



The Thirteenth issue of a weekly, or thereabouts (job, life, love, etc., permitting), letter substitute from:

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"A Glorious Victory..."

The Labour party in Britain became the official government last week with an unprecedented majority of 178. For those of you in the UK this whole spiel may be somewhat repetitive - but the victory still gives me great cause to inanely grin at strangers in the the street. The statistics of the victory make reading which, at worst, is astounding: not one single Tory MP in Scotland or Wales. Not one. The official opposition in Scotland and Wales is the Liberal Democrats. No Tories in any major suburban cornubation. And labour... the highest landslide since, I think, the Nineteenth century. What, in my years as a political scientist student, we tended to call, and I apologise for the jargon, a huge fucking majority.

To be a bit more serious. The last two landslide victories of this scale were in 1906 and 1945. Anyone who knows anything about British politics knows that the 1906 government laid the foundations of the welfare state (from a German example nonetheless) and later the constitutional change that saw the end of aristocratic rule in England. The 1910 budget (which precipitated the 1911 bill) still stands as the major retraction of the political power of the landed classes in Britain to this day. In 1945, the next major landslide, the Labour government introduced the Welfare state and the running of the country on Keynesian economic lines. The huge political and social changes that wrought are still being felt today. The welfare state in Britain was a Tsunami whose waves swept away the old British societal views.

The third major landslide of this century, possibly the biggest of this century, and what? Jesus, with 178 majority the possibilities are endless. Huge reforms of the welfare state - Mr. Frank Field, MP, please step forward. Not a well known British Political figure but his ideas on the Welfare state are nearly as radical as those of the Conservatives. Changes to the economy: (Mr Gordon Brown, MP, Chancellor of the exchequer please step forward.) His first act was to give the Bank of England Carte Blanche to change interest rates, the first time this has happen since the foundation of banking in England hundreds of years ago. We also have Martin Bell (one time BBC reporter) as a new MP - I mean, a hack? Jesus the wind is certainly blowing and we haven't heard the latest in this

round of political fall out. What happens to the Conservative party now is going to be the stuff of satirists for years to come. Talk about a mess - no let's not. They had 18 years, fuck 'em.

It's a new dawn. A new era. Not the socialist one I hoped for but at least one with a conscience, Christian or otherwise. One that at least appears to care. One that looks towards Europe with hope, if with still the British bulldog on a leash. Possibilities. As New Labour stated: "Inclusiveness." Jesus, I could almost go home to take part in it. The potential is enormous.

Perhaps not 'A Glorious victory', perhaps more a Glorious Revolution...? As always time will tell. I'm an eager observer.

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Two weeks already since my last issue. A camp bed and some supplies and I could live in Allen's bar and restaurant. I really do need a break and some weekends off to get my system back into gear. I'm also typing this up hours before I begin to pack and move location. This might mean some EMail downtime for a few days, but as I'm only moving 15 doors down, it might also not mean anything.

Plans are already afoot for Toronto's main con of the year, Ad Astra (<http://aries.phys.yorku.ca/~white/adastra.html>) which takes place over the weekend of 13-15 June. I'm helping out with the Toronto in '03 Worldcon bid party (<http://www.worldhouse.com/worldcon-2003>) and also plan a few surprises myself. Apparently Ad Astra isn't known for it's fannish content and there are a lot of media fans who attend. "Really," I thought, "that gives me an idea.."

The first meeting of the Foxes Den came and went with a smaller than expected turnout. Lack of publicity on my part, inclement weather and a lot of apologies were to blame. Hopefully for the next meeting there will be a bigger turnout. I intend in the next week or so to put the newsletter on the web so you can check out all the exciting things that you are missing by not attending. Next meeting: Thursday 5th June.

And now, you.

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From: daly.julia@traf.com (Julia Daly) "At work (18:13 my time on Saturday 19.04.97) - but typing up my visit to you. The system is going down soon, so I doubt I will finish today. Been out partying every night last week, but kept drinking down to 2 nights only - still shouldn't have done them either! Knackered, so must get some sleep tonight.

Another friend has been hospitalised for an emergency operation - John Dowd was hurried into hospital because of an abscess on his leg he had been ignoring for some time. Fran finally persuaded him to visit the doctor who sent him straight for hospital. He has been unwell for some time, probably due to the fact that abscesses tend to poison your blood quite a bit. However, saw him on Thursday night after the op and he seemed much better. I hope this hospitalising of my friends is not becoming an epidemic.

Sorry to hear it is still cold there. We have had a couple of days of brilliant sunshine here followed by clouds and now a little rain. Still, I'm sure Yorkshire Water will put out another hosepipe ban soon! Hope you're not too miserable really. Huge and voracious hugs heading your way non-physically! Enjoy your party and the football. Snowed under with work - again!!! ((- Well I hope to be able to print some excerpts from your trip report in some fanzine I'm doing. Hey, if it doesn't fit, I'll just start another one! Now why does that not sound as silly as it was meant to... -))

From: Ireece@u.washington.edu (Lesley Reece) ">remember Tommy it is "Norn Iron", "craic", "waines", "Veda"< Care to translate any of this for an ignorant American? I'll help you with your next John Hughes movie... ((- 'Norn Iron' is what Northern Ireland sounds like when the locals pronounce it. 'Craic' is an expression with many uses, generally to describe news, gossip or social events; i.e. 'we had great craic at the pub last night,' meaning we had a good time. 'Waines' is a contraction of wee-uns referring to children. Hey, I'm just translating, not explaining. 'Veda' is a bread - this one you have to taste to find out. One of the great things about John Hughes' movies is that they don't need translation - they speak to the 18 year old in all of us. Well, me anyway. -))

From: murray.moore@encode.com (Murray Moore) "TOMMYWORLD is distributed once a week? It seems to arrive here on a daily basis. -> send me a note and I'll print you a copy and put you on the list. I am skimming the TWs I receive. Please put me on your North American mailing list. I prefer waiting to read paper than reading on screen now. I say, if it's worth typing, it's worth preserving on paper. Will the print version begin with TW 1? Will it include the letters, or only your writing? ((- As you may notice in the masthead (Ms. Reece informs me it is NOT a colophon) I no longer offer this option. I had intended to do this at the start but given that this is an electronic thing, that I try to get it out weekly and that my wonderful printer (720 x 720 dpi) costs a fortune to run (but look at the photos... DFL 2) I'm just going to do this on the Internet. In order to help people out though there are four options to getting this: 1) RTF (preferred) 2) Word Document 3) ASCII (text) document or 4) as an EMail message. As with most of my own zines there never really is a number one. TASH was like that and so is TW - there is one, somewhere, but I do like to annoy timebinding-like people every once and a while... -))

From: bevansa@cix.compulink.co.uk (Bernie Evans) "Hiyah!, TVM for TW12. Shame about your cold, but I'm gobsmacked you can't take sick leave. What happens if you get run down? Do they expect you to go to work on a hospital trolley, pulling several carts

behind you with the ICU equipment on it? Or do you have to use up annual leave? And if that's the case, do you get fired when you've run out of it? Or maybe I'm over-reacting here and it's the same as my job, no show = no pay? ((- Yep, No Show = No Pay and loss of good shifts. Great job, shit industry. -))

From: TLFLOYD@IBM.NET (Terry Floyd) "Hey there Tommy! Thanks for keeping me on your list. I really enjoy reading Tommyworld, and the RTF format is really nice, now that I know how to handle it. I thought of you the other night as I went to see 'The Devil's Own'. I know you've probably had dozens of people tell you about this movie, but Brad Pitt really does a nice job pretending to be Irish and Angry. It's not a great movie by any means, and there are some plot holes so huge you could drive a truck through them, but as entertainment goes, it works okay. I have a lot of trouble with some of the useless characters in the story, but I'd be curious to know what you thought of it, if you've bothered seeing it yet. I'll bet dollars to doughnuts you'll really hate it! ((- Haven't seen it yet, but do intend to do a movie blitz sometime next week. 'The 5th Element' is high on that list as well as a few Oscar winners hopefully. I've heard good things about 'The Devil's Own' as a movie and bad things about all the production problems - but I'm a sucker for summer movies and the like - even went to see 'Murder at 1600' and 'Absolute Power' - gotta be a fanzine article in there somewhere. Thanks for the nice words. -))

From: rbyers@u.washington.edu (Randy Byers) "Thanks for the batch. Loved the piece about the gun. 'Tis the season to be dreaming, I guess, because dreams have been hammering me every night for the past month or so. Nothing as dramatic as the gun, but I opened my eyes one morning, still dreaming, and saw the head of Jesus on my bedroom wall. Thought it might be absolution, but instead it's just given me a bad cold. Cough, quack. Hope this means I'm on your regular list now! ((- Yeah, er Randy, remember that talk we had? The one about those special pills? You weren't listening, were you? Seriously, I've been having some other really weird and spacey dreams: My Granny, who died whilst I was in Cuba, was on her death bed talking away to me (which is what happened in real life with my other Granny) only in this dream she was reading Philip K Dick's collected short stories. We didn't talk about PKD, but this was something I just noticed. Strange. Yeah, you're on the list, just remember in court, you asked for it. -))

From: PJBoal@aol.com (Pamela Boal) "Hope you are feeling better by now. I am enjoying TommyWorld but I think at least for the next few months I must forgo the pleasure. We are out on the boat for ever longer periods and my e-mail box is in danger of getting over full. I wouldn't like TW to constantly bounce back to you. Frankly even less would I like it if there was no room for urgent messages from family and friends. Mind I still want your paper zines, I can take those to read on the boat. Perhaps if you carry on doing it I can have TW when we stop a roving in the winter? ((- No problemo, Pam, enjoy yourself and I'll send you the back list at some stage. Then again you won't see this, so maybe I won't. But then if I do send you, arrggh.. -))

From: FanmailAPH@aol.com (Andy Hooper) " Tommy -- Just spent a few hours tweaking and shaping the last three TommyWorlds into a pleasing shape -- one of the things I love about E-zines is that you can lay them out anyway you like. I do the titles in Village K, your comments in Arial, the letters in Palamino, and all those double lines in Meridien Bold. I printed out ten copies of all three, planning to take them around to Vanguard next week and lay them on people who aren't on your mailing list or don't have net access. This is, of course, a wildly presumptuous thing to do, and rather reinforces Nigel Rowe's comments about my treating you as my "discovery," but I hope that you won't mind. I promise not to put it in the hands of any unstable fans with enormous collections of homoerotic media-based fiction to share with you. ((- Actually I'm flattered. I'd loved to be able to print out and distribute copies but see my comments to Murray above. Cool, man. -)) After I ran wild in my appreciation of TW 5 to 8, I was rather more restrained in my comments on #9 and beyond, or at least, didn't assign them a spot in the top five ((-but you can read it at the Apak Web Site: <http://www.oz.net/~cjuarez/APAK/> -))

Anyway, to amplify on that just a little, I have to admit that I simply forgot all about your brief attribution to your dreams after I got a paragraph into the story in #10. I was just caught up in the narrative. I find it interesting that you dreamed of being the master of the situation -- in my dreams, I'm seldom so effectual. And I wonder about the connection you infer between the violence of your dreams and the socio-political thuggery you've witnessed/experienced in Belfast. My Grandfather and Uncle Tom were policemen, and told horrific stories of bodies impaled on parking meters and desperate young fugitives who blew out their brains with shotguns when cornered, and one of the first pictures taken of me after I could walk show me with my Uncle's garrison cap on my head and his service revolver in my hand. My Uncle Bill was quiet on the subject of his two tours as a navigator in B-17s, but my great Uncle Bob was willing to peel back his sleeves and show the pale white scars he acquired in his escape from a burning M2 Stuart. And the names of men who didn't come back were never too far from anyone's lips when I was growing up.

When I was six, Bill and Tom went out with rifles to ride along with fire engines in the City of Detroit, when rioters set fire to buildings, then sniped at the firemen who came to put them out. When we moved to bucolic West Virginia, friends were killed by cars, in swimming accidents, were struck by lightning, with alarming frequency. Returning to my mother's idyllic childhood home of Madison, Wisconsin, we found anti-war protesters in armed conflict with riot cops, tear gas drifting in the afternoon air, and just five days after we arrived, we were awakened by a massive pre-dawn bomb blast that killed one researcher, shattered a math research building and blew out windows a half-mile away. I've had a few garden-variety beatings, once surrendered a small lump of cash at gun point, and I've whirled my big stupid fists around as if I understood why on a few vomit-inducing occasions. But I don't think anyone would regard my environment as having

been a violent one, or would associate any of the places I lived with violence in the way that Belfast is.

All around us life rages and ravages to sustain itself, flesh is torn, consumed and forgotten. The difference between the violence I've known and what you experienced in Belfast is that no one ever made me feel as though I ought to *expect* such things just because of who or what I was. My feeling about violence was that life occasionally struck some sparks as it scraped by you, and concentrated on keeping my hands in front of me. Maybe if I felt a more focused malevolence directing calamity and injury my way, I'd have violent dreams too.

You see, this is the problem with my trying to write a letter of comment to you, Tommy, because I end up filling up as much space as you normally offer in an entire issue. When I finally get my thumb out to write a letter of comment, I tend to make a fairly lengthy production of it -- 90% of my average loc would end up on the cutting room floor of Apparatchik. So I'll wrap it up for now by noting that whatever title you want to give to this endeavour, TommyWorld is a consistent pleasure to read, and has the function of a fannish radar beacon -- a regular pulse from flattest Ontario, showing the outline of a Tommy-shaped object in the fanzine clutter, moving fast and close to the ground. With a combination of immediacy and disarming honesty, you give a good example of why it's worth doing a fanzine in the first place. So of course I point to it with pleasure, it's always great to get a fanzine -- in whatever configuration -- that gets to the heart of the fanzine equation, and leaves me feeling like I've really received something noteworthy for nothing. ((- Aw, shucks...Never one not to feed my ego. -))

I wonder, in fact, if #13 isn't already waiting in my mail queue. I planned to write you this afternoon, but got side-tracked in laying out yours and Cheryl Morgan's latest issues and I know we're getting close to your usual deadline. Which is just as well, as it would spare you having to figure out what, if anything, you want to use from this rambling missive. Which is now over. ((- Ha, ha. fooled you. Two weeks later... Next issue another 'interesting' article and hopefully not before too long. Take Care out there and be careful -))

This is being distributed to a whole bunch of friends on the net, if you received this and would NOT like to be on the mailing list please accept my apologies for this intrusion and let me know so that you will not be bothered by further ramblings. If you know someone who would like to be on the mailing drop me a line.