

One page of PERsonal Attacks on Bruce LinsEy

For those of you who weren't paying attention: this is *OPERABLE*, the new subzeen of *House of Lords*, which I'm putting out to fulfill my Linsey Poll charity pledge to print one page of personal attacks on Bruce Linsey for each vote *HoL* received in The Poll. I garnered a big 42 votes this year (with a sublist of only 39!), but obviously I can't put out all 42 pages at once. Not for lack of material, mind you; it's just not worth that much effort. So we'll just take this one pretty pink page at a time. I'm printing this as a distinctive flyer; if you don't want to read this stuff, just throw it out. (But you won't.)

Now let's get this silly argument over whether or not Linsey applied to be the BNC out of *HoL!*

PERSONAL ATTACK #1: Bruce Linsey has applied before to be the BNC.

(MARK BERCH) In *HoL* #16, I disputed your statement that Linsey had been "rejected as an applicant for the BNC because he was too controversial" by pointing out that Linsey was never an applicant in the first place. You replied, "I was told by BNC Don Ditter at the ByrneCon... that Bruce Linsey has ((had, I assume)) applied for the BNCship, but that he had rejected Bruce..." You also said, "I was told by former BNC Lee Kendter, Sr at a WoodyCon about a year later that Bruce had applied for the BNCship when he stepped down, but that he had rejected Linsey..." "You will print a retraction in *Diplomacy Digest*, won't you, Mark?" you concluded.

Don't count your chickens before they're hatched. What I did was to listen to what those BNCs had to say:

Don Ditter: "Bruce Linsey [*sic*, Lindsey] never applied for the BNC job under my tenure. I never considered him as a successor to me as BNC, nor to my knowledge did he wish to be considered." That's quite emphatic.

Lee Kendter, Sr: "To the best of my knowledge, you ((Linsey)) never asked me about taking over the job of BNC. Since you never asked, I'm quite sure you were not turned down. Also, I never ran anything in the zeen ((*Everything*)) about looking for a successor, so I don't know how you would have even known that I was looking for someone." Again, very emphatic.

These two categorical statements resolve the issue of whether Bruce was an applicant to either Don or Lee. There remains then the alleged statements made at ByrneCon and WoodyCon. Your statement will do beautifully: "Now, maybe Don Ditter and Lee Kendter lied to me ((Julie)), but I can't imagine why." Neither can I, and I don't think those statements you refer to ever existed. I think you should retract both your statements about Linsey, and your statements about what Don and what Lee said.

I find it a bit irritating when you make your various comments about my agreeing or disagreeing with Bruce Linsey. Thus when I disagree, you say, "Since you are such good buddies with Bruce, mind telling him about part C? It would be a real favor to all of us." I'm not your messenger boy. You want him to see it, you send him a copy of *HoL*. On the other hand, when I do agree, it's "Great minds think *so* alike [*sic*, so much alike]." What's the point of these wisecracks? It seems like it's damned if I agree, and damned if I don't. Do your readers need you to point out each agreement and each disagreement in language and position? Should I do the same for you and Dick?

Yes, I accidentally misquoted. Yes, I typed "Typically, Berch" instead of "Berch, typically" and all the rest. But there's a difference between such an accident and your deliberately creating quotes in order "to indicate irony." An accident is something I try to prevent, but yours was done on purpose, and you see nothing wrong with it—even though, the way you put it, it appears that those were my own words.

[Hey boy! I have a message for you! (Another wisecrack!)]

[I know you're not my messenger boy, Mark; you're Linsey's second mouth. You used to complain that no one ever noticed when you disagreed with Linsey; now you complain when I do notice. I guess I'm just damned if I do, damned if I don't, too. You may certainly point out where Dick and I agree and disagree, but are you implying that your relationship with Bruce is on a par with marriage?]

[You should complain about a couple of wisecracks (one of which was not meant to be a wisecrack, but a genuine request) when you blast me as a liar on the front page of your zeen? This is the same Mark Berch who, when Linsey published a letter accusing me of adultery, said, "She's made a few tart remarks in her time, so she's not exactly above it all." You can dish it out, but you can't take it. My wisecracks, at least, are meant to be funny.

[Yes, you "accidentally" misquote quite a lot. You did it three times (that I caught) in this issue.

[This Kendter "quote" is the funniest thing you've sent me yet. "...you ((Linsey))..." Are you sure it wasn't "...you ((Mark Berch))..."? Where did you get this letter? How come you had it, and Bruce didn't?

[While we're at it: How did Bruce come by this letter from Ditter when Ditter has been out of Dipdom for years? How did he know he needed a letter from Ditter (notice the date: June 12) when I hadn't even named the BNCs in question yet? Why did Ditter misspell his name? (He spelled it "Lindsey," not "Linsey." There was a "Bruce Lindsay" in Dipdom for a couple of years.)

[Why is it that if Sacks has told me something (see **Custodians in HoL**), I have been misinformed, but if Ditter or Kendter told me something, I'm making it up? Why would I make up something like that, anyway? My original remark was merely an offhand comment—do you really believe that I tell such casual, yet detailed, lies? If so, what's the point in arguing with me, or telling me to retract my statement—I must be incorrigible and beyond shame.]

(MARK LARZELERE) I noticed your problem with believing Bruce Linsey had applied with Don Ditter to succeed him as BNC. Linsey (as you know) has produced a note from Don saying he never applied to be BNC (and Berch naturally didn't miss the opportunity to put this on page 1 of *Diplomacy Digest*).

I was quite surprised to see Don's note because I was at that ByrneCon too and had believed for several years that Linsey had applied to be BNC. However, I remember Kathy, not Don, saying that Bruce Linsey had applied to be BNC. She said that Bruce applies to be BNC every time there's an opening. Don did not contradict her, but merely said, "Bruce Linsey would have been too controversial." That definitely did leave the impression that Don was saying that Bruce had applied to be BNC.

In that light, I find it easy to see how you made the mistake (a mistake I could just as easily have made). I don't know where Kathy got the idea that Bruce routinely applies to be BNC, but would take this as an example of why one should be cautious in believing what Kathy says about Bruce.

[And vice versa, of course.

[Well, how about this, Mr Berch? Will you retract your statement that I lied and admit on page 1 of *DD* that I might have made a honest mistake and misinferred what was said about Linsey? Considering there was much the same crowd as Woody's, a similar situation could have occurred, with Kathy saying something about Linsey applying for BNC and Kendter merely replying, "Oh, that asshole." If you will be gracious enough to admit that I may have been mistaken (even though you'll probably continue to believe otherwise), I will give you the benefit of the doubt that you really *don't* know or have proof that Linsey did, in fact, apply to be BNC (even though I think you know and maybe even have proof that he did)...]

(ROBERT SACKS) It is unfortunate that Linsey is again involving non-hobbyists in his disputes, in this case a former BNC, Don Ditter, who has left the hobby. We neither know nor care whether the statement was forged or coerced, or whether Ditter has forgotten his public statements, or is merely abiding by a policy that says that governments never admit who their spies are and BNCs never admit who applied for the office.

(ROD WALKER) Linsey applying for BNC: He did. Either Ditter or Kendter (I now do not remember which) once asked me what I thought of various people who'd applied for the post, and Linsey's name was on the list. The question you need to ask is not why Bruce is insulted by your statement that he applied for the position, but why denying it seems so important to him. It goes without saying that Ditter and Kendter have no motive to lie about the fact. So what's Linsey's motive?

[...then again, if Sacks and Walker agree on something, how wrong can I be?]

There now, that wasn't so bad, was it? Two pages down, forty more to go!