kept his peace about it; why intimate he would not do so now? Rusty doesn't publish (he has muscular dystrophy and can't handle anything like that. He owns a Kaypro to do rare correspondence because of his disability -- the keys only need to be touched, not pressed, and mistakes made because his crippled hands miss the right key can be corrected readily). Why do you even suggest he would use anything against anyone? He's never raised funds in behalf of any one candidate, nor campaigned in anyone's behalf, he's only raised a couple of hundred bucks each year to go to all the fan funds. Don't try to create a monster out of whole cloth. It won't wash. (27 September 1984)

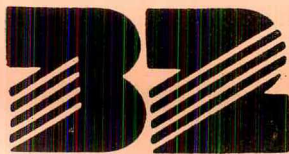
Sort a like a episode a "Fawlty Towers," ein't? Ear we 'ave Robbie bumbling about in US fandom wit all the savar fare a John Cleese serving Stuffed Rat wen the bloke ordered the Filette O'Gratin. E'nuff ta make ya guffah, et is. Without even trying, Hansen had managed to disparage one of the more notable fund raisers in the history of fan funds. Since he was writing while a guest of Avedon, probably using her typewriter, and Avedon was a member of the group being addressed, you'd a thought she could a saved him from his pratfall.

The knowledge that Hansen was dealing in the ad hominem (a preoccupation with possible motives) as opposed to substance was conceded in his reply to Jackie:

It was never my intention with regard to Rusty Hevelin to "...try to create a monster out of whole cloth" but only to point out how "...any inexplicable action on the part of someone who has chosen to involve himself in all this is open to misinterpretation" and to suggest how this could happen. I thought my letter was phrased in such a way as to make this clear but if not, and if this had caused distress to anyone, particularly to Rusty himself, then I apologise unreservedly. (17 Oct 84)

In other words, interest in the questions (I had raised) on the part of a fan Hansen knew little about was "inexplicable." And "open to misinterpretation." My position would be that any interest by any fan in any fan fund administration question would be totally understandable -- if Taff and all other fan funds belong to fandom. Hansen's view would be that he "couldn't see what any of this could possibly have to do with" a given fan. Why wait to see what someone has to say, when you can dismiss them based on who their friends or enemies might be? A closed mind makes life just that much simpler.

Hansen's face saving apology could not mask the fact that his "letter was phrased in such a way as to make [it] clear" he objected to the presence of Hevelin out of concern for the candidacy of the Haydens. It was in this letter Hansen told us "Taff is



about friendship and enabling those on one side of the Atlantic to meet those they've communicated with so long on the other," a veil-allusion to the nominations for Martha Beck which were then on Avendon's desk (approximately 10 feet from where he was sitting) -- and a premonition of the rhetoric which would be given expression soon in the Pickersgill petition against the Beck write-in. Rob was to return to England and invalidate the nomination of Martha Beck who would have been on the same ballot as the Haydens. It was then assumed the Haydens would only be confronted with the dead-fish candidacy of Rich Coad.

But Ragnarok was dozing in the wings.

On October 17th, 1984, Hansen apologized "unreservedly" to Hevelin. Now he was fully aware that Rusty was a primary facilitator in furthering transAtlantic contact through fund raising activities. A few weeks later a petition appeared from Hansen's best friend charging that the "orchestrators of the Beck campaign have no history of involvement with British fandom." In that same month Hansen announced that "British fandom" had neither "respect" or "trust" for Beck's "campaign managers," one of whom he identified as Rusty Hevelin.

"Rusty had nothing to do with [the Beck write-in campaign] except to go along with Joni [Stopa] in recruiting Martha to run," stated Jackie Causgrove. Hevelin helped persuade Martha to allow her name to be placed in nomination. A thorough search of a 12" stack of documentation on the events of 1984 relating to Taff reveals no evidence of his participation in the write-in campaign. There are only the allegations of Teresa and Patrick Hayden and Rob Hansen. The only distributors of material and collectors of signatures I can readily identify are Howard DeVore, Causgrove, Joni Stopa, and Maia Laskowsky -- all of who have been involved in fanzine publishing. Hevelin's name appears in none of the promotional material and is not even mentioned by Jackie in the campaign flyers as one of those who originally suggested Martha be placed in nomination, though this would certainly have been a legitimate place to mention him. His name was present on a list of fans who voters might know who could expedite the verification of credentials if the voter was not known to the administrator -- as were the names of Tucker, Glicksohn, Coulson, and Bowers (ring leaders all, I suppose).

Teresa Hayden, in Science Fiction Chronicle stated, it was "true that Rusty was quite visible in the Martha Beck write-in campaign."

"Quite visible?" "True?"

Where and when, Teresa? Where and when?

Teresa also, with breathtaking compassion, forgiveness, and graciousness, exonerated Hevelin of animus toward herself and Patrick, "I think this clears Rusty of anyone's presumption-of-appearance-of-vindictiveness..." but neglected to point out that the major "anyone" referred to were Patrick Hayden and, according to Patrick, herself. "The only people who really continued to harbor ill feeling about the events of 1978 were ourselves," stated Patrick referring to himself and his wife. Who would expect Teresa, so skilled in the arts of debate, to come clean before 5,000 to 10,000 readers? "Presumption-of-appearance-of-vindictiveness" sounds like Beauty, to me. That is, something in the eye of the beholder. Was Rusty's visibility in the write-in campaign equally as substantial as the Haydens' presumptions of vindictiveness or is this just the sort of nightmare they daydream about?

Hansen "remembered having heard that the Nielsen Haydens had publicly fired Rusty from the Iguanacon committee," but doesn't say where he "remembered" hearing it. This not awesomely noteworthy event occurred in 1978 (prior to Hansen's entry into fandom?), but since he says "I don't care about your petty squabbles" I doubt it would have clung to his mind like a leach all these years. Perhaps he heard about this petty squabble from Patrick Hayden who seemed to be living in terror that Hevelin was Out To Get Him. All this rhetoric about "axes to grind" which Hansen flung about with abandon could have been xeroxed from Patrick's letter of apology "for having continued to be paranoid about [Hevelin] ... for seven years." "In fact I haven't believed ill of Rusty's motivations in supporting Martha for some time." Patrick wrote these words on 7 January 1985 -- 7 days after the voting in the Beck/Coad/Hayden race had ended. And after his "paranoia" had been injected into the Taff race (by Hansen) and to 400 potential voters in a Duff race (!) by Richard Brown. A little paranoia (and



ad hominem crap) goes a long way. Of course, if Patrick had apologized before the voting was over that might have reflected badly on him. Who wants a paranoid administrator? Especially one who had accused Bergeron of "clinical paranoia on a truly awesome scale." And, as Hansen says, it would have constituted material "that could be used against them in the [ongoing Taff] race by means of the quotation-sans-qualifiers method so beloved of Richard Bergeron." Better to leave all your friends deceived, right, Rob? So they could pass along Patrick's "paranoia."

Sans qualifiers.

Less than six weeks after apologizing "unreservedly" to Hevelin, Hansen announced that British fandom had no "trust" or "respect" for Hevelin and had allowed circumstances to "create a monster out of whole cloth." Now Hansen owed Hevelin yet another apology as well as owing one to British fandom. Unless, British fans agree that anything goes in the name of friendship -- even kicking Taff fund raisers in the teeth. An "unreserved" Hansen apology and a token will get you on the subway. In Puerto Rico.

In Science Fiction Chronicle, May 1985, Chuck Harris viewed with sadness the potential fallout of controversy over Taff. Adding more fuel to the conflagration, Harris denounced "the little psychos" who "crawled from the woodwork to libel a perfectly respectable American girl ... just because she dared to take sides in this tawdry business." Hm. Some thought the "libel" was the accusation that she had 'taken sides.' Did the Taff Founder think it fine publicity for 5,000 to 10,000 people to be told a Taff election was a "tawdry business?" How could this admission staunch the flow of "casualties" who "will vote with their feet and walk out of fandom." Chuck went on, "Some of them -- the fund raisers, the articulate, the active fans, are the very people we can least afford to lose." Yes. It would be a pity if Rusty Hevelin gave up on Taff in disgust. Think of the money Taff would lose. But tell us, Chuck, who are the "psychos" who might have this deleterious effect on the fund-raisers? Do you think you do Taff a favor by keeping their identities so coyly hidden?

Locke, Causgrove, and Hevelin (fund-raisers, articulate, or active fans, all) have made significant monetary contributions to Taff over the years. One of them, having taken offense at certain ill-considered remarks of the EuroAdministrator, will confine future donations to Duff.

The dirty work against the "orchestrators" of the Beck campaign and the deception of British fandom proceeded, though significant figures in British fandom (and Taff) knew these "orchestrators" were fanzine fans and/or had a history of involvement with British fandom.

And all this was done in the name of "friendship."

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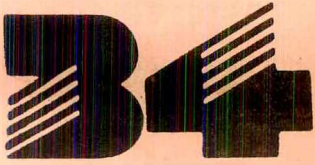
Paul Skelton is a fan who believes Taff is about friendship. You all know Skel. He's one of our best -- kind, wise, tolerant, accomodating, the sort of fan who'll give you the shirt off his back for the asking or, at least, 5 or 6 pages of scintillating copy from his typewriter. They don't come any nicer.

However, I don't believe Skel has been treated in a friendly manner by a European Taff administrator.

Skel nominated Martha Beck for Taff. He did so in a spirit of friendship for Joni Stopa, who had asked him to, though he expected to vote for the Haydens. Skel's nomination became redundant when Pete Presford's nomination for Martha either wasn't written in time and arrived late or both. Apparently, Pete hadn't been informed as to the nominating deadline, had been ill, and didn't realize a deadline had been announced in the US so late that it would be virtually impossible to beat -- what with the variables of transAtlantic communications. A two week Taff voting deadline (from the time the announcement appeared in mailboxes to countdown) hardly took into account the tendency of fans to just lay down in the face of deadlines. Or maybe it did. It's that mañana mentality, you know. At any rate, Skel's act of friendship was put aside.

Fan history rolled on.

Presently it came to pass that I received a letter from Paul Skelton asking me to send him a copy of the letter Rob Hansen had distributed announcing he "had no alternative but to serve notice that we will not recognize a US Taff administration run by



Martha Beck" and explaining his reasons. I was surprised. I had been about to write to Skel and ask him for a copy. Out of curiosity.

"What gives?" I wondered. "Is Rob sequestered with his dancing girls in the villa in the Himalayas refusing to deal with Taff matters again?" I'd begun to think of him as a kind of retired Eastern pasha living magnificently in remote hills. There are some things about fandom you have to conceive in terms of fannish jokes. Otherwise the reality would drive one to don a bandana and eyepatch, strap on a cutlass, and take to the high seas on a three-master.

On to drink.

I wrote to Hansen, "I find it surprising that one of the nominators of Martha Beck would not have been informed of your intentions in this matter." I requested he send copies to Pete and Paul as his "constituents" and out of common courtesy. Skel had voted for Rob in his Taff race. "As a participant in Taff races for over 30 years, I am particularly interested in this material as part of the historical record," I impertuned. I visualized The Great Hansen laughing darkly in his dim study as the fading light of a setting sun glimmered through jeweled fretwork in the arch overlooking the lake. Of course, I already knew Rob would refuse to accept mail from Puerto Rico as part of his Open Door Policy on Taff, so I also sent copies of my letter to Pete and Skel asking them if they would kindly forward it to Rob in case the copy I sent directly encountered some unthinkable fate.

While I was praying to Allah, Skel sent my letter along to The Surreptitious One and enclosed a request of his own for a copy of the Royal Decree which would have crushed the dreams of Taff voters.

He refused to send a copy of his statement to Skel. He ignored me, naturally.

Locke, Causgrove, Hevelin, and Beck, who did not merit "trust and respect," were not sent copies. I began to be dubious how much "trust and respect" is deserved by a Taff administrator who dismisses voters and contributors, declares he will disregard the results of an election and does it without the knowledge of major participants (while accepting their money). Hansen's letter was released on December 13th, two weeks before the polls closed. He was interfering in the electoral process behind the backs of people he named and refused to face them with his actions. And accusations.

He refused to send copies to Martha Beck's nominators in England, on whose behalf he was supposed to be administering Taff. I doubt he sent one to Roy Tackett, a former administrator, his peer in Taff who had nominated Martha.

Only three months prior, Rob Hansen had written "Taff is about friendship," but now he was violating the most common basic fannish ethics and doing so in the name of Taff. In the Dave Locke Forum, I had suggested it would be an act of arrogance to stone-wall the interest in Taff of any fan.

Commandant Hansen didn't mind.

Hansen's distribution of his letter in careful avoidance of Beck partisans and her nominators demonstrated a sneaky streak which surprised me. His profile in courage revealed an aversion to assume responsibility for his own actions and statements. Hansen attempted to share with Kevin Smith the responsibility for denying Martha Beck a place on the ballot (the better to deflect the fallout) -- when the authority for making that decision was vested in him alone. Furthermore his letter of 13 December was interference whose implications for the future he is not willing to submit to public scrutiny. It is Taff's ugliest precedent. It is a precedent he prefers to keep hidden like some bloody dagger against the day when it can be drawn against a fairly elected Taff candidate.

Yes, Langford was correct when he said, "Sometimes I wonder if the worst dangers to Taff aren't its friends."

Or, at least, the people who think they're its friends.

VOX

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