



QATOR ITRINS

TALOSSA'S PREMIER NEWS-MAGAZINE

VOLUME I, No. 1

SEPTEMBER 2004

NIGHT-ON THREE MONTHS

An examination of the aftermath of the Revolution

by Jeff Ragsdale

TEAR DOWN THIS WALL!

An impassioned plea for openness in the Republic

by Dieter Hamm

WHAT TALOSSA MEANS TO ME

Evaluating one's patriotism in our Talossa

by Marti-Páir Furxbéir

WHAT I WANT IN THIS CONSTITUTION

Committee member offers a plan of law

by Miestrá Schivá

ALSO: NEWS, EDITORIAL, WICKED QUESTIONS AND MORE INSIDE!

editorial

“Four Stars of the Southern Cross, In Mourning For Their Sister’s Loss”

Damn. It’s been a while since I published a Talossan newsmagazine. I hope I still remember how everything works.

Welcome, free Talossans and others present, to the very first issue of *Qator Itrins* (Four Stars). I’m not sure whether this is still common knowledge, but way back when I first applied for Talossan citizenship, it was almost expected that a new citizen would start up a newspaper of some description. (There used to be an archive of Talossan newspapers from the mid-to-late-’90s - its ghost is still flitting around the Web. Check “www.talossa.com/media” at web.archive.org. Some of those old *Devotchka Gazetas* are hilarious.)

Of course, my original newspaper, *The Southern Cross*, became infamous for a whole number of reasons. However, my new venture is in the old tradition - hence the name, which is not only a reference to the glorious banner of the new Republic, but to my original attempt at press-baron immortality, seven long years ago. Tradition, as all Talossans should know, is vitally important - as long as it’s balanced with creativity. I hope I can keep that balance in these pages.

I want *QI* to be an outlet for not only news, but political debate, historical record, linguistic interest. Also, I want it to be a *compelling read*. I want people to start an organised chorus of whining whenever an issue is a day late. I want people to say something like “Damn, can’t wait to see what *QI* says about this!” I want it to be the beating heart of the New Talossan Culture, born in freedom but taking everything that’s good about the old one.

So, this week: we have news on new organisations. Read about the TFAS, RFT and possibly other acronyms on the next couple of pages. An article from Marti-Páir Furxheir, on his experiences of the Revolution. And controversy - your editor on her hopes and visions for the constitution; and micronational eminence Dieter Hamm speaks on the topic of whether Talossa should throw open its borders (by which we mean posting access on *Wittenberg*) to the wider world. Finally, our Secretary speaks about where we are, and where we’re going.

And - right beside this article - a translation of it into *el glheß Talossán*. If we’re serious about being the Republic of *Talossa* - and not just another secessionist micronation - we have to reclaim everything that’s good about the old Kingdom. And vigorously promoting the language is one thing that this paper is going to take seriously.

Anyway, happy reading. I’ll expect articles from most of you for the next issue. (See back page.)



MIESTRÁ SCHIVÁ
Editor / Redacteur

A recording of part of this editorial (in Talossan) will soon appear on Radio Free Talossa.

Ûn aubümiçaziun d’iens pàrts d’acest editoriál bentópt apiarha sür Raídio da Talossa Liverescù.

qê c’è valançat pèr aràtiutà. Eu espereu qê eu pèvarhéu mîntenençar acest balançeu dîn acestilor pàxinàs.

Eu volt qê *QI* serà ‘n eschtivéu pèr non solamînt noveschti, mäs zebäts politicáis, adnalàs ßistorici, neonac’has glheßeschti. Ocsá, eu volt qê serà *necebar en lirar*. Eu volt qê xhînts zeveniençarhent ‘n corâ organicaðà da c’horar quând’evri ‘n ißüta isch ‘n ziuâ schpéit . Eu volt qê xhînts zirent qualse’cosâ come “Miéida, non pût atendar vidarê qê zia *QI* över acest!” Eu volt qê ça serà la coraziun pulsind dal Culturâ Nouâ Talossán, nascadâ en livertâ mäs prîndind toct q’isch ben dal vell.

Sâ, acest mes, ja noveschti över organicaziuns nouâs. Liretz över els TFAS, RFT és poucivâlmînt acronüms altreux sür las douâ pagxinàs proxims. ‘N articál da Marti-Páir Furxheir över sieu experiençus del Revoluziun. Ocsá cuncontroverçü - tú redacteur över sieu ispéux és viziuns pèr la Constituziun; és el eminençeu nazuinetál Dieter Hamm parla över siat Talossa fost regaßar sieu grentzàs (par qêt si volt zirarê, aceßivalità da *Wittenberg* pèr afischar) àl mondeu pü amplex. Finâlmînt, ár Secretár parla över dove noi sînt, és aduvé noi viennent.

Aici ja va articál prüm înel glheß Talossán. Schi noi sînt seriösen över estarê la República da *Talossa* - és non solamînt ‘n naziunetâ secedistâ altrâ - noi fossent arpiar toct q’isch ben dîn el vell Regipäts. És aviguratmînt promotar el glheß isch viensâ cosâ qê acest xhurnál seriösmînt piersequarha.

Zespitzi toct, liretz felicamînt. Eu expectarhéu articáis del püpàrts de voi per la ißütâ proxim. (Videtz la pàxhinâ rüc.)

dal redacteur

“Ûn Pàts Sânc Glheß isch ‘n Pàts Sânc Coraziun”

Miéida! C’e ja ‘n timp deschînd eu publicéveu ‘n xhurnál Talossán. Eu espereu qê eu sovenênçeu adüc come toct funziuna. (Ocsá, qê va Talossán non isch trô atrôtz!)

Benveneschti, Talossâes livereschti és altreux presînt, àl ißütâ prümâ da *Qator Itrins*. Eu non sînt sigür siat c’e adüc sâp común, mäs dîn el timp vell quând qê eu aplicéveu priméis pèr citaxhienità Talossán, si prescâ expecteva qê ‘n citaxhién noveu seßadra qualsevol xhurnál. (Ja füt mustáir da xhurnáis Talossâes dels ârs 90 centreu-à-schpéit - ça spritz adüc flota circüm la TM. Investiget “www.talossa.com/media” à web.archive.org. D’acestilor vells ißütàs del *Devotchka Gazeta* sînt gladoûrs.)

Da c’horsicâ, va xhurnál urixhinál, *La Cruz Midziuál*, zevienieva scândlic pèr mült da raziuns. Com’evri, va çjartî noveu continua la tradiziun vell - daincêts la nôminâ, qi non solamînt satüra el bandeur gloriös dal nouâ República, mäs va attentat urixhinál àl ûnmortalità d’iensâ baron da preßeu, ja seifet ârs lungs. La tradiziun, come toct i Talossâes fossent säperê, isch vitâlmînt împîrtînt - sâ

CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN THE REPUBLIC

New Radio Makes Waves: Fine Arts and History Books To Follow?

By our own correspondent

Beating the Republic's first newsmagazine to publication by a couple of weeks, Chris Gruber's "Radio Free Talossa" took to the airwaves on August 13th.

RFT opened for business with a half-hour opinion show, "Stubborn Things", narrated by Chief Justice Gruber himself. Topics ranged from the plans for the production of this very newsmagazine (thanks for the publicity, Chris!) to Gruber's plans and wishes for the upcoming Constitution.

Showing a quite frightening command of audio technology, Gruber produced a fully professional-sounding show, which actually fooled one or two listeners into thinking that more than one person was involved in its production.

The editor of this newsmagazine, tickled at being described by Gruber as "the infamous Daph", is planning to make that appearance a reality for its next issue, contributing a reading of part of that very editorial you see on the opposite page.

A Huge Step Forward

Reaction from the Republican audience was no less than rapturous. Among many to cheer the new cultural endeavour was another of the Republic's cultural mavens, Ronalt Rosáis. "Talossan Culture just took a HUGE step forward in it's 25 year journey



The logo of the new radio station

toward uniqueness," he said, applauding Gruber's effort.

Rosáis' own contribution to the flowering of the New Talossan Culture has been his plan for a Talossan Fine Arts Society. The Society's mission, according to its website, is "to permeate Talossa's culture with the fine arts by encouraging the free expression of all its citizens."

Most concrete of the TFAS proposals so far is for Talossan musicians - which the Republic appears to have by the truckload - to band together to compose a national anthem for the Republic. Another rumoured venture has been the setting up of a music station to complement RFT.

But wait, there's even more! Jeff Ragsdale, former publisher of a newspaper in the Kingdom, has announced plans to set up our first publishing firm. "Oraclá Press is nearing the completion date for the first volume in a new series of what-will-end-up-as-books dealing with the Halloween Crisis and the formation of the Republic of Talossa," says Ragsdale.

It's well known that people are never so creative as during a revolution. With a media explosion linked to a flourishing of interest in the Talossan language, the first months of the new Republic have proved that old saying well and truly. It only remains to be seen if this level of energy can be kept up as the Republic consolidates. ■

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE: WORK GRINDS ON

By our own correspondent

In less interesting news, the process of designing a new constitution for the Republic of Talossa inches onwards. The nomination of a Committee of the Convention by Dean of the Provisional Governing Council, Michael Pope, was supposed to speed the process up by producing relatively quick decisions on a draft text to be put to the wider convention.

However, this was not to be. Although what work the Committee has produced has gone smoothly, it has also gone at about the rate of continental drift. Committee member Jonathan Kelly has had recurring computer troubles which has made his access to *Wittenberg* patchy at best.

The other committee members - Miestrá Schivá, Chris Gruber and Michael Pope - have often had more pressing engagements, which have often left the Committee silent for up to a week at a time.

Nevertheless, the Committee has managed to produce one substantive draft of the new Constitution - the duties and powers of the President of the Republic. The President will be elected to a one-year term (with no consecutive re-election) by a secret preferential ballot. Procedures for impeachment have been laid out.

Also, many of the President's powers will require the consent of the Parliamentary government. What this Government may look like, Zeus only knows so far. Stay tuned for further updates. ■

LINKS

"STUBBORN THINGS": http://www.courteousminer.com/rft/shows/040813_1.mp3
TFAS: http://www.geocities.com/tfas060104/tfas_page.html

Talossa at the Age of Majority

by *MARTÌ-PÁIR FURXHEÍR*

Every new citizen of Talossa has to write an essay on what Talossa means to them. In my mind, if we presume to judge a person on what Talossan means to them, we had to know what Talossa was supposed to mean to us.

Except Talossa doesn't have the same meaning for everyone, and I believe it is in that difference that the schism occurred.

With the recent secession of the Republic by some citizens of the Kingdom, I had to think hard about what Talossa meant for me in order to determine if I wanted to belong in the Kingdom or in the republic.

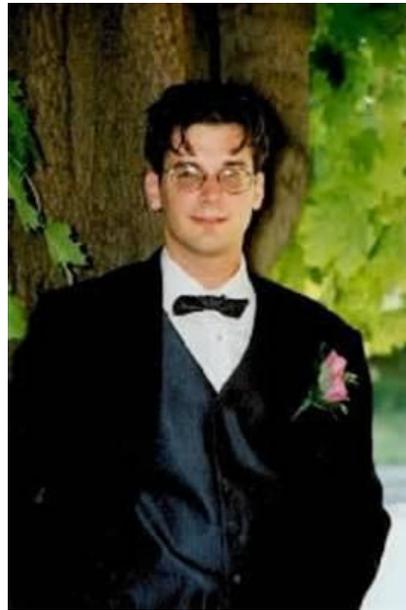
I called a few citizens of both sides, and tried to figure out exactly what it meant to be a Talossan.

For the Kingdom, it appears that Talossa is tradition, respect of the King, and monarchy. I am not just talking about one citizen. I spoke to a few Kingdom citizens or read their messages on Wittenberg (both forums, actually) and discovered a common thread. All the current citizens I contacted mention the King as the main reason for staying a Talossan.

We all know Mark Hamilton, and many accuse him of having a monarchy fetish because he blindly follows King Robert I in all his endeavors. But other examples are less well known.

When I first mentioned splitting the country in two, on Black Tuesday, I called Gary Cone. On that day, Gary was convinced that Talossa would die in its current form, and that it needed a major reform.

I frankly asked Gary : If Ben and Amy left, would all the problems be solved? While he agreed that Talossa would finally know peace, and while he agreed that all the fights



Martì-Páir Furxheír is administrator of talossa.com, talossa.net and the Republic's discussion group, Wittenberg.

implicated Ben, he also said he would leave Talossa if Ben left, because Talossa without Ben isn't Talossa.

I felt that Gary preferred to let Talossa die rather than lose its founder. Several other citizens of the Kingdom share his point of view.

In my philosophy, Talossa is a creation which can only reach its true potential once it is no longer bound by its creator.

I created a company which I still control, but if I die, I want it to survive. As long as I am alive and able to control it thought, I want to have power over it.

It is the same with the life of my daughter : her survival is in the hands of my wife and I, her parents. One day however, she will grow up enough to live on her own. If we let go, she will still respect and listen to us. But if we force our beliefs on her and impose a dictatorship on how she should rule her life, she will run away from us as soon as she reaches her majority, and possibly earlier. So, my goal is to raise her to become an

independent and strong woman who can face problems her own way.

In my opinion, Talossa isn't a company. It is alive, much like my daughter. And I believe that it has reached its age of majority, and now wants to live its own life.

For Talossa, this finally occurred with the founding of the Republic. On that secession day, many of the citizens said they no longer accepted being tutored. They wanted to grow away from Ben's control.

Right now, the Republic is like a young adult leaving his or her parental house for the first time in his life. Except that we have assets, and lots of them. We have many talented and dedicated citizens. We have a common sense of unity and responsibility. We have a common goal : to prove to the world that Talossa is a dream made true.

But that dream - the dream of a group, a community, a country where every citizen has decided to take the future of his nation into his own hands, and to fight to make it succeed - can only exist if everyone of us believes in it.

In Talossa, patriotism means something different than in traditional countries. Talossa will not defend your home. It will not offer you protection against foreign countries. It is fragile. Patriotism in Talossa is pure, it is selfless : it is having the courage to protect something, solely to let it live, not so that it will bring you protection, but so it can grow and live.

If everyone can see it that way, Talossa would become pure, away from the manipulations of people to control it. Away from a form of patriarchy which was required in the first few years, but grew obsolete. Away from the personal attacks. And that, my friends, is something powerful to believe in. ■

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

[The following page contains extracts from an article entitled The Road to Jimstown. This was written by a group of oppositionists from an American far-left group called the Spartacist League in 1984, explaining why they had chosen to leave that group. Much of this may sound familiar to those of us who have been through the Talossan Revolution. Bits I find particularly interesting are in bold. - ed.]

[American leftist James] Cannon once remarked that if you get a few people in a room for long enough, they can talk themselves into practically anything. That observation increasingly guided the leadership as the SL's degeneration proceeded in the late 1970s. The "fights" became outright psychological gang-bangs.

Here's how it works in the SL. A meeting is called where the designated comrade is called to account for mistakes which he allegedly committed. Each item on the bill of particulars is grossly exaggerated and extrapolated; perfidious motivations (political and/or personal) are attributed. Incidental personal criticisms of the individual's mannerisms, lifestyle or demeanor are thrown in for good measure.

Those leading the attack typically do a good deal of histrionic screaming and posturing in order to create the proper emotionally-charged atmosphere. The assembled membership is expected to provide the chorus: repeating and embellishing on the accusations. (A reluctance to participate is punishable by being made the next point on the agenda.) Attempts by the accused to agree with the substance of the charges are initially dismissed as disingenuous and insincere, unless the hapless "star" of the proceedings is prepared to exceed all the others in vilifying

himself.

There is no beating the rap. If you can prove that some of the allegations are false, new ones are quickly invented. Or you are charged with using "lawyer's arguments" and attempting to obscure the overall picture by quibbling over "details." In some cases, the refusal of individuals involved to "come clean with the party" (i.e. confess to the charges) is itself taken as evidence of an anti-leadership attitude. After all, if you don't agree with the charges, then you must think the campaign against you is a bureaucratic atrocity!

Round after round, meeting after meeting, the "fight" continues until the object of the exercise gives up and hands in his resignation or confesses in what is deemed a suitably abject and contrite manner. Breaking down and crying is usually taken as evidence of sincerity, especially in men. The "fight" is then concluded with the unanimous passage of some harshly condemnatory motion. **Anyone fortunate enough to be deemed worthy of one last chance can expect to spend at least the next few months as a pariah.** Eventually there is a new victim and, with luck, the previous target can gradually recoup his status as a regular member. But the "lesson" is not quickly forgotten.

The leadership's shock therapy techniques are deliberately intended to break the personal and political self-confidence of those subjected to them. Usually the "fights" are aimed at potential "troublemakers"—the idiots and yes-men can usually be integrated without difficulty. The choice posed: to crawl or to leave the group ... is only a difficult one for those who take the politics seriously.

The purges in the SL gave a lot of little people the chance to vent their frustrations and "get even" for petty grievances (real or imagined) against the victims. Some joined in with a mixed sense of fear and excitement, glad not to be on the receiving end and anxious to demonstrate their regime-loyalty.

The most debased elements acquired new skills—interpretive accusation and cavalier disregard for the truth. They became masters of the art of the shrill and hysterical denunciation, and eagerly strained to be first on the round to jump on the back of each new victim. More experienced and decent people didn't really believe much of it but kept their eye on the "big picture" and tried not to get their hands any dirtier than necessary. They suppressed their qualms and tried to focus on whatever grains of truth they could find in the indictments.

Once widely regarded by [other left groups] as honest, serious and "orthodox," the SL today is perceived with equal justice as dishonest, nasty and nutty. James Cannon said that "it is perfectly possible for slick leaders to write ten constitutions guaranteeing freedom of criticism in a party and then create an atmosphere of moral terrorization". Robertson has set up precisely this kind of operation.

The purpose of such slander [...] is always the same—to discredit one's opponents without having to answer them politically. It also has the effect of "locking in" those members who participate. Every time someone engages in slander or violence against an opponent, he is much more closely to the degenerate leaders who ordered it. Even when people break with such an organization, most feel themselves so deeply compromised by their own participation in such practices that they tend to leave politics entirely. ■

What I Want To See In Our Constitution

By **MIESTRÂ SCHIVÂ**,
member, Committee of the
Constitutional Convention



I realise that it might be stepping outside convention a bit (if you'll pardon the rather weak pun) for a member of the Committee who's supposed to be working up the constitution to ramble on at length in a newsmagazine [*that she herself edits!* - Ed.] about her vision of how she wants the damn thing to end up.

However, I don't really see any other way of getting my overall vision across in the current process than in essay format. When the process makes one of its periodic tiny lurches forwards - that is, when all four Committeepersons happen to be online within 24 hours of each other - the discussion all seems to be on the minutiae of constitutional law. No wonder we're all three-quarters asleep.

Well, enough with the cheap shots, anyway. This article is for me to give you the lowdown on how, if I were benevolent dictator around these parts, the Constitution of the Republic of Talossa would look...

Issue 1. DO WE REALLY NEED PROVINCES?

You'll note that I'm not asking do we *want* provinces. I think provinces are a good thing, in principle. The vision I always had of Talossan provinces is that they'd be like "training grounds" for important, national politics - that newbies or radicals, who we might not trust at the moment (or ever) with power at the national level, would be able to run loose in a province. Also, that the same would go for offbeat, not-entirely-approved cultural endeavour.

But let's face it, fellow citizens. *We don't have Provinces like that.*

Back in the Kingdom, there were only brief flurries of Provincial activity. This was mainly since, with rampant apathy towards provincial politics, all that ever happened was perhaps one nutbar would seize power in a Province and wield it howsoever he pleased until he got bored. There was no room for the cut-and-thrust of debate that made national politics interesting. As for cultural diversity... well, Evan Gallagher and I tried to see how that would work in practice back in '97. And we got stepped on so hard that no-one ever tried again.

I think all this should be different in the Republic. But we can't *make* it different. Going to great lengths to establish Provinces from the federal government level down would be, I believe, a waste of time, since they probably won't become active anyway. If people living in a province want to get it going, on the other hand, then by all means let them be supported. Which leads me to my next point...

Issue 2. DO WE NEED A SENÄTS?

I live in a country which functions perfectly well with a unicameral legislature. So why couldn't Talossa follow suit? I've seen no actual justification for having an upper house at all - except for the argument that it would give the Provinces representation. But if we don't **have** provinces that exist as anything more than lines on a map, what's the point of that?

Therefore, in my Barebones Framework, I came up with the idea that *the Senäts should only become active if the provinces become active*. If three Provinces get up and running, then by all means let's give them a chamber of Parlamint where they can have a say over legislation. This would have the great converse effect of *encouraging* active participation in the Provinces - if you could only get a Senäts seat by getting your province up and running.

But until then, can *anyone* answer for me - why do we *need* a Senäts? Especially when we might have trouble filling the Cosâ with competent people? Oh yeah, that's right, that's my third point.

Issue 3. MULTIPLE OFFICE PROHIBITION

It was an object of extreme vexation to me that in the Kingdom's system, you can be a member of both legislative chambers at once, and also in the High Court. (Yeah, I'll get onto the Cort later.) Imagine how ridiculous this would look in a "real country". A Congressman runs out of the House after losing a vote on a Bill, into the Senate where he votes against it again. After he loses there **again**, he runs to the Supreme Court, puts his judicial robe on and votes to strike the bill down.

The justification we were given back in the Kingdom for this was "we don't have enough competent people to fill Cosa and Senäts". Simple answer: *let's not have a Senäts* (until the provinces become strong enough to need a voice - by which stage, we should have more than enough active citizens for.)

And it should come as no surprise to anyone that I don't think Members of the Cosa should be

cuntroverçu

allowed to be Justices, either. It is not *fair* that the law can be judged by the very people who made it - or, perhaps, voted against it. And what about the “not enough people” question, once again? Well, can anyone explain to me why a 20-person nationette needs a *three*-person High Cort? Surely one, or two, is enough for our purposes? Especially since we only want the best, most qualified person having final say over the interpretation of our laws - and he would *have* to be totally politically neutral.

Issue 4. PARTY LISTS AND A SECRET BALLOT

I think it's an elementary tenet of democracy that you should know who you're voting for. One of the most corrupting influences in the old Kingdom was the “blank cheque” electoral system - where the boss of each party would win a number of seats in the election, and afterwards

hand them out to whoever had voted for him. Oh, yes, and conduct revenge campaigns. Is it any wonder that it became almost impossible to defeat the King's party, when you knew how he would make your life a misery if he knew you were his political opponent?

A secret ballot is the fundamental, basic way to stop that kind of crap happening. In addition, we should adopt a new electoral system. The smallest acceptable change - that is, one that would not change *too* much how Talossans are used to voting - is a Party List system. That is, on the ballot next to each party's name would appear the list of people who would fill the seats they won. So, if the Gloria Estefan Revival Party were to win, say, five seats in an 11-person Cosà, the top five people on their party list would get into office. That way you would *know* who you were voting for - and the chance of corruption would be lessened.

controversy

(In Talossa, I think it would be acceptable if a candidate who so consented were allowed to be on more than one list. Some people are popular enough that every party would want them on board!)

Those are the four big issues which I think have to be tackled by the Committee, and the wider Convention. There are other good ideas, as well. I think that instead of a Presidential veto, the President should only have the right to refer a bill to the High Court - like in Ireland.

And frankly I'd also prefer the Irish Single Transferable Vote system - like we used to use in Penguinea - to a Party List system. But what I've outlined above is, I believe, *essential* for a lean, well-functioning, trustworthy democracy in our glorious free Republic. I hope to have your support in the Convention to make it happen. ■

“Tear Down This Wall!”

by DIETER HAMM

I now have to resist saying something like “Mr Chief Justice, tear down the wall” - because I would have like to express my congratulations to Miestrà on her citizenship in Talossa on the Talossan board, without any need to ask for admission.

Congrats to Miestrà, just for that one reason; congrats to Miestrà on the Talossan board, so that the Talossans can see that they are not considered the all-time “enemies” of us ex-Penguineans; and no bureaucracy for board admission, howsoever small or even tiny.

Looking back, I didn't join Penguinea in just one step. It was a process that took at least 3 months, from the first contact to “Protector” Evan to my final citizenship application. I kind of choose the Free Commonwealth of Penguinea for me, before said FCP was allowed to vote on me.

I don't know whether I'd want to join



the new Republic of Talossa; somehow I feel tickled to do so, because of the fun of it, because the friends in there, because of a certain flair of it, etc... most important would be friendships anyway, because that's the one reason for the extravaganza of nationette-building, IMHO.

I understand your concern. In the very beginning Polyphony started with a

password-protected board, too; after a while we added an open board for visitors. Since the spam to ham ratio remained low, we finally gave up on password protection.

So if I were a Talossan, I'd suggest to maintain a board with a name such as “Coney Island” or “Fisherman's Wharf” or “Pier thirtysomething”, where all possible friends or critics of the Talossa(ns) can leave their tags.

Anyway, again: Mr Chief Justice and other “South-Talossans”, consider to tear down the wall, open up Wittenberg, and see what will happen. You may miss some fun if you don't do it. ;-) ■

Dieter Hamm has been the Primat of the German micronation of Textor, as well as a member of the Penguinean legislature. His words are taken from a post on the Polyphony discussion group, and have been mildly edited to make up for the fact that English is his second language.

commentary

Nigh-on-three-months: How we're doing...

by JEFF RAGSDALE

Our citizens have stayed around, and apathy has not reared it's ugly head, but the Non-Talossan-Life-Summer monster is willing itself into our consciousness with a vengeance. Our constitutional convention has come to a standstill in recent days, and Wittenberg has been... well.. *boring* as of late.

What's there to do about it? Well, for my part, I and Ian Anglatzara are working toward a good solution to the problem of mass-distributing emails with word docs and such to the Provisional Governing Council. And certainly, Radio Free Talossa has gotten off to a wonderful start, not to mention *Qator Itrins*. My own magazine, *Oraclá*, which, ere our independence, had enjoyed a serious rejuvenation, is still on hiatus, though it might be well for



JEFF RAGSDALE is Secretary to the Provisional Governing Council of the Republic of Talossa, and a former Prime Minister of the Kingdom.

me to tell my readers that officially. When I get some extra time, I will certainly see to that.

Simply put, everyone is busy because we all have vibrant non-Talossan things going on, and that has been what's been cramping our style recently. Once Labor Day rolls

comentár

around, I look for things to pick up. I hope for an infusion of more former Talossans into our midst such as Eddie Abel, Jamila Cruciani, and T. Carter Ross.

One thing I also hope for is that we don't degenerate into the "I hate Ben" Club. I don't hate Ben Madison, though I, along with everyone else, is, of course, horribly disappointed (to put it mildly) in the things he did this spring to put us Founding Fathers (and Mummys) "over the edge", so to speak.

One thing that has come out in emails as of late, and I think I am safe in letting this cat out of the bag, is the need for our own "TalossaFest", our own gathering, in the Republic itself, of course, to which we could invite one or more citizens of the Kingdom. I should love to see Tomas and Jahn again, not to mention Cone and Brook. Meeting Wes Erni in person would be very good, indeed.

How are we doing? While we could be doing better, we are doing as well or better as realistic expectations would have us. Which is not a bad place to be in. Not bad at all. ■

WICKED QUESTIONS FOR THE MONTH...

1. What would happen if the Constitutional Committee were given Valium? Would time actually go *backwards*?
2. Would you be just as happy if we made the Republic a benevolent dictatorship?
3. If so, who gets to be dictator? [*The correct answer is, of course, "Miestrâ Schivâ" - Ed.*]
4. Is there *really* enough difference between Bush and Kerry for Gruber and Pope to be so *loud* at one another?
5. Is there *anything* our former monarch could do that would persuade the remaining Kingdomites leave?
6. Are your clocks accurate? What's the weather like where you are? [*This question is a paid advertisement from Ronalt Rosáis. - Ed.*]

GUIDALIGNHÂS PËR COMTRIBUÇADÉIRS GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Qator Itrins welcomes your letters, essays, newsarticles, interviews and rants for publication, in Talossan or English (or, in exceptional circumstances, some other language which the Editor speaks and can translate). Articles longer than 1,500 words will not usually be printed. Send all contributions to heatherblackrose@paradise.net.nz, preferably in RTF format. Deadline is the 27th of each month.

Sá vivadra la República Talossán!