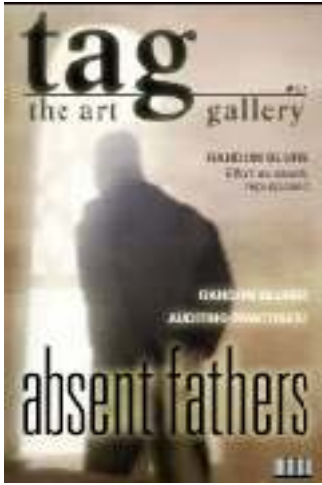


## Absent Fathers

A TAG Editorial  
July 29<sup>th</sup>, 29476



I'm reminded of a story that circulated a few years back, when Philip Ross's position as CEO of the Omni-Tek Corporation of Rubi-Ka was being challenged by a group representing a cross-selection of employees. Citing Ross's absence from his role as "father" to the Corporation, they asked for his immediate dismissal. Back then, Ross was quick to respond in kind, stating that a father's role was also to force his children to

function independently - to "kick them out of the nest", so to speak - and that if they were unable to manage without a parental figure in their daily lives, they were also unfit to stand on their own two legs as employees.

It was a valid response, especially since Philip Ross has always been less of a public figure and more of a behind-the-scenes executive who takes his work, and the welfare of his employees, very seriously. We can argue about Ross's methods and policies as much as we want - and this magazine doesn't agree with the majority of his decisions - but no one can say that Ross isn't a fastidious leader, and a hard-working executive and employee.

But in times of crisis, are fastidiousness, hard work, and good intentions enough? When the future is unclear, are father figures important - crucial - to the development of the general population?

If this is the case, then those who call themselves neutral - and that includes this editor - are out of luck; leaderless and directionless, adrift in a sea of contradictory purposes. Then again, we neutrals are free to forge our own future, unbound by a collective consciousness like the Council of Truth or the Omni-Tek Corporation. Perhaps we don't need a father - or, indeed, a mother - because we are more independent than our fellow citizens.

The theme of this issue is absent fathers; specifically Henry Radiman and Philip Ross, two father-figures whose roles have come under increased criticism from an increasingly restless populace. Whether or not this criticism is baseless, or if it's founded in a real need for direction, is arguable, and thus reflected in two in-depth articles - written by Christian E. Fuquay - that will feature in the upcoming weeks: One about Radiman and his recent

personal statement relating his apparent disappearance, the other about Ross, whose work appears to have become increasingly isolated from the public eye.

I'm confident that both articles will shed some light on the situation, or at least highlight an important issue - absent fathers, and the children left behind. Thanks for reading TAG.

Ramos Kawamoto  
Editor-in-Chief

## Where in the World is (was) Henry Radiman?

By Christian E. Fuquay  
July 30<sup>th</sup>, 29476

*Take one Council of Truth leader (missing), one desperate attempt at peace (failed), a game of chess between two heads of state (stalled), and a vociferous bunch of clanners (irate). What do you get? The latest crisis to befall an already beleaguered Council and yet another reason for Omni-Tek employees to wonder just what the hell is going on across the border. Christian E. Fuquay investigates.*

On Friday July 26, Henry Radiman - the besieged and absent leader, spokesperson, and elder statesman of the Council of Truth - released a written statement to UniClanCast after months of total silence. Quoting an obscure author from pre-winter Earth, he made light of the rumors of his parting with the Council, and cited a private "pilgrimage" as the major reason for his silence. Fellow clan-members were not impressed:

"To me it makes no difference if Radiman is back," says Redruum, President of Clan Anarchist Syndicate. "[We] will carry on our plans for things in the future that are already set in stone. I also feel that Radiman will not be able to rally the clans as he thinks he can."

For others, it's hard to reconcile what they see as an apologetic, weakened Radiman with the strong and opinionated leader who instigated a ground-breaking dialogue - and tense chess game - with Philip Ross last year. They see this as another sure sign that Radiman's long leadership of the Council may be coming to an end.

President Barchus of the West Athen Militia: "A leader needs to be seen and heard by those (who) are being led. Mr. Radiman (as well as) the rest of the Council are neither (seen nor heard). They are hopelessly out of touch with the needs of the clan community."

And then there are those who see Radiman's silence as indicative of the overall political situation on Rubi-Ka, rather than as a measure of one man's ability to lead a disunited people. Omni-Tek's CEO Philip Ross has also been unusually quiet these past few months, since the clashes in Sabulum and the Dust Brigade's departure from the headlines.

It may appear, as some have suggested, that both leaders have pulled back to lick their wounds after several highly publicized, and embarrassing, political and military fiascos in the wake of the complete collapse of the peace negotiations.

But while Philip Ross is no stranger to silence, it's much more unusual to hear Radiman confess that he's been "weary and disheartened", and that he needed "time away from the world." Even die-hard Council of Truth supporters may find it hard to swallow that the man they've grown to respect - perhaps even love - shows himself to be so vulnerable.

But even this may have been a forgivable offence. After all, in politics, human weaknesses aren't always a measure of political strength and resilience, and often the former weakness can help support the latter strength - after all, more politicians ought to show signs of humanity at some point in their careers. Some clan-members, however, have questioned Radiman's timing (Rederon, President of Knights of Sacrifice, replies that he is glad Radiman has returned "but the circumstances, I am not happy about... It had to come to the eve of a coup for him to say anything."), and others ask where their leader has been for all this time.

They had assumed that the Council was still in operation, silently, behind closed doors. It appears that they were wrong. It may even look as though the Council of Truth-affiliated clans have been leaderless for some time now, contrary - or so they claim - to their knowledge.

As for the Council, it appears more concerned with looking ahead than accounting for Radiman's absence and whereabouts, which - if suspicions voiced by both clan-members and Omni-Tek employees are correct - is a good way to avoid embarrassing revelations.

But there are rumors. There are always rumors.

A source - who wishes to remain anonymous - claims that Radiman's departure is a symptom of a growing power-struggle within the Council itself, instigated by both the collapse of the peace negotiations, and the Dust Brigade's actions against civilians, fuelled by Simon Silverstone's - the leader of the extremist clan Sentinels, and not a

member of the Council - pressure for a reformed, and militarily strengthened, Council, under a new leadership (presumably Silverstone's). The same source quotes existing members of the Council as being disillusioned with Radiman's direction, and his relentless insistence on cooperation and diplomacy.

There are certainly clear signs of the more moderate clans' rapid move towards increased confrontation and violence as a substitute for political negotiation. The hard-liners are fast gaining the upper hand, and this is a trend that appears certain to continue, despite Radiman's return:

"If he decides to lead us to victory we will support him," says Rorie - President of Opposing Force, and a vocal clan-member - "(but) if he chooses to be silent and do nothing, we will replace him."

Henry Radiman has always been one to favor a peaceful solution to the conflict, and he has stated time and again that he believes war is a futile course of action for the clans. "Call for war, and war will heed your call," is a phrase he's used time and again, and there are certainly calls for war that may not go unheeded for much longer. But then again, there are still those who take a softer line and urge Radiman to pick up the slack in leadership - to return to his role as father to a divided family - and stay the course:

"It is time for him to unite the clans under the banner of peace once and for all," says Szentasha, leader of the clan Unity of the Rose. "He can't do this from inside a cave, or behind a desk. He has to be among the people."

Radiman's last public statement prior to Friday's letter was on April the 18th of this year, when the Council announced that there would be no traditional march through Tir this year - celebrating the establishment of the Manual Laborers' Guild - mainly due to security concerns. Since then, and until last week, there was nothing.

Speculations were rife, with rumors going around that Radiman was dead, that he'd resigned or been fired from the Council, that he'd left the planet - it was even said that Radiman had been captured by the Corporation and held in Omni-1 for questioning.

Requests for comments - both on and off the record - from the Council were repeatedly ignored, with even high-ranking clan officials and the Voice of Freedom apparently left out in the cold. If this was a conscious policy by the Council, it wasn't a very well thought-out one. Soon - culminating with a public demonstration last week - clanmembers who'd previously supported Radiman were in an uproar, crying out for blood, and for a change in leadership.

The fact that it had to come down to public protests and a virtual lynch mob before

Henry Radiman decided to make an "appearance" - he has yet to show himself in public - is indicative of either a leader grown more remote or of an actual physical absence from the Council and from Tir for some amount of time, as indicated in Radiman's statement.

If the latter, where on Rubi-Ka has he been?

While disguises - both real and illusory - are easy to come by, it's hard to imagine Radiman skulking around in the alleys of Omni-1. It's even harder to believe that such a celebrity could travel undetected, and unprotected, for several months.

One clue may lie in Radiman's use of the word "pilgrimage". It's an eccentric turn of phrase, and it immediately brings up associations with a Council of Truth-affiliated clan that has remained an enigma to everyone on the outside: The Pilgrims.

Actual details are hard to come by, as the Pilgrims are few in numbers, and prefer to remain secluded. It's often been rumored that Henry Radiman was himself a member of the Pilgrims, and that he represented the clan on the Council of Truth before stepping up as leader and spokesperson of the Council itself in January of '467. But again, there are few hard facts and much speculation. The Council has been ferociously protective of Radiman's privacy - to the point where many have suspected a "conspiracy of silence".

If Radiman did visit - or rejoin - the Pilgrims during his absence - his "pilgrimage" - this also corresponds well with his stated purpose to "rediscover" himself and his cause. But it also brings up a new, and perhaps more worrying, issue: Is it right, or indeed ethical, for the leader of a group representing several clans to ally himself so closely with one clan - a clan that probably represents a miniscule fraction of the clan population? Can Radiman remain the impartial representative of diverse opinions if he himself is the adherent of *one* opinion?

Regardless of his whereabouts during these past three months, it's still worrying to many clan-members that the Council - active or not - has remained leaderless for this amount of time. The presumption is that a temporary, or indeed permanent, replacement would have been instated, but that appears *not* to have been the case.

In fact, it may appear that the Council has not convened, nor been active, since before April of this year. If this is true, is the Council still a political force to be reckoned with, or is it just, as some have suggested, a ham-fisted

bureaucracy that stands in the way of the clans' political evolution? If the Council still holds some power, how long will that last in view of recent weeks' criticisms?

According to Radiman's statement, the Council of Truth intends to reconvene shortly, and one presumes that they will address these concerns, or face the wrath of their most vocal critics. If Radiman's return from his pilgrimage - supposedly reinvigorated and refreshed - is to carry any sort of significance for the countless thousands of clan members out there, they say, there needs to be action. If not, some clan-members, and clans, may elect to form a new power structure unfettered by the past and by traditions - and without Henry Radiman.

While no principals have stepped forward to comment on the record, our anonymous source is adamant that there's more to this story than what meets the eye, and that the crisis within the Council is indicative of a much larger crisis, one that may end up affecting the lives of everyone on Rubi-Ka - a crisis that involves not just Henry Radiman, and not just the Council, but the Omni-Tek Corporation, the ICC, and even rival hyper corporations like the Sol Banking Corporation.

Without hard facts to back up the usual gossip, however, it's hard to treat this story - and the story remains that of Henry Radiman and his disappearance and reappearance, and the reasons given thereof - as something symptomatic rather than the isolated story of one politician who has provided a very human reason for his absence: A tired, heartbroken man in search of answers - answers that he may have found, wherever his pilgrimage may have taken him.

It might very well be that this is all there is to it, and that all we're doing is creating a storm in a teacup - making a big deal out of a very small story.

After all, even fathers grow tired and need a vacation once in a while.

*(TAG contacted the Council of Truth requesting a response to the above article from either Henry Radiman or Council spokespeople. Our requests went unanswered. If the Council still wishes to make a statement or partake in an interview, we will publish their reply.)*

## Discouraging Words From a Tired Leader

By Malcolm Ervinstai  
August 09<sup>th</sup>, 29476

*After Henry Radiman's return just over a week ago, there's been much speculation about what the Council of Truth's next move will be, both in the media and among citizens on both sides. Tuesday afternoon, the Council of Truth gathered for an emergency session, which was prematurely terminated yesterday afternoon. Immediately thereafter, Henry Radiman invited leaders from several clans to an unscheduled meeting to inform them of the situation. TAG reporter Malcolm Ervinstai received an exclusive invitation to the meeting and submits the following report from the Council's headquarters in Tir.*

The Council of Truth formed late last century, to represent a united clan front, and has for some eighty years provided the stability and government the clans have always needed. After witnessing an uncharacteristically jaded and weary Henry Radiman last night, the general impression was that this might be about to change.

The meeting appeared to some as a charade, and instead of providing answers, Radiman only added to the wealth of questions that have caused an increased division between the clans:

"The Council of Truth has met, and we have discussed at length the challenges laid before us," Radiman said in his speech. "It is, as always, my task to inform you about our dialogue and our decisions. But I'm afraid that, this time, there are no decisions."

It may appear that the Council of Truth is hard hit by the immense pressure they've had to face in the last couple of weeks, and when its leader's defense is reduced to quotes from ancient Earth philosophers - some say - it's a sad day for CoT supporters.

Radiman continued:

"Our ranks are growing restless – even inside the Council's chambers - and it appears to me that a sea-change must come, one way or another."

His statements were interpreted by some as placing doubt on the present Council's ability - or willingness - to fight.

By the time Radiman had finished, and announced that he would not take questions, many of the gathered leaders reacted with incredulity. Many had hoped for firm

decisions, for a new direction, and for hope, not a new set of rhetoric and ambiguities.

"According to what I have seen here tonight, I would welcome change. If we are not here to be informed or assisted, then perhaps we should walk into Rome, and ask Ross what is going on," Chong Lecho Browman of the Council of Twelve commented after Radiman's departure.

With Henry Radiman absent, questions were directed to the Council's secretary:

"We are here as a result of troubling times. The Council no longer sees our support as being forthcoming, and so we must ask ourselves: Where do we intend to go? What is our common objective?" Alex Questo Svancara, President of the Knights of Valor asked.

While most of the people present voiced doubts about Radiman's ability to yet again rise from the slump they say that he's so efficiently maneuvered himself into, others remained reflective:

"Mr. Radiman took the effort to tell us they have made some mistakes. That is the mark of a true leader. The Council isn't all-powerful; it is the mark of the whole of the clans. [Radiman] is doing what he can to promote the best move of the clans. In this, he is doing the right thing with his speech today." Kristopher Savedsoul Clasen commented.

More than anything, the meeting, the speech, and the reactions only highlighted the turbulence, indecision, and uncertainty currently dominating the political climate around the clans, and General Hunter Mechanicks Shone summed the evening up:

"The tide is changing, but for the better, or the worse?"

## Omni-Pol Investigations End in Dust Brigade Mayhem

By Tawanda Iacopino  
August 15<sup>th</sup>, 29476

Late yesterday afternoon, a group of Omni-Pol investigators were following up the investigations into Monday's homicide and permanent death of an unidentified man in the Lush Hills Resort, when two masked Dust Brigade commandoes opened fire at the Omni-Pol officers.

As the investigation team was conducting a thorough search of the resort, looking for potential new evidence

from Monday's puzzling crime, an informant arrived to deliver a message to the investigator at the scene of the crime, Detective Winterfeldt.

The message was delivered, but the detective refused to comment on what new evidence, if any, the message contained.

Local residents and visitors at the resort began congregating around the investigators, and the situation was rapidly getting out of control. The Omni-Pol officers started clearing the grounds and told everyone – including this journalist – to leave, so as not to further contaminate the crime scene.

The sizeable crowd of people was slow to comply, and Detective Winterfeldt grew visibly agitated, and increased her effort to chase off the many bystanders with angry gestures and comments like "Get that damn Tag reporter out of here," and "Move along people, there's nothing to see here".

Before Omni-Pol personnel were able to restore order, two Dust Brigade commandoes arrived and opened fire on the investigators.

The normally pleasant resort turned into a battlefield in an instant, and although the citizens present did their best to aid the investigators, the commandoes managed to bring the investigation to a complete halt.

One of the commandoes was killed in the incident, but the second Dust Brigade member managed to get out alive. His parting words: "Target terminated. Move on."

"The disruption of an official Omni-Pol investigation is a serious crime," Omni-Pol's Chief Investigator on the case, Amanda Anaya, told TAG, "and the arrival of the Dust Brigade commandoes is cause for concern. We have yet to confirm any direct link between the Brigade and the man found dead in his room Monday, but such a link seems highly likely."

## **Silverstone and the Sentinels Urge Clans to Act**

*By Malcolm Ervinstai  
August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 29476*

Simon Silverstone, the founder and leader of the radical clan Sentinels, made an unannounced appearance at the East Gate of Old Athen last night.

Delivering a scripted speech, Silverstone encouraged all clans and clan members to stand up against the impending arrival of ICC Peacekeepers. He also urged continued, and increased, opposition to the Council of Truth, the Omni-Tek Corporation, and every other existing authority on Rubi-Ka.

The Sentinels' leader was quick to place the ICC, Omni-Tek, and the Council of Truth under the same umbrella – attributing them all with similar conspiratorial agendas. He appeared to suggest that recent events prove the existence of a corporate plot to stamp down on freedom and human rights.

"The ICC, Omni-Tek, and the Council of "Truth" - they are nothing but the whores of profit, wallowing in a capitalistic bed of fornication, conspiring to silence the voice of reason with every underhanded means at their disposal," Silverstone preached to the scattered crowds.

Flanked by two heavily armed Sentinel bodyguards, Silverstone made an imposing presence as he predicted imminent doom for the clans, should they fail to respond appropriately to the perceived threats:

"If we are to avoid being devoured by the corporate machine, we have to act now. The time of diplomacy and feeble inaction has to end."

It's been more than a sixteen months since Silverstone last made a public appearance, and the Sentinels have been unusually quiet and reserved of late, but Silverstone appeared to suggest that the Sentinels might be about to emerge onto the political stage with a newfound zeal, and - one assumes - blazing guns:

"I, Simon Silverstone, and the Sentinels, will support anyone, any individual, clan, or organization with the courage to stand up to the Council of Truth and its faithful flock. We are clan members, not sheep, and we have to fight the shepherders with every means at our disposal:

"Our hearts, or minds....and our guns!"

While onlookers were divided in their reactions, there was no mistaking the impact made, and passion instilled, by Silverstone's appearance. Some attendees cheered the radical leader on, and pledged their allegiance to him and to the Sentinels' cause, while others reacted with pure contempt:

"Goodbye Simon. I'll die before I follow you," Wanderingx spat, as the clan leader and his guards left Old Athen.

With the public emergence of Silverstone, the already frayed political climate seems about to further unravel. The only certainties appear to be that the Council of Truth is under an increasing amount of pressure, and that the ICC's decision to deploy more Peacekeepers is a highly controversial one.

### **Silverstone's Speech**

*A complete and unedited transcript of the speech held by Simon Silverstone in Old Athen the evening of August 22, 29476:*

"Loyalist clan members, friends and comrades - our freedom and future is being held hostage by corporate criminals!

We have just been informed that the ICC and their so-called 'Peacekeepers' are on course for Rubi-Ka.

They will no doubt attempt to shroud their intentions with hegemonic slogans like 'protecting innocent civilians', and 'maintaining peace and order'.

This is nothing but blatant lies, exorbitant paraphrasing, and corporate rhetoric. After all, who is the ICC - the 'Intergalactic Confederation of \*Corporations\*' - coming here to protect and assist? Me? You? Honest, hardworking clan members? Lazy, two-faced neutrals? Corporation employees?

No one, not one person here, is wide-eyed enough to believe these bedtime stories. The ICC is merely protecting the interests of the corporations it serves. The ICC wants to ensure the continued exploitation of Rubi-Ka's natural resources, of notum, so that the corporations can keep fattening themselves on the carcass of freedom and justice!

The ICC, Omni-Tek, and the Council of "Truth" - they are nothing but the whores of profit, wallowing in a capitalistic bed of fornication, conspiring to silence the voice of reason with every underhanded means at their disposal; be it the Peacekeepers, Omni-Tek's Armed Forces, or propaganda

about the Dust Brigade's supposed 'terrorist attacks'.

If we are to avoid being devoured by the corporate machine, we have to act now. The time of diplomacy and feeble inaction has to end.

I, Simon Silverstone, and the Sentinels will support anyone, any individual, clan, or organization with the courage to stand up to the Council of Truth and its faithful flock. We are clan members, not sheep, and we have to fight the shepherders with every means at our disposal:

Our hearts, or minds... and our guns!

We have nothing at all to lose. We cannot lose. We are the David of our times, standing up against the giant Goliath. We are the wrathful angles of mercy, facing the injustice of the demons of Mammon.

As we speak, a wind of change is blowing over the hot sands of Rubi-Ka, and we are approaching a time when history can be rewritten by our hands. This is the moment when we have to make a difference, stand up and be counted, in the name of our birthrights to human dignity, and a life free of the corporate shackles!

With justice on trial and the jury in deliberation, time is precious. There has been too much talk. If we are to avoid a favorable ruling for the plaintiff, we have to make a closing argument too strong to be overruled. Too strong to ignore! Too strong for Peacekeepers or soldiers or 'loyal employees' to stand up against! A tide greater than all the waves of the sea will sweep across Rubi-Ka, and you - all of you - will ride the crest of that tide to victory!

A new sun will rise on Rubi-Ka, and it will be colored blood red."

# The Forgotten Subway and the Exploitation of Notum

*A TAG Editorial*

*November 06<sup>th</sup>, 29476*

Remember the subway?

I don't blame you if you don't. It was promised to us loooooong ago, but ended up another failed effort at improving Rubi-Ka's less than satisfactory infrastructure. Still, what do we care? We got the Whom-Pah instead, right? Why bother with another broken Omni-Tek promise?

But I'll stay away from politics today, I happen to have something else on my mind.

This morning I had a meeting up in Borealis - don't ask me why, sometimes your business takes you to the most desolate places – and as I was wandering around I began to see the futility in my search for a good place to get my morning coffee (I knew I should have just gotten my regular take-away cuppa in NC, like I usually do).

As my frustration grew and my mood started to deteriorate from the lack of my morning fix, I stumbled into an old mate of mine. He looked even worse than I felt, all pale, hands shaking, like he'd sold bronto meat without getting paid.

He told me he'd seen something - a creature of some kind – unlike anything he'd ever seen before down by the locked up entrance to the old subway. I tried to get the man to calmly explain to me what he was babbling about, but that proved just about as easy as locating a decent reporter in the Omni Herald.

I strolled down towards the old subway to have a look see. Imagine my surprise when I found there was a hole in the entrance and I was able to walk straight in. Omni-Trans told us ages ago they had thoroughly closed these things. But hey, they told us they'd build them too, didn't they?

What I found inside was frightening though. There's an entire little community of vile beings down there, my old buddy was right about that, and I have no idea where they come from. Needless to say, I didn't stick around, and got my soft journalist butt out of there in a hurry.

So, back at the office, I started calling around to figure out what the heck is going on down in the abandoned halls of the subway.

Apparently, experts know there's something down there. They know Omni-Trans all but abandoned the place to its own twisted destiny, but no one was able to get me a straight answer on what's down there, how it got there, and why.

The creatures, experts say, are products of faulty insurance scanning and scrambled DNA codes. They're not the regular kind of mutant produced and brought to us by Omni-Med, they're broken, soulless freaks of defective resurrection. At least that's what I can boil it down to.

The fact that insurance technology only works on Rubi-Ka has to tell us something. The supply of notum, and the presence of notum in the atmosphere has to be huge for the technology to work. Right?

If the experts I have been talking to are right, and these creatures currently residing inside the old subway halls are in fact results of bad insurance and faulty scanning I think there's a need for a shout of warning.

Why didn't this stuff happen before? (Well, there are similar examples from the early days of the development of the technology, but very, very few. I've been assured the beings down in the subway are very young.) Can it happen to anyone? Is the supply of notum thinning out? Have OT mined and refined too much of the stuff? Is it possible to exploit the notum to its extinction? Can we remove it all? Does it refill?

And why, oh why, is it impossible to find a decent cup of coffee in Borealis?

*Ramos Kawamoto*  
*Editor-in-Chief*