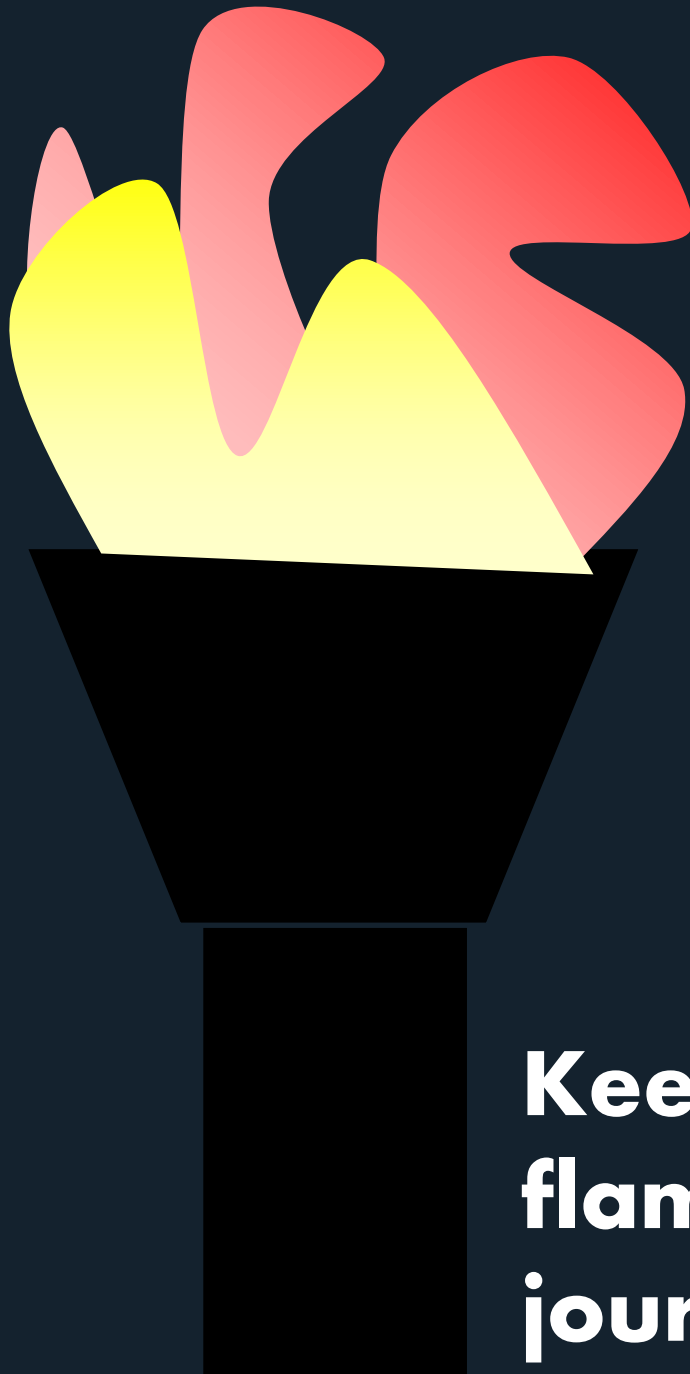


# LA S'CHINTEIA



*Talossa's Magazine of Everything*



**Interview with  
prospective  
citizen Mitchel  
Paul**

**El Colour dal  
Gramança -  
Prolog Pärts 1**

**Keeping the  
flame of Talossan  
journalism alive**

**Volume II**

**July 2019**

**Ian Plätschisch, Editor in Chief**

**Volume II**

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## **Update to the La S'chinteia Release Schedule**

Azul, and thank you for coming back for more of La S'chinteia.

When I released the first volume last month, I could not commit to a release schedule, given that I had no idea how many others would want to contribute. However, interest was strong (although we could always use more), and I now feel confident that a volume of La S'chinteia can be released every month, although each volume may still have somewhat less content than I originally envisioned. I also had it pointed out to me that I needed to establish a more regular and more frequent schedule in order for this magazine to have any hope of covering timely news stories (which, if you couldn't tell from the cover story, is pretty important, and now we quite need staff reporters ready to don their fedoras and get to work).

Therefore, I now plan to release a volume La S'chinteia on the fourth day of every month. Part of this is a practical consideration for political coverage; by the fourth day of the month, the final results are in from the previous month's Clark and the current month's Clark has just begun. However, I also like the symbolic meanings of the number four for this magazine. Not only is "the fourth estate" a traditional moniker for the press, but also, "S'chinteia" means "Spark," and plasma is usually deemed the fourth state of matter.

**Ian Plätschisch**

**Editor-in-Chief**

## The Necessity of Talossan Press

*Miestrâ Schivâ*

**EDITOR’S NOTE: This article was prepared for the inaugural issue of the revival of the newspaper Beric’ht Talossan in October 2018. However, the paper was never issued. With the permission of the author, this article has been printed here with slight modifications.**

You can’t understand Talossa – nor, I would wager, properly “be” Talossan – without a knowledge of its history. And Talossa’s press has always been the first draft of Talossa’s history.

In the first 25 years of Talossa’s history, there was always a vigorous and partisan press which told the story of what it meant to be Talossan, in real time. For a lot of that time, the “press” was nothing but King Robert I’s organ, Støtanneu, hand-written in a blank book. As Talossans matured, publications such as Talossan National News or the notorious Integrity provided competing voices, typed and “mass”-distributed (among the 20 or so Talossans of the time), even word-processed as technology advanced.

The Press absolutely blossomed in the early Internet era – but back in those halcyon days of the late 90s, we didn’t know about dead links or bit rot. Nobody knew that we would need to keep archives of those little “online newspapers” (actually static HTML pages) such as l’Avîntguard, Devotchka Gazeta or a little magazine which I may have had something to do with called The Southern Cross.

To be absolutely frank and real for a second, Talossa is a story, a narrative, first and foremost. It is an ongoing narrative, written in real time by all its citizens, and carried in their memories. But memories are unreliable. Websites go down and are not archived. Email collections become impossible to effectively search as they increase in size.

This becomes all the more tragic because – if you read the histories of our nation written by King Robert I – the Press is literally the first draft of History, in that it becomes the primary source material on which the historical narrative is based. In turn, the historical narrative – the “story of Talossa” becomes the basis of what new citizens learn, about Talossa. and what it means to be Talossan.

George Orwell said “he who controls the past controls the future”. In the days in which King Robert I wrote all the official histories, which were in turn mostly based on his contemporary press accounts in Støtanneu, he was quite literally in a position to shape the minds of new citizens, given a lack of competing information. Long-term citizen Gödafrieu Valcádac’h will tell you, for example, that he accepted the complete lies and tendentious misreadings about myself which he was spoonfed when he first became a Talossan citizen, because it literally never occurred to him that the King and his official histories would not be truthful.

In reaction to this, in the era after the abdication and flight of King Robert I, it seems to me that the governments that followed until Reunision made the opposite mistake entirely. Now there

was no more official history at all. As negotiations failed (by both Kingdom and Republic) to get the national archives of Talossa back from the former King, even the possibility of “correcting” the official history became impossible.

Worse still, there was no regular press – not in the Republic, anyway, and I don’t think so in the Kingdom. (If I’m wrong in the latter regard, someone point me to some archives!) Because I didn’t read “Kingdom-Witt” regularly during the era of the National Schism, I don’t have any idea what was going on in that period in the “other Talossa”, what the main lines of political debate were, etc. Any historian of that era is going to have to do a very, very deep dive into the archives to retrieve the storylines. I don’t really understand what it meant to be a Royalist Talossan at the time when my Republican colleagues and I were trying to do Talossa differently.

So what’s the take-away here? A regular press is not only something that’s fun. It’s not only a convenient way for people who’ve been away from Talossa for a while to “catch up”. It is the basis of the ongoing narrative which is Talossan identity. Vladimir Lenin said that Pravda was the scaffolding around which the Bolshevik party was built; the same was true of Støtanneu back in the day. Any Press is better than none. If you don’t like it, start your own newspaper.

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### **Getting to Know: Mitchel Paul**

*Ian Plätschisch*

Mitchel Paul is a student from Edgar, Wisconsin. He will be eligible for a petition to grant citizenship on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

#### ***La S’chinteia (LS): What is it like living on a dairy farm?***

*Mitchel:* It is an experience on its own to be sure. It is definitely a heavy working job but there is a lot to enjoy about it. Like there is a certain happy and warm feeling you get every time you have a new calf born or move a herd to the pasture for the first time after a long winter. Yes there is many times you may end up working 30+ hours a day (and yes I know days are 24 hours) but even if I don’t take up farming in my future, I know for sure it is something I will carry with me my whole life.

#### ***LS: How long has your family been in dairy farming?***

*Mitchel:* My Great Great Grandfather Frederick Paul came over from Prussia and started the farm somewhere between 1886-1896 and it has been in the family since.

#### ***LS: What do you know about him?***

*Mitchel:* Quite a bit. A short summary of his life: Born somewhere in Western Prussia, moved to the US at age 7 with his family, married his wife Ida who was also a Prussian immigrant, starts his own blacksmith shop and a small farm, has 3 kids, passes the farm to his son, Walter and passed away at the ripe age of 71.

**LS: I see from your immigration thread that cartography is one of your interests. How did you get into that? From what I hear of the field, it deals a lot now with Global Information Systems; is that true?**

*Mitchel:* I have always been big into maps and have over the last few years got into cartography. I am a big contributor to many of the large online map services such as Apple maps, Yandex.Maps and Google Maps. And yes a lot of Global Information Systems are used. Many of what the big companies have for map data is shared to them from local people and local governments and all this creates a large diverse array of global information to be used in map making.

**LS: What is the process like for contributing to those maps?**

*Mitchel:* Most companies have some kind of editing service where you can make edits and review edits on maps. If they do not one can almost always suggest an edit to the company and they will address it accordingly. My personal favorite to use is Yandex.Maps map editor.

**LS: Did you hear about the updates to Apple Maps this year?**

*Mitchel:* Yes, they are to come this fall. I am looking forward to all the new features and pictures.

**LS: What have you seen in Talossa that interests you? How do you see yourself getting involved?**

*Mitchel:* Talossa is a community of people who have come together to form their own nation in which they get to make what they want of (within Talossan law of course). I find this very appealing and want to be a part of it. Talossa also houses many of my interests such as geography, history and vexillology. I see myself becoming a citizen who seeks my interests inside of Talossa and pursues new things I may have never thought to try or do.

## **El Colour dal Gramança - Prolog Pärts 1**

*Translated by Iac Marscheir*

This is part of the prologue of Terry Pratchett's seminal fantasy work, and the genesis of one of the longest running book series in history, *The Colour of Magic*.

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In üna distanta es reuçada partida da zimenziuns, in ün pläts estreglhesc qe non fosteva volarh, las cieras àd estreglhen buclind uschilent es eicardent...

Videtz...

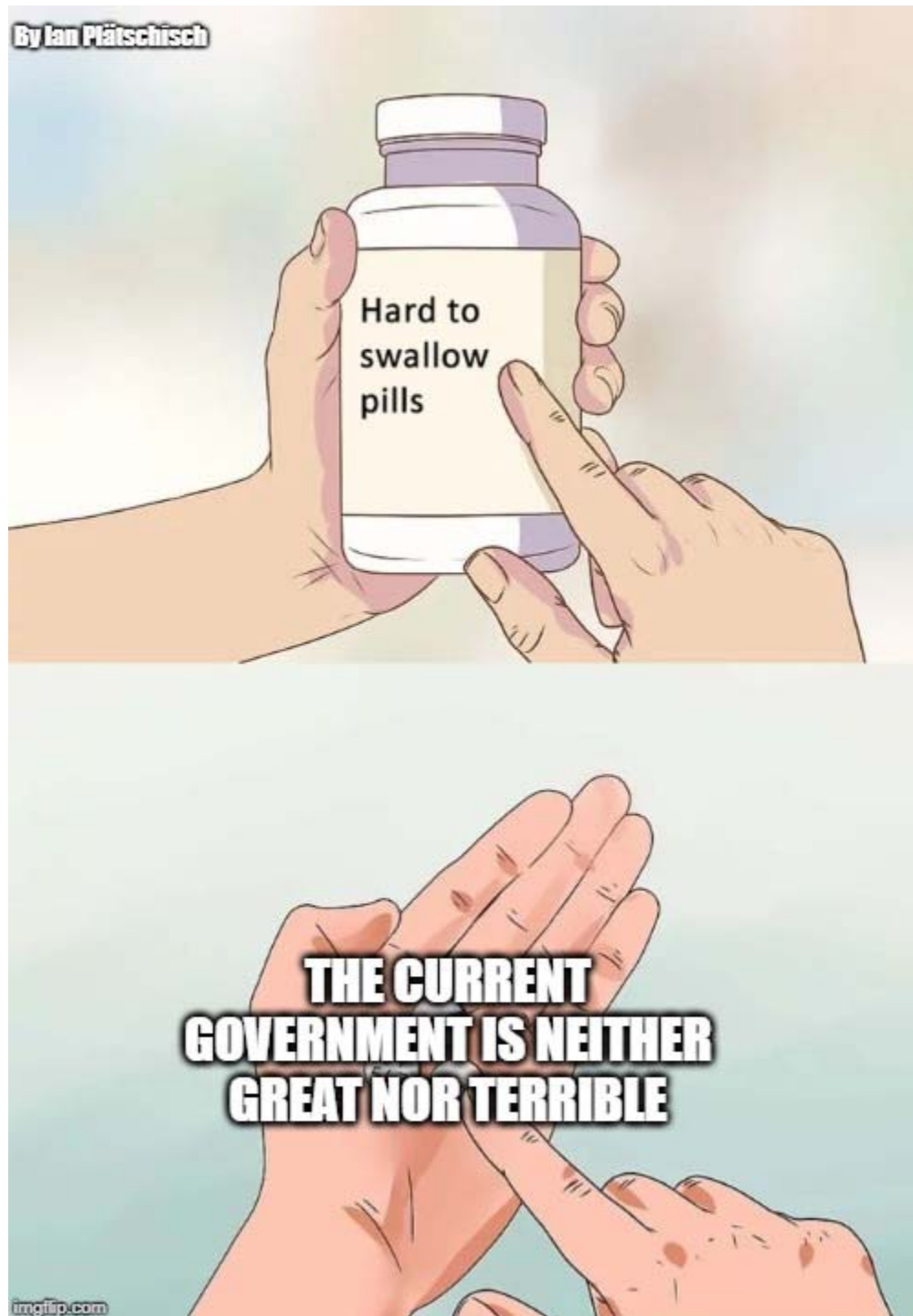
Grült A'Tuin, el acjanaglh, va, naxhind bielplanc trans el golf interestreglhesc, dal frosta da püdrogen pa sieu mebras griéas, sieu vāts coquigha anciént marcat par las cráternas dels metiours. Par ops d'uglhen sa grült qe las maes qe sint ancombrats par la coschtera dels uglhen es la pulvia dels asteroides O antspecta stacmint el Destinaçal.

In ün cervedour sa grült qe 'n cità, sa bielplanc q'el mundeu, O pensa solamint över la Geviac'hta.

El püpärts dal geviac'hta va da Berilia, Tubul, Grült T'Phon es Jerakeen, els qátor eiafunts grülts, qissen þumbreux, vasteux es sagoraçat par els estreglhen, pirneçent el Disc del Mundeu, sertat par la cascada lung à ça'ns circümferençù es cupolaificat par la vosta celestéa da Çéu.

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### Recommended Monthly Value of Memes and Comics



## Elegy for a Seahorse

### The Rise and Fall of the Moderate Radical Party of Talossa

*Ian Plätschisch*

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** This article first appeared in Volume I of *La S’chinteia*. It is reprinted here with additional material from a new interview with Lüc da Schir (in red).

When I became Seneschal as leader of the Moderate Radical Party of Talossa (MRPT) at the beginning of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosa in July 2018, it marked the seventh consecutive term of the MRPT’s participation in the Government. The MRPT led five of those seven and had garnered 40 or more votes in the three consecutive elections between the 50<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosas. It also maintained a plurality in the Senate for five consecutive terms between the 48<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosas.

Then, just before the elections for the 53<sup>rd</sup> Cosa, it collapsed.

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Alèx Soleighlfred and Glüc da Dhi cofounded the MRPT (originally known as the MRP) in 2011. According to S:reu Soleighlfred, it was “a period of vibrance in the opposition end of [the] Talossan political spectrum,” although S:reu da Dhi said that part of his motivation to found the party was “to contribute to a more diverse political landscape with parties working together in coalitions rather than a two-party system, in which one party held a permanent majority.” Da Dhi also said that he desired “a party with a clear platform that specifically said what it wanted to change legislatively rather than a big tent party.” In summary, “A Talossa with a diverse political system in which parties work together in different varieties and everyone, including various political minorities get a chance to shape Talossa is certainly what we had in mind.”

Another important aspect of the young MRPT was its organization. According to Soleighlfred, he “preferred to stay away from the limelight and sit in the party headquarters, refining the internal policies, structuring the documentation and so on.” He reflected:

So, from my end, my vision was to make a party which would have clear structure, lifecycle, schedule and positions. It should have been a well-designed and well-maintained mechanism. A party well organized has a better chance to organize a country well, than does a chaotic, unclear party. That's what I was trying to achieve with the Party Digest and the Key Statute, which governed the party until its' demise. My partymates played a great role here too, for example, the regulations on how to conduct the Party Congresses weren't made by me, still, I admired how thought through they were.

Sir Alexandreu Davinescu of the RUMP remarked that “the MRPT digest was and is -- by a wide margin -- the best set of rules to ever govern a party.”

Neither expected the MRPT to achieve great success; rather, they hoped for steady growth and to, according to da Dhi, “build a party that could last for a long time and could in the future play a role in coalition politics if the RUMP ever lost a majority.” Da Dhi admitted that both he and



Soleighlfred assumed that the Progressive Party would stay the largest party to the left of the RUMP. In its first election (for the 43<sup>rd</sup> Cosa), the Moderate Radicals got only three votes (eight seats); in the election for the 45<sup>th</sup> Cosa, it earned thirteen votes for twenty-one seats.

Lüc da Schir became a Talossan in 2012 and initially joined the RUMP. However, after getting in touch with da Dhi, he switched to the MRPT. He said that “it looked far more appealing to me to be in an upstart, small party rather than a sleepy behemoth where I hadn't really been acknowledged by the other members.” While he did acknowledge that chance may have played a role in his joining of the MRPT rather than the Progressive Party, due to the instability of the political system around the time of Reunision, he ultimately concluded “no other party would have allowed me to contribute so much to its growth.”

The MRPT got its chance to play a role in coalition politics at the start of the 46<sup>th</sup> Cosa in early 2014, when the RUMP fell just short of a tenth consecutive majority by earning only 96 seats. The MRPT rocketed to 56 seats, helped by the fact that the Progressive Party chose not to contest the election at all. Soleighlfred noted, “I suppose people were hoping for an alternative, and in MRPT they saw a political force which both provided alternative and didn't get over the top at the same time.” As the largest party in the so-called “Rainbow Coalition,” the MRPT was able not only to participate in, but lead, the Government, and party leader da Dhi became Seneschal. When asked about his tenure, da Dhi responded:

I don't think I was a particularly effective PM. After years of the RUMP doing everything we had to learn a lot in a small time. There are certainly things I wish I had handled differently such as the Hool case and the communication about replacement of previous (deputy) ministers, but I do think I did some things well in areas of transparency and accountability and in how I defended the government. I think during my government we never even got around to too many reforms. Many of the most important reforms of that period happened in the terms before and after me.

The MRPT led the Government again during the 47<sup>th</sup> Cosa, this time with the leadership of da Schir. However, the newly-formed Free Democratic Alliance (created as a merger of the Republican ZRT and the Liberal Congress) eked out a one-vote victory over the MRPT for the 48<sup>th</sup> Cosa and formed a Government with da Schir as Distain. Unfortunately, the term ended in a failed Vote of Confidence in the final Clark after the Moderate Radicals withdrew support from the Free Democrats due to a lengthy period of disharmony between the two parties, brought on by failing to achieve a variety of coalition objectives. I said at the time:

The MRPT Ministers have clearly lost the confidence of the Seneschal, and, by extension, the leading coalition party. We discussed our participation in the government at length within the MRPT and have decided it best to discontinue our involvement with the cabinet. The reasoning is two-fold; if the MRPT Ministers [are] really the problem, we should get out and start anew. But, the second and more likely case is that the MRPT is being treated as a scapegoat, and we have grown tired of it. Healthy debate between parties is healthy, and the MRPT admits it's Ministers are not as active as they should be, but we do not wish to work with a party who ignores our achievements while pretending they do all of the heavy lifting... this government has lost the Confidence of its own Seneschal. While vaguely blaming the whole coalition, the MRPT has been repeatedly

singled out by top members of the leading party, and the MRPT is tired of being a scapegoat for problems which, though some fall squarely on the MRPT and its ministers, should rightly be the responsibility of the government at large.

Ultimately, da Schir concluded while resigning as Distain that “we as a party can say we're walking out of this term in Government with our heads held high knowing we've been loyal to our coalition partners until the very last days of the 48th Cosa.” After losing seats in the subsequent election, the MRPT went on to support a RUMP Seneschal for the 49<sup>th</sup> Cosa, with da Schir again serving as Distain.

The elections for the 50<sup>th</sup> Cosa turned out to be the most strenuously fought in recent memory. The Free Democrats attacked the MRPT's performance during the previous two terms and the MRPT retorted by listing its accomplishments and arguing that the Free Democrats were dramatically overpromising based on its level of activity in opposition during the previous term. The MRPT won out in the end, more than doubling its number of seats and attaining a Cosa plurality for the first time in its history. **The ensuing Government was probably the most successful in recent memory, as da Schir reflected:**

I will always look with pride at the achievements of the government of the 50th Cosa. Coins, bipartisan Organic reform, healthy immigration, better management of our web presence, Monarchy reforms, a solid Electoral Commission, micronational outreach... That's an example of a complete team that I was honoured to serve with and that did so much for Talossa and moderate radicalism.

The MRPT went on to win Cosa pluralities and lead the Government (in coalition with the Free Democrats) all three terms between the 50<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosas, at first under the leadership of da Schir and finally under my leadership. **According to da Schir, “My only gripe is that we never got to form a government by ourselves to see our team in action, even though we were excruciatingly close to having a Cosa-Senate majority in 2017.”**

Of course, the coalition did experience some strife at some points during this period. Most notably, near the end of the 51st Cosa, constant clashing between Foreign Minister and MRPT member Magniloqueu Épiqueu da Lhiun with various Free Democratic Ministers led to the establishment of the Cabinet Code of Conduct and da Lhiun's ultimate resignation. Da Schir, who was Seneschal at the time, said that these episodes caused him “some pains that will haunt me for years to come.” However, the coalition held together fairly well most of the time, and certainly never reached the level of discord that had caused its dissolution at the end of the 48th Cosa.

One reason for the MRPT's success during this period was its approach to campaigning and coalition building. **According to da Schir:**

I think my greatest contribution to the party was campaigning - putting our people in the condition to deliver our agenda through winning seats in the Cosa and in the Senate; getting us multiple pluralities and majorities in both houses, leading multiple Cabinets, and keeping us there. Back in the days, I would spend days on spreadsheets, working on where to get our votes from, which particular type of citizen to target, and so on. And

obviously, though by the end it became tiresome, I thoroughly enjoyed the hidden craft of building coalitions and keeping them together.

Another reason for the party's success was that it always ran on the most detailed manifesto of any party (which is part of what attracted me to the party when I became a citizen in April 2015) and had the most prolific legislators (the party's campaign mailers often bragged that the MRPT had passed more bills during the previous term than all of the other parties combined). By the end of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosa, the MRPT's legislative accomplishments included:

- **The repeal of the Semi-Permeable Wall Act**, which allowed Talossa to engage with like-minded micronations
- **The ¾ Majority Amendment**, which removed the King's absolute veto power over amendments and resolved the Proclamation Crisis
- **The Open Sesame Act and The Catchment Area Reform Act**, and **The Provincial Assignment Simplification Act**, which streamlined the assignment of immigrants to provinces
- **The Mandatory Cosa Lists Act and Amendment**, which mandated that parties tell voters to whom they would give their Cosa seats
- **The Ranked Choice is the Best Choice Amendment**, which instructed the Chancery to use Ranked Choice Voting when conducting elections to the Senate
- **The Senators Are People, Not Parties Amendment**, which gave all Senate candidates a fair chance regardless of party affiliation
- **The Advisory King Amendment**, which reduced the King's veto power over legislation

MRPT politicians also took the lead on streamlining the Organic Law, resulting in a broadly supported proposal, and wrote a variety of bills to streamline the Kingdom's legal code and processes.

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However, after so many terms of mostly legislative victories, I began to wonder whether Talossa's chronic activity problems were being solved by reforms that, yes, did make Talossa a better place, but possibly not in a way that would attract new or returning citizens. Da Dhi remarked:

"I think a lot of the things that the MRPT wanted to achieve were realised at some point during coalition rule and I think many of these (like abolishing the semi permeable wall and mandatory party lists) were good for Talossa but there is some double feeling about it, because it didn't result in the activity levels that we wanted and we lost many great citizens to inactivity. When I retired from politics there was also still a lot of personal animosity, plus we never really managed to get everyone, both opposition and government involved in Talossa at the same time."

After coming to the realization that the MRPT's manifesto was simply no longer suited to today's problems in Talossa and spending months formulating an alternative vision (that certainly was influenced by moderate radical ideas), I resigned as Prime Minister and leader of

the MRPT at the end of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosa to found Awakening and Magnifying Passion. The day afterward, da Schir also announced he was suspending his membership in the party, remarking:

The...MRPT...was a party that had its strength in a certain combination of people, and almost all of them are gone: some have left for other jobs or parties, some are semi-active and won't take part in active inter-party activities for the foreseeable future, some have completely disappeared and don't seem interested in ever coming back. Without them, all that remains is an empty husk that happens to have an outsized history of accomplishments, but that presently has no realistic hope of surviving except by inertia. The manifesto itself has almost exhausted its short-term usefulness, which is ironic, given that accomplishing stuff should be good. Today's Talossa has different issues than 2012 Talossa or 2014 Talossa, and this party isn't cut for them unless it radically reinvents itself. For that to happen, though, some effort is needed from its membership, and I fear I'm the only one left who would be prepared to put any amount of such meaningful effort in that. If the party isn't willing to take a breath of fresh air, if no one in the party cares about that - it will die a slow death à la Progressives... A blunt TLDR would be that I have no time or willingness to babysit a party that has basically been on life support since last summer.

He later said:

The whole point of my unsuccessful decision to 'suspend' my membership was precisely because I would be left alone to [run the party], and wanted to send a strong signal to the rest of the party that I would not accept to be a power behind the curtain for a puppet leader... Knowing where we would have ended up, I don't know if I would still have chosen to retire from the leadership [in June 2018, before the 52<sup>nd</sup> Cosa], but I don't regret that choice now. It was paramount to me that people who deserved to have a shot at the top had the opportunity to do that, and four and a half years was already a long tenure for a party leader. The last thing I wanted was the MRPT to become the Party of Lüc rather than being rightly recognised as a great group of very talented individuals.

At this point, a few of the remaining members converted the upcoming ninth MRPT Congress into the "Refoundational Gathering," but the only attendees were Soleighlfred, interim party leader and former whip Txoteu Davinescu (no relation to Alexandru Davinescu), and Senator Sevestáin Pinátsch (da Dhi had left the party at the end of the 51<sup>st</sup> Cosa to become Secretary of State). Just eleven days after my departure, Davinescu declared the party folded, saying at the time:

I believe the time has come. I am sad to see the MRPT come to this point but facts are facts. It was with a heavy heart that moments ago, I closed the Refoundational Gathering and brought the Moderate Radical Party of Talossa to the end of road. Due to lack of support and party members, the MRPT is no longer a viable component of the political system of our great nation. Therefore, as the one the mantle of leadership fell to with the resignation of many of the senior party members, I hereby stand down the ModRad Party and bring the story of a once beloved national party to a close. Thank you to the many that came before and though the party may be gone, here's to the ideals of the MRPT living forever in the new direction of the Kingdom!

Davinescu drew criticism for his unilateral decision, especially from Pinátsch, although the latter admitted to me he had no desire to lead the party. Davinescu defended his decision when I spoke to him, saying:

I believe the sudden and unexpected departure of almost all the senior MRPT leadership created instability as well as lack of confidence in the party following their departure that ultimately lead to its demise. As for the MRPT's demise being hung on me, I have always thought this to be nonsense. With the complete departure of every major party player, I brought in one of the party founders [Soleighlfred] to help shore things up. Nothing worked...the MRPT saw an almost complete loss of interest in being active in party functions or objectives. After nearly a month of this, and the departure of the party founder brought in to help, I made the decision to shut down the party due to a complete lack of interest from anyone but myself... With no one else trying to be involved, I said enough was enough and after consulting with [Soleighlfred], I chose the best course of action [which] was to dissolve and move on. In light of this, I feel my decision was completely justified...No one said a word until after I made the decision to shutter operations.

Davinescu further stated that he had repeatedly asked for others to get involved during the Refoundational Gathering before he ended it, to no avail. Soleighlfred reflected:

As with other things in Talossa, there was a certain lack of fuel. In our case, a pretty abrupt one...the General elections approached, and I realized there's no momentum in preparing for them. Then I read Lüc's message about essentially leaving the party, and what's worse, I understood why he did that. People who built the party left the boat, most of the roster weren't very active, and the rest didn't completely realize the size of the problem. All the MRPT had were some disoriented members and some inertia. This wasn't anyone's mistake in particular. To a certain extent that was a logical outcome of the circumstances. I tried this "Refoundational Gathering" thing because, before leaving this sinking ship, I wanted to see for sure whether it was actually sinking, or whether we could drain the water with some work and dedication. I took on a very unusual and unfamiliar role for myself, that of an initiative. I dared to self-assume temporary leadership because I had a feeling that that's what I had to do, that was my moral obligation because in the end, I made this party too, even though co-made, and now it was dying. Unfortunately, the Gathering showed that there was no momentum left.

Both Pinátsch and Soleighlfred pointed out that the detail of the party's governing documents eventually became a hindrance. Pinátsch said that "While the amount of written documentation the MRPT had very clearly defined us and our policies and processes, I found it an encumbrance sometimes. The length and complexity it enforced on our activities was off-putting. I think the final (failed) congress that signaled the end of the party was symptomatic of that weight" and Soleighlfred said "in honesty, our internal regulations weren't very useful once the membership shrank. It was designed for expansion, not shrinkage. I am partly to blame that I couldn't foresee that. But overall, MRPT isn't the only entity in Talossa which, ultimately, has the regulations which are bigger than the entity itself."

Da Schir also reflected on some of the reasons for the MRPT's ultimate downfall:

I have often repeated that the party wasn't created on an underlying ideology, that moderate radicalism 'grew' out of the MRPT's fundamental allegiance to centrism and pragmatic reformism. We weren't a Default Monarchist or Default Republican party, which made it much more difficult to retain members and didn't give us much of a 'core constituency,' beyond people who just wanted to get things done and to see Talossa work for any and all of its citizens.

I've observed how the MRPT was way more than a party in that its fundamental success was borne out of a very specific blend of the right people in the right positions at the right time... Once some of those people left, I guess they simply were never truly replaced, and the 'magic' that held the MRPT together just sort of vanished as the months went by. In the final months, we had a party leader who ended up absorbed by Organic reform for most of his term and had little time for actually leading the party; a party whip who never did his job and even forgot to vote; a general lack of any kind of meaningful action from other party grandees - the few that were serving in high offices, at least; and no other member who was potentially ready to pick up the slack and make a name for him or herself in the Ziu or in Cabinet.

You'll see our luck (in attracting able members) and supply of fresh bodies simply dried up, and complacency did the rest. That sort of happened to the RUMP as well, almost ever since the end of our single government together; but no remaining RUMPer would ever dare running away from The Monarchist Party to form something better representative of 'conservative' interests, while as a non-ideological party our own would always be exposed to our membership or pool of voters simply floating away towards different projects.

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Most members of the party were positive about the legacy of the MRPT and the future of moderate politics in Talossa. According to Soleighfred:

We managed to build a party from scratch which in relatively short term led the popular vote for three consecutive times. And, which is more important, the governments which we led / were a part of changed the political landscape of the country, got things done, and I would call this shift from the conservative part of the spectrum to a more progressive one to be the single most important event of the Talossan politics of the past decade. It's not our personal achievement, of course, our allies played a part not less important...I am fairly sure the MRPT has served its purpose. I think we've shown that the then-opposition to the RUMP can be mature and get things done. We've had our policies successfully brought to life, the secret ballot, for example, and some more. In short, we've proven that the moderate radicalism is viable. I'd like to think that we have influenced the FreeDems through years of our alliance, like they influenced us...I think that in the future some new serious centrist force will inevitably arise, and when it does, I hope it draws from the history of MRPT.

Pinátsch remarked:

I joined the MRPT because it was most aligned with my own values, and because I wanted the chance to participate in government...it was important for me to only join an organization that I truly fit into and could represent honourably. I was proud to have the



MRPT banner on my signature line until the very end...I am glad that the MRPT existed as a competitive alternative to the RUMP and was saddened to see it go. Two-party systems (US, Canada) don't provide voters with meaningful choice. I think we're healthier when 4 or 5 (or more?) perspectives exist, when voters can choose the party they actually believe in instead of voting strategically, and when coalition governments become more common than not. It's odd to say this now, when a major party has recently fallen and a majority government is in place, but I took some comfort in the fact that I was contacted to take over the portfolio I currently hold [Minister of STUFF]. Even when the Seneschal [Miestrâ Schivâ] could have placed anyone in this Ministry, she chose an Independent that she believed had the best chance of actually getting the work done. I respect that.

Davinescu said that "I do believe that in my time with the MRPT, the party did well in carrying out its mission and objective. It absolutely influenced other parties and the nation as a whole."

Former citizen and MRPT member Iac Marscheir was less positive, saying that "I joined the ModRads because they seemed to be the most centrist, and I, as a new citizen at the time, wanted to preserve the status quo. That said, being a centrist party really deprives you of any legacy besides 'they made sure it was the same as before.'" Da Dhi simply stated that the future of Talossan moderate radicalism "is not up to me but to the moderate politicians of today."

Da Schir was the leader of the MRPT for four and a half years, and under its banner, he served as Seneschal for three full terms, making him the Kingdom's third-longest serving Seneschal. He is also the youngest person ever to serve as Seneschal, being just 16 years old at the start of his first term (during the 47<sup>th</sup> Cosa). Here is what he had to say about the legacy of the party and the future of moderate radicalism in Talossa:

The MRPT kind of forced other parties to take a hard look at themselves and wonder why we, the ugly duckling of Talossan politics, kept winning while they didn't really achieve much. The MRPT's presence had first and foremost the effect of defusing both ideological poles. The Free Democrats adopted an agnostic platform precisely to stay relevant as a potential government party, since republican voters weren't enough for a plurality. And the RUMP, to me, became less of a carnival after the first coalition governments, although that also coincided with a general period of internal apathy for them that they haven't really come out of yet. We changed politics: we went in with a two thirds majority government by the RUMP, and bowed out after a sustained period of three viable big parties, something that had probably only happened during the PC/MN/ZPT 2003-2004 chaos. We offered a moderate alternative that could work for everyone, and Talossa today is way worse off without it. Leaving an empty net for the Free Democrats (or the RUMP) to score in was something I desperately wanted to avoid while Leader, not for our party's sake but for Talossa's; the fact we ultimately failed is something I regret very much, not because we lost power for power's sake, but because our failure let down the 40% of Talossans whom we represented.

The MRPT's legacy is indubitably one of greater democracy. Just think of some of our legislative accomplishments: IRV for the Senate, a semi-secret ballot, no Senatorial endorsements, mandatory Cosa lists... And yet, there's much more we might have done, that ultimately didn't happen, mostly because of all-Talossan laziness (me included). But

above all, we showed to the world that centrist politics didn't have to fail with the PP's cold death, that honesty, transparency and perseverance can lead a tiny party from anonymity to sustained success. The MRPT is a story of success that I believe will stand the test of time.

The future of moderate radical politics is unclear, to be honest. [As long as] the key players are still the same, others are still inactive as ever, others still are quite content as independents, and nobody from the other parties is particularly willing to try something new, then there's little chance the present situation will change in the short term. Who knows, it may very well be that a future great centrist project will claim the sceptre of moderate reformism, but for now true moderate radicalism has died with the MRPT.

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The Moderate Radical Party of Talossa was, perhaps, the defining force of post-Reunision politics. Originally founded, according to da Dhi, with an eye toward opening relations with the Republic, the MRPT led the first Government with Reviensadeir participation and passed countless liberalizing reforms. However, it was also always staunchly Monarchist. The MRPT navigated a middle course in Talossa during years in which taking such a course was quite necessary and did not fail to broker compromise when tensions between opposing ideologies ran high. It can truly be said that the MRPT did what it needed to do and was the right party for its time in Talossan history. Whether its fall (and the rise of the Free Democrats) marks the end of the era of moderate monarchism and coalition politics or simply a brief departure remains to be seen. Whatever happens, the fact that the first Reunision Day occurred seven years ago and Talossa is still going strong (and indeed that there are many Talossans, such as myself, that never knew a time when Talossa was divided) is a testament to our ability to overcome our differences. Our community is as prepared now for change as ever and I am proud that the Moderate Radicals were able to play a small part in that.

However, the MRPT ultimately fell victim to a trend that must be stopped in order for Talossa to continue to thrive. An emphasis on legislation, sometimes at the expense of other activities, may have been the cause of the MRPT's long, but inactive, membership rolls. Even if they start out interested, no one (not even me) can simply continue to write bills indefinitely, and a party needs active members to keep it going, not just a well of citizens who show up at election time. Going forward, all parties need to recognize that politics should not be, cannot be, at the center of everything. At the core must be community, and while the MRPT was good at that for many years, there was definitely a decline over time (one example of this is that the famed MRPT Congress, which at one point featured days of pageantry and guest speakers, eventually became little more than a time to make minor edits to the party manifesto). Further, while the urge to regulate and formalize many aspects of Talossan life would be useful if the Kingdom were experiencing rapid growth, the truth is just that it is not. People come to Talossa seeking flexibility and the ability to run with their ideas; the MRPT failed to learn this lesson, hopefully Talossa as a whole will.

“Our party got to where it did because of a group effort. We all know that we had some members who were great at writing legislation, others



that were the foremost defenders of our policies on Wittenberg, others that through recruiting brought the party to being probably the second biggest in Talossan history by overall membership count, others that in Congresses and in internal discussions shaped our manifesto and our ideology.”

-Lüc da Schir

“Our legacy is our cabinets, and an example of how to make a tightly knit party succeed (and a lesson of how this can all suddenly fail). Seriously, this is a lesson: structural problems can catch you off guard when nobody's looking.”

- Alèx Soleighfred

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