

WIZ

#11, July 25, 1984, appears from the direction of a balmy Puerto Rico where the temperature is rarely higher than 90° even in the winter. This time of year, pineapples, mangos, and papayas are at the peak of flavor and are eaten with a dish of cottage cheese as I write the following observations:

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Department Of Curio Innuendos Revisited: A number of you expressed reactions from wondering if my remarks on the sexual appetites of Avedon Carol didn't just possibly "perhaps skirt the boundaries of poor or at least questionable taste" (Bob Lichtman) to a condemnation of "unworthy retaliation" (Church Harris). Thank God. I was beginning to think you were all moral idiots. It's good to know that all of you aren't. The point was that comment on sexual conduct is beside the point and I'm relieved some of you were suitably outraged. Now, I'd like our Guardians Of The Public Order to tell me what right Avedon Carol had to run that type of scurrility with her Taff report and what level of taste should be expected in a Taff administrator. Or do you think this conduct is fine in a highly visible representative of fandom, but that us lesser lights have to toe a certain line or risk fannish wrath? I would like to know.

And I didn't "allege" that she stuffed ballots. I wrote, "I don't know if...or not." Can't you people read what's on the page or do you just go along making up suppositions of what I must have said based on what you thought I said? Forgive me for being so subtle. I was just using Avedon's new technique. Or is an ad hominem reply based on sexual speculation alright when she does it, but when I use the same technique in a bizarre rejoinder which illustrates its total pointlessness it's reprehensible? What gives?

The Domingo Theory: "The fix is in for Rob Hansen. He's your boy if you're looking for a Taff report," D. West wrote at the end of a letter denying rumors he was standing for Taff which I quoted portions of in Wiz #6, September 1983. I laughed it off as just another murky undercurrent in the ironic sardonic Western repertoire which Church Harris thinks I "so fully appreciate". Harris is wrong. The above example was too cynical even for me. The undercurrent of a load of Taff votes floating downstream on a raft of dung quite passed me by. You know how naive I am.

D. had met Avedon Carol at AlbaCon in March, 1983, when she was Taffing around England. He told us in that letter in Wiz what a nice man he was and that when in her company he "did absolutely nothing more depraved than play dominoes." That was his big mistake.

March, 1983, was quite a month for Avedon. She met Rob Hansen, whose bed she helped make, and was handed a copy of Ansible #32 which informed her, if someone had neglected to tip her off, "The really stark and stupendous rumours concern the upcoming 1984 Taff campaign, with Rob Hansen and D. 'Dave' West contending to go to Los Angeles..." Lifting our finger from the Fast Forward button, we stop at Ansible #33, June 1983, and find Avedon's remarks on a few things about the AlbaCon experience which impressed her most vividly: Hansen is conspicuous by his total absence, but, judging from these notes, the person who did catch her interest was, of course, D. Avedon writes, "I do wish, however, that D. West would take up a game which makes a more interesting spectator sport..." Avedon knows exactly through which ribs the knife should be inserted in order to penetrate the heart most quickly. Before she slips on the pool draining from the deft incision inflicted on West, she also allows as how she found it "refreshing" that she was "unfamiliar with the normal run of local fanpolitics" (having already forgotten that any one might be running against her ex-roommate). As we depart her AlbaCon notes, she leaves to no one's imagination the sort of spectator sport she prefers: "but the bartender who kept grabbing his crotch supplied an interesting floorshow."

"How on earth are you going to handle the British fandom of today?", D. asks (Warhoon 30, September 1982) as they wheel his body into the intensive care unit. A thoughtful nurse places a copy of Bill Gibson's "Neuromancer" and The Amnesia Report on the table beside the anesthesia. The latter is Avedon's announcement of the Taff results which, after she slashes her way through Eric Mayer in defense of Ted White and making irrelevant speculations about the sex life of somebody who dared criticize the cover of Epsilon #15, ends with, "Everyone knows Dominoes is a boring spectator sport."

The first islandwide domino tournament, held Saturday at the Mets Pavilion, has one very happy winner in Governor Romero, presaging, he hopes, November's election results. He joined Guaynabo Mayor Alejandro 'Junior' Cruz for the opening ceremonies then stayed to play a game with some of the contestants and mingle with the spectators.

--The San Juan Star, San Juan, Puerto Rico, July 8, 1984

In February, 1984, I was one of an alarming number of people who voted for D. West. I say "alarming" because shortly after mailing my ballot I received an astonishing and agitated letter from Avedon Carol appraising me of the drift of the voting -- a drift which she makes abundantly clear was not to her liking. She analyzes the reasons for and the sources of West's support and laments with some feeling the trends in the voting. She even projects a possible victory for West. In retrospect, I believe this letter was nothing more than a devious bit of manipulation intended to lull West's supporters (with whom she might have assumed I was in general contact) into a false sense of success and spur Hansen's supporters into voting. The major part of the letter is DNQ, but I would question whether a DNQ should have force in a matter which I regard as nothing less than a betrayal of public trust. I will leave it to Avedon to decide if it should be published in these pages. In support of my assumption that it should be regarded as

2 a campaign document, I will cite one line in the part she asks not to be quoted which I feel has forfeited its right to confidentiality through having been worn thin by repeated use: "dominoes is a fucking boring spectator sport." Furthermore, she also regrets the failure of an earlier strategy to Get West which also hinged on her Domino Theory -- a failure brought about by the fact that Malcolm Edwards had not yet published her Taff report. From the earliest whisper that West might be running against Hansen until the moment she slammed the lid on West's coffin, Avedon Carol utilized The Domino Theory as the leitmotif of her campaign to win Taff for Rob Hansen.

It seemed strange Avedon would send me this kind of letter. We had previously had the most casual of contact. I don't recall writing to her more than once since her entry into fandom. But by this time I'm used to receiving occasional Machiavellian confidential communications from all sorts of fans trying to knife each other or grind particular axes. I chalked it up as just another indiscretion and failed to detect it as part of a larger pattern -- it's not easy to perceive all fandom through the fresh air of distant Puerto Rico...nor are many fans as willing to conduct in print the kind of in-fighting and political games that are possible on a verbal level in encounters in hallways and smoke-filled rooms. Just part of the climate of moral courage, I suppose...a climate I am exposed to only via a rare eye-opening DNQ letter. Letters like these usually have the effect of decreasing my respect for the sender rather than the person being attacked.

The implications of Avedon's actions are ruinous. She is compromised. If she would communicate such information to a casual correspondent, what was she telling her best friends? What was she telling other Hansen supporters who she trusted implicitly? If she saw nothing morally wrong in accompanying a report of the results of the Taff election with a defense of Ted White against Eric Mayer, or if she saw nothing morally wrong with conjecturing before the Taff electorate about the sexual orientation of a new fan she doesn't even know, or if she saw nothing morally wrong in sending me that letter, then I see no reason whatsoever to think that she wouldn't tell anyone anything to achieve the results that were achieved. If anyone seriously thinks that she would only be indiscreet with me (when she was several light years closer to Rob Hansen or Lassie, say) and can convince me of that, then I will appear at LACon on a flying pig where I will serve as one of the native bearers pulling her and Rob into the main convention hall seated on the back of a golden ass (hammered together from the passé breast ornaments of the Taff dancing girls of the 50's).

"The foregoing is all DNQ, of course," writes Avedon in her letter of February 24 and then relaxes her cloak of confidentiality long enough to make this statement which will give you some vague idea what has gone before: "why in God's name did you vote for West, when you know damn well he doesn't even really want to meet anyone in the US, and you wouldn't meet him anyway?" Let's subject this to a little analysis, shall we? It's already obvious the mantle of Taff confers dictatorial powers even Josef Stalin might have envied, but I was startled by this revelation that it also makes the Taff administrator omniscient. How does she presume to read West's mind? Apparently, it has escaped her notice that with West one is never sure what he's thinking from moment to moment. He has, in recent memory, gone from being the most vocal foe of fan reprints to an ardent practitioner and from being a non-candidate to, at least, a candidate of record. Perhaps West finally decided he did want to meet some US fans -- such as the Nielsen Haydens or John D. Berry. Who knows? Not Avedon Carol, I would guess. Probably it never occurred to her to ponder why West goes to so many conventions in Britain or how West was able to report on five or six of them in "Performance" She's so determinedly convinced he is completely anti-social that she overlooks what can be inferred from his indefatigable convention mongering. And she presumes to say that I know he doesn't want to meet "anyone" in the US -- which really is an even more blatant conjecture piled on top of blatant conjecture. Avedon presumes much. Too much. The balance of that sentence, "why in God's name did you vote for West...you wouldn't meet him anyway?", is staggering in its implications. (Can you imagine her saying, "Why in God's name did you vote for Hansen", etc?) What she's saying is "why vote if you're not going to meet the candidate?" or "why participate in Taff if you're not interested in meeting the candidate." Coming from anyone else this is merely an obnoxious argument, but coming from the Taff administrator it is something else: it articulates the viewpoint that Taff is solely the province of those interested in meeting the candidates and that fans who have other interests in it are an interference. In order to succeed Taff needs the continued interest of the broadest range of fans involved in fanzine fandom: by questioning the participation of those who won't be meeting the candidate (for whatever reason) the current US administrator is (through a doctrine of exclusivity rather than inclusivity) narrowing its appeal and undermining the future health of Taff. I find this irresponsible and a direct insult to me: an insult underlined by the fact that I heard no such complaint from Avedon Carol when I campaigned for Avedon Carol for Taff in Warhoon #29 despite the fact that she was surely aware it was unlikely I would ever want to meet her. I didn't hear a complaint from her then, nor did I hear a complaint from any of the other three candidates that year, nor did I hear a complaint from anyone in fandom. In fact, I have never heard a complaint about my participation in any campaign to import or export a fan going back to the WAW With The Crew drive of 1952. I didn't hear this when I nominated Bob Shaw for Taff in the 60's (if memory serves, I believe I was the person who organized the entire nomination and campaign. Shaw lost, of course). I didn't hear this when I nominated Jerry Kaufman for Duff in the 80's (he won, for some reason). I didn't hear my participation questioned until this year and that question came from the Taff administrator and solely because I was supporting someone other than her choice.

In Credible.

3 And it gets more incredible. Concurrent with this letter from Avedon I saw questions raised about my participation in Taff with even more frequency than one might encounter references to dominoes since Avedon's first trip to England. I begin to smell another rat. And the rat is that part of the campaign to defeat West was an attempt to discredit my voice in Taff on the basis that I wouldn't be meeting the candidate and that my support of West was "irrelevant and intrusive. In February, 1984, an associate of Avedon Carol's (I omit his name, though I invite his response in these pages) wrote to me. He said, "In recent in-person discussion with various fans I've encountered some resentment of your promotion of West for Taff: 'What does he care? He won't be meeting the winner!' is about the way it is usually expressed." He also attributes this sentiment to two other friends of Avedon's (one of whom I have written to repeatedly in inquiry on this point with no response). My correspondent agrees with Avedon's view and goes on to write that my "opinions on in-person fanac like conventions, Taff, Duff, etc, are irrelevant" and "as a non-participant, your opinion has no weight and ought to be ignored." This is not an opinion he has mentioned to me before though we have corresponded since the early 60's and he is not known for being shy. I was underwhelmed. I assuaged my miff with thoughts that Avedon wouldn't have agreed (while she was running for Taff -- you know, she sent me a card thanking me for supporting her), nor would Bob Shaw or Jerry Kaufman. Nor, perhaps, Dan Steffan who in the past year has written to me for comment on the possibility of standing for Taff in 1985. Clearly my opinion is not considered irrelevant or Avedon wouldn't have been so exasperated over its expression -- nor would Steffan have solicited it. However, I can agree to disagree, though I find this argument divisive and a flagrant attempt to exclude me as irrelevant. (Of course, I can't actually be excluded -- what can they do, tie me to a lamp post? -- which is why I'm so sweetly reasonable about this: fans do, from time to time, inquire if I'd nominate them for this fan fund or another. Two seconds reflection on this last illuminating point is a consolation and a balm to my ego. Enyway, ah dont tink he know shit from shugar!) But I do protest, vehemently, when such a position is given expression by Avedon Carol. I find it counter to the interests of Taff -- that is, to bring fans together and foster international friendship. Further, I find her words coming from other people a further indication of her hand (and mouth) manipulating this Taff race. I accuse her of inspiring and or taking part in an attempt to discredit my involvement in Taff (and my support of West). This is unconscionable in a Taff administrator who, if she finds a mask of impartiality too hypocritical to wear, must, at least, refrain from active interference. The candidates and the voters certainly have a right to expect that.

Avedon's question, "why in God's name did you vote for West...you wouldn't meet him anyway?", presents us with the spectacle of a Taff administrator raising the question of who is welcome to participate in Taff and who is not. The mandate we gave Avedon is that voting is open to "interested fans all over the world" and "voting is open to anyone who was active in fandom (clubs, fanzines, conventions, etc)." This means Australian, Swedish, or German fans who may not get to meet the candidate on his or her trip are still welcome to vote. No question is raised about whether the voter will actually get to look at the candidate. This probably even includes John D. Berry, who announced his support for West in Wing Window, but didn't think it likely he would be at LACon to meet the candidate. (Why in God's name did he vote, then?) By merely raising such a question, Avedon has betrayed her mandate. The person whose vote is questioned will, naturally enough, wonder about the rest of the sales pitch: "Taff needs continuous donations of money, and material to be auctioned, in order to exist." If your participation is questioned by the administrator on her arbitrary grounds (that is, when she doesn't approve of, say, your choice of candidate), why bother to support the fund? Avedon threatens the future of Taff itself.

The implications of Avedon's actions are ruinous. She is compromised. By the final flaunting of her Domino Theory (that West is too boring to entertain American fans) as the punchline of The Amnesia Report, she brazenly calls attention to her approach to this whole Taff race and is sharing her joke with those who know what she was up to. Either she forgot her letter to me or is defying me not to share the laugh. I choose not to. She has blighted the fruits of Rob Hansen's victory. She has called into question the meaning of that victory, if not its result. She gives one to wonder why pages of The Amnesia Report are devoted to entirely extraneous matters when a fraction of its space could have been devoted to something as simple as a list of the (80?) Stateside fans who (we are told) voted -- as Dave Langford has done with British results in Ansible. She gives one to wonder why she has never made a public reference to the amounts of money (even by way of public thanks) coming into Taff, its current total, or its disposition -- as Dave Langford has done with British funds. (I believe her only reference to the Taff dinero has been "Votes for 'Embezzle Funds' are a delight to Taff administrators who would love to do just that" -- a most curious aside when one notes there were no votes listed for "Embezzle Funds" in The Amnesia Report.) As the administrator of a fund to which much lip service is paid as an instrument of international friendship she has accompanied its official report with uncalled for speculations about a fan she does not know and lethal babble anonymously directed at Eric Mayer about Ted White's Group Mind. She chooses to dwell on such moronic concepts and by these actions shows her total lack of interest in developing the good will of Taff or, indeed, tending to its business in a conscientious manner. She regrets that her Taff report was not published in time to do damage to West's candidacy. Every Taff ballot states (with an explicit pledge of confidentiality direct from the administrators themselves) that "Details of voting will be kept secret", yet she has treated that assurance with contempt by making

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such details known or has spread false information about the voting. She has questioned the participation of fans who would not get to meet the candidate or who do not share her choice of candidate. She gives one cause to wonder about her continued administration of the fund and raises questions in the minds of those who will be candidates in the coming year. Her total lack of impartiality and self confessed willingness to manipulate the results puts her in an impossible position for announcing the winner of next year's race. She has abused her office. She should resign.

Out Of The Blue: The following arrived while I was writing the above. It touches on one of the themes dwelt with in "The Domino Theory". Eric and I don't always see eye to eye -- most recently on his criticisms of Ted White's critical approach in Paper Fan -- but his piece makes me think we both may have fallen afoul of The Fannish Power Elite:

An Open Letter To Cesar Ignacio Ramos --as addressed to rb (by Eric Mayer): Since Cesar seems to be having a hard time getting real I thought he might like to hear from someone who hasn't been there too and still isn't. I'm not about to write to Cesar directly though. It wouldn't do for a fellow who's blurry around the edges himself to start writing to a fan some solid citizens have pegged as a figment of a living legend's imagination. Once I started that I might just as easily wake up one morning and discover that all this has been a dream and we're every one of us giant skunk cabbages. I read about it once in a science fiction book, or so it seems. It often occurs to me, before I fall asleep nights, that we may indeed be nothing more than dreams in the mind of God, as Bishop Berkely said before he took up selling snake oil and writing science fiction, although why God would dream up a planet of skunk cabbages only He would know.

These musings (I can hardly dignify them as philosophizings) are prompted by a recent letter from a fan who is on better terms with reality than I am. We had been debating certain points of fannish etiquette and finally the writer came out with it and told me my opinion didn't count because I'd never been to a convention and was therefore only a "paper personality". He explained that the fandom I was floating over was not the cardboard fandom I imagined but a fandom of flesh which could be pressed at conventions to the disadvantage of annoying, incorporeal entities like myself.

It didn't surprise me that real fans, who get together at conventions, weren't likely to lend much credence to me. More than once I've questioned myself. "What do you think you're doing," I've asked, "pretending to write locs, and articles and publish fanzines with a couple toddlers underfoot. And hecto covers. Who are you trying to kid? You might as well claim to be the only fan in Puerto Rico outside Richard Bergeron."

Still, I had never speculated deeply on the nature of a fandom in which reality is predicated on convention attendance and, presumably, pissing on Bob Shaw's shoes is more important than anything you can do at a typewriter, phenomenologically speaking. It is quite a strange place. Consider, for example, that you might know a great deal about a fan with whom you've corresponded at length over the years but be less real to him than to someone you said "Hi" to in a hotel corridor. Consider too that even the most hardened congoer must necessarily remain unreal to the large portion of fandom which he has still been unable to meet.

Paradoxes abound in such a fandom. Suppose fan A meets fan B at XCon and fan B meets fan C at YCon. Then both fan A and fan C are real to fan B but not to each other. Does fan A accept fan C's opinions as valid on the basis that fan C is real to fan B who is real to fan A? Should fans, before engaging in any sort of fanac, specify which fans are real to them?

Or is there a threshold of reality? After you have shaken so many hands or pissed on so many pairs of shoes do you become real to everyone? If you pass this threshold in North America are you real to fans in Australia and Britain too?

Although I'm not likely to get real in a fandom where one's reality is based on discretionary income and lifestyle, I like to think that I'm not entirely immaterial. Like UFOs, I've been sighted. There's something there, though what it is may remain a mystery. True, just as Carl Brandon was merely a dream in the mind of Terry Carr, so am I only a dream, but a dream in my own mind, and one that is essentially faithful to the dreamer. For us unreal fans there cannot exist the split personalities enjoyed by the likes of Joseph Nicholas.

At any rate, Cesar has got it exactly right. If he wants to get real there's nothing to do but win Taff. No one is more real than Taff winners.

As for me, increasingly since that letter, I awake in the morning with no sense of where or who I am but, for a moment, only a rudimentary sense of being. In that moment I am paralyzed and I have begun to wonder whether the paralysis is due to the fact that my consciousness has preceded the materialization of my arms and legs, the room, the world outside the windows and fandom beyond.

One day Kathy will shake me into reality. "Carl Brandon is at the door, get your leaves moving."

Have Another Mango: I'd intended to cut this issue at four pages and get it Out On The Streets, but find myself with extra time before my flight is called. I'll include a few letters. Unfortunately, Hansen-Steffan-Bergeron on #9 runs 8 pages so I'll have to hold that over. Anyway, here comes our next reader with battle-axe brandished:

Mal Ashworth: This may be a letter filled with possibilities (maybe).

Subtle ironic undercurrents in Joseph Nicholas, for instance. Mayhap it is possible that it is not quite impossible (perhaps) that Joseph's writing, and, indeed, Who knows?) whole *Weltanschauung*, is permeated, nay, riddled, by subtle irony. Indeed. And if Chuch Harris says so then certainly it behoves me to strive hard to believe it, for yet another possibility is that Chuch Harris is bigger than me; or, as we would put it in a philosophy seminar: If there is anyone who is bigger than me, then it is probably Chuch

5 Harris. Or, even more rigorously -- there exists at least one entity such that it has the attribute of possibly being bigger than me, and that entity is identical with Chuch Harris. (So big is he, look you, that you might advise those Okapi to wipe that smug smile off their faces while reading of his Close Encounters with goats, wallabies, coypus and the occasional albino hamster.) Thus it is that I offer my wholehearted support (or else) to his proposed 'Be Nice To Joseph Nicholas' Week -- it's just that I shall be on holiday at the time (when is it, by the way?).

Which possibly brings us to poodles. Though it may be difficult to see why. Unless you're looking in a completely different direction from me. You have to make allowances, you know, for the high-spirited mischief of this Langford lad. I, for one, to not believe for a moment that D. West said "Terry Hill fucks poodles". This I can tell you for certain: I spent last Friday evening with him (D. West, that is) and poodles were hardly mentioned. No, no, not D's style at all. "Consider the possibility that Terry Hill fucks poodles," well, yes, I would credit that. "May it not be that Terry Hill fucks poodles?" Yes, yes, quite possible. "Do I recall hearing somewhere that Terry Hill fucks poodles?" Maybe, maybe. And many other variations. But a bald declarative "Terry Hill fucks poodles"? Oh, dear me, never.

But, having said that, I still think there is something that you may all be missing (possibly). You are failing to see this thing in its whole context. Neglecting to run the total scenario up on the wide screen, as they say at Joe's Coal Merchants and Funeral Parlour. Ask yourself once again, "Why did D. West stand for Taff when he obviously wasn't concerned about winning?" Don't you see the pattern emerging yet? Why, for the experience, what else? All that wheeling and dealing, the sleazy bargaining and horse-trading, the nights spent in muttered negotiations in smoke-filled rooms, the nudges given almost imperceptibly to the elbows of the unbelievably important figures being wheeled down the Corridors of Power in mink-lined wheelchairs -- all Experience. /rh: Soon to be the sequel to "Performance"? Expect it at a theatre near you./ Don't you see? D. never wanted to be a Taff tripper because he has his sights set unwaveringly on Something Higher! His never-disclosed aim is actually to be a Manager, a Manipulator, an *Eminence Grise* even! And the final clincher, the one thing that gives the whole game away and makes this interpretation a dead cert is that hitherto enigmatic phrase "Terry Hill fucks poodles". When D. is heard muttering that he isn't making a declarative statement about a real state of affairs in the world of 1984 -- he is actually trying out in his own head a Campaign Slogan for Taff in 1986, weighing up carefully the pros and cons to see whether poodle-fucking may hold a fresh new appeal for an electorate by now jaded and bored with baby-kissing! You see what that means?! D. is hoping to land the plum job of Terry's Taff Campaign Manager in 1986! Already he sees himself as the Kissinger to Terry's Ford, the Bismarck to Terry's Wilhelm, the Aspasia to Terry's Pericles. Remember who told you it first.

Good on you, Buggsy, for your attitude to the KTF scene, and Nicholas especially. Sitting Ducks who deserve all they get and seem to be starting to squeal more than a little because now, for the first time ever, what they took to be impossible is coming to pass and they are Getting It. I blame Hollywood and television for misleading these rather undiscerning youngsters. They seem to have swallowed hook, line, and sinker, the Jack Palance sinister-black-clad-deadly-killer image. Pity there was no one around to tell them that in real life it is usually the toothless fat slob sitting in a corner reading a book of jokes and feeding the cat who is your real Badass. /rh: Do you really think so; or are you trying to flatter me?/ Oh well, it's all Entertainment. /rh: Or Performance./ (16, Rockville Drive, Embsay, Skipton, North Yorks., England)

Taff And Its Ramifications: seems to be running away with this issue. No sooner is the Cesar Ignacio Ramos In '87 drive underway than the following urgent message arrives from Glen Ellen. (Is anyone standing in '85?)

Bob Lichtman announces: I believe this became semi-official at the party last Saturday for Jeanne Gomoll, who was visiting San Francisco, but in order to provide some spirited opposition to Cesar in his bid for Taff in '87, we offer none other than the "madwoman of Norwescon," Jeanne Bowman. If anybody can offer and deal with eccentric but loveable behavior, it's Jeanne. Her sense of humor would fit right in at a British convention. This very coming weekend she is attending Westercon in Portland, Oregon, where no doubt hundreds of her existing fans will throng her and many new converts will be won who will, several years from now, vote *Jeanne for Taff in '87*!

RB: I trust Langford is recording all this for Ansible. I think the Brits have a right to know if Female Insanity is going to be a theme again in 1987. Personally, I'm pushing for Puerto Rican Sobriety -- but what do I know? I haven't seen Ramos' fanzine yet, either. In the meantime we can cool out with:

Harry Warner: Much of the material in this tenth issue makes me happy I live in the only place comparable to Puerto Rico for seclusion from the rest of the fannish world. The thunderbolts and land mines which seem to threaten the path of fandom in much of its contents are entirely too exciting for my Caspar Milquetoast personality. Hagerstown isn't a particularly safe place in case nuclear conflict should arise, since there are communications complexes only fifteen miles to the east and west of it, the underground Pentagon only a slight distance further away, and Washington and Baltimore only about sixty miles distant as the H-Bombs fly. But at least I don't feel in extreme danger in case the exchanges among the main characters in your cast should become more severe, and I doubt very much if the search to prove or disprove the existence of Cesar Ignacio Ramos will ever spread to western Maryland. Pete Ramos pitched in Hagerstown occasionally while he was a minor leaguer but I think there are about seven million

6 people named Ramos in your part of the world so there probably isn't any relationship between the two.

But while I'm on the topic of baseball, I heard an announcer say something during the telecast of the Atlanta Braves' game last night that struck me as applicable to fandom. He was discussing with another announcer the ball-players who have shown themselves to be particularly sensitive to harsh criticism in recent months. "The only people who don't take harsh criticism hard are the stupid people," he said, and that might be something to keep in mind when reading fanzines nowadays. I don't think it's true in every case in fandom, because fans aren't all cut out of the same pattern. But it fits a lot of cases I can think of offhand.

I could feel in my bones that the Redd Boggs article which you excerpted would horrify the feminists and libbers. But I think Redd is right about the instinct. No matter how illogical it seems from the scientific standpoint, I'm pretty sure that there's some sort of inheritance of long-standing habits from many, many generations in the past. Why else should lie detectors work, if not because parents have taught their kids century after century that they shouldn't lie (except when there's no better way to get out of a situation)? Even the hardened criminal's internal functions get agitated when he knows he is telling a lie, no matter how indifferent his conscious mind is to truth as a virtue. I think the housecleaning impulse gets born into girl children, even though many of them manage to subdue it thoroughly, just like the maternal instincts whose shortcircuiting can cause all sorts of trouble later on for women who have abortions. /rh: But, surely, one case is biological and the other cultural conditioning./ (423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740)

Alexis Gilliland writes: In the course of beating Avedon over the head with an inflated bladder for not knowing whether C. I. Ramos is gay or not /rh: Wrong I didn't berate her for "not knowing". After all, how could she?/ (I am not entirely sure he is real...probably he is, but you appear less than totally sincere in making that assertion on his behalf. Conversely, having encountered Puerto Rican/Chinese restaurants in New York, and learned to avoid them, I am not impressed with Ted White's argument from Moo Goo Gai Pan. I will have to try the Poo Poo platter; perhaps there is a cowchip burning in the center, instead of a cup of sterno.) you say: "(the vote was scandalously lopsided Stateside)" an assertion indefensible, even in jest. Having made his contempt for Americans manifest, D. West was very properly repudiated by them. Those who love us do not speak ill of us, and all that. /rh: I also made reference to his "non-candidacy" which was a "spit in your eye" to US fandom./

You may argue that the American electorate was unsophisticated if you wish, but the fact that D. received as many American votes as he did suggests that perversion and masochism is alive and well on this side of the Atlantic. Which makes one wonder why he was so reluctant to come? Perhaps he didn't know.

Joseph Nicholas wants to work for nuclear disarmament? Fine. After that he can get started on nerve gases, and biological warfare. (There is good news and bad news: The good news is that the Defense Department has found a cure for AIDS. The bad news is they are working on crossing AIDS with the common cold.) To paraphrase the ARA (the American Rifle Association, Mr. Nicholas, which lobbies for the right to bear arms, including snub nosed revolvers with police-armor piercing bullets) "When hydrogen bombs are outlawed, only outlaws will have hydrogen bombs."

Probably there is more chance of repealing the laws of physics that made the bomb possible in the first place. Sorry about that, Joe. The bomb is here to stay. The only question is: are we?

The above is my considered opinion, what I believe. I am not saying it to be rude to Joseph. Do I like it? No. It is sort of like climbing a sheer mountain face when you can't retreat. The only way to go is up, and throwing away the ropes and climbing gear that got you into this precipitous and deadly place won't help one damn bit. Going up mayn't help, either, but there isn't any other choice.

Skipping to page 10, we again find Mr. Nicholas, this time taken to task for writing KTF fanzine reviews. In view of his left-liberal political orientation, easily inferred from his voluminous writing, the obvious question is: why does he do it? One would think a liberal more civilized, more tolerant of human frailty, and a man of the left more inclined to display solidarity with his comrades in the struggle. (In case there is any doubt, the preceding sentence is grossly ironic.) In fact, I believe that the KTF reviews in question are, for Joseph, a form of play, a recreation, non-serious except to the recipients. What is he doing? Exercising his considerable rhetorical talent, which is normally in the service of his left-wing ideology, on fannish frivolity. Normally, of course, such broadsides are reserved for subjects which really matter.

Is there any corroborative evidence? Perhaps. The syntactical confusion of his arguments, which he is seemingly prepared to continue interminably, is strongly suggestive of leftist intellectuals. Stick to the revealed truth, and it doesn't matter whether you are right or wrong, just keep on talking until the other side shuts up from sheer exhaustion. Contradict yourself, but never concede a point. Sophisticality. Use any argument that will win, and never mind that your facts are wrong, your logic flawed, your premises fallacious.

So what do we have? A left wing intellectual hanging out in fanzines, sort of like a barracuda in a child's wading pool. (4030 8th Street South, Arlington, Va. 22204)

Tom Perry: You sent me to my files with your statement that I had been slow on the uptake with my response to West, but durned if you weren't right. I seem to remember firing off my letter the day Wiz arrived, but that's obviously false. I guess I must

7 have written the reply in my head and left it there for several months before moving it onto paper and mailing it to you. Fannish time has an entirely different measuring rod than Real Time (as us computer mavens call it) and I often feel like the relativity twins when I map fannish events against their real world counterparts.

For instance, I don't remember exactly when I wrote the article that is apparently going to appear in the imminent Innuendo/Lighthouse. I can place one attempt to write a second version as being in 1969, at which point I had already given up on Terry's ever publishing it. (I wrote him asking for the return of the manuscript or at least a couple of details from it that had escaped my memory; he responded, deadpan, that he was incensed at my thinking of submitting the material elsewhere since he was on the verge of publishing it and had in fact already stencilled it. I believe he had had it about five years at that time.) And that means -- if I can refer outside the parentheses to what I said inside -- that the original version is nigh on to twenty years old. I never did finish that 1969 version but I tackled it again in 1976 and brought it to the ground that time. It was published in a British fanzine that had almost no circulation in the U.S., so I thriftily offered it to Arnie Katz, who had asked me for material -- only to have him disdain the offer as smacking of Simultaneous Submission, which he as the editor of a professional rassling magazine could not abide. Imagine how he would have felt if he'd known that Terry Carr was also in the process of publishing essentially the same material, and had been, at that time, for more than a decade! I fear that me and my poor manuscript would have been bounced not just off the ropes and against the mat but clear out of the ring. (Box 2134, Boca Raton, Fla. 33427)

RB: I must confess not being totally breathlessly excited about the thought of a 20 year old issue of Innuendo which has never been circulated. Historical documents are all very well, but I'd really be bowled over by an Innuendo growing out of the fandom of today. I'm sure it will be applause worthy, but it can't possibly have the impact a current Innuendo could have. This is to take nothing away from Terry who I credit with creating two or three of the top ten US fanzines of all time (Lighthouse, Innuendo, and Fanac). Few of us have equaled his achievements. But. When he created those achievements they were all very much a part of their contemporary scene and reveled in it. Not exhumations. I would greet a new 20 year old great fanzine that had been freshly minted with a mixture of wistful enthusiasm. Such a fanzine would be all past and no future.

Taff '87 Campaign Heats Up! (Press release for Ansible): 18 July '84 -- In an effort to catch up with the rocketing Cesar Ignacio Ramos in '87 Taff campaign, Jeanne Bowman, "The Madwoman of Norwescon", announced today that she eats placenta. Not to be outdone by the appearance of Holier Than Thou #19, in which Marty Cantor pledges his support to the Ramos Drive, "The Madwoman of Norwescon" reveals in Rich Coad's Space Junk #7 some simple recipes for the (she says) culinary preparation of afterbirth. As I (Richard Bergeron) type these lines, Cesar Ignacio Ramos, perhaps contemplating a battle for the putridity vote beyond his wildest dreams, seems to have departed for the bathroom. I hear the toilet down the hall flushing. He returns.

"Did you vomit?" I ask.

"No," he replies forthrightly.

Your move, Ramos.

Leanne Frahm (with whom I am secretly infatuated) writes to ask, "Is Cesar Ignacio Ramos real?" Why sure, Leanne, sure. At least he was the last time I noticed...in Puerto Rico where "reality and fantasy intermingle relentlessly" one has to periodically check. There's an easy way to find out though: just vote for him for Taff in 1987 -- the resulting fury should he turn out to be me will be heard even in Slade Point. Anyway, why shouldn't he be real? Or is everyone beginning to suspect this is just an elaborate long range gambit by a fan who thought nothing of taking 10 years to produce a single issue of his fanzine and now has hit on the most baroque scheme in the history of fandom to make his social appearance?

Come to think of it, I like the idea. Wish I'd thought of it.

An Apology (of sorts): A friend writes to express distress that my intemperate remarks on Avedon Carol, in Wiz #10, may have been the result of having felt insulted by her raising the question of homosexuality in my vicinity. I should say not. Some of my best friends (both here and in New York) are gay, I've had a couple careers based in gay-intensive industries (supplying the decorating trade and women's fashions), and once gave SRO performances at The Purple Grape (a transvestite hangout in Manhattan) of my Bob Fosse choreographed Diana Ross extravaganza. These I had to cease when my thighs got too wrinkled.

No, my annoyance with La Carol had more to do with baffled astonishment that a sexual question was being raised in a context which clearly didn't call for it (the context being my (!) "second voice"'s remarks on the Epsilon cover) and the propriety of addressing so irrelevant a response to the Taff electorate. Her concern with matters below the belt strikes me as verging on the carnivorous -- in the past I've found the general focus of her preoccupations with sex largely uninteresting, but this struck me as just Too Much.

Cesar showed her statement to a friend of his from the country who hails from another fandom, but who is aware of 'our' fandom. His friend said, "Why did she say that? God, what a bitch she is!" I don't know whether he's gay or not, but somehow I couldn't care less.

Be that as it may, I'm sure Avedon cares as passionately about which gender I sleep with as I do about which gender she sleeps with. The heat of my reaction created confusion on that score. I apologize. In retrospect, I wonder what made me think I could

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denounce what I regarded as poor taste by exemplifying it myself. I was wrong.

Side Effects: The suggestion that my participation in Taff is open to question has already had a concrete effect. I'd planned on sending a copy of Warhoon 28 to the Fan Room at LACon with a flyer to solicit orders with part proceeds from all sales to be donated to Taff. The arrangements were worked out through the estimable Marty Cantor. Suddenly it all seems like too much bother. Also, I'd thought of sending a two foot tall stack of fanzines to the US Taff administrator for her to sell on behalf of the Fund. I still have a considerable hoard of publications from the 40's which I no longer have much use for -- a complete run of Fandango, miscellaneous Acolytes and like that. However, I've changed my mind after reading her (unwise) crack about "Embezzling Funds" and her comment somewhere that while she agrees with the concept of not throwing out old fanzines, it's far too much trouble to look for string and paper to wrap them and then go through the drudgery of going to the post office and actually mail them to someone. And a rumor has reached me that Avedon keeps the Taff money in a stocking with a hole in it! I toyed with the thought of donating them to the Astral League (that boring spectator sport D. West invented which has had more copy devoted to it in convention reports than any other single event of the last several years). But we know what West thinks of old fanzines. It would be an impiety to the memory of Laney to send them there. Guess I'll just have to keep them.

Strolling down Memory Lane, I come to a bronze plaque embedded in a well clipped lawn. It bears a few numerals signifying an amount somewhere in the middle three figures: it's a commemoration of the sum I once raised (with a single bound) for the effort to import Bob Shaw to the United States. I nostalgically recall that nobody, at the time, thought to ask why I bothered. That was long before Avedon met Rob.

There must be something I can do for Taff. Something symbolic. Like "Not Voting".

Chuch Harris takes me to task: This is the first letter I've written for some weeks. I had an accident (tripped and broke two ribs) while decorating the living room. The pain-killer tablets the doc prescribed fuddle my fine mind. I can't concentrate. I can't lie down. I've had to sleep in an armchair for the last three weeks. And I am pissed off when, instead of a bunch of hibiscus and a get-well-soon card, my oldest friend in Puerto Rico starts to tell everybody how much more I have in common with D. West than Rob Hansen.

This is mischievous nonsense. D. despises the largest part of fandom. "Kill The Fuckers" is his basic motivation; time-binding is pointless cock; 6th Fandom is one with Tyre and Ninevah and a good thing too, and anybody predating Rat Fandom are boring old farts, and... but what's the point? Are you seriously suggesting I share D's outlook on anything?

Rob Hansen is something else again. I've only met three new fans since I came back from the Glades: Hansen, Hill, and the delectable Miss Elda (who wrestled on the floor with me until I Gave In) and they are all what used to be called trufan types. Rob is bright, articulate, honest, knowledgable about past fandoms, dedicated to fandom, women, and Joe Sainsbury's Grocery Emporiums. He is a really nice bloke...in fact, he's a mirror image of me except that he's less than half my age and says Fuck a damn sight too often. He copied True Rat for me, and demolished my defense of John Brunner. I think he'll be a super Taff candidate and I hope he makes the same impression Stateside as he made on me.

And so, to be fair, would D. West. They say he is housebroken, amiable and good company. He can hold his drink and is quite likely to say something memorable.

Which is more than can be said for R. Bergeron, Esq. I can quite see that you are pissed off with Avedon, but it is still unpardonable to hint that she forged Taff ballots, or raise your pious hands about her lack of impartiality. Where did you get such a daft fuggheaded requirement? There is no such thing as an impartial fan, and no such concept was envisaged by the Taff founders. It doesn't matter a horse's patoot if Avedon is another of us goat-fuckers or not. She was elected as the last Taff winner and consequently as the current vote counter. It's a democratic process. If you don't like it, go screw. If she so happens to be vote counting between multiple orgasms it's no bloody business of mine or yours and good luck to her, and I wish I was too.

The dreadful thing is that, from where I stand, this is such unworthy retaliation that it destroys all your credibility. For instance, how can we accept your censure of Joe Nicholas and equate it with your own actions? I am quite aware that we all have clay feet, but the trick is to hide them, not flaunt the bloody things.

So there. I disapprove of you. I disapprove of Joseph. I disapprove of Abi Frost. I relent a little bit about D. West, and I will shoot Avedon if I catch her hanging around my goat pen.

I think I'll let you tell me what I have in common with D. West. I keep returning to this point like a dog to its vomit. I suppose we'd both agree that he's one of the best (if not the best) fan writers of today. We are both handsome, suave, charming, debonair, and very very willing, madame. We both like the edged retort: the barbed answer instead of the soft words that turneth away wrath. We are both latter-day Laney -- fan hatchetmen rather than lovable Burbees, but none of this matters because basically I love fandom...all the fuggheads and morons, Joe Nicholas, D. West, poor old Joy Hibbert, thoats, BSFA clots, and you dear reader. D., I feel, despises much of it and will never agree that fandom is still a gestalt in which Bergeron and Burgess, Willis and West, Harris and Nicholas, and all the rest of the mass of slobbering halfwits are equal and necessary parts. (32 Lake Crescent, Daventry, Northants, England)

RB: I'm suprised by your statement that the concept of impartiality in a Taff administrator is novel. Where did I get such a daft notion? Well, I do drop the occasional

9 hit of acid, or maybe it's something I caught off a toilet seat, or maybe it just appeals to my sense of fairness that winning an election is enough of an uphill battle without the person doing the vote counting crossing their eyes and throwing up when they come to a ballot they don't approve of, or maybe I got it from that fugghead Dave Langford who, while Taff administrator, asked in Ansible #20, "are there any deserving candidates? No answer from me -- I'm supposed to be impartial here, remember?" Wonder where he got such a daft idea? Surely, not from the plethora of previous administrators rooting for their favorite candidates. Maybe the next Taff ballot should carry a voting space for the question, "Do you object to the administrators announcing a preference among the candidates before the election?" Take this to its logical conclusion: Don't you agree that Avedon should be one of the nominators on the 1985 ballot? I have a suspicion some of the voters (and candidates) might object. What do you think?

I'm not sure what bad taste (which I've apologized for) has to do with credibility, but I'm glad you bring Joseph into the discussion. Glancing elsewhere in Ansible #20, I find a one page rider titled The Northern Guffblower #9. This was a report/rider written by Nicholas advising fans of the current status of Guff, news of the fund, income and outgo of cash, items for sale, and an announcement of his impending Guff trip report (which, strangely enough, disappeared completely when Judith Hanna arrived on the scene). I think the Guffblower should be acknowledged as exemplary of the way a fund administrator should conduct his or her term. Coupling this with various reports in Aussie fanzines to the effect that J. had been found to be a delightful raconteur, drinking companion, and general three ring circus, makes me wonder (at risk of committing the gross sin of 'interference') why he hasn't been nominated for Taff yet? (Has Be Nice To Joseph Week started or have I been premature?) Is it too much to ask why an American administrator doesn't prevail on Glycer to run a half or quarter page of news notes in File 770 to keep fandom abreast of the current condition of our half of the fund, instead of....? I suppose it is.

How do you equate "the mass of slobbering halfwits" as "equal" to, say, Redd Boggs? Equal only, surely, in the sense that both occupy a certain amount of space which happens to be in fandom. The effect of the example of a Redd Boggs, or the pleasure one gets from the grace he lavishes on his current apazines can in no sense be said to be "equal" to the effect or pleasure given by the work of someone who doesn't particularly care or who, unfortunately, wasn't born with the talent of a Boggs. In what sense are they equal?

You make a number of assumptions about West, which may not be justified by the evidence. I ask if a fan who puts together (and publishes) a 180 page anthology of his own writing on the subject of fandom (and simultaneously is denounced as lazy by Terry Hill!) can be said to be motivated by hatred. Would you say that "Ah! Sweet Idiocy!" was written out of contempt or Laney's disappointment with the thing he loved? Save for West's (fairly obvious) deliberate flights of provocation, I would say that his critical stance is essentially constructive and motivated by a desire to see fandom try to achieve its potential. I wouldn't go too far in comparing either yourself or West to Laney. I recall FTL as the first of the true KTF critics and credit him for setting an example that seems to have made me permanently leary of the social side of fandom. Has there been anything since to compare with the vindictiveness of his personal attack on Ackerman? -- by all accounts one of the nicest people ever to inhabit the microcosm. FTL's Fandango Awards epitomized the KTF approach.

A final word of caution (free of charge): Enough of this making like Michael Jackson routine on the top of a step ladder while roller painting the ceiling, Harris. We can't afford to lose any of our Born Again fannish genii of the 50's at this point.

Eric Mayer interferences: Maybe I ought to nominate Cesar for Taff. After all, since I don't go to conventions it won't matter to me whether he's real or not! In this instance I might be the most qualified nominator. (1771 Ridge Rd. E. Rochester NY 14622)

Arthur Thomson writes to express consternation that his copy of Wiz #10 seems to have been lost in the post and that he was "forced to go beanie in hand knocking at Vince Clarke's door to borrow his copy." Art whimpers pitifully, "I am a Wiz addict. I follow all the convoluted and twisted paths of argument and reasoning that run hot foot through the pages of your fanzine. Indeedy." How touching. It's a relief to hear that somebody is following all this. He also mentions "talking to Abi Frost a day or so back, outside the One Tun on a fine hot London evening, I told her that it was nice to see that people in Wiz thought highly of her. Chris Priest nodded in agreement as he passed by on his way to Texas. She wondered what issue of Interzone you had seen..." It was Interzone #7. I recommend it to all my friends even though somebody on the editorial staff apparently snatched Gibson's "Fragments Of A Hologram Rose" right out from under my nose just as I was reaching out to secure it for Wiz. Pistols at dawn. Please tell Abi I miss her acerbic prose and, by way of retaliation for Interzone's effrontery, would be delighted (if she has the time) to publish a screed from her on the current state of British fanwriting. Maybe for Warhoon 31? (now on the drawing boards).

Pete Lyon recalls a certain Matrix cover and the Concrete Overcoat Fan Fund awards ceremony and baptism of fire: ...I well remember hunkering down ever further in my seat as the runners up in ascending order were solemnly intoned. My doom seemed inevitable. I was astonished when I received nary a mention in that venomous list. How could it be that I had escaped "fandom's most public form of censure"? It's not as if I would have minded...the award is characterized by it's good natured humour. Either my sins were too petty, or obversely too heinous to be appropriate. Perplexity mounted, as moments later, I was awarded, to warm applause, the prize for best painting in the Art Show! Is there

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no justice? (And poor old Simon Polley got lumbered with COFF.)

There certainly is no justice! I'm puzzled about some of the covers of A Woman's Periodical...I've asked Margaret how it is that her lewd and fascistic outpourings there, and in other fanzines, do not engender the disapprobation that my humble efforts seem to. The subtle difference betwixt us escapes me. As for anatomical correctness... As one who can draw correctly, I reserve the right to sidestep or relapse stylistically if it suits me; and I reserve the right for anyone to draw as freely or as naturally as scribbling their signature. There seems to be an awful lot of confusion as to why the cover was so awful, but general agreement that it was so. I did actually give some thought to what I was doing, and integral to the jape was its appearance on the cover of boring old Matrix. My production was loaded with obvious ambivalence...cues for unthinking misinterpretation; but my 'political' conscience was clear (at least to me).

After all, at worst, it was a childish prank, cooked up by at least three inebriates on a Friday night at the pub: a little stone tossed into the placid waters of fandom, arrogantly, to watch the ripples. Naturally I would have been disappointed if the damn thing were to be treated as such and consequently ignored. But, it was even more of a disappointment to have my cynical view confirmed and see it taken up as a cause celebre in such a predictable way. I suppose it's all grist to the fannish mill. The fact that one and all are proclaiming their feminist principles and high moral purpose is indeed edifying. In truth the fact that fanart is being discussed seriously, for whatever reason is a Jolly Good Thing: surely it can be more than mere decoration. (33 Haddon Place, Leeds, London, LS4 2JU)

Oddz Zen Endz: 26 July 1984: Summer doldrums. In Puerto Rico they last all year. The urge to commit fanac is a conscious effort, a battle against the persistent call of inertia, the temptation to lounge on the roof among hibiscus and rose plants in the hammock with ocean breezes pushing clouds into games of tag against a backdrop of cobalt blue. One lies there and browses through a copy of Bill Patterson's "The Little Fandom That Could" and contemplates what it has to say about the social side of fandom. In the US, you are entering the dog days of August. Activity which involves the use of a typewriter will seem even less attractive than it does here. Many of you will be anticipating the carnival of Worldcon and its fallout. In the face of that expectation it would require titanic effort to write an article or publish a fanzine. Following Worldcon will come Worldcon Letdown: a recovery from emersion in and withdrawal symptoms from an intense social and commercial ritual. I wish you all a wonderful time. I will be with you in (much the best way) spirit. I cross August and September off my calendar and conclude that Holier Than Thou #19 will probably have been the major fanzine fandom event of those two months. I am informed that Teresa Nielsen Hayden and Tom Webber (or as Patrick has taken to referring to them, "D. West's other US nominators") are brainstorming a fanzine of "the small but dangerous school". That would be refreshing. A nice cool fanzine on a hot day. Tom is sojourning with P&T at 75 Fairview and probably speculating about this maniac Bergeron who writes the most ghastly letters to P. A rainbow advances toward the rooftops of Old San Juan from Condado. It signals the breaking edge of a wall of water departing an over-ambitious cloud formation. It will pass like a shower of diamonds. Marty Cantor writes advising an August 15th deadline for my HTTP column. He must be mad. I am in the middle of planning Warhoon 31. It should be quite an issue: a 64 page portfolio of silk screen prints ranging from 5 to 9 colors per page in an edition of 500 copies. The beach beckons. Ambition ebbs, but somehow I slug my way through this endpiece. Perhaps Tequila with Schweppe's Tonic and a squeeze of lime -- to wash down the pistachios -- will help. I wonder if D. West has sent Rob Hansen a bon voyage card? The Commandant of Bingley must be heaving a sigh of relief that US fandom didn't lose all its marbles and imagine him as Representative of British Fandom. Clearly, West had never felt less representative of anything in his life. Hansen gets to walk the plank. Should be one of the most fascinating Taff trips of the century -- as the candidate tours the country on the Victory Train he'll be interviewed on the controversial issues that have arisen in his wake. First on the agenda, I aver, must be a top level meeting among the current administrators (if that can be arranged) over the question of whether the money of those voters who won't get to meet the candidate should be refunded: their involvement having been solicited under false pretenses. Epocal decisions await under a baleful sun and an inertia which drives back the impulse to commit this to paper and mail it out. If I succeed you will be the first to know.

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TO:

WIZ

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