



THE TRANSATLANTIC FAN FUND

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RON BENNETT ELECTED 1958 TAFF DELEGATE

SUCCESSFUL YEARS ENDEAVOURS

Second consecutive year of triumph for fandom

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It is with great pleasure that I have to report that for the first time in its career, the Transatlantic Fan Fund has successfully carried through its objects to transport a fan from one side of the Big Pond to the other for the second successive year. Last Year Bob Madle attended the 15th World Science Fiction convention in London. This year Ron Bennett travels to the 16th - in South Gate. Both do so through the generosity and co-operation of fandom as a whole.

The story of this year's TAFF elections has been one of amiable and industrious co-operation between the two organisers, and of amusing and often heated bickering between people on the sidelines. The hard facts are that 1958 has seen a successful election, a good slate, a popular delegate and an actual journey - and all this without any attempts to raise any squabbles or scandals for the simple reason that there have been none. The next elections will be held in time to bring an American continent fan over here for the 1960 con, wherever and whenever that may be.

Ron Bennett is sitting beside me here at Tresco. He is on his way through to Southampton. The Queen Mary sails

from Soton on Thursday morning the 14th August and arrives in New York on the 19th where Ron will be met by Dick Ellington and the Dietzes. This, of course, brings to memory the departure of Pamela and myself when Dick Ellington, Dave Kyle, Larry Shaw and Dick Wilson toolled down to the docks in a covery of taxis to make sure we left on time, and to make sure we left. Ah, me, what it is to be a TAFFman! Ron will find in the USA the same tremendous welcome and generosity as we did, and already his transportation across the continent to South Gate has been fixed, he has offers of hospitality and the con committee have arranged accommodation at the con hotel, which, although this is now the usual custom must never be taken as a matter of course. All TAFF organisers have been and will continue to be grateful to the various con committees for their thoughtful arrangements for the visiting TAFF delegate.

I don't think it is necessary for me to elaborate on what 'South Gate in 58' means to fandom. This is one of those dream watchwords and rallying cries that have, against it would seem impossible odds, blossomed into reality. If any fan wanted to attend any worldcon over the last few years, his automatic choice would be SGIN58. This being so, and the fact well known by Bob Madle and myself, it became of paramount importance to make very sure that a fan did really travel to South Gate this year. We had to ensure that TAFF grew up, that it did its job, and that it was made strong enough to function despite the various oddball cries from even odderballer people. When Walter Willis, Bob and myself discussed the various items that should figure in the revised TAFF procedures, we did so with the advantage that we brought a great deal of prior experience to the meeting. Bob was able to put before us at first hand the feelings of the US fan and of Don Ford. The discrepancies of procedures were ironed out and subsequent smooth operations proved that this sort of get-together of interested parties produces results. The trouble is, tho' - you only get one worldconayear!

When all the smoke and dust has died down, one fact remains. TAFF in itself is just about the most worthwhile thing fandom has ever done, and its success is owed to two men - Walter Willis and Don Ford. No-one can take away from them this honour - and that's said in all seriousness and without any supposedly funny snide remarks about egoism. Those two really worked on TAFF!

TAFF REPORT FOR 1958

This year the voting was heavy. Received at Tresco were 102 ballot papers, not all of which were filled in, some people wishing merely to send in their donations, and others sending in their donations without a voting paper. As votes were being sent to the US manager, Bob Madle, for the first time, his votes were kept entirely separate from mine. The final results overall were:

Candidates:	Ron Bennett	287
	John Berry	240
	Dave Newman	229
Write in	Ted Tubb	12
votes	Norman Wansborough	3
	Alan Dodd	2
	Harry Turner	1
	Alan Hunter	1

As Don Ford in his report remarked, voting on these was light. Bobbie Wild also received quite a few votes before she pulled out due to health reasons and for no other reasons.

The following sent votes to Tresco: HFSanderson, Joy KClarke, RBennett, J. Michael Rosenblum, Ted Carnell, Archie Mercer, Paul Enever, Ron Ellik, Terry Carr, Ethel Lindsay, Walter D.Cole, GNRaybin, Elaine Phillips, Max Phillips, Belle CDietz, Franklin MDietz, Jr., Peter AWest, Betty Kujawa, William GTowart, CEHaycock MD (Now Mrs. Moskowitz - congrats, Sam!) Mel Osher, Allen Howard, James A. Brown, Wm.Merrill, Sheila Ashworth, Mal Ashworth, Martine Thomé, Pierre Versins, Ken McIntyre, NGWansborough, Sol Levin, David D. Smith, Helena Schwimmer, Joseph Casey Jr., Fred A. Heath, Kay Buckman, Roger Sims, Alfred J. Welch, John D.Roles, Eric Bentcliffe, John Koning, Jean Linard, Anie Linard, Chuck Harris, Laurence 'Satyr' Sandfield, Jim Caughran, Tony Thorne, Brian Jordan, Ina Shorrocks, Norman Shorrocks, Eddie Jones, Les Childs, J.R.Owen, N.Weedall, H.Stanley Nuttall, Sylvia Dees, Bob Richardson, Bryan Welham, E.C.Sterne, Roberta Wild, Patricia O.Milnes, Frank E. Milnes, Audrey BEversfield, PHMabey, John Humphries, DEOldham, Sid Birchby, John W.McLeod, Heather Robson, Ralph Bailey, CMackenzie, I.Tubb, ECTubb, JSMackenzie, Diane Berry, John Berry, Harry Turner, Madeleine Willis, Walter Willis, William G.Harry, Roger Horrocks, A. Thomson, Ken Potter, Dorothy Ratigan, Jim Ratigan, Don Allen, BTJeeves, Mike Moorcock, Boyd Raeburn, HMKyle, A.C.Kyle, Jr., Richard OSandfern, Arthur CKyle, Peter Hamilton, Dr. J.N.Baxter, Jan Jansen, Ron Buckmaster, Daphne Buckmaster, Ellis T.Mills, Eric Frank Russell and ERJames sent in forms. One was filled in: "Since all these names are known to me thru their activities and the writeups are all so excellent, how can I vote..." The other: "Cane faire rien!" No prizes for guessing which quote fits which personality.

Donations also received from various people who were either unable to vote or too late. Keith A. Freeman, Gillian Adams, Vince Clarke, Ella Parker, Julian Parr, our old friend Anonymous and half of the residue from the WAW to the Gate fund. A raffle was held at Fettering this year, Ina Shorrocks and Bobbie Wild kindly officiating; and Peter West made a handsome donation from his Photo Agency work. Archie Mercer contrived one of his usual complicated methods of sending in money, connected in some vague way with lost property at the Cytronicon, and Norman Shorrocks had a hand in it some where, too. Many people sent in donations over and above what was considered by one singularly uninformed female fan as the required amount of 50 cents (I do so hope that she's been straightened out on that. Publishing a fan that is read by many people demands accuracy in reporting.)

For the benefit of future taff elections, it might be a good idea to say here and now that as much cash as is possible is wanted; we only put the 2/6d or 50c limit on as a lower limit. The more the merrier.

But perhaps the strangest feature of the extra donations came in the form of a continuous stream of five shilling postal orders, handed to me each week by Bobbie, then a continuation of that in two half crowns a week. These, Bobbie told me, came from an anonymous source. A certain amount of detective work convinced me that if it wasn't Bobbie herself, putting her mental house in order after pulling out of taff, then it must be the newest and brightest-for-a-long-time light of the London O. This young lady said to me: "I know I can't vote in TAFF, but here's five bob." The next week she said the same. I demurred. After all, we're not all millionaires and if bnf's consider a half a crown is jake by them, why do any different? So - the five bobs flowed in from different directions. You should take this as an example of the spirit of TAFF getting to work on a brand new fan before the superficial boredom that afflicts you greybeards of the fannish scene has a chance to ossify.

Another fine deed was performed by Dr. J.N. Baxter of Saskatchewan. After sending in more than the statutory minimum, he said: "Provided that a representative is definitely sent this year, I will guarantee a further amount of five dollars. But if nobody goes then you don't get it." I told Ron Bennett and threatened him if he broke his leg before climbing aboard the QM. I thanked Doc Baxter and asked him to send the cash c/o Rick Sneary. There is another important point brought up by Dr. Baxter's letter which I hope to air later on in this report.

When the fund was running along nicely, after a slow start, back in May this year, Norman Shorrocks very kindly offered to run off an appeal to reach out to the people who hadn't as yet stirred themselves. There were at that time quite a number of them; the fund was running along well, but it could have gone faster. I jumped at this and an appeal was sent out which brought in a number of the laggards and made the difference between sending Ron with his lunch tied up in a shirt and booking him the captain's table. (well, not quite, but you get the idea.)

At that time, too, a problem arose in the timing of the sailing. I had booked a berth with the Greek Line at a date which, so the candidates advised me, was too early for them. I'd severe memories of my own attempts to book a berth in 1955 and so had done the deed nice and early. Now it was all to do again. And, as is usual, there was none available. Here Norman Shorroock stepped in again and through 'unorthodox channels' came up with the berth that Ron is now occupying. As soon as this had been, as I thought settled, I caused to be published in 'steam' an extension of voting time. After publication Norman informed me that Cunard wanted the booker's name at a date even earlier than that I'd set for the first ship. Willy-nilly, I was forced to revert to the originally advertised time for the end of voting (as shown on the ballot forms). This accounts for any odditys you may have heard rumoured about the closure date. In the event I had but one vote late. (Millian Adams) And this because the girl had been out of touch. What Bob Madle had, tho', must be another story. Our co-operation had been close and good up until the time I went to Ireland and he moved. However, at the Midwestcon, Bob was able to explain the true facts and found that people were willing to donate to TAFF even though they weren't voting having left it too late. Bob used my cut-off date, because he had to, and the voting as given earlier was the final count.

There is one slight discrepancy. John W. McLeod of Auckland voted twice. I mean - he sent in two papers, only one of which counted.

For reasons which I am not at liberty to disclose, J. Michael Rosenblum is numbered among the patron saints of TAFF. (Micahel- if the choise of patron noun sounds odd - you know what I mean, selah)

On the US side of the pond, Bob had a problem that luckily did not trouble me unduly. He was forced to reject a number of votes from people who were not science fiction fans. This was a matter of principle and was conducted in all amity between those concerned. In point of fact, had the votes been counted they would not have affected the results. Naturally, I did not personally know all the names of the people listed above; but in those cases where there was a doubt they had all already been vouched for on the space on the ballot form provided. As you all probably know, there has been some controversy on this vexed question - after all, how do you define a sf fan? In essence, that doesn't bother us; we here in TAFF are concerned with how you decide who has a moral right to vote in a taff election. I'll have more to say on this later in the non-report sections; but here one answer is obvious. You have a taff administrator. As they say in the newspaper competitions: His decision is final.

On the US Scene, after Ron has been suitably received in NY, he will be taken on to Detroit by Sandy Cuttrell, Bill Donoho and Dan Curran. and from thence will go aboard the travelcon with the Detroit mob on what promises to be a fantastic and altogether wonderful tour thru the States to South Gate. Bob Pavlat, also, will be taking care of Ron and is himself attending the con. From personal experience I can say that Ron is in fine hands ; although he needs to 'ware the brown bottle that I was glad to note superseded spirits in NYC.

Issue No.20 of FANAC, dated 12-7-58 carried news of Ron's election. FANAC is just about the premier fannish newszine these days, of course. Another fnz, unhappily, saw fit to mention, 1607-58 that Bob Madle had notified the SAPS OE that Dave Newman had been elected. Unless Bob is developing two heads, and unless there is chicanery abroad, I guess we must again put down astigmatism in affaires fannish against the fnz with the garbled report. The news has been disseminated over all the fannish channels, and this report, which is now going out as an entity on its own, would have been included with a fnz had one come out on the right time. As it is, I missed little - and the paper work is nothing short of backbreaking. Not that I mind, you understand, just that I have to take it into consideration when planning the earning of the bread and margarine.

Now we come to the financial position. This is rosy, for a change. The fare across the Atlantic, East-West is £70-10-0d. West-East it is £60-0-0d. The difference is accounted for by the return taking place during the off-season. In the U.S. Bob has about 200 dollars, and has already booked the return and paid for it, Ron having the ticket in his wallet. He leaves New York on the 17th September. This leaves about £6 still in TAFF funds, which is as it should be.

Here, I have paid for the Queen Mary fare and also the two-way trip from Harrogate to Southampton and back. This was £4-11-7d. Cash in

hand consisted of:	Balance	50	5	-
	WAW to the GF	3	-	-
	Elect. donations	19	10	4
	do. after appeal	9	14	6
	HKB		1	9
		82	11	7
	Fares	75	1	7
	Balance	7	10	-

And if anyone wants to know howcome that 'HKB 1/9d' - bulmer believes in making book keeping easy. So we march forward into 1960 with a credit balance of seven pound ten. The rule about the elected delegate receiving either the fare or the 90 percent, whichever is the less still holds good, as there will be a little more to come in on the basis of the 1958 elections.

This report is being made not in any stuffy boardroom fug, but as we are, after all, dealing with affaires fannish, in the spirit of fandom and its mores. However, as a considerable sum of money is involved, a certain amount of commonsense must be displayed. A glance at the financial tables will show that had not Lee Hoffman backed out and thus ensured that Bob Madle would be able to travel, and had not Dave Kyle fixed up the cheap plane fares, the cash in the kitty calculated on what was brought in this year would not have been enough to have sent Ron over and brought him back. In fact, on this side only £32-6-7 was collected despite the appeal. Also, a great deal of this was the outcome of a few peoples' generosity. The balance from last year in the US was 60 dollars, so they managed about 140 dollars this year, which is about £12 more than we did here .

I leave these figures with you to ponder. They make one thing very clear. The decision to hold over the next TAFF election until 1960 is sound. The weakness is that only one election in that time is not a good thing, as a large number of fans seem to like to vote before they part with cash. What it will mean is that a drive will have to take place at some convenient midpoint of the period, prior to the elections themselves, to lay down a strong foundation for the fund. It would appear that possibly the forthcoming British resortcon at Whitsun, 1959 would be a good time, plus a special effort at the Worldcon in September, 1959, which is likely to be held in Detroit, Dallas (now withdrawn) or Chicago, although all signs show that Detroit will get that dubious honor.

It must be driven home to fandom - if fandom considers it worthwhile, that is - that TAFF is a part of a person's participation in fandom. You read sf, you write letters, you attend a club and a convention, you read and write for and possibly publish a fan magazine, you- if you are one of the few trufans left - collect. You also believe in and support the idea of one of your number travelling across the Big Pond to attend a convention on the other side and to meet fresh fans. In a word, you support TAFF. TAFF is above politics, above the fluctuations of the fan scene, is not affiliated to any other body, is not dictated to by anyone, is out to grind no axes and does not make a profit, save in the spreading of goodwill.

TAFF is with us all the time, throughout the year, and does not suddenly pop up just prior to election time. Provided you receive your ballot papers in good time, there is no need for any whining about how and what is taff doing this year. TAFF is with us all the time, and is always ready to accept donations in the fannish cause. I am happy to report that many fen here are in the habit of tacking on a bit for TAFF whenever monetary matters are involved. TAFF is not Ltd., or Inc., it is a spirit, more than a thing, and despite wars and rumours of wars, can point to a good record of achievement. There are precious few other institutions in fandom that have the same high record.

DIGRESSIONS OF A TAFFMAN *****

What follows is open to query and correction. I don't pretend to know it all. If you have positive proof of what you claim in opposition to this, then I'm sure fandom as a whole would like to hear it. Otherwise just listen, huh?

During the war Forry Ackerman decided it would be a nice scheme to visit his many friends in England and the Continent. With typical Ackermanese brilliance he dubbed this brainchild The Big Ford Fund; but in the event he couldn't make it and so decided that it would be an even better scheme to bring an Anglofan over to the US. Ted Carnell, at that time a prominent fan, went to Cincinnati in 1949. He paid most of his fare himself; but the idea was born. Later on, Don Ford was in close contact with Norman Ashfield and they decided to repeat the process, although it does seem that Don was going this alone. At least, there is no general record of any list of contributors being drawn up. Norman although keeping up his contact with Don, dropped out of fandom, and a hiatus ensued. Around about the same time (1952) Walter Willis had risen like a Nova on the fannish scene. Through the moribund British fandom of that time, most of Walter's outside contacts were with US fen. We all know of the effects of Sixth Fandom; what is not generally realised is that the US fen were so struck with the writings of Walter that they raised the scheme to bring him to America.

The cry "WAW with the Crew in 52" meant just what it said. Apart from the Epicentre and a few other active fans, it was all in the States. So the US fen clubbed together and put up some cash. Walter supplied a lot himself, too. He went to Chicago in 1952 (The mammoth con that was the pierced boil of the boom) carried up on the enthusiasm of US fanzine fandom. The project was supposed to be secret from Anglofen, until it was an actuality. That didn't work out, of course - but Walter went. Ted Carnell, and now Walter Willis. Both going to the states, both attending a convention; and both, obviously, representing different sections of fandom.

In 1953 Bert Campbell went to Philadelphia - no doubt in the morning and with a shillelagh under his arm - on the wave of personal enthusiasm he had generated at the Bournemouth Con. His passage was paid for by himself, with help in the form of extended payments from his firm, Hamiltons. It was, primarily, a business trip. But he met fans, was well known and liked, and forged another link in the idea. He even put in a snap vote for London as the next worldcon site. But a warning note was struck in a fanzine of the time, which pointed out that Bert was not an elected representative of British fandom. Not one of the three visitors so far had been that. The nearest was Walter, brought over because the fen wanted to meet him - and Ted Carnell, because of his undoubted position in the fandom immediately during and following the war.

((For the purists among you - the Redd Boggs's of fandom - this is being composed directly onto stencil without benefit of notes. I'm giving everything as I recall it. Wherefore the leading cageat.)))

Now Walter was simmering with repressed feelings. He'd been taken across the Big Pond - why shouldn't that idea be extended? It was - and Walter will curse me for revealing this skeleton - a matter of conscience. A meeting was held. Out of it came proposals for what was then termed the "Two-Way Transatlantic Fan Fund." At the Coroncon in 1953, Ted Carnell made the first public announcement of the fund that had been set up by Don Ford and the Cincy group to bring Norman Ashfield to Philly. As Norman hadn't been a ble to go, Don and the CFG had thrown the offer open to any British fan able to go. The meeting decided that there was not time to organise the despatch of a suitable fan to Philly. That a permanent Two-Way Transatlantic Fan Fund be set up to help both British and American fans to attend each others conventions. That 1954 would be the time to send the first fan across to the US.

Walter was delegated the task of running the procedures and voting. He published his proposed details in Hyphen and set to work. That first election slate consisted of: Vince Clarke; Derek Pickles; Ken Slater; Tony Thorne; James White.

Now here we have the crux of the matter. TAFF, as it now is, was a fusion of two ideas. The enthusiasm was there. It was agreed by the US fen that we here should elect whom we liked as we liked to go. Walter pointed out that it would be not only good manners, but sensible, to give the US fen a voice in who was to visit them. Various of the rules, if that be not too rigid a word for them, were proposed then that are now a feature of all TAFF elections.

Item (3) on the proposed rules bears reprinting in full. "There should be qualifications for voters, to prevent such an eventuality as, say, the entire population of Trowbridge, Wilts, voting for Norman Wansborough. They must be (a) active already in fandom to the extent of having subscribed or contributed to at least one fanzine or joined a fan club or organisation; and (b) show their interest in the project by making a certain minimum contribution to the Fund. Say 2/6d?"

Well, that seems clear enough. If your milkman reads every copy of Astounding that comes out, does that make him a member of those who should vote for people in a TAFF election? Remember that there were, at the time of these proposals 1953, no voices raised in dissent. The ordinary, sensible way of looking at that is if your milkman talks to you, goes along to meet the local fans; creates, with you, a local group; reads a fanzine or so - then he is bound to understand what fandom and TAFF mean - up to a point, of course - and either pull out in contemptuous disgust (as many do) or plunge right in. (the wise ones.) Either way, he becomes a sheep or a goat.

TAFF is a facet of fandom. It is generally accepted that readers of science fiction are called fans. But the important point is the degree of commitment involved. Just because your milkman reads *Astounding* every month (and there must be many people who do just that, judging by the circulation figures) he can call himself a fan - but he is not a member of the group of people who have a far greater interest in sf, to the extent of collecting it, of discussing it, of attending and giving lectures about it, of writing to one another fantastically long letters about it, of going to meetings and conventions in order to meet writers and artists of sf, and to talk to other readers and collectors, and of seeing in sf something that can take hold and grip their imaginations. From the letter columns of the prozines came the fan magazines. It is true to say that almost every major fan has had a hand in fanzine publishing and writing history. But there are major fans who never have, those people whose talents run to organising conventions, for example. I fail to see why one group should denigrate the other.

Personally, I believe that to be a whole-hearted fan, you must have a fanzine publishing history behind you. I don't mean by that that you must necessarily publish your own fanmag. I do mean that you have a knowledge of the field, can orient references, are aware of traditions and personalities, are conscious of what science fiction fandom has done and is still doing, come to that. You are not in the full picture if you ignore the fanzines. Equally, you are not in the full picture if you ignore conventions. Some fanzine fans do not attend conventions - very few. Some convention fans deride the fan publishing field - quite a number. You'll probably notice and remark on the very few long lasting top flight fans who are just members of one group and not of the other. So it boils down to a comity of interest, split by a possible divergence - there are other splits, if you look for them. Why should not the completist collector deride those who do not collect everything? Of course, it's almost impossible to collect everything these days and so the problem takes care of itself. But you find precious few modern fans - I mean latecomers - willing to go to the lengths of the old timers. One reason is that sf is cheap now, and you don't have to search avidly for it. One time every single bit of sf, wherever found, was precious. It has ingrained habits into older fans. To me, *de Ackerman* has always epitomised the man who treats sf as the one shining thing in his life; his enthusiasm radiates. You get very few like that beginning now. Of course, you can't - there isn't room for more than a few professional fans; but others there are who are the same way inclined, if not so lavishly. We can't all be whole fans; but by heck we can try, and forget this nonsense about who is a fan and who isn't.

So we went into 1954's election with a wondering sort of hesitancy, not quite realising what was afoot. Vince Clarke won that one, but backed out and so no-one went on TAFF in 1954. The same set of rules

was carried through to 1955. That slate, after a false start and a series of withdrawals which have nothing to do with TAFF history, was Eric Bentcliffe, Terry Jeeves and Ken Bulmer. Walter carried on as usual, again inviting the US fen to take part in the elections. He could have, under the original agreements, run the election purely on an Anglo basis. By this time the impetus of Sixth Fandom had gone; whether or not you consider that it has been renewed, or maybe you think 7th never did get up off the ground after that doglike knee in the groin, I wouldn't know. The boom had proliferated and busted. Fandom was again temporarily down. Here in England Vince Clarke and I had founded OMFA. (I have to mention it again..) At first consisting of a majority of Anglofen (And Irish, natch) it had gradually taken aboard many welcome US fen. Our contacts with the States and Canada, although attenuated, were still intact. The first Cytricon was held.

In the 1955 elections, Ken Bulmer was elected. I don't want to make this a personal thing (more on that later) so will content myself with pointing out, in the history of TAFF, that in 1955 the very first TAFF delegate travelled. This was, in one important sense, the beginning.

Through my contacts I knew plenty of US fen - and I was pleased that so many remembered me. I had the greatest of good fortune in being taken care of by Don Ford, under the original arrangements. He proved to be a first class gentleman. Having Pamela with me was no handicap, either. But the best bit was that, thru Don, I was able to meet and get to know the various convention type fans in the US - a thing that Walter had not done to the same extent. By this time Ted Carnell was to all intents and purposes out of the fan field, being tied up with Nova Publications Ltd. and Bert Campbell was on the tail of a degree and his eventual disappearance from science fiction. So I was in the direct line, and had a task to fulfill. By meeting people, you get to know them. You can then form an opinion, which may differ radically from the one you formed through correspondence and publishing.

During the period prior to the 1955 elections a few people had been beating the drum for TAFF. I well remember Chuck Harris, in the 1954 elections, energetically going round creating an interest in TAFF and spreading the word of what it meant. It is very difficult, now, to gain a full understanding of just how TAFF was regarded then. It was a mad dream, a wild vision: It had taken Ted Carnell a long time to get there; Walter had not found it easy, Bert was facing the inevitable bills. And here we were, a bunch of fans, planning to elect a representative to go across. A great many people laughed and wrote us off as cranky visionaries.

Then, in 1955, someone actually went. The obvious occurred. All kinds of people jumped on the badwagon, shouting their spiel about TAFF and the way it should be run. Why were we doing things like this? It should be by ... and so on and so on. I'm happy to report that Don

Ford, who in any case doesn't faze easily, and Walter were able to hold off the flood. It might be pertinent here to comment that we didn't necessarily consider our system the best; but it worked, it had grown up as a tool forged in the fire of use grows under the hammerings of circumstance (4½ cents a word stuff, this) and we didn't intend to alter it just because a bunch of johnny come latelies wanted to get into the act. On the other hand, whenever a sound piece of advice or suggestion was offered, it was, if possible, incorporated into the body of unwritten laws governing the elections.

Ted Tubb, who has drummed up a great deal of cash in his time for TAFF and who most certainly cannot be regarded as a jcl, once suggested that a bond be posted by each candidate. This was tossed out in one of the periodic tussles that shook TAFF at that formative period. Walter had to preserve his poise and even temper in the face of great provocation that time. Later on, Don requested a bond posting from his candidates, they complied as a matter of course, and Ted's suggestion went thru quietly.

But some of the ideas dreamed up by various well-meaning people were out of this world for oddity, to say the least. One suggestion was that the candidates should be chosen from the opposite sides of the Atlantic. There is some merit in this one, and a version of it has been used in the last election. The idea has just been put forward again as something new that the TAFF organisers should note. Ah well. Better, really too much interest than not enough, of course; but it is sometimes trying.

Now, however, the most serious crisis shook the TAFF idea. I have faced some tricky moments in fandom; none, perhaps, so painful as the months following my return from America. I was treated to the spectacle of various fans carrying on a feud and using as their central captains two friends, Don Ford and Walter Willis. Through misunderstandings a situation was reached in which one side accused the other of saying things they had not, and the second of trying to regain a balance in TAFF that, disastrously, seemed to have been lost. Briefly, the central question revolved around the basic idea of who should morally have the right to vote in any TAFF election. Now think on the tortuous strings from which TAFF dangled, the different ideals that had gone into its creation. Point one was that it applied to fans. And although we are forced to use the word 'fan' semantics alone can straighten out what it means to about 500 different people. Probably 500 different meanings.

Grant that a man who pays money and watches a football match is a football fan. But how does he stack up against the players and coaches and managers? How does he stack up against the fanclubs who go out onto the touchlines no matter what the weather, who spend money on badges and scarves and annual dinners? He's a fan, sure. What are they?

The players and coaches and managers can be likened to the authors and editors and publishers. The fanclubs with their finery to those who publish fanzines and fan whole-heartedly among themselves and the annual dinners are manifestly conventions.

Now sf fans are a race apart. The idea of a transatlantic FAN fund means what it says. Remember the milkman who reads Astounding. We all know Kingley Amis reads AST. We read on the adverts for F&FS that various US TV and allied goodbodies read the magazine. All right then, they're fans. But would you stand them alongside a Bloch or a Tucker or a Grennell or a Harris or a Moskowitz or a Kyle or a Barrett or a Slater or a Burbee or a Rosenblum? Of course not. Each man's conscience dictates his own opinion of himself as a fan; if a person who reads sf comes into fandom, we recognise the step, we realise that a new aura has swum into our perceptive field, though that may take time. But we get to hear about it. And the neo knows nothing about fandom for quite a time; even the smartest and most willing take time to grasp what it is all about. That's one reason why there is a lag between the time a person comes into fandom and the time they can really and truly understand enough to see clearly just who and what they are voting for in TAFF.

But equally so, the fan group is running taff for fans, not professionals. In the US the pro-fan is rarer than he is in Britain. When L. Sprague de Camp and Alfie Bester and Bob Heinlein and others came over here they did so under their own steam. (plug) They are not fans in our sense of the word, even though they might have contributed to a fanzine; the criteria for categorising them changes into a different gear and by the very hazards of their pro life they may impinge on fandom without becoming truly fans - perhaps I'd better call the mere fan reader a fan and the collective for usn's fen - . When the pro author does a little something for a fanzine he is doing so on a different plane from the work done by an ordinary citizen that makes the o.c. a fan. There are the fan pros, people like Bloch and Tucker and Silverberg; but with them we can see at a glance that fandom means something of what it does to the little guy in his attic in the country with his collection and his duplicator and his inky fingers and his yearly incursion to the big smoke. You'll find the fan pros are essentially in fandom because they like it and savour the wonder of it, not just because it looks good for the peasants to dabble a little with the kids.

It turned out that someone wanted to nominate Doc Smith for TAFF. Then the argument turned on whether he could even vote. Facts that he had long contributed to fnz were brought out and it was proved that he was in fact a trufan. I'm on very very very delicate ground here. I doubt that any one alive could unravel all the complications that followed. Walter was accused of being a dictator because he had said that Doc Smith oughtn't to be nominated for TAFF. Well, I hope you can see the reasoning behind this opinion, and bear in mind that Walter could not have been aware that The Doctor E.E. Grey Lensman Smith had ever done enough in fandom to be ranked as a member of fandom, completely discounting the glory that is his through his pro writing. You see, we're talking about fans. Or fen.

The upshot was that Walter was told he was a dictator, was told he had said that only people who published a fanzine could have anything to do with TAFF and like that. It was a farrago of nonsense, with the kernel of truth being that Walter and the groups who thought like him wanted to put over the idea behind TAFF, that it stood for those who not only liked sf but who did something about it beyond the mere reading

in the field. Equally, when you read that he had said that convention fans should not vote (he didn't) you would feel right to condemn that viewpoint as much as you condemn the viewpoint that any Tom Dick or Harry who casually picked up a Galaxy at the drug store could also vote.

From this history of the birth of TAFF it is very easily seen just how these misunderstandings might arise; that they did is something to be deplored but not forgotten. They are all over now; but they do serve as a warning for the future. From Walter's idea of fanzine fen clubbing together to bring across someone they had read and liked the sound of and Don's idea of bringing across a British fan in place of the one he couldn't one project emerged. It was bound to have to find a way round this rock before it could settle down. The situation was further caused by the dissimilar fan structures in the US and in England. (Ireland, too.) Here the fanzine fan is predominant, and the fnzfan also is predominant at conventions. We have very few topflight fen who are merely confen. In the US there are bnf's in fnz fandom, but the majority of mature fen in the field are confen. This is especially true in the CFG - the Cincinnati Fantasy Group and their many friends who regularly attend the Midwestcon, which is - the Worldcon notwithstanding - regarded by many as the major con of the year. As I have said, I was fortunate enough to be engulfed in the confen type at Cleveland and quite clearly saw that when things had to be done and decisions taken and the prestige - if I may use that word in this context - of sf fandom had to be upheld then it was the confen who handled things. Handled them crisply and well, too, as I saw on more than one occasion. Where there was a bnf fanzine type who was also a confen type, he, at the con, quite obviously fitted in well.

The alarming difference - well, not really alarming, just interesting - was that when a fan who was a fnz type fan and young was involved, he was usually, by comparison with t'others, a nonentity. Now these are harsh words. But it was not until late on in the con at Cleveland that I caught so much as a glimpse of people with whom I could discuss Atom and WAW and Who Sawed Courtney's Boat and '-' and '/' poetsarcs and fully certified sex fiends and Harris, Harris, Snoopwhistle and Harris and the Fort Mudge Steam Calliope Co and the Bulmer Aqueous Vapour Company (Apart from Lee Hoffman and Bluch and Tucker and a very few more) And even then the conversation was hard going. They were shy. And, what is far more to the point, very few of them, hyperactive tho' they were at the time, are still around. The US fanzine scene is composed of, in the main, youngsters, who flare up and die. The confen go on for ever, like the combined fnz and con fen over here. True, my friends, hard words.

This is not to say that there are no fnzfen in the US who are primarily fnz fen and who also are mature and long-lasting. Of course there are. But, by definition, if I didn't meet them at the Cleveland con they were not the 100 per cent con types that I did meet there. (Apart from those who because of distance couldn't make it) I met a whole raft of first class people around the country who were fnztype fen, and who hadn't made it to the con and who wished they had; not all the US fnzfen were the shy inarticulate gazelles I talked to.

And there I suppose you have one of the basic reasons for this old disagreement. A person in any society can only judge what he knows of that society on the basis of the people he meets or knows in it. Things can take place to the nth degree involving many people in the society; unless the person in question knows enough about the others he will be unaware of what is going on. It is manifestly difficult for anyone except the few present to know what's going on in a smoke filled room at a con, where all kinds of high-policy are discussed and settled. When the results are seen, unless explanations are offered, how can you tell for certain who did what and when? If you do not keep up with the fmz then how do you expect to know what is going on in the major world of fandom? To be able to see round all sides of these questions demands a sort of encyclopedic knowledge; and it is pretty safe to say that there is no-one in fandom today with a full knowledge of what is going on in the current fandom. Plenty of folk know a great deal, and keep up; but knowing it all is reserved for none of this Earth.

To revert to Doc Smith for a moment. I'm not at all clear if the row began merely because he was queried as a voter, and the angry reply was that, by Ghu, he could stand for candidate, too, if needs be. That isn't important; the incident was merely the trigger that released the charge that had been building up, out of the divergent beginnings of TAFF.

You see: Walter's experience had been of a group of friends clubbing together to bring him across because they knew him and liked him. It was a personal thing, a very precious, wonderful gesture.

Don's experience had been of disappointment that a friend hadn't been able to come across, and a generous throwing open of the offer to anyone who could manage it. He wasn't bothered who came; he didn't even want a hand in this person's selection. It was a very precious, wonderful gesture -- and an all-embracing gesture.

This being so, even though the fund started off with the proposals, No.3. of which I have quoted, on a pretty wide front, and with US participation, the clash was inevitable. That it began as it did was a trifle; that people began to chant slogans originating in things not said by the opposite side was to be deplored, and that it threatened TAFF was just darn silly. Of course, fans are human, super-human, if they are to be believed and if fandom personalities are highly-coloured. Fandom is composed of articulate people and so they say what they think and Degler take the hindmost. Rows in fandom are part of its nature; it distressed me personally that my friends were being slanged on each other's account by other friends; but then, I'm notoriously simple and easily discomfitted. You have to watch pretty carefully to see who is malicious in their feuds; their reputation precedes them as a stinking miasma and trufen tolerate them (some don't, of course) and do not allow themselves to become involved. I can say publicly, now, that this taff argument under discussion was a clean fought debate, thank Ghu. It was not until later, and newer people crept in, that things changed; but then taff was a united body, well able to defend itself against the cankers.

So this TAFF history is brought forward to the end of 1955, when Walter handed over the reins to me. I was faced with the debris of the quarrel I have just outlined (the facets of it were various and interesting but hardly worthy of detailed treatment) and a shining ideal combined of the enthusiasms of Walter and Don, with the idealistic aspirations of Walter and the hard-headed practicality of Don. As a team, they were perfectly fitted to work together once they had decided what the task was. My task was equally clear. My friends were busily arguing amongst themselves about who and what was a sf fan; I had to run TAFF.

The argument affected me in two ways. I could quite clearly see and agree with Walter's contention that a fan had to know who he was voting for. The spirit in which taff was founded did not include the situation where a fan is approached in a clubroom and asked for money and a vote for someone of whom he has never heard, or, in the normal course of things, is ever likely to hear. Either he doesn't keep in touch with world fandom, or the candidate doesn't. Is it true to say that the only way to keep in touch with world fandom is thru the fanmagazines? You answer that one, it's a finger exercise. (exercise, natfh) On the other hand I have five fingers - (There's a psychological name for this or you can call me hayseed) I could quite clearly see Don's contention that if taff was to do what it had set out to do, namely get a fan across the big pond at regular intervals, then we would have to secure cash from whatever sources were available. I am given to understand by various US fen that the US fan won't part with cash unless he has a vote. This, if true, meant that all kinds of votes would be coming in, in order to secure cash in a mere mundane greed for money that completely contravened the fannish spontaneity of the original taff idea. That sickened some of the trufen old guard. The hard-headed old guard were amazed that fen could be so woolly-minded and idealistic as to suppose that enough cash could be collected on a spontaneous basis.

To clear away one thing - it has been proved that US fen, quite obviously, will donate without a vote, as if we thought they wouldn't. But that is a sample of the innaccurate information that comes the way of a taff administrator. Secondly, because of misreporting of what the fnz fen were supposed to claim, the non fnz fen were hurt at not being called fans. All this is old hat now; but it does point up the sort of situation obtaining when Don Ford and I set the ball rolling on the 1956 elections.

It will be instructive, for a variety of reasons, to quote the results of the 1956 elections. I have a copy of FEZ handy, dated March, 1956. Lee Hoffman 332. Forry Ackerman 177. Dave Kyle 109. Lou Tabakow 61. G.M. Carr 50. Wally Weber 37. Hal Shapiro 10. Kent Corey 8.

It might be invidious - and unkind - of me to comment on just why these results were as they are. Just this word: The leaders were whole fen, the others local white-haired boys (I've met them incidentally and they are wonderful fans, real fine guys) disliked or unknown for the remainder.

It should be made very clear that even though Walter had handed over to me, he remained very active in the taff framework and consistently supported and encouraged it. His advice was always valuable and his gift of clear thinking extraordinarily helpful. During the elections of 1956 and 1957 Don Ford was the senior administrator, as the fan was coming from the US side of the big pond. During 1958 I was senior, as it was an East-West visit. Next year's will see Bob Madle as the senior - for what that's worth, of course. Don, Walter, Bob and myself can all vouch for the work demanded and the abuse that one gets if one is a taff administrator. Of course - we thrive on it...

During the early part of 1957 an event occurred which is of paramount importance to taff. This was the publication, complete in one volume, of 'The Harp Stateside'. In this volume you will find what is perhaps the greatest reason for TAFF and with it a piece of fannish literature that will endure - I hesitate to say is immortal with the h-bomb controversy going on. Now if only these political guys with their UNO's and etc's could get together like fen and discuss their differences, we might get somewhere. By this I am thinking of the mature type fan and not the hop-head, of course.

Fortunately, I was in Belfast at the time Walter began to print THS and was able to help foul up the two Gestetners he had just acquired. And so we come - out of context in this history, perhaps, but of strong personal feeling to me - to the complex and controversial point of why so far there has been no Bulmer report on the taff trip of 1955. There have been sundry short reports in various places; but no over-riding full scale effort. But then, when you come to look at it, what the hell can you find to say after the Harp Stateside? I mean - Walter has done it all; he's written the definitive account. It is not fair to claim - as I have half-jokingly done - that my own laziness accounts for the lack of a report. I have an extraordinarily strong guilt complex about this. It has affected my fan writings. It has been suggested that I merely sent round a nice letter to all those who subscribed to the 1955 taff to say thank you. This suggestion, made in good faith, I decided to adopt. And then - well, it hardly seemed adequate. And so the gap was extended. I hesitate to point out that writing is my living, and writing takes it out of you. After a day at the typer you tend to get the screaming abdabs at the thought of turning out some more. You need a hobby like gardening - see how sane and balanced is Paul Enever - who gardens for a living and fans for a hobby. Bloch and Tucker extend brilliant jabs at the field from time to time; but they for all their genius, do not fan all the time. So I plead guilty to letting down the side. This report and, I sincerely hope, the short report that follows I hope will be received in the spirit in which they are written. I have set aside a certain amount of time, forgotten pro writing and unpaid bills, and set to work.

Don handled the 1956 elections competently, to the extent that he arranged for taff to go thru that year. There was a little discrepancy in vote-counting, which came to light, was discussed, Don's system was rejected and the system we have now was reinstated. Again, TAFF was going thru a formative period, this was, you will recall, the first US election and the first time anyone was coming on taff from their side. Unfortunately, like Vince, Lee Hoffman backed out, and regrettably left it rather late so that there was no time for the next in line, Forry, to make arrangements. Dave had not polled the required quarter of the total votes to be asked to travel, and so taff lapsed that year. Lee came over under her own power, as did Dave. But the taff funds were intact.

The demand that candidates should at least be well known to the other side of the pond was now an integral part of the taff idea, arising, it will be seen from force of circumstances than design; only one string of the original taff idea having that object strongly in mind. The results I have quoted demonstrate that this idea, independent of who stands for election, will prevail. Should Augustus Bickerstaff decide to stand, and no one has heard of our Gus (an unlikely event) he will receive no votes. Alternatively, you have to make sure that he doesn't go out and buy up all the votes in sight with women and strong liquor and old copies of Vargo Statten.

A recent suggestion has been that taff should be turned into a club, with an annual subscription and a free vote. The decisions as to who should be admitted to this club rested on the self-same arguments as now operate to decide who shall vote. As you pay your 2/6d or 50c minimum to vote, that could be regarded as the club sub. The requirements for voting and membership are the same. So where lies the advantage? The disadvantages are obvious; by this time fandom is tired and suspicious of clubs and organised bodies. I qualify that remark, thru various recent happenings; but taff is a thing springing from fandom, is run by a handful of dedicated fen, and is not dictated to by anyone. I hope to tabulate the rules that were drawn up in the meeting I mentioned; but the current administrator must have a free hand; he must do the job because he wants to and not because he is a mere elected member of a club committee. We've all seen what happens to fannish committees.

So we went forward into 1957, the year of the first truly Worldcon. Don had worked like a beaver in getting out ballot forms and publicity, and although the 3 for 1 voting system was still in operation if everyone knew that, we all started even. Anyway, it was a US election and under the original system they were entitled to handle it how they liked. That we here didn't like the system meant merely that we would handle ours differently. But it was a detail in the taff growth; it has all been settled now, and is a matter of history. As a matter of interest, it was publicly said by Don that as the election was under way it could go thru as was, and a definite scheme be worked out later that was acceptable. This, strangely enough, is what happened.

From history, we come now onto happenings that are quite recent and must still be fresh in people's minds. I must re-iterate that what I say is what I see; I can be wrong. Already, on reading back, I notice one or two small points that could have been better framed. Like that it was not 4d's idea to set up a fund to bring him across but to bring a british fan across, which later changed to the Big Pond Fund, which was designed to bring across Walter Gillings as well as Ted Carnell. 4e himself was asked to travel by the Abglofen; but was unable to do so and did himself contribute a great deal of money under different names. But the general outline of taff history, which is all that this account attempts, is bascially sound. And if I have left out a great deal of the bickering that went on, it is because it is best forgotten, and only those sections that have a bearing on why we now do what we do have been mentioned.

For 1957 the slate was: Stuart Hoffman; George Nims Raybin; Ed McNulty; Robert A. Madle; Forrest Ackerman (who withdrew almost immediately) Boyd Raeburn; Dick Ellington; Richard Eney.

Over here a great deal of campaign material for Dick Eney was circulated. How the candidates stacked up in the US was virtually unknown; many of them were just names. Remembering that although very many US fen knew me prior to my trip, quite a number, as is the way of things, didn't, I felt confident that whoever was elected would be received in the same generous way as was Pamela and me. In the event, I was right. The election was held and Bob Madle was elected.

On the heels of this I was made aware that there were certain rumours circulating in fandom that there had been vote buying. Putting aside the difference in approach to elections here from that in the US, I felt that Bob Madle himself would not have been vote buying, as would not others of the slate; but that if anything should come of these rumours then the obvious sufferer would be the man elected. However innocent he was, he would suffer. I was very troubled. I wrote to Don and asked him what went on.

Everything blew up.

In fact, some people who like to stir decomposing bodies are still yapping about it all. I do so, here, with the greatest distaste; yet if my history of TAFF is to be anywhere near complete, some mention must be made. There are a few facts that so far have not been made public. After the ruckus, it was settled pretty satisfactorily that there had been vote buying by at least one fan. Bob Madle did not buy any votes. What had happened is that a chance remark had been passed on, had grown in the re-telling, had become big enough to harm reputations, and had been jumped on by a shrill-voiced caucus to air their grievances.

One of the candidates had approached a wk fan and had said, in essence, that since taff was such a good thing he would put up the 50c so the fan could vote for him. This the fan repeated in casual conversation to another bnf, who is a Very Good Man, in the presence of another candidate. The bnf felt a little steamed up; after all, was this the way taff was to be run? Also, it so happens that this bnf is one of the Quiet Americans, if you will pardon the term, he is the soul of kindness and generosity, with an immaculate sense of honour and has one of the finest reputations both in the US and over here of any fan living. He is a big time confan and has contributed to the fnzfield a solid body of useful work. He has the welfare of taff at heart in the same way that all wholefans have. He was writing a letter to a fan in England and mentioned what he had been told, and although now the terms of that letter are not known, they were most probably strongly derogatory of the vote-buying candidate's actions.

Now - assume that the candidate had not been vote buying, that the wk fan (that means well known to avoid misunderstandings) had misinterpreted the remark, that it had been merely that taff was worth 50c or something similar. No-one now is going to go on record as saying that this candidate did in fact buy votes. (Some already have, but that's another story) The remark had been made, it had been passed on in all fairness. The origins, already in the chain of catastrophe, had been laid.

The English fan rather naturally passed on this information, and it reached me at, quite possibly, third or fourth hand. It had grown fuzzy by that time. Others were talking about it. Because of the reasons I have stated earlier, I had to find out about it, to get the truth. To do this I wrote to Don Ford.

Now - in the interim, the small party who had been campaigning for Dick Eney and who couldn't believe that Bob Madle had won, seized on this as being the explanation for who nobbled the favourite. Whilst I was trying to pursue quiet enquiries, a hullabaloo broke. I should like to make it quite clear that Walter Willis of Ballyhackamaore was not repeat not one of those people screaming dirty politics etc. He only came into the act at a later date. Dick Eney, also, was not connected with the rumour mongering. This was not a case, as has been suggested, of sour grapes on the part of Dick Eney - he is a great fan and took the course of the election in a fine spirit, as Bob Madle himself has testified - but of a very small vociferous body who failed to appreciate that Madle was a bnf when they wore three-cornered trousers and who was still known in the American fan field O' he must have been, look at all the votes he collected from other equally well known bnfs. It was another example of the American confen of later years having been fnz fen earlier on.

::::Incidentally, I am not at liberty to disclose the names of the wk fan, the bnf and the candidate involved. If anyone knows, by chance, then keep your big mouth shut. The only people qualified to speak are those actually involved. Just who it was doesn't matter; what does matter is the various repercussions that followed. If ever there was a case of

a faked telegram or an assassination triggering off a waiting potboiler composed of gigantic political and economic forces, or an ear starting a religious and monoarchical scrap - this was it. This was just the cause of the excuse; once rumours were floating about the factions could attach what values they liked to them.

I am happy to report that as of now both Dick Eney and Bob Madle have come out of it with their reputations intact - enhanced, if anything.

As to the merits or demerits of any one delegate, I am in the invidious position of having to cast out the beam before the moat is shifted. I had wondered whether or not my pro writing disqualified me from standing as a taff candidate. As I had taken a job to earn cash in cash I was elected, at the time I was not a professional. But, really and truly, I am. Equally so, Bob Madle cannot be called a fanzine type fan, not these days just pre election, anyway. He has come into the fan publishing field again, tho' of recent days. And he was putting out FANTASCIENCE DIGEST back in 1937. That was before a lot of the fen who were creating were born - of course, you can see their argument, but fandom is a continuous growth, it just didn't start the day you, sir, or you, madam, joined up. This is one of those knotty problems that can only be solved by actual individual cases, each dealt with on its merits.

As I suppose most of you have realised now, I am finding this task of writing a history of taff a ghastly job. I have steadfastly eschewed mentioning anyone's name in a derogatory context. I will try to adhere to this. I have my own strong opinions, of course. There are and have been feuds and arguments over taff going on a long time now. I have friends on most sides of the arguments. If I think a friend is wrong it is my responsibility to say so. And the best way to do this is not to take the negative attitude and say you and you, fugghead, are wrong but to take the positive attitude and say what should be done. And here we bump into the dictator smear. I don't care if you call me a dictator. I have outlined a few things about taff, and I shall do so and so long as I am in charge that's the way things go, no matter how much yelling goes on on the sidelines, from friends as much as fuggheads. (You note the cunning way in which bulmer insinuates that if you aren't his pal you're by definition a fugghead? The not-so-well hidden persuader, huh?) Repeating - all suggestions are welcome. You can have your fights and feudes as much as you like but just remember that you are fighting over taff, which is an idea that goes on, and does not stop because of the fights. Again, we come to the unpleasant facts that some of those who have taff closest to their hearts sometimes go off the rails about it, say things that, although they may not be sorry for, at least they can see were not exactly clever things to have said. And I disapprove most strongly of certain insultingly worded slanging matches that have been going on. Chu, fen - let's argue like gentleman, not urchins with four letter anglo-saxon words for a staple vocabulary. It takes all the fun out of arguments if you descend to those levels.

((For those of you who know that bulmer never paragraphs I gloss, for those of you who don't I must apologise for the long paras. The little white lines running between paras are expensive and difficult to obtain)))

It's their shape, you know.

Now again I have to make it clear that the little vociferous group was not Irish Fandom, it was not the stateside friends of Eney. Whatever may have later been said, at the time the rumours floated about detached from reality, the storm clouds brewing were really and truly waiting to settle about the shoulders of the old argument - fanzine fan or not. (Y'know, reading some of this I am forcibly - and appallingly - struck by a sort of rich Moskowitzian flavour. Ghu forgive me.)

Bob Madle was not, at the time of his election a fnz fan. He was, however, well known and respected in the US, he was known to a number of fans over here and as a choice for a taffman was first class. Now under the original terms, the sponsoring country was left to choose their own candidate. There had been a mention, as Chuck has rightly pointed out, that the candidates should be fairly well known on both sides. I think that Bob was 'fairly' well known. Certainly, he wasn't as well known over here as I was in the States; but that was one of those things. Looked at purely from the viewpoint of the spirit which brought Walter over in 1952, Bob Madle was not the fanzine fan type we were looking for. But looked at in the light of the original Don Ford CFG Ashfield fan fund (The British Fan Fund) he was an ideal choice. As TAFF today is composed of both these strings of parentage, as I have attempted to point out, Bob was a fair choice for taff.

Now - unless you all decide to split TAFF right down the middle and set up two distinct funds, one to bring a confan to a convention, the other to bring a fanzine type fan to a con and to meet his correspondents, you have got to accept a compromise. On the face of it, the confen have the money and the fnzfen the contacts. Yet the fnzfen were able to bring Walter across in 52. You see, nothing is clear cut in all this except the single fact that to run taff successfully you must steer as clear a course as you can thru the murk and dust of competing factions. That I can see both sides of the problem is my misfortune; it's my emotions that are torn up when friends bicker.

Not that I don't get the occasional laugh out of it, tho'

After the successful 1957 elections, Bob Madle took over as US TAFF administrator. Don Ford, like Walter Willis, remained on the advisory committee, ready to give help and encouragement. Some of the strife of the 'Vote Buying Rumours' affaire still clings; but if I have been successful in showing that a modus operandi can be found for TAFF, that old conflict can be laid to rest alongside the Great Staple War and the Cosmic Circle and Operation Armageddon and suchlike cause célèbres of their day.

They have always said, and 'they' are always right that great eminence and popularity inevitably bring great envy and malice. To further their own ends a group began to refer to Walter as 'Ghod'. This he regarded as just one of things that had to be tolerated; but it irked him. Once you are up, there is only one way to go. The slightest little thing, the smallest little faux pas, and the wolves descend, happy to drink the blood of a better man and gleeing in their sudden power to inflict pain as a cowardly group of little people dragging down a great man. (Gee - honest, I ain't read the immortal storm for a long time) ((Much the same sort of thing, with different personalities involved and different aims is seen in the Dave Kyle fracas)) Right. Walter is one of the greatest wits in fandom today. By nature he does not suffer fools gladly but through character and kindness inherent in him is always courteous and pleasant to the greatest of morons. Lately he has become entangled with such an one. Well, not a moron, really, someone who just thinks along different lines from normal people - and that's a fatuous statement, bulmer. Someone who has their own decided viewpoints and these viewpoints happen to be different from what you consider the viewpoints of a modern civilised man. Hmm, that's better.

A funny remark was made about the well known penchant of Americans to being 'sex-starved'. This is such an old one that is quoted all over the place that Walter really lowered his sights in re-quoting it; but it happened to fit in to make a funny remark; funny to Americans, too, who know the answers. This was ripped out of its context and quoted against Walter in order to smear him.

Again, he mistyped, and instead of using obliterate, did as bulmer does and just struck over. He typed Bought. I have spoken to Walter, man to man, eye to eye on this. It was a genuine typo. You might go as far as you like in talking about Freudian slips; but I advise you to read Bob Shaw on Freud. This was a serious matter; it seemed that Walter was accusing Bob Madle of having bought the election. He did not. Repeat. He did not. By this time Walter was a little tired of the petty attacks continually being made on him and although I surmise that he realised that they were the result of his position - a position which had been thrust on him - in fandom, that thought did not make his own position as the butt of the envious any better or more easily endured.

Without caring if I bore you by repeating this, I will again re-iterate (is that a tautology?) that Walter had been ablaze with fanning (?) and on a great wave of enthusiasm had been brought across to the States to meet the people who had been such good friends in the fanzines. He wanted to perpetuate this ideal. And now here he was engulfed in petty squabbles, seeing arguments everywhere about taff, seeing the dream dragged - well, not thru the mud, exactly, but seeing all kinds of bickering and squabbles going on. I can candidly say that in my experience any great dream tends to get a little earthy once financial angles have to be figured. But that's by the by. There is too the thought that Walter may have considered that I was a weak administrator because I didn't rush into print to air my taff administrator's views on things.

As I explained to him and Don, I figured I'd best get on with running the thing and leave the shouting to people who wanted to. And during the 1958 elections, during which most of this shouting had been taking place, I was far too busy to become involved, quite apart from my natural (an pompous, if you wish) feelings that it was all a bit beneath a taff administrator. Hell - that does sound pompous. What is meant is that Caesar's wife is above reproach. I'm for taff and for no-one else. If the person running the affair is dragged into bickerings, then just who do you trust to see the thing thru? I figure I owe far too much to taff and to the friends I have made in fandom to let TAFF go by default whilst I'm busily arguing with people who want things done their way and don't give a hang about the greater good of fandom (If you accept the concept that fandom is worth working for, that is)

The upshot of all this has been a rampaging attack on Walter, which badly misfired, which brought to light that Walter still has friends, and also, incidentally, showed that the idea of TAFF still has power to move men to fierce argument. Now if it only moved them more readily to putting their hands in their pockets... Walter feels so strongly about TAFF because it is part of his fandom, just as the taff idea is part of Don's fandom, and Bob's too. If I say that to Walter the dream means a great deal more, you can see why by what I have written. Of one thing I am very certain. TAFF is about the most worthy and selfless idea ever to hit fandom and as such I intend to see that it is not sabotaged by anyone. Both Don and Walter feel like that, and as next year's administrator, so too does Bob.

The foregoing is probably true; as near as I can make out the general thread of argument is sound but occasional embroiderments may be not strictly accurate, wherefore I have deliberately avoided too closely detailed an account of the more outrageous nonsenses that went on. Taff started in a fine fannish spirit, disagreements arose as to the way in which it should be run, the administrators, in their various ways, ignored or listened to the suggestions, and today taff is an fannish institution of which all you listening men can be proud. Yes - proud. Think of it. Here we are, an amorphous bunch of people, all interested as a basis in sf (the odd man who is in fandom without reading sf is rare and can be discounted) reading and writing and collecting and publishing and con. attending - and we club together and send one of our number 3,000 miles and this year nearer 5,000 to attend a strange convention in a strange land, which turns out to be not strange at all. Y'know, TAFF is something of which to be proud and all the bickering in fandom now won't stop taff from going ahead. It's on its way to even greater things.

Like the original TWO-WAY Transatlantic fan fund. Yes?

Ken Bulmer.

A BLUEPRINT

As you will have guessed from the two preceding sections of this report, I am making no attempts to turn this into a long-faced serious and constructive screed, nor am I frothing off in an esoteric fannish burst of glee. So the following rules that are currently in use by all TAFF administrators are presented in the fannish way of freedom, coupled with a certain restraint. They are not listed in any particular order of merit.

1. A permanent Two-Way Transatlantic Fan Fund shall be set up to help both British and American fan to attend each other's conventions. (This category includes Irish, Canadian and Continental fans, also.)
2. The ballot shall be secret. Each fan must sign his own paper and no proxy votes are allowed. No block votes are allowed. Each fan may vote once only.
3. Each voter is to be allowed a first, a second and a third choice. If he wishes he may leave blank any place, 1st 2nd or 3rd on the voting paper. He may not vote for ~~more than one~~ one fan more than once. The first choice shall receive 3 points, the second 2 and the third 1. Highest total of points elects.
4. Should the elected candidate prove unable to travel, the second shall be offered the opportunity and also the third, provided that they both received more than a quarter of the total votes cast.
5. Each candidate must sign a declaration that they are willing to go, come what may, save an impossible situation such as an act of God etc.
6. Each candidate must be nominated by a panel of five well known fan, three from his side of the Atlantic and two from the other.
7. The leading nominator must provide an election platform of about one hundred words, detailing why it is considered their candidate should be elected to go on taff.
8. Fan on both sides of the Atlantic shall be allowed to vote in all elections, irrespective of which way the fund is operating this year.
9. A minimum sum shall be donated to the fund - at the present it is 2/6d or 50c - to entitle any one fan to vote. More donations over and above this are both welcome and requested.
10. In order to be entitled to vote, a person shall be a science fiction fan and shall to show this be active in fandom to the extent of having subscribed to or contributed to or published at least one fanzine or have joined a reputable fanclub or organisation prior to six months before the closing date for nominations (in both cases). This is a matter for the conscience of the fan; the decision on any point is the administrator's and that is final.