
APPARATCHIK

The twenty-fifth issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, published by Andy Hooper, member fwa, supporter afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 207. If you want to dine with the devil you need a long spoon....

Issue # 25, January 12th, 1995.

DO IT YOURSELF PSYCHADELIA : I turned on MTV the other day, while I was eating lunch. The VJ announced that the next video was Soundgarden's "Black Hole Sun," an enticingly trippy tune that sounds more like Pink Floyd than Pink Floyd does, and which I had on a CD close to hand. I pulled it out of the rack and lifted the disc into the player, and sat back down with the stereo remote (as opposed to the VCR and cable remotes).

Then sat through six commercials.

But when the video - also strikingly surreal, with violently morphing images and a strong "When Worlds Collide" feeling to it - began, I was able to hit the play button just two seconds after the soundtrack began on the TV. The effect was like listening through an electric fan, or at the back end of a very large football stadium.

I turned it up, and I recommend you do the same thing.

THEN DO THE RIGHT THING : While we wring our hands and mutter darkly about the present and future of TAFF, it's worth pointing out that the best way of affecting the current race would be to actually send in your ballot and vote. The end of the race will be here sooner than you think, and the ballots that have been piling up in among your current fanzines will sink into the lower strata unless you take action to prevent it soon. Why not go now and fill one out, and put it in the pile of outgoing mail? You'll find that nagging feeling of unfinished business that has clutched the fan-center of your brain will subside once you have done so. And of course, it goes without saying that I heartily encourage you to list Mr. Dan Steffan first among your choices for the Transatlantic trip.

LO, HOW THE MIGHTY : The Texas SF Inquirer # 53 (dated September 1994) arrived today. I appreciate the generosity of it's editor, Alexander Slate, in sending the zine to me, even though there have been precious few trades in return lately, and of course, I am not a member of the Fandom Association of Central Texas. I might have been, though, had Carrie not been hired so quickly by the firm she works for now. We listed Austin second on our list of places we would like to move to, and would have made an effort to find work there if Seattle hadn't come through so quickly for us.

So, I opened issue # 53 and tried to imagine what I would think if it were my club's zine.

First of all, my copy is defective. Page 20 slipped

in the photocopier and the print trailed halfway off the paper. Now that I think of it, the last issue I got had a bad page in it as well. Maybe Alex can only send a few extra copies to non-subscribers, and saves the bad copies for non-club members? Maybe the collators don't take the time for a quality-control check.

Next, Alex leads off with apologies for the tardiness of this and the previous issue. Clubzines have more pressure on them to be timely and frequent than other kinds of fanzines, because the members of the club theoretically depend on them for information about upcoming club events and business. In many ways, it is much more difficult to publish a clubzine than a fat genzine, and a lot more difficult than grinding out a bi-weekly cage-liner like this. You have to please a lot of people who don't know a good fanzine from Lucas' Little Brother, and if they decide they don't like what you're doing, they can take your fmz away from you. A lot of young or inexperienced faneds decide to start their publishing careers by taking on their local clubzine, in the hope that having the resources of the club to work with will make the process easier for them. Instead, they become locked in a struggle to find material and meet deadlines for an increasingly impatient audience, and this has soured innumerable nascent faneds on the entire fanzine milieu.

Anyone who knows the publishing history of TSFI can understand Alex's concern about the need to meet deadlines. For those arriving late on the scene, it was just seven years ago that Pat Virzi (assisted by Neil Kaden, A.P. McQuiddy and Dennis Virzi) received a Hugo for her work in editing this very fanzine. Ironically, by the time she received the award, she had already been forced to give up editing TSFI in a dispute about missed deadlines, which had grown out of a general feud and power-struggle that gripped FACT and its fringes in the mid-eighties. I was not privy to all the details of the conflict, and would be perfectly happy to hear them from people who were closer to the event, but my impression is that the zine fell into the hands of people (Scott Merritt and Monica Stephens) who had less connection to fanzine fandom for a brief Babylonian Captivity, and things have never been the same since.

Which is a shame, because I always enjoyed reading the trade copies of that came to CUBE, where

...across the frozen tundra of Lambeau field...

The producers told me they'd had quite a lot of luck with bald actors.

editor Spike Parsons held TSFI in high esteem and tried to follow its example in significant ways. At the time, I thought it was the best clubzine of the day, and I would still rank it among the best I have ever seen in that fannish subgenre.

It feels pretty damn strange to be waxing nostalgic about the mid-eighties, but I just got out my collection of TSFI's, and had a lot of fun paging through them again. Remember the small tempest unleashed by Dennis Virzi's "Open Letter to British Fandom" in June of 1986? The imaginative "Our 21st Century Writers" series by Allen Varney? The excerpts from "Cheap Truth" postings by Bruce Sterling? Of course, a clubzine has to run a lot of sercon drivel to satisfy the stfnal appetites of the neofen, but TSFI always seemed to have a better class of reviews, criticism and interviews with authors than most other clubzines. A. P. McQuiddy's interview with Bill Gibson in issue # 22 was one of the first published conversations with the author, and to my mind, is still one of the best I've read.

Whatever we think in retrospect of the cyberpunk/noir movement in SF in the mid-eighties, it was an interesting time to be a science fiction reader. In my opinion, Austin's writing community enjoyed their greatest days some years before F.A.C.T. was even founded, but there were some really interesting people working in and around the city when TSFI was at its best, and the excitement of having them there was palpable in the pages of the zine. There was a strong regional chauvinism in the interests of the columnists and critics, but on the whole, I think they had better taste than 90% of the people writing sercon and stfnal material for fanzines today. The reviews were real reviews, not the gormless book reports that plague us now. Of course, any fanzine willing to print Bruce Sterling's opinions has to comfortable with the idea of stirring up a little controversy.

Returning to the contemporary edition of the fanzine, Alex has delivered more material than most clubzine editors. He has been editing TSFI, either by himself or in concert with Dale Denton, since # 29; 24 issues in four and a half years is not all that bad. Let us, by way of comparison, look at the number of issues of RUNE published in the past two years (a cheap shot, for which I am ashamed), or the two issues of CUBE that I got out in about 11 months. I think you're doing okay in the frequency department, Alex.

Then there is the question of the format of the zine. The current look is nowhere near as attractive as the three-column offset newszine which Ms. Virzi used to produce, nor is it as appealing as the mimeographed editions which she published in the latter stages of her tenure. There is a lot of art by contemporary "big names," like Ransom, Stein, Michaels, and Foster, all of it as essentially void of topicality as those artists work in other zines. Representational art is, after all, meant to represent something; give me a good Rotsler Monkey-Head any day over these visual non-sequiturs (Although I have to admit I

really like the two pieces Linda Michaels has in # 53, and the Foster is pretty funny). There seems to be a great deal of wasted space in the zine, which I would think an editor as concerned with costs as Alex appears to be would want to avoid. I do give him credit for improving the look of the fanzine over the past four years, though; looking at them now, # 36 & 37 trod perilously close to crudzine country.

A more thorny issue is that of content. Alex usually has a large dose of his own writing in each issue, and while I have read far worse, his work is not strong enough to carry the zine on his own. His forays into quasi-libertarian and anti-feminist rhetoric leave me predictably cold, but they presumably go over better with his local readers. Of all the old columnists who used to make TSFI so lively, the only one left is Ed Graham Jr., still holding forth on an entertaining variety of topics. Ed seems to be a little wearier these days, but so are we all.

One writer who is clearly going strong is perennial Hugo-nominee Evelyn C. Leeper. The fact that this woman's writing is so popular gnaws at me like a particularly obtuse Zen koan. I've read quite a few of her articles now, and while I applaud her interest in science fiction, her eye for detail, and her ability to keep what must be meticulous notes, I have never derived the slightest pleasure from reading any of it.

This issue features the third part of an extended account of all the programs and events she attended at ConFrancisco, plus some functions her husband Mark went to instead. This goes on for ten interminable pages of double-column text, and only very occasionally rises above the level of basic reportage. Some of the panels described sound like they might have been very interesting to attend, but reading Leeper's account of them is like skimming the Cliff's notes instead of going to the source material.

If a person wanted to present ten pages of opinion and original thought on a sixteen-month-old Worldcon, that would be understandable, but the idea of writing this vast laundry-list of minutiae is incomprehensible to me. I'd do it if you paid me, but I'd try to talk you out of it. And remember, this is the third installment of this stuff - the whole article must run to 30,000 words. I hope Alex got it on disc.

There is none of the snap and verve of the sercon material that appeared in the old TSFI. If Evelyn Leeper has a sense of wonder, she's keeping it on a short leash.

The class of material presented is not something we can lay entirely at the editor's door. In a clubzine, if you don't have some interested and talented parties in the club who are willing to contribute material, you may be out of luck. But Alex is clearly looking for material beyond the ranks of FACT itself, and as long as he is going to do that, he might as well hold out for a slightly-better class of writing. I suppose I ought to offer to send him something myself before I complain too much more....

Still, the most pressing question is just who is the zine supposed to represent. TSFI began it's life as an

expanded bid sheet for the 1985 Nasfic, clearly identified with fans who eventually formed the core of that convention's committee. That group is long gone now, splintered into feuding factions, moved on to bigger problems, or just plain old and tired. Yet, TSFI lives on, a changeling child of the fanzine that once gave us so much pleasure. Who are the people it serves today, and what are they getting out of this relatively pallid genzine?

I don't know what the current state of FACT itself is, but I can tell you that there are plenty of entertaining and talented people in Austin and surrounding environs. The trip Bill Bodden and I made to ArmadilloCon in 1991 stands as one of the most enjoyable fannish experiences I have ever had - not even waking up with roaches crawling on me in Lawrence Person's apartment the Monday after the con can dampen my memory of the event. I know the people I talked to that weekend could help put out a hell of a genzine - Alex just isn't reaching them somehow. Maybe the whole issue of whether to put out a fanzine at all just brings up too many bad memories of old feuds and follies for people - which might explain why there's so seldom any mention of club history or the publishing record of TSFI in its pages.

The only time I have seen Alex make reference to the history of TSFI (although, to be fair, I haven't read every issue) was in the 50th issue, which also happened to be the tenth anniversary number. In it he briefly allowed as how he figured Pat would remain the only editor of the fanzine to win a Hugo award. That was the limit of the retrospective material in the issue, aside from a fairly gloomy piece by Ed Graham on the aging of fandom.

Now, if I won an award for my perzine or a genzine I edited on my own, I might not make any overt mention of it beyond thanking those who voted for me at the time. It's embarrassing to sing your own praises so stridently. But if I ran a clubzine - a fanzine designed to foster contact, cohesion, interplay and colloquy between the members of my club, to be an expression of the ideas and principles and speculations of the club members, and that fanzine won an award, I'd splash in on the masthead in 16-point bold type. "WINNER OF THE SCIENCE FICTION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR BEST FANZINE, 1988" I'd slap that right up there in front and remind people just what you can do if you set your goals high enough. Get them thinking about how they'd like to do it again, maybe if only to prove they could do it without the previous generation's hand to guide them.

Anyway, this is far from the worst zine I get, and I don't want to create the impression that there hasn't been some good stuff in it from time to time. But you know I'm a big one for having an ideological center in your fanac, and I also think you can tell a lot about a fan group by the fanzines they produce. This is, I'm afraid, a fanzine without a center, and it makes me ask questions about fandom in Texas as well.

If you want to win a Hugo, it helps to lobby people in the pages of your editorials, as Pat Virzi used to

do, and it doesn't hurt to have the Worldcon scheduled for a neighboring state. There's going to be a Worldcon in San Antonio in 1997, of which I was a pre-supporter, and I certainly hope to attend it as well. I like Texas a lot; I've had pretty uniformly good experiences there, especially if you leave out the time I've spent on board Amtrak trains in the state. But I have to admit I don't have that many correspondents down there right now, and I figure I'm going to have to do some ground work before 1997. Hell, I think I know more people in El Paso than I do in San Antonio....

Whoever those people are (and of course I do know some of them; no need to send me Texas phone books) the center of fannish gravity in the Lone Star State has shifted their way. Their bid-flyers were just as interesting as those first TSFI sheets were. Maybe they ought to try putting out a few issues of a genzine between now and the end of 1996...who knows what they might accomplish.

ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS I'd do if I ran the world is make it illegal for communication companies - MCI, Sprint, AT&T, etc. - to advertise on TV. I wish I could explain why they make me feel that way, but every time I see one of their ads, I have the strong impulse to get my softball bat out of the closet and stave in the television screen. Part of my reaction probably arises from the unpleasant experience we had when we foolishly switched from AT&T to Sprint, when Carrie and I were first married. I doubt they ever sent us an accurate bill, and we spent almost 11 months trying to get them to stop harassing us over \$60.00 that we had definitely paid - in fact, I think we may actually have paid it twice, but this was not enough for them.

That's not really the reason, though, that it sets me off so thoroughly. It's just being bombarded with more drivel, inane slogans and manifestos and bargains and plans and always sniping brutally at the other companies and their ads, all of it transmitted at ear-shattering volume. It's like having a presidential election going on all the time. The effect this has on me is that I begin to despise everyone and everything associated with these ads. I haven't watched more than one or two episodes of "Murphy Brown" ever since Candice Bergen starting doing those Sprint ads. All of those friendly people at MCI, thrashing around in a giant room full of dancing phone operators and flashing tote-boards - I occasionally lull myself to sleep at night by imagining five or six large, bald men in rubber jumpsuits bursting into the room and spraying the place with flame-throwers. That guy who juggles the Nokia cellular phones? I like to imagine him being fed, hands first, into a vast sausage grinder, then served on pasta to his extended family. The smarmy little AT&T ads about the tiny savings really available from other carriers - the people in them go down on the same list with all the Scientologists and NRA boosters and anti-choice lobbyists in Hollywood and publishing and fandom and so forth, the people I want to hang from the street

We started with a very strong Klingon influence and then realized we better back off.

Does the Smithsonian have a propeller beanie yet?

lamps with piano-wire. I scare myself, frequently, with the vehemence of my hatreds. A guy like me shouldn't be out walking around loose.

And now, to add to the general stress level, I have to reconsider my policies in this area, or at least admit an exception to them. Good old Ray Walston, our favorite Martian, one of the more consistently entertaining character actors of the last 40 years, has done a commercial for AT&T, asking if they offer any discount for Martians living in the USA. How can you hate something like that? It's getting so a person can't even enjoy being a troubled loner with severe emotional problems and a trunk full of dynamite and automatic weapons....

WELL, WHY NOT? Victor Gonzalez called the other day, and said that he would like to write a column for APAK. I was a little taken aback; I'd never considered the idea of anyone else writing editorial or feature material for this fanzine; for one thing, the deadlines are more than most sane people would want to deal with.

Then Victor noted that I already have a piece of his cooling its heels in the unpublished SPENT BRASS File, and have for about five months now. He allowed as how he would really like to write something for a fanzine that will actually be published in our time, and I figured there wasn't any way to say no to him. So, we might see a piece by Victor in the next issue; if anyone ought to be able to meet a bi-weekly deadline, it ought to be a working reporter.

I extend the opportunity to anyone else out there who would like to take it. I wouldn't bother sending anything over a thousand words, and it would improve your chances if you sent it on a 3.5 inch disc formatted for IBM-compatible computers. Your work would find its way to a hundred fans at best, and would no doubt be full of typos and ham-handed edits, but if this doesn't discourage you, fire away. Of course, if the choice was between sending me an article or sending me a letter, I'd choose the latter every time....

JUST A FEW MORE NOTES on the business of the zine: The listing in # 24 which stated that lifetime subs to APAK had risen to "\$1973" was in error. Lifetime subs still cost a mere \$19.73, and include having your name printed, with indifferent spelling and capitalization, in the closing colophon of each issue.

As for our British correspondents, I am going to package this zine with the previous issue and send it along by the beginning of next week. I can't promise that I will be able to send them first class, but professional affairs have been going well enough for me that I think I can afford to spend the extra money that regular mailings will cost me. Those who send me their fanzines should consider this nothing more than a natural restoration of an all-for-all trading relationship. Those who don't send their own zines in trade should be sure to let me know (in a LoC, hopefully) that I should keep making the effort.

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS!

[After a blissful hiatus, TAFF/DUFF and attendant discontents have returned, in the person of VICKI ROSENZWEIG (33 Indian Rd. #6R, New York, NY 10034) who writes:]

"...And now, in the hope that you aren't thoroughly tired of fan funds, I want to talk about DUFF a bit. One of the DUFF candidates this year is Lucy Schmeidler. (I can almost hear the voices saying "who?") She's involved in fandom here in New York for several years, without making much of a splash; is part of Jewish Fandom (which, as a semi-organized group, is concerned with holding Sabbath services at cons and making kosher food available to observant Jews who attend cons); and seems to be corresponding with a number of Australians, perhaps in more of a sercon mode than most of the APAK readership. (She organized a reception for Alan Stewart when he was in New York on his DUFF trip, for example, and was inviting people to meet a visiting Australian publisher next month.) Lucy's zine in the November Apa-Nu (basically a New York apa, with the out-of-town copies going mostly to people who used to be New York fans) talked about running for DUFF, some of the practical difficulties she was concerned with, and the question of whether she would be an appropriate DUFF candidate (since Apa-Nu and an apa devoted to Jewish fandom are her only print fanac). In my zine for the December mailing, I included a paragraph to the effect that, so long as she was willing to fulfill the obligations of a DUFF winner, including writing the trip report, there was no reason she shouldn't stand. I also offered to vouch for anyone who was legitimately qualified but whose name might not be known to Dick and Leah Smith (some of our local club and convention fans come to mind). I took this zine to collation, and Lucy and I got to talking a bit. She was talking about voting for GUFF. I said I wasn't going to, although I'd had the opportunity (Janice Murray had both ballots and Australian currency, to make things easier for North American Fans), because I had no particular stake in the race and didn't know the candidates. Lucy said that she wanted to vote because she wanted to open up the elections to people who aren't generally involved in fan funds. My response is that sometimes I may, responsibly, decline to vote in an election, and that doesn't mean anyone has excluded me. that conversation leaves me wondering about Lucy's purposes (other than wanting to go to Australia and meet the people she's been corresponding with) in running for DUFF. Not that I think DUFF should be limited to fanzine fans: people who don't publish fanzines may still be interested in contact with other parts of fandom. rather, I think fan fund voters should be people who care about the result, not merely be voting in order to make some odd point about having the right to vote. And I think I may have made a mistake in offering to vouch for people, even though

they are legitimate voters. (This may be the only time that I'd regretted what I put in an apazine between the time I got to collation and the time the apa was stapled). Most likely, it won't matter: many of the people to whom my offer applies seem to think it's unreasonable that they would have to make a donation in order to vote, and that 'why should I pay for it?' mentality (never mind that both and Vijay Bowen have explained why they have to pay) is likely to override any thoughts about being included, as artists, filkers, or what-have-you, in the DUFF constituency

"I think I write letters of comment in the time that most Americans use watching TV, and at least some of the thinking involved is done on the subway. (There are advantages to a commute in which I have no need to pay attention to the road.) It does cut into the time I might otherwise be using to work on another issue of my personalzine, but while I regret that, my pocketbook doesn't."

[Everyone who stands for a fan fund has to have some sort of personal agenda in doing so, beyond the stated object of contact between fans. Fans are usually complicated souls, with a lot of interests outside of the fannish or stfnal, and it stands to reason that they would seek to pursue some of them at the same time they served as a fund-delegate, without necessarily "using" the fund in any objectionable way. Of course, if you want to avoid alienating people who might find your collateral interests somehow inimical to their own, it would be wise not to go around trumpeting them to the heavens, and perhaps to refrain from making them part of your platform.

As for who makes a fit fan-fund candidate, I think the question simply does not require answering. Anyone who has the desire to stand for the fund, and can get five people of some experience in fandom to nominate them, is by definition eligible to be a candidate. They may end up humiliated by the results, but it's not for us to protect them from themselves. The issue of who would make an appropriate delegate is altogether different, but we have trusted the electorate to make that decision for forty years, and I see no compelling reason to take it out of their hands.

I wouldn't worry about having to vouch for voters. People who don't understand why it is necessary to contribute financially along with their ballots have neatly self-selected themselves out of the fan-fund electorate. It's remarkable how nature sometimes does our work for us, isn't it?

Next, the following note came from Barnaby Rapoport (P.O. Box Storrs, CT,), written on the back of a postcard with a Piers Anthony cover on the front, which was in turn stuck inside a copy of The Best of Raymond Z. Gallun:

"Here's the Gallun ("Galloon") best-of you requested. I trust it will prove a rich source of APPARATCHIK linos. Will this get my name printed again? But never mind, I'm in a mellow mood over having just found a fine copy of 'Susan Dey's Secrets on

Boys, Beauty, and Popularity' (Tiger Beat Presents) for nineteen cents, featuring sixteen pages of photos of this crush of my early teens.

"P.S. You're lucky that Bixby question didn't cost me the game, or I'd have had Nevenah break your arms."

[I was actually quite touched that someone was willing to first find and then send along one of the odd things I listed in my closing colophon. Certainly there is the potential for a wide variety of diverting linos in this volume of golden-age classics. When I opened the book to a random page, my eye lit upon:

"Dream Valley! Hexagon lights! Composed only of a soft auroral luminescence as far as anyone could see, they altered their shapes and colors constantly. Now they were the simple, diaphonous planes of a six-sided form. And now they took on all the beauty and geometric complexity of a snowflake expanded to colossal size. Yet they were, according to accepted scientific opinion, no more than phenomena related to terrestrial auroras, being induced in the minute trace of Lunar atmosphere by incoming electromagnetic waves from the Sun. Some odd, natural condition, peculiar to the Moon, was supposed to give them their crystalline shapes by reflecting in some manner, and in enormously magnified size, the forms of minute ice crystals still floating in what little remained of the Lunar shell of air." (Magician of Dream Valley, ASF, October, 1938)

Well, all I can say is that I've been there. I've seen those colossal crystals hanging in the Lunar atmosphere. And I'm here to tell you that the hangover which followed was probably beyond the imagination of even Raymond Z. Gallun.

As for that crack about the Bixby question, do you think Alex Trebek would have let you get away with switching "It's a Good Life" for "It's a Good Day"?

Now, we'll swing back to the subject of fan funds again with long-awaited comments from Joseph Nicholas, (16 Jansons Road, Tottenham, London, N15 4JU, United Kingdom) who reveals:]

"By means not convenient to describe, we have acquired a *samizdat* copy of *Apparatchik* 16.

"...While appreciating your desire to publish a small, frequent fanzine, and acknowledging that its planned frequency would be destroyed if it had a significant overseas circulation, the fact remains that if you're going to discuss a question of interest like TAFF then you are damn well obliged to ensure that your comments receive an international airing. After all, if you presume to second-guess what British fans might think of the issue without giving them an opportunity to comment until ten issues have gone by, what the hell else can you expect?"

[My word, Joseph, two expletives in one paragraph! Yet another indication of the passions which this miscalculation of mine has engendered. I should think the wealth of angry disclaimers that have come this way would constitute evidence that my remarks have enjoyed

Just stay in the cab Vern ... maybe that bear's hurt, and maybe he ain't.

Like they say, a man don't always do what's best for him.

some considerable distribution across the length and breadth of your teeming womb of royal kings. From this point forward, let us consider that facet of the argument put to rest; blow and carp though British readers may, they will have to turn to the pages of their own nation's fanzines to see further indictment of my hubris. On the other hand, it seems no more than fair to air further considerations on the subject of TAFF by people who have been waiting for many months to make their opinions known: -aph]

"Having voiced such a criticism, however, I do think - although I perhaps have less psychic investment in the issue than others - that there are problems with the British End of TAFF. Although it is supposed to be for all fans - that is, promoted as the property, and supposedly operates with the participation, of all fan interests - the fact is that it is perceived as largely if not exclusively 'owned' by fanzine fans. For as long as I've been in fandom, and for many years before that, the British winners of TAFF have been fanzine fans - but because TAFF is supposed to be for all fan interest, the winners have felt it incumbent upon them to attend a Worldcon, at which these different interests will notionally be represented, rather than a more specialized event...and for the most part have not found the experience particularly enjoyable. (Would you, if you'd traveled thousands of miles to meet face-to-face, for the first time, those who've been no more than names on paper, only to find yourself surrounded by hordes of drones in elf costumes?) There have been few if any attempts, consciously or otherwise, to widen the participation base, to include groups other than fanzine fans, but by this point, such widening may no longer be possible: as you know yourself, perceptions have greater force than mere facts, and if convention runners (filkers, gamers, costumers, whathaveyou) think that TAFF is exclusively for fanzine fans then no amount of reasoned argument will persuade them otherwise. Indeed, these perceptions may well be further entrenched by the current race: in view of the low number of votes likely to be cast for Joe Wesson, it comes down to a straight fight between a fanzine fan and a convention fan, and if the latter loses it may be

impossible to make further appeals to interest groups other than fanzine fans in the future.

"Gloomy, eh what? But remember your Gramsci: 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will', as he so trenchantly put it. That TAFF can be so vigorously discussed, by British fans who find so many problems with it, surely indicates there is life in it yet."

[Just so; I suspect the only time that we really need have fears about the future of TAFF is when we cease to have arguments about it.

I have to admit that I look at all efforts to "widen" the participatory base of TAFF with a somewhat jaundiced eye. In what way would TAFF have to be changed in order to make it more appealing to con-running fans? Why should we go out of our way for their benefit when we are unwilling to change the parameters of the fund and the trip to benefit the people who have historically contributed their time and money to keep the fund going for decades? I think TAFF is something which either appeals to you on its own merits or not at all. If it does, you probably have some rudimentary predisposition toward sympathy to the ideas and rituals of fanzine fandom as well, but it seems hardly necessary that the two be linked, even in the rump court of perception. I think the most effective thing we could do to give TAFF a wider base to work from would be to print a whole lot of ballots (with slightly more descriptive platforms than we have in the current race) and try to get them distributed to a larger group of people. Get conventions to put them in their registration packets. Ask Andy Porter to stick one inside his subscriber copies of SFC. Drop them from low-flying aircraft. We don't even need to get them to vote, just to respond in some way, to ask for more information, and thereby be recorded for the fund's mailing list. As you say, we may never be able to counter the image which TAFF has; I'd simply settle for retaining the bad, old image, and attracting a larger group of snotty elitists to participate.

And on that note, I'll close for now. I'd love to hear from you all, but if you have just one stamp, use it to vote in the fan fund of your choice! -aph]

Of course it does, it's a special blend_half whiskey, half codeine.

APPARATCHIK IS the Sistah Abdullah X of fandom, gone all potato-headed and duck-billed from an overdose of dem GALOOT colognuh. You can get APPARATCHIK for \$3.00 for a three-month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a life time supply for \$19.73, or in exchange for a copy of John Keel's The Mothman Prophecies (might as well get real obscure, since people seem to be actually reading this stuff). Overseas correspondents are expected to respond on a fairly regular basis, or send trades, or something. Genuine lifetime subscribers to date: Don

Fitch, Lucy Huntzinger, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Alan Rosenthal, Karen Schaffer, Geri Sullivan and Art Widner. Fanzines and things received since last issue: BLAT! # 4, Dan Steffan and Ted White; Crawdaddy! # 7 (new series), Paul Williams; Pry # 3, The Corflu Vegas committee; Southern Gothic # 3, Lucy Huntzinger; The Texas SF Inquirer # 53, , Alexander Slate for FACT; Trash Barrel, dated 12/16/94, Donald Franson; Wondering & Wandering # 5, Don Fitch; The Wrong Leggings # 2, Christina Lake. I, Prince Arcturus, command it!

..shoulder, thereby improving their accuracy. His theory about ...