

ANYPLACE BUT NEW ORLEANS

A public service announcement by Don Markstein, P.O. Box 53112, New Orleans, La. 70153.

It might possibly have occurred to one or two people to wonder why it is that the "New Orleans in '79" WorldCon bid is being run by Meade Frierson, who lives in Birmingham, Alabama, when New Orleans itself is crawling with fans who are eminently capable of putting on their own bid (and have, on two occasions in the past). Actually, the truth is that Meade Frierson is not running the New Orleans in '79 bid, but has merely lent his name to it as a front. The real chairman is a guy named Don Walsh Jr.

Now, it might possibly have occurred to one or two people to wonder why it is that Don Walsh can't put his own name on his con bids. Very simple. He figured that if it had his name on it, it would lose, because his reputation in fandom is none too good.

There are good reasons for Don Walsh's reputation to be bad. He's a thief. I don't personally know of any armed robberies he's pulled, but he's certainly used every other form of theft to obtain money. His record in embezzlement alone would be the envy of Slippery Jim DeGriz, and here he is, trying to get his hands on the money that flows through a WorldCon committee.

When Walsh stole Bill Bruce's entire sf collection and sold it to a dealer, and didn't even deny it (in fact, he bragged about it), but stayed out of jail because neither Bill nor the dealer would press charges, it didn't bother me, because I figured that if the people he'd hurt in the deal didn't want him put away, it was none of *my* business.

When he was led away in handcuffs from a gun store where he worked after trying to sell guns he'd stolen from the store to a federal agent, but wasn't convicted because the evidence mysteriously disappeared, I shrugged my shoulders and figured there wasn't anything I could do about it.

But when he tries to turn the WorldCon into his own little get-rich-quick scheme, and put the fiasco in *my* town, dammit, that's where I draw the line.

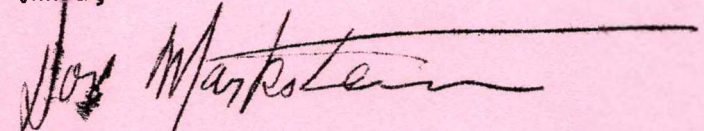
If nothing else, if by some unfortunate miracle he does get the con, I want to be able to say "I told you so."

My opinion of Meade Frierson's intelligence has plummeted since I heard about this affair. Surely, it must have occurred to Meade to wonder why Walsh had to go out of town to get someone to front his bid for him. The reason, of course, is that not *one* New Orleans fan is willing to put his name on this bid. We all know Walsh too well.

The bid can't succeed. If London doesn't cut it down, Chicago will. The worst thing about it is that it might go on long enough to damage the reputation of any legitimate New Orleans bid that might come up (John Guidry is already talking about getting a committee up for the early 1980s). I'm hoping that by getting the word out on who is really behind this bid, and what kind of a person he is, as early as possible, it might be possible to nip this thing in the bud.

If you have any questions, comments, nits to pick, or what-have-you, my address is above.

Quack,



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