

Sandi Jones
1038B Heritage Hill Drive
Naperville, IL 60540

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This LoC will get in before the deadline even if it means doing something that that I never do and that is not procrastinating. If I don't do it now it will never get done.

My first question is to Cheree. Do you print all of the letters that you receive or do you pick certain ones to publish? I have read all the back issues from #3 to #7 and I don't recall it ever having been mentioned. ((Ed's note: I print all the LoCs I receive, usually exactly in the form they come in, though I do occasionally edit letters a bit.))

Since I am dealing with the esteemed Editor, I would like to put in my two cents regarding the issue of her placing a comment about three ladies who did not get a letter into issue #7. This was my first issue of SE and I thought how great a group of individuals this must be and how considerate of the editor to take the time and space to inform everyone that three "regulars" would not be in that issue. I personally would have been quite complimented by this, to have been singled out and mentioned. But being new to SW fandom I may not be up on all of the etiquette of letterzines. Speaking of etiquette, when I write to someone about a comment I appreciated in a letter, or an article that brought me new insight, or a story that really moved me, is it too much to expect a simple acknowledgement? Just wondering.

On to my comments:

Lin Ward: In TESB Ben tells Luke to go to Dagobah to learn from the Jedi Master who taught him. Also, when Yoda dies he tells Luke that when he is gone, Luke will be the last of the Jedi. I think this clearly establishes the fact that Yoda is a Jedi. Also I loved Cheree's idea of Yoda being the last of his race and that the circle would be complete when he told Luke to pass on what he had learned.

Lin, I also enjoyed your many interesting thoughts about the reasons for the use of "Wormie" as Luke's nickname. My own thoughts were that it was just another inside joke--a reference to the worms of Dune. Similarly I think that Luke's comment about not being able to see out of the Stormtrooper helmet is an inside joke because so many of the actors who were in the Stormtrooper costumes complained that they could not see anything. A lot more mundane than your ideas, but interesting.

Marlene Karkoska: If you are in the minority by thinking that asking your Apple for permission to use it is silly then I am in the minority with you. We all love R2 and 3PO, but they are just machines and were created to serve man. I would certainly sacrifice my Commodore for my friend. I agree with you that robots cannot and never should be equal to humans. We might end up with a Butlerian Jihad.

I was so glad to read your comments about liking Han less because of all the negative comments about Luke. I originally was a Han fan, but after ROTJ I became more and more enamored with Luke. Then I really started to take an even closer look at Luke to see if all this anti-Luke commentary had any merit. Some of it is quite true, and a great deal of it doesn't hold water (in my opinion). For me the faults that Luke has just make him more real

and shows that even a great hero has feet of clay. And so does Han, and I have always considered him to be a hero but in a different way. Speaking of Han, I would like to briefly address the issue of the "I know" statement in TESB. My first gut reaction when I heard this was how typically male. Then after some serious thinking about it recently, it came to me that Han could actually be trying to save Leia from the pain of knowing that he truly loved her since he did not know if he would survive the next few minutes. Han was acknowledging the bond between them. It would be much easier for Leia to hear those words than "I love you." It was much better for her to hear the words "I know" rather than the trite "Me, too."

Back to the Editor: Cheree, you asked about the woman/character vs. man/adventure idea and stated that you had become more of a Han fan through fan fiction. That is how I am getting back to caring about Han. In many of the stories in zines I have read Han's shell is really peeled away and the true gentle and caring man is revealed. I enjoy the stories that show how Han tries to keep his guard up but his good natured and honorable self keeps coming out.

As far as fantasy fulfillment, you hit it right on the "Mark" (excuse the pun). I don't have a corner of my bedroom devoted to photos of Luke/Mark, Han/Harrison, Tom Selleck, and a few assorted Chicago Bears for no reason at all. It's not the only reason I happen to love the character of Luke, but they (fantasies) do come in handy when one has been divorced for three years! I could go on but I am afraid I might jeopardize your PG rating.

Terri Black: I think DV knew Luke had made the lightsaber because of the "vibes" that it gave off. He could have sensed Luke's aura in the sabre. I'm sure that construction of a Jedi's own personal lightsabre must have been somehow involved in the final test to become a Jedi Knight. It must have been an extension of the Jedi's own personality and make-up. Speaking of sabers, did anyone ever comment on the fact that Vader's sabre is white after he has killed Ben? It was probably just a foul up by special effects.

Marcia Brin: Why is it that I always feel I could write an entire LoC to you alone? Guess you just challenge me to really look at my ideas and think them through as to why I feel as I do and what reasons I can find to support them.

First of all, I agree with you on Jeanine's fiction; it is the best I have read so far. I could not stop reading "Seeds of Destruction: Renaissance." [FAR REALMS #7]

Now to a few points on which I disagree with you. You have made many statements regarding Luke's treatment of 3PO. My own feelings are that Luke cared very much about his droids. In ANH when they enter the canteen and R2 and C3PO are ordered out, Luke very sympathetically tells 3PO that it would be better if he waited outside and the reassuringly pats him on the shoulder. In the novelization it even stated that Luke realizes that this was no place to make a stand for droid rights. Then after the Death Star is destroyed it is Luke who shows the concern for R2's condition and reassures 3PO that R2 will be alright. In TESB Luke is concerned for R2's safety in the swamp and it is not only because Luke needs R2 to aid in the flying of the X-wing, because it is made clear in ANH that an X-wing does not need an R2 unit to fly since Luke was able to destroy the Death Star without R2 and get back to base.

In regards to Luke's supposed mistreatment of R2 and 3PO in ROTJ by withholding information from him and sending them into Jabba's lair, I think that the main argument against this idea is what I stated before--I would gladly sacrifice my Commodore for my best friend. R2 and C3PO are machines and not "people." At least not the way I interpret people, as being human beings, or organic beings in galactic terms. Someone has made the point that the more rebels that become involved in the rescue attempt the more expendable 3PO becomes.

You stated that you have not met a Luke fan who still likes George Lucas. Well, then, I can be your first. I am a Luke fan and a most adamant George Lucas fan. I admire GL for what he has done, taking his dream and making it become a reality. He is someone who has worked through the system to get what he wants and now can turn around and thumb his nose at the industry if he wants to. I admire his courage and as an extension of that I admire Luke's courage and his gung-ho attitude towards the world. I think if you really look you will be able to find lots of Luke fans who like GL. How can you not like the creator of your favorite character? I welcome your LoCs and certainly wouldn't use any means to get you to stop writing them. There are many sides and points of view to all issues and everyone has a right to her (or his--in deference to Tim) opinion. As Voltaire said, "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." Just as you have your right to see Han in your way, I have my right to see Han in my way. The same applies to Luke.

I personally like the way I see Han (of course, I do--otherwise I'd see him differently). I admire Han's raw courage and ability to get through that asteroid field by his own innate ability. It took someone with a great deal of talent and expertise to do that. I personally don't need, nor do I want my Han to have Force-sense, Han has great Horse-sense. He has made his way in the galaxy by scraping tooth and nail to become the person he is. I admire anyone who can come from such a background as Han did and rise above his circumstances. (Oh, dear, I am beginning to sound like a real Han fan.)

One more point I'd like to make about Han is that he is the modern man in the story. He is the person that we can identify as coming from our own times. He does get along without magic and is very successful without it. Luke is a mystical hero and therefore can use the "magic", though I think it is a very believable magic. It is a matter of Luke and Han being different, not one better or worse than the other. Even GL has stated that he wanted Han to be the cynical counterpoint to Luke's innocence.

Marcia, I believe you may have taken Mickey's challenge all wrong. As a third party I went back and looked at Mickey's request. I don't believe she was asking you to do an article in defense of Luke but, as I would like to request of you, can you give us alternative actions to your judged misactions by Luke? I don't want you to defend Luke; I want you to merely state your views on how Luke "should" have acted in the situations that you are critical of him. It is very easy for me to see Luke's motivation in many of his decisions, so opposite views are always welcome. In this way I may either solidify my beliefs or perhaps change or adjust my views of the incident. I believe that if it were kept on a factual vs opinion basis, it could lead to a most interesting debate and exchange of ideas. (I better clear up that factual vs opinion

idea. What I mean is, we state a fact such as Luke left Dagobah before his training was completed; that is a fact. Briefly, my opinion is that he acted out of a sense of responsibility and loyalty to his friends to end their pain. Now, what I would ask you and other critics of Luke to state is your alternative actions and what consequences would have resulted from those actions. It is very easy to simply state "Luke should have stayed," but it takes time and effort to counter with an alternative action.)

Mickey Malkin: I hope you don't mind my taking up your cause but I remember when I read your idea in a past issue I was very intrigued by it.

Elsie Bartok: I don't know if this point has been brought up regarding Han/Luke's screaming but I thought it might be a new view. When Han was being tortured, it was just that--torture--and not a threat to Han's life. Luke was being executed, a definite threat to his life. Han had no one to cry out to for help. Luke had someone to cry out to for help. Luke certainly had no way of knowing that asking (begging, if you will) for help would mean his father would have to sacrifice himself for Luke.

You ask "What game?" has Han been playing? I believe Han's game is the one of the big tough guy with the heart of gold. Han has drastically changed and for the better. He no longer needs to play the game of the cool sarcastic mercenary who is afraid to open up and show his true feelings. Sure he is flip with Lando about the mission; it can't be easy for Han to give up all his old ways, and who'd want him to, anyway? I do believe I am sounding more like a Han fan all the time. But it is the little bit of a Scoundrel that makes Han so much more endearing.

One point of fact I have to quibble with you about and that is that I do not see Luke saying "Thank you" to Han at the end of ROTJ. Luke and Han have a very deep friendship and no words are necessary at that point. They have a way of communicating without the need for words (and I do not mean through the Force.) You stated that there is nothing in the movies to show that a commander outranks a general. What do you make of the statement "Evading the dreaded Imperial Starfleet, a group of freedom fighters led by Luke Skywalker has established a new secret base on the remote ice world of Hoth." My own interpretation of this statement and the role Luke plays in the rebellion is that as a Jedi he is a separate entity from the military force of the Rebellion. That makes the most sense to me of any explanation I have read so far.

Pat Nussman: I was intrigued by your statement about Luke not showing any force sensitivity before he met Ben. We see so little of Luke before that meeting that I don't see where he would have had time to show his force-sensitive nature. I have a fantasy of Luke as a child levitating stones and his uncle catching him at it and making him feel strange and ashamed for what he has done.

Jean Stevenson: Your comment about Luke's over-the-shoulder glance at Han when he calls Jabba "worm-ridden" was great. It is one of the things I love about letterzines; they give me so many new points of view and interpretations. This is a scene I will look at with a fresh viewpoint the next time I view it.

A few last comments and then I will wrap it up, though I have only touched on half of what I had hoped to cover.

I am looking for people interested in private correspondence. I already have one person to write

to who is a Han fan (she has said that she thinks a lot of you would be amazed that a Han fan and a Luke fan can correspond amicably, but we do). I would enjoy hearing from anyone who would care to write.

My son (10 years old) asked me to put this in my LoC. We had been discussing the ideas in the Loc's about the color scheme and the sabre colors. After watching the trilogy, he pointed out to me that the Imps' laser blasts from their ships were green and those from the rebels were red. Now, how does that fit in with the color scheme?

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the letter writers, authors, and artists for giving me a wonderful world of SW fandom into which I have been able to immerse myself.

If you have made it this far through my letter, I thank you. It can be a little intimidating going up against some BNFs for the first time.

Go with the Force.

NOT A CLONE

Liz Sharpe
6020 Westchester Park Drive
Apt. T-2
College Park, MD 20740

Oh, irretrievable incognito mine... Well, perhaps your photograph (in SE#8) will finally put paid to the rumor that I'm actually a clone of Annie Wortham. A "clone" is an exact genetic duplicate. Please note that, in addition to graceful antennae, intricate and beautiful gills adorn my enigmatic visage. (Whether or not my home-grown ornamentation represents an evolutionary advance is an issue which Annie and I have not yet begun to debate properly. The fact of the matter is, she's jealous.) Clearly, "clones" is not the appropriate term to apply to this relationship.

Oh--before I further compound my sins of omission, I must tender my thanks to all who said nice things about the article I wrote, 'way back when, on the subject of "droid torture". Thanks! My particular appreciation is extended to the several people who contributed additional insights; the learning process is synergetic. Beaucoup gracias, one and all.

A short comment (I hope) on the last issue... That issue (#8) maintained the pleasant, generally low-key tone of its predecessor, with only a few exceptions. Perhaps the general atmosphere of tranquillity explains why I was more distressed than usual by the occasional shrill outbursts.

I am not criticizing Cheree for printing such letters when she receives them. Nor do I wish to advocate some sort of "censorship". It is certainly the right of all fan (as of all people everywhere) to talk about what interests them, at a length which pleases them. But that means that I get a say, too. And speaking as a conscientious non-combatant, I was rather annoyed by several letters in SE#8, in which the gladiators persisted in applying the

terms of their own discussion to the rest of SW fandom in general. I speak only for myself in this matter, but the fact is, I would prefer to be included out of the Luke/Han debate. I don't object to the subject matter of the discussion. I do object to the use of sloppy rhetoric which relentlessly, and in at least one case, inaccurately, includes unconsenting bystanders in the fray. The fact that I have chosen not to parade my own opinions on the topic in public does not mean either that (a) I have none, or (b) that the opinions I do maintain fall neatly into someone else's pre-determined categories. I consider myself to be a "SWars" fan, rather than a fan of Luke, Han, or the Empire (for example) exclusively. Please don't trouble yourselves to speak on my behalf! Argue the niceties of your chosen arguments to the limits of your hearts' content, but please--be aware that the generalities of whom you speak so freely may well be irked at the liberties you take. Particularly when the tone of your comments becomes rather upsetting to at least one of the bystanders involved. Specificks make for a much more devastating argument than sweeping generalities, anyway: let the "everybodies" look after their own concerns. Thank you!

I'd like to launch two tangential notions into the forum, on the subject of Luke's loss of his hand, in TESB. The first notion is drawn from Greco-Roman myth. In order to enter the land of the dead (presumably on some worthy quest), a living voyager had to pacify the guardian of the gate (the three-headed doggy-like critter named "Cerberus") with a donation--voluntary or otherwise. The journey into the netherworld was a feat of tremendous daring, not (to the best of my recollection) undertaken for the personal aggrandizement of the hero; the hero who successfully completed the voyage generally emerged considerably wiser (occasionally, richer)--though not necessarily completely happy. (For reference, one can turn to the adventures of Orpheus, Theseus, and Hercules, to name a few.) If Luke's hand represents a "sop to Cerberus" (Darth Vader is no dog, but he might stand very nicely as the keeper of the gates of "hell"), what (knowledge) does he gain as a result of his journey?

The second notion is drawn from Norse mythology. An otherwise minor god, Tyr, lost one of his hands in an act of courage which (temporarily) guaranteed all the gods' safety from one particular source of great danger. The basic story is that the gods had grown increasingly afraid of the strength of the wolf Fenrir (or Fenris, depending on your translation), but had been unable to bind him. At last they procured a chain which they thought would do the trick; but, seeing their new confidence, Fenrir became suspicious. He refused to allow them to approach him with the new chain. At last, the wolf agreed to a bargain (a "dare" is more like it): he would permit the gods to try the new chain on him, if one of the gods would consent to place his hand between the wolf's jaws, as a "token of good faith". Tyr alone volunteered for this duty. The chain held, and the gods would not remove it; so when "dare" time came, Fenrir angrily bit off Tyr's hand. The terms of the original "agreement" do not imply that Tyr expected to lose his limb. In other words, Tyr paid the price for the gods' safety, but not out of a perverse inclination toward martyrdom: he was the sole volunteer--and the price he paid was not what he'd expected. Nor was the "safety" thus purchased permanent... An interesting sidelight on the issue (though I'm not sure how far parallels may be drawn) is that Fenrir (Darth Vader) was one of Loki's var-

ious offspring; and Loki was a complex figure who both supported and opposed the gods, at different times.

Onward...Marlene Karkoska: I agree very much with the basic premise put forth (among other fine ideas) in your letter in SE#8, that the interests of "Imperials" must be considered (and their rights preserved) under the new regime, whatever it may be. But I found myself struggling with the definition of "Imperials", a little. I agree that J. Random Citizen in the street must be protected. I can extend the principle as far as J. Random Infantryman, or his equivalent. (I'm not as sure about "stormtroopers," but the movies did not indicate whether a Terra-like distinction between "regular" and "special" troops exists in the Empire.) But what about the higher-up folks, like our dearly-deceased Grand Moff Tarkin? (*SIGH* What a beautiful villain.) Surely someone like that qualifies as a war criminal? The problem of "how much representation/protection?" is compounded by the fact that the more important the "former Imperial", the more powerful he is likely to have been--and formerly powerful men are particularly dangerous (especially to those who are responsible for the "formerly"). It is to be hoped that the government the rebels put together will not descend to the methods of the Empire (if there is any justice in their struggle); but still, I think they'll find it necessary to temper their liberalism somewhat, in specific cases, in the interest of preserving what is these days referred to as "the public good." (Nothing Marlene said necessarily precludes the punishment of guilty persons for their wrong-doings; I'm just expending my own thoughts on the subject.)

With reference to the same point, even if the "Imperials" do become dissatisfied under the new regime, there are ways to express such unhappiness other than violent, military-style rebellion. Some of these other methods can be employed even when the discontented persons are formally lacking the franchise. (Women and non-whites did not get the vote in this country by accident.) One can lobby important politicians; accumulate economic resources (maybe); there are hunger strikes, protest marches, and other forms of non-military demonstration. Even full-fledged "spontaneous" riots (like Watts) can get a point across, without necessarily turning into across-the-board "rebellion." Hopefully (there is no guarantee, particularly once the habit of direct violence has been established), even if they are discontent, former "Imperial" elements would try to resort to other methods of expression first, before plunging the SW galaxy once more into military strife.

And finally, before I close, I'd like to inject another note of scholarly stuffiness. I noticed, in SE#8, several mentions of the Arthurian legend, in connection with SW. In each case where specifics were cited, reference was made to T. H. White (THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING), and occasionally, to the musical ("Camelot") which was largely based on White's work. I would like to point out (gently, because I myself love and cherish both book and musical) that White's interpretation is not regarded in the (er) best of lights by Arthurian scholars, being full of modern anachronisms (of plot structure, character psychology, religious dynamics, and social hysteriography). For instance, the great emphasis placed on the romantic triangle between Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot in TOAFK is only a minor theme, in some of the source myths (there are versions in which Lancelot does not even exist)

((Ed: I believe that Lancelot first appeared in the story in Malory's version written down in the 1500's, nearly 1000 years after Arthur supposedly lived, and only because French romance was then the vogue. I believe in the original version, as penned by Geoffrey of Monmouth about 950 A.D., Bedwyr/Bedevere was Guinevere's lover as well as Arthur's boyhood friend)); the stress is laid instead on Mordred as the cause of Camelot's destruction. And even in White, the triangle was only a potentially devastating force--deadly as it could have been, the three had managed to maintain their precious, precarious equilibrium for many years, until Mordred intervened. I am not, myself, a professional Arthurian scholar, but I have gained the general impression from the pros that White's TOAFK is to the broader background of "Arthurian myth" what GONE WITH THE WIND (both book and movie form) is to a professional historian's view of the War Between the States (Civil War, as you prefer). Beautiful, memorable, and moving; and possessing more than the usual share of dramatic truth; but still, a work of literary/dramatic merit, rather than specific historical or analytical import. Drawing conclusions about comparisons drawn between OAFK/C and SW, in terms of "Arthurian legend" is therefore a business which needs must be approached with caution. I'm not saying it can't be done; but it needs to be done carefully, in very precise terms.

See y'all back at Speaker's Corner in a couple of months from now! Fair voyages, one and all.

REBUTTAL

Michelle Malkin
6649 Castor Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19149

June 21, 1985

Another good issue, I see, aside from the two letters that raked me over the coals. I'll respond to them first, if only to get them out of the way. There has been enough hard feelings over the Luke/Han debate. I intend to put an end to at least this particular part of it.

Marcia Brin: I don't take anything that you say as a game, especially when you infer that I am a liar. If I remember correctly, all I said about the two of us at MediaWest was that we joked about out T-shirts. You pointed at your Synagogue of Ford shirt and I pointed at my Han, Luke and Leia Fan shirt. How is this misquoting you? Anything else I said about that MediaWest had no evil intent to it. In fact, all I actually did say was that we all got along fine and even joked on occasion. Is it such a terrible thing to say that we got along well? As far as the movie is concerned, we did discuss it in the bus going back to the hotel and we both disagreed. So what? If anyone wants to check this out, they only have to read SCOUNDREL #5, page 46 (response to Barbara Izzo) to decide for themselves. As far as the begging/screaming

debate is concerned, I never said that you were the one who had originally mentioned the screaming. At the time I brought the topic up in JUNDLAND, TOO #2, I was responding to an entire list of anti-Luke comments that had been made by several people in the previous issue. No names were mentioned at all. In response to a comment about how Luke should not have begged his father for help, but should simply have died, I brought up the subject of the screaming because the comment about the begging had reminded me of it. At that time, I couldn't remember who had made the comment, but I have located the letter in SE#1, page 2, column 2 of Christine Jefford's letter. She didn't like the fact that Luke had been "writhing on the deck of the Death Star as the Emperor bombards him with power" and "hearing him cry and moan for help from his father." The second part was what I was thinking of when I saw the comment about begging, and it reminded me of the first part. I questioned Chris about this in the next issue, and she responded in SE#3 that Luke was an epic hero who should rise above such weakness. That was not enough to satisfy me, since I've never considered it any more "weak" for Luke to cry out in pain than it was for Han (another epic hero) to do the same when he was being tortured. Therefore, I brought up the subject again, hoping for a nice peaceful answer, whether I agreed with it or not. Writhing or screaming, it amounts to the same thing. Jean Stevenson gave the kind of answer I was looking for, even though I do disagree with her. She may have sounded tired of the whole subject, but at least she didn't jump down my throat and accuse me of doing things I'd never done. I have never said that you were the one who criticized Luke for screaming. In fact, I never said anything directly to you about it at all. Why are you assuming that this question was just addressed to you? It was addressed to fandom in general and the people who believe that Luke shouldn't have shown his suffering in particular. In answer to your comment that, if I'm so bored with the Luke/Han debate, why don't I come up with new topic to discuss, please read my last three letters in SE. I brought up about 15 topics of discussion. I only point this out in curiosity as to why you said this at all. I do admit to owing you one apology, even though you seem to think I'm the kind of person who wouldn't admit to a mistake. The person who criticized the editorial policy of JUNDLAND, TOO was Jean Stevenson (SCOUNDREL #2, page 25). I should have checked before I made this comment concerning you, rather than depending on my memory. I will end my response to you by saying that this is the last time I will respond to you, since any further correspondence between us either in zines or in personal correspondence (which you refuse to consider) is absolutely pointless.

Elsie Bartok: I believe that your comments directed at me were answered in my response to Marcia Brin. I did, however, want to thank you for the large print in your letter. By the time I had gotten to it, my eyes were pretty tired, so I appreciated it.

Thank you for printing the portfolio of photos. I have a rotten memory when it comes to connecting faces to names. Now, I'll be able to refer to these photos and, hopefully, not embarrass myself in a few cases. I don't, however, recall Liz Sharpe having antennae. Is this condition contagious?

I enjoyed Annie Wortham's article on Mark Hamill's play. I really wanted to see this play, after being very impressed by his performance in AMADEUS,

but it just wasn't meant to be. I did hear Mark on a rock radio show shortly after the show closed, and although he said he regretted the show's closing, he sounded pretty chipper.

Sally Syrjala: I like your idea about the Jedi awakening Force power only within people of their choice. I could see this as a major reason why they failed to survive. Such talent, in my opinion, should be brought out and trained in everyone who has it to the best of their ability. It's a part of evolution and shouldn't be suppressed. Such an outlook on the part of the Jedi could have led to a form of "enlightened" elitism. And, such a thing usually leads to plain old elitism—a danger to all. I also agree with you about Rick Deckard being a replicant in BLADERUNNER. There are so many things that point to this. What I'm curious about in this movie is why Deckard and Rachel went to Canada. If the USA was in such wretched shape, wouldn't some of the atmospheric damage have gotten to Canada, too? Were people just leaving the States to go to the colony worlds or were they leaving the whole world? Thank you for your remarks on Han and Luke's cries of pain. My personal attitude is that a person can just accept so much, before they have to do something to either change, start or stop a thing. This isn't only in regards to Han or Luke's actions, but to life in general. That's why I can find nothing wrong with the fact that both of them writhed and screamed and Luke asked for available help (Luke was also probably aware that his own death would have led to the deaths of a lot of other people, so he most likely wasn't just thinking of himself or even his father).

Rose Arnold: I've seen WITNESS several times and plan to see it several more. That scene where Book has no shirt on and has Rachel's blanket around his shoulders always turns me into a drooling mess. He looks so GORGEOUS in that scene! Well, actually he looks gorgeous throughout the whole movie, but that one happens to be my particular favorite. Aside from that, HF puts in a great acting job (once more showing how expressive his face can be) and everyone else in it is good, too. Better yet, I just love the movie for itself. It's beautiful. The incredible camerawork brings out the full lushness of the Lancaster County countryside. And, some of the shots of Rachel in the farmhouse look like Vermeer paintings. Lovely!

Cheree: In regards to your note within Lin Ward's letter—in my series Yoda is the last of his people. His people weren't the first Jedi, though. They are a race that had developed their psychic abilities to an incredible degree, and then when they realized that they were a dying race, passed their knowledge on to the humans we see in the movies. The humans passed this knowledge on to anyone else who could use it, ended up fighting a war over the proper use of it, and the Jedi we know grew out of this. This is in the outline I mentioned sending to Jenni last issue. Now, if I can only sit down and write the actual stories! All this takes place before my actual series starts, but I wanted to develop the events that would lead up to the events that we know of. In case you wonder if the Dago-bahns regretted giving this knowledge away, they sure did!

Lin Ward: I agree with you 100% that the Jedi were of all races and species and of different crafts and skills, and they had learned to balance both "sides" of the Force to do their jobs properly. I also liked your idea of Force aberrants having their psychic centers burned out to stop them

from whatever they had in mind, as was done in MZB's Darkover books. I do think, however, that any poor communications between the Jedi would have been more deliberate than not. There must have been enough telepaths to keep them all in touch with each other, if necessary. If different groups of Jedi started going off on their own, they might not have wanted to stay in touch with each other. This would definitely speed up the gradual dissolution of the Order. About HF playing Fat Chester, last I heard, HF wasn't even in Hollywood yet when LEAVE IT TO BEAVER was being made. Can anyone verify this for me?

Debbie Gilbert: The 20,000 year figure comes from Ben's line about the Jedi being guardians of justice (or somesuch) for 1,000 generations. I figure a generation is 20 years long, therefore 20,000 years (give or take a century). I was also disturbed by the comment made by Laura Virgil's clergyman about never seeing an atheist die. I hope he isn't around when I kick off, because I'm a secular humanist.

Marlene Karkoska: Excellent point about the Imperials having some representation in the new Alliance government. I'm sure that not all of them were mad dogs or self-seeking aggrandizers (is there such a word?). To not give Imperial sympathizers some representation would cause more hard feelings and, as you say, possibly lead to another rebellion. Not to make them feel a part of things and not to take advantage of whatever improvements they might have brought in would be a ridiculous, selfish and dangerous waste. If the Old Republic was so corrupt, maybe the Imperials were able to change that in places (not that none of them weren't corrupt, but I imagine they had to be a lot more careful about it), and in places where science and education may have fallen apart, they may have brought them back together. There is usually some good mixed in with whatever bad may exist (which is not to say that I condone the Imps [I don't care if Mussolini did get the trains to run on time, he was still a murderous maniac], but to throw away the good with the bad would be downright stupid. Another case in point: where would our space program be today if not for the German scientists sent here after World War II? Would it have made more sense to let them rot in prison? Gods, now we're really getting into controversial subjects!).

Good ideas on how the Emperor could have hidden his aura from the Jedi either by killing off anyone who found him or by shielding himself. I do have a question about Yoda's method of shielding himself. We were never told where Dagobah was or how time worked there. Is it possible that Dagobah exists on another plane? How was Luke able to find it without ever having been there or getting directions? Maybe Yoda placed it where it could be found just long enough for Luke to land and then hid it in another dimension again?

Cheree: "Stagnant Jedi"?! What a heading for a letter. Sheesh!! Sounds like something from an H. P. Lovecraft or E. A. Poe story (a putrifying pool of stagnant Jedi).

Cindy Rodriguez: Yoda's statement about "Once you start down the Dark path, forever will it dominate you. Consume you it will" can be taken in different ways. Mostly I think it means that whatever you conceive the Dark Side of the Force to be, and if you move toward it, even if only temporarily, that will dominate all your future actions. If you see the Dark as evil and you have experienced and nearly given in to the evil, everything you do

after that will be affected by it. If you see the Dark as simply unbridled emotions, it's the same thing. Your future reactions to either evil or over-emotionalism would be either to give in to them or avoid them like the plague. Your whole life would revolve around this. And, if you go overboard in either accepting or avoiding them, you will be consumed.

Tim Blaes: Nah, the Falcon would sound like Majel Barrett. Also, if the Shelley Swan thing is a hoax, someone wasted an awful lot of time (to draw those weird Luke pictures) and money (postage) to carry it out. I think it's too weird to be a hoax, and if it is, the perpetrator is ashamed to step forth.

Now that the Elfquest saga is completed (except for possible future material that exists in the same tenuous future as other SW movies), I have to satisfy myself with the new comic reprints of the old material and looking for the added artwork. It ain't enough. Good point about the asteroids. I loved LADYHAWKE. It has been so long since I've been to see a movie that so engrossed the audience that several of them could be heard to be crying. That's what happened during the scene when Navarre and his love tried to touch hands as the change was taking place. And I was one of the ones crying.

Carole Regine: Good, though humorous question about whether or not Mon Calimari share humanoid sexual characteristics. Somehow, I can't imagine one of their females leaving a bunch of roe for the first passing male to fertilize, but that doesn't mean that they couldn't have developed some other method. I loved your description of Admiral Ackbar as an individual and a person. Bravo! Luke's predisposition to weapons could be a reflection of how he was first taught to be a Jedi. The very first thing Ben Kenobi taught him was how to use a lightsaber. In answer to your question of whether or not there is a similar factionalism in ST fandom between the Spock and Kirk fans, yes, there definitely is, between some of them. This doesn't exist only in the Kraith fans. There have always been ST fans, even way back before Kraith was first written, who were virulantly pro one and anti the other. It didn't make anymore sense in ST fandom than such a thing makes in SW fandom now. My question even back then was why do you have to hate one to prove that you like the other? No sense to that at all.

Chris Callahan: I hope that you realize your comment about "religious-style fanaticism" is probably going to get you lambasted. May the Force be with you. Also, I'll bet you that what Sally Syjala said about "the ideas of all the peoples (being) treated with care" as a way to peace meant exactly the same thing as what you said in response to it. Sally?

Maggie Nowakowska: Fascinating point about how the people in a universe that accepts esper talent and life-after-death would view the ending of life. I'll need some time to chew that one over and would be very interested in what others have to say about this.

Melody Corbett: It was what George wanted?

Pat Nussman: The block theory sounds pretty good to me (for reasons that we both know), but I also like the idea of one Jedi triggering the abilities in another who doesn't know he/she has such abilities (for the same reasons).

Jean Stevenson: I know that my reply to your comment about the \$3,000 for Harrison's star will make me unpopular to some people, but I agree with you completely. The way I see it, I show my appre-

ciation for HF by seeing his movies and buying books, magazines, photos, etc. about him. The dollar that would be sent for his star could be used more usefully by being sent to a charity. We could all just as easily collect this same \$3,000 and give it to charity in HF's name. That would be more of an honor than a piece of metal stuck in a sidewalk. Something like that I'd gladly donate to. Also, I agree that we are interpreting different things in *TEMPLE OF DOOM* and *ROMANCING THE STONE* from our own personal points of view. While there are things that we can both easily agree on (such as racism and sexism) in general, the way we apply these beliefs do tend to differ in regards to different things. This isn't to say that either of us is wrong, just that we see certain things differently. As to your interpretation of why Luke shouldn't have screamed (if you did give it before and I forgot, I apologize), we seem to come at this from totally differing viewpoints as well. I can't see Luke just laying down to die when it isn't necessary. He knows (I believe) that others will die if he does--the entire fleet will be destroyed and the future of the Galaxy will be awful to think of, and his father is there to help him. The importance of his survival goes beyond him or his father as individuals. They have a Galaxy to think of. Once before, in *TESB*, Luke was quite willing to die rather than be used by the Dark Side Emperor or Vader; this time, his job was to live for everyone else's sake.

In closing, I offer a suggestion for those who would continue the Han-Luke controversy until the whole of fandom is sick of it (I know that I am, and I half, not completely, regret jumping into the fray to begin with): On a piece of paper, please write the definition of an extensional statement (one that can be proven, such as "this wall is ten feet high") and an intensional statement (one which can't be proven no matter how many ideas or arguments are offered since its meaning exists only in the mind of the individual, such as, "100 angels can dance on the hilt [I wouldn't advise that they do it on the blade] of a lightsaber" or "Luke Skywalker has fallen to the Dark Side of the Force" or "Han Solo is a hidden Jedi").

I quote from S. I. Hayakawa's book *LANGUAGE IN ACTION* (Harcourt, Brace & Co., copyright 1941): "When...statements have extensional content, as when we say, 'This room is 15 ft long,' arguments can come to a close. No matter how many guesses there are about the length of the room, all discussion ceases when someone produces a tape measure. This, then, is the important difference between extensional and intensional meanings: namely, when utterances have extensional meanings, discussion can be ended and agreement reached; when utterances have intensional meanings, arguments may, and often do, go on indefinitely. Such arguments can result only in irreconcilable conflict. Among individuals, they may result in the breaking up of friendships; in society, they often split organizations into bitterly opposed groups; among nations, they may aggravate existing tensions so seriously as to become contributory causes of war."

I've seen several friendships end and SW fandom partially split due to this fannish "controversy". Before what is now obviously a fannish feud escalates into a full-scale war, why don't we all just cool it?

That's it for now, Cheree. Sorry if I ran a bit over the page limit. I'm sorry that the only jarring notes in this issue had to be in relation

to myself and that I had to use a good part of my letter defending myself. I will say that I have no intention of writing to either of the persons who stomped on me in this issue anymore. If they wish to carry on the "battle", they'll have to do it alone.

FROM DOWN UNDER

Carolyn Gollledge
6 Burrawang St.
Ettalong 2257
Australia

July 1, 1985

Well, here it is at long last, the promised letter. I'm afraid I haven't got anything very new to say, but I did want to join in, so here goes nothin'. First up, G'DAY, MATES!!! (Sorry, couldn't resist.) Have a feeling this is going to be a very long letter. Apologize in advance, but you will go and make so many interesting comments.

Ann Wortham: Thanks for telling us about HARRIGAN 'N HART. Mark/Luke dressed as a little girl and singing "Lay me in my little bed"! Brother, would I love to see Harrison/Han's reaction to that! As to your letter, Ann, okay, so what did the Falcon have to say? You shouldn't have had too many problems communicating what with your antennae and all!

Sally A. Syrjala: Very interesting comment on *BLADERUNNER* re the reason for Deckard's possibly being a replicant. You got me worried now. Like the idea of "power matrixes" amongst Jedi and its current loss to them because of lowered membership so to speak. Luke Skywalker may give this a totally fresh start which must be what is needed...I mean a different approach, perhaps a new type of Jedi altogether to the old...one which may be more impervious to those elements which got them into trouble initially. "Polarities" and "a neutral state of being" for Vader's death/return. Very well expressed.

Mary Kever: Agree that there would be no final test that would make a Jedi immune to the dark side for all time. Luke's asset here will be that he is a very accepting, non-judging type of person now. A lot of this attitude could have been learned from Han Solo. In *ANH*, Luke is angry because Han refuses to join the Alliance. Leia sets him straight and Han's later selfless actions over the Death Star and on Hoth and Bespin prove to Luke that each being must express the good within themselves from the source of individuality which makes them unique: the soul. Anything else would be false and twisted. Any attempt to mold a person to your own idealized vision could only be a fatal mistake, one which perhaps Vader was enmeshed in his youth. Han's independence of judgment, his actions, despite what he says, more often than not initiated by loyalty for and love of friends, could have been a vital part of the example shown an impressionable Luke and one which stood by him in the final confronta-

tion. He would not "turn" and betray or give up loving his friends. Thekla Kurth is right. Leia is the one who will most likely need the most careful watching. Han, of course, learned much from Luke; I am merely saying here that's one thing Luke learned about Han.

Laura Virgil summed up my and many others' feelings about Luke/Han precisely. How about we let that particular debate rest there?

No, Sally, I can't see Leia joining Han as a pirate. She has struggled hard to get to this point of victory/power so that she could go on from there. The Rebellion was the means towards the establishment of a new order; Leia will want to be a part of that.

Rose Arnold: WITNESS? There are no superlatives worthy of it. It is simply the best. DUNE: the movie book/publicity alone was enough to stop me from going.

Lin S. Ward/Jeanine Hennig: No, Jedi as one particular race doesn't ring true to me, though it is a fascinating possibility. Since the Force is a part of every living being, it would be accessible to all with the correct psychic temperament. Wookies seem likely candidates having more time to learn and ponder. Life-span seems an important factor, i.e. Yoda is a Master and lives to 900 standard (?) years. Humans, in this regard, are severely handicapped and could lead to a tendency to be impatient--witness Yoda's/Ben's exchange on this very point. Perhaps humans have some other trait which outweighs this flaw--compassion, strong ties of love, etc. Reincarnation or further learning when a human fades/dies and becomes a part of the Force in a way unique to Jedi keeps that one particular entity growing...until he is reborn?

Cheree: Liked your idea about Yoda's ancestry and mission. Lin, a common oath binding a multi-racial Jedi order? More than likely. How do you think it would be phrased? The Emperor--"Hot Hands"--like that! Your summary of the purposes behind Luke's, umm, unfortunate nickname was very concisely stated and probably hit Lucas's intentions exactly. How about "Wormie" as in caterpillar--waiting for metamorphosis? Agree with being totally puzzled by Yoda's "now matters are worse" comment re Luke's going to Bespin. Whatever happened to "no greater love hath a man than that he lay down his life for his friends"? Luke must have known that he had little chance of survival, as did Han when he tackled that Hoth blizzard. Disregarding philosophical mumbo-jumbo, love is the greatest Force in the universe. Perhaps Yoda was merely referring to the extra pain Luke would bring upon himself; Yoda and Ben must have intended telling Luke about Vader soon, but he put himself in a position of finding out painfully. Then again, Luke probably learned more through his suffering than years of teaching. One thing really throws me, though--Luke's first reaction to Vader's "news" is such utter revulsion that he'd almost prefer death, yet six months later, with no explanation as to what caused the change, he can see good in his father. How did that happen?! By the way, "Oh, mushroom of little faith"! Gigggle!

Maggie Nowakowska: So right re your comments on adults who view kids as a "separate species". There is not much of childhood left for children today. Could this be the basis for the despair and violence so prevalent these days? Lucas gave us a ray of hope, of love; let's make sure we never let go of it.

Debbie Gilbert/Laura Virgil: That clergyman's

comment re athiests. How many people only claim faith in a deity out of fear/superstition/social programming? I believe very much in God/Force but only after ten years of complete atheism. It seems a natural thing to me to question, to be skeptical and then maybe find, accept, rather than just swallow it from the cradle. As for life after death, I can't see as it makes a scrap of difference one way or the other. It's what you do here and now that counts, and if you're only doing it angling towards a final reward, you're doing it for all the wrong reasons.

Michelle Malkin/Debbie Gilbert: Human origins from one planet. Very probable. Otherwise there would have to be great genetic incompatibilities, at least. Can't see evolution taking an exact same course on several isolated planets. Take the mammals of Australia as an example--and they had a common ancestor a long way back--but still developed major differences. Debbie, ouch, about Lucas being "mercenary". Perhaps the present evidence seems to lean that way, but I believe he is far too creative a man to be overly wrapped in bits of trading paper.

Marlene Karkoska: Agree Vader did the logical thing in following the Falcon in ESB. After all, everyone else, including Luke, disappeared rapidly into hyperspace. The Falcon would have been the only thing left to follow by the time Vader got back to his ship. Yes, a Jedi would have to be independent of any other judgmental influences other than the Force. Liked your comments concerning the lack of collapse of the Jedi and the way you based your argument on Kenobi's words. For the sake of a lasting peace the Imperials MUST be included, or at least their rights given careful consideration by any newly formed government. Look at the results of the Versailles Treaty of 1918. No, Luke did not have to tell Threepio of his mission. Agree with your comments that droids are not equal to humans, but feel they should nevertheless be treated with courtesy. And I think there is ample evidence that they do have feelings and their obvious loyalty, even though programmed, should not be treated with scorn. (Not that you are, I am referring here to characters in the SW saga.) Am not sure that Luke should have been told about his father at an early age. He could easily have become embittered, and failed to grow into the innocent, trusting adult who is capable of refusing the Dark. The SW movies without Solo's breaking the tension with humor could easily have become tedious. Luke's lack of knowledge of the Jedi eventually worked to his advantage, as I think Yoda at least intended. He is looking for a complete new beginning from Skywalker. The forest analogy works well here again. Forest fire: devastation: rebirth. Maybe this was what the order needed.

Cheree/Michelle: You saved me the trouble of commenting on Han's "I know". You said it for me perfectly. Except I'd like to add that everyone's forgetting the basic emotion Solo would be feeling at that moment--sheer panic/fear/shock. I'm surprised he could talk/think at all. I'd be too busy screaming. As for screaming, I'll get to that later. You sum it up beautifully, Michelle. "For a Jedi to be immune to Falling would make him/her too godlike to be believable." Yes, medical technology would at least have been able to heal Vader's scars and probably his lungs. It must have been a deliberate denial for purposes which suited the Emperor. Another possibility would be though that medical treatment must be given within a certain time span

after the damage is done, and Vader simply couldn't be reached. As to what is to be done with captured stormtroopers, Karen Ripley tackled this problem movingly in her story "Loose Ends" in WOOKIEE COM-MODE #2. Luke argues that a young, wounded trooper should be permitted to return free to his family. The youngster obviously wants no more of war. How many would have been compelled/drafted into the fighting? Given the Empire's style, I'd say the vast majority. The Alliance Council objects to Luke's proposal, saying "It is not policy". Solo crudely points out what he thinks of this beginnings of bureaucracy. Keeping these men prisoners of war when that war is all over bar the shouting would be suicidal for any new government. Interesting point re the spark that set off the Clone Wars--maybe George will soon oblige with answers.

Cindy: Hello. You did marvelously on your first letter. Makes it tough on me. But then this is no competition. It is for fun. I hope we both have lots more. (Thanks to Cheree.) I enjoyed hearing from someone new very much. Wish more fans would come out of the woodwork. There could only be a handful of Australians who have even heard of fanzines, which is a shame because I know they'd love 'em. With exchange rates what they are for the aussie dollar, purchasing them is all but impossible now. And I can only share with so many. I suppose if we got together and pooled our cash, we might be onto something.

Cheree: Your point about male/female involvement in fandom was well stated and intriguing. Think your conclusion may hit close to the mark, i.e., men/adventure vs. women/characters. Think you can see this also in novels men and women prefer to read, or at least what they like most about a book. I love adventure as much as anyone, but can't get into it without a character to really care about. Men don't seem to be bothered by this aspect as much. The action is more important. (And this is, of course, a generalization.) Han caught my eye (put that down as an understatement!) but it was the RELATIONSHIP between the SW characters that held my attention long term, and also the moral issues raised by the story.

Terri: Very good poing re the Emperor's hold over Vader being Vader's hatred of him.

Sally: Han/Luke screaming/begging. Both men simply did what was natural at the time. Han had no one to beg for help, otherwise I'm sure he would have made us all deaf. (He gave Vader such a headache he had to leave!) Seriously, though, why do you think Vader left the room before the torture was properly underway? Did he simply have business elsewhere or as a Force adept could he feel Solo's pain/anguish in the call he was unconsciously projecting, and wanted to distance himself from it? Or did he as a person not actually like physical torture or condone its use--he used drugs on Leia. Well, any ideas?

Luke could not have known Vader would die in his attempt to save him. Luke's utter grief as he realizes the man is dying proves that. Perhaps he would have held back if he'd known it would cost his father his life--but then again Anakin became a part of the Force as a result of his self-sacrifice and therefore did not really die.

Barbara Tennison: "The personal, character-centered story is SW's strength." Absolutely--and note Cheree's comment on women being in the majority in SW fandom. Jedi being "incorruptible" accounts for them being killed off rather than merely quietened. Probably true. Seems to be the fate of all

incorruptibles--they don't sway with the breeze, they snap/die.

Vader's murdering his own officers in ESB could be in part attributable to his inner turmoil. Love your comments on Han of ROTJ. "His joy in Leia is wonderful to see." Exactly. Is something wrong with being in love?

Tim: Thanks for your insight about your cat. I sympathize. My wookiee/dog is the same, but I can't throw her out; she's too heavy. She pins me down until I surrender and take her out for a walk--when she demands it, she gets it! Thanks also for defining Force Sensitive/Force User so concisely. This is how I see it, too. That makes twice you've been asked about your omniscience regarding Luke's virginity. Mary. So? God, being bored--I like the idea. Share your hurt re the Ewok comic, only I think Richie Rich/HotStuff are far superior. I had my answer re the asteroids typed up, then saw that you had said it for me; thanks.

Carole Regine: Ackbar's reaction struck me as being relief, but I like your interpretation of compassion. You're right about Luke's hand giving him the most trouble during the Emperor's attack, and Vader's faster demise under similar treatment. Differences between Kenobi and Yoda; well said.

Chris Callahan: I hated that TOD scene of the victim burned alive. The explicit and unnecessary portrayal of suffering shown here almost turned the movie into a negative experience for me. I couldn't get that imagery out of my head. Torture exists in our world, and I didn't want to be reminded of it when I'd paid to relax.

Marcia Brin: I like George Lucas. I take your point that Luke's actions could be interpreted in two opposing ways. Every witness to an event perceives even its physical parameters differently. Moral judgments of character behavior in a film about which we have no detailed frame of reference, are always going to be subjective. Your interpretations of Luke's behavior fit your perceptions. Since we do not know what Lucas intends for Luke in the future, we can only guess at his state at the end of ROTJ. The spirit of the three films, however, is fairy tale and this would indicate a happy ending for the heroes. Note Harrison Ford's comment; he wanted Solo to die in JEDI, but Lucas insisted on a happy ending. A happy ending would indicate all's well with Luke and the Force. Brother, Mickey and Marcia, let's not get to pistols/Lightsabers at ten paces, please! As Cheree says, everything that was said and done was in "all innocence and a spirit of friendship." That much at least is indisputable.

Jean L. Stevenson: Always enjoy your long letters. Liked "leashed with love" discussion. Interesting SW/Arthurian legend comparison. You said it for me re agreement/disagreement--only much more fluently.

Elsie Bartok: Sorry. Han/Luke are equal in my book so can't get into this type of discussion/comparison. The evidence cited to support your words could be interpreted in any of a hundred ways, i.e., Marquand's words. These people are human, everything they say is not gospel. Ask them the same question on a different day and I'd bet you'd get a different answer. As much as I admire Lucas, I really can't see him being as devious as to take semi-sacred care with every word, every gesture, every nuance--it's not meant to be a Chinese puzzle after all. Note the freedom of interpretation and script changes given the actors alone--in THE MAKING OF RETURN OF THE JEDI, Hamill, Ford and Fisher have

quite a discussion re Solo's and Skywalker's joint line "Tell him!". I'm sure Lucas meant ROTJ to be taken much more as is on the surface, rather than to find guessed at hidden meanings--which is fun but no more than that. Food for thought but not food for war. Alternate possibilities, no more, no less.

B. J. Evans: Good point on amount of faith influencing an individual's amount of active Force use.

Well, that's it from Down Under. Aussies are garrulous as you've just discovered. Sorry. Looking forward to SE#10. Till then, keep smiling!

CLARIFICATION

Marlene Karkoska
656 S. Belvoir Blvd.
S. Euclid, OH 44121

July 9, 1985

Well, unfortunately, peace did not reign for very long within the pages of SE! I noticed that things got a bit "hot 'n heavy" again in #8, and I'm afraid my present LoC is probably not going to cool things down much!

I'm sorry, Cheree, that some people found it necessary to attack you in their LoCs last issue. I thought that their remarks were uncalled for. Some people don't seem to be able to see the possible positive motivations behind people's actions; they only look for negative ones. (As you said, you included the note in a spirit of friendship.) Some folks are quick to take offense, but seem oblivious to the fact that they offend others with alarming regularity.

After reading my own comments concerning Imperial involvement in the future Republic in the last issue, I realized that I did not explain myself very well. I probably came across as an Imperial sympathizer, which was truly not my intention. I'd like to take this opportunity to try to clarify my position a bit. (So...HOLD YOUR FIRE, okay, guys?)

The war in that Faraway Galaxy is a Civil War. The Rebels are not seeking to secede from the Empire and to set up their own form of government, independent from, but co-existing with, the Imperial government. They are fighting the war to return freedom to the entire Galaxy, and to replace the corrupt, repressive Imperial Government with one that is more fair and just. Therefore, when the battles are finally over, it's going to be important to try to pull the Galaxy together and to try to heal the wounds caused by a long period of warfare. If, after the American Civil War, the South had been denied representation in the government, this country would never have become unified. ((Ed: To Southerners, this is something of a sore point. During the Reconstruction years, the South was treated as a conquered enemy country and "put in their place.") I think the same thing would be true for the SW galaxy. If the New Republic is ever going to be strong, united and prosperous--indeed, if it's ever really going to be a true Re-

public--then every group needs to be represented, and everyone needs to be part of a co-operative effort that will make it a viable government, one that will be able to handle the multitude of problems of a vastly diverse Galaxy. However, I am certainly not recommending that Imperials who were guilty of war crimes be included in the new government. Just as there were good people in the North and in the South during our country's Civil War, I'm sure that there are also good people who were on the Imperial side or who were Imperial sympathizers, but who weren't active in supporting the repressive policies of Palpatine. These Imperials may have truly felt that the Imperial form of government was better for the Galaxy than a Republican form of government at that time. Perhaps they felt it could more effectively unite the galaxy. I'm sure that these Imperials were against tyranny, and that they would have preferred a new leader in place of Palpatine, but perhaps as law-abiding citizens, they did not condone open rebellion as the means to accomplish a change. There were probably also people in the military who followed the orders of their superiors, but who were worthy men and women. It is people such as these, who are basically good and honorable, that I am suggesting need to be a part of the New Republican government, along with the former Rebels. Of course, many checks and balances would need to be built into the new government, and I'm not saying it would be an easy task. However, if true, lasting peace is ever going to become a reality in the SW galaxy, I do think that the former Imperials need to be represented in the New Republic. After this "clarification" of my position, I don't know whether there will be fewer or MORE blasters aimed in my direction! Oh, well! At least things won't be dull! (not that they EVER are!)

Mary Kever: If you want to read a story that doesn't have Han and Leia settling down to a quiet life after the war, Liz Sharpe has a story called "Command Performance" in SOUTHERN KNIGHTS that has Han and Leia living an adventurous life as the secret heads of "The Department", flying off in the Falcon to fight crime in the galaxy. It's a wonderful story with GREAT characterizations of Han, Luke and Leia. I think you might like it.

Michelle Malkin: Perhaps the Clone Wars were fought over the issue of clones. Perhaps the knowledge and technology of clone production was readily available and one group wanted to mass produce clones (perhaps to serve in the military), and the other group was vigorously opposed to "manufacturing people". They were unable to solve their differences and it eventually led to war--hence "Clone Wars". Wars have been caused by far more trivial issues!

Jean Stevenson: I disagree with your statement that "Luke doesn't understand that everyone must die sometime, and that it's better to make it meaningful than not." He does understand this, and he has willingly put his life on the line many times FOR A CAUSE--to free the princess, to save the Rebel base, to avoid joining his father in Darkness (when he jumped from the gantry on Bespin), and to rescue Han Solo, for example. The point I was trying to make is that Luke was not as willing to be a useless martyr and to die for nothing if there was a way he could prevent it. He was not willing to quietly allow the Emperor to kill him knowing that he wouldn't have saved anyone's life through his sacrifice, and knowing that two Darkside Force users would remain alive and continue to terrorize the galaxy after he was gone. I'm sure that Luke Skywalker also real-

ized that as the last Jedi knight left in the galaxy, he was certainly far more valuable to the Alliance and the future Republic alive than dead. He was the only one who could found a New Order of Jedi Knights. It was because Luke did not see his death at the hands of the Emperor (after he rejected the Dark Side) as a meaningful one, that he was unwilling to silently sacrifice himself at that time. Luke saw in his father a chance to save them both, and he seized the opportunity—a wise move, in my opinion.

Marcia Brin: I do hate to cross sabers with you again, and I was really planning to remain as calm and patient as a Jedi Knight and not let your comments upset me, but there is **POSITIVELY NO WAY** that I can sit back quietly when you as much as accused Luke Skywalker of being guilty of **MASS MURDER** and **INCEST** (and Luke fans of condoning such things) without responding to your accusations!

By "mass murder," I assume you are referring to the fact that Skywalker destroyed the sail barge on Tatooine which caused the deaths of Jabba's nasties. Well, from my point of view, Luke was acting in SELF DEFENSE (which I do not equate with murder), protecting himself and his friends. If Luke had not destroyed the barge, more of Jabba's henchmen would have found their way to the deck gun and would have pulverized our heroes on the skiff before they could have gotten safely away. No one aboard that sail barge was an "innocent" either. Even Jabba's droids were cruel and evil. No one who is involved with a crime lord is a good or nice person. Jabba's companions certainly seemed to relish the prospect of watching Luke and his friends become the Sar-lacc's main course. Unfortunately for them, Skywalker managed to turn the tables and Jabba's crew perished instead. That way of life involves risks and Jabba's people knew that going in. Luke's act on the sail barge was one of self-defense, not murder. However, if you INSIST on saying that Luke was guilty of murder because he kicked the trigger of the deck gun, which effectively destroyed the sail barge and its crew, then I hope you realize that you are also accusing Leia of being an ACCOMPLICE (or at least an accessory) to mass murder. She did, after all, POINT the gun at the deck for him...and don't tell me that Leia didn't know what Luke planned to do. Leia is no fool...she knew Luke wasn't simply planning to rearrange the furniture or to redecorate the sail barge!

As for your charge of INCEST...WAIT A MINUTE! The film I saw was rated PG! Frankly, I don't understand how you can consider a simple, innocent kiss to be the equivalent of incest, but again, if you INSIST that it is, I'd like to remind you that it was Leia who kissed Luke several times, not the other way around. If you are referring to fan fiction incest stories, I've read three, and I know that at least two of the three authors of those stories are known as Han fans, not Luke fans. (I am unfamiliar with the third.)

As to your charges of "slavery" and "betraying a companion", because Luke sent Threepio and Artoo into Jabba's palace, if Luke was guilty of anything here, it was only of being less than completely honest with Jabba the Hutt. As I've said before, Luke never intended to allow Jabba to keep his droids. They were a necessary part of his plans to rescue Han Solo and he presented them as "gifts" as a ruse to get them (and his lightsaber) safely inside the palace. I saw this as a clever little "Trojan horse" idea—"beware of Jedi Knights bearing gifts!" And you can read my LoC in SE#8 for my

position on briefing droids about a mission or "requesting" their help before sending them to do a job. All of your other charges against Luke have been effectively answered in past issues of SE by others.

I also wanted to point out that the two quotes that you keep repeating in your LoCs as "proof" that Lucas agrees with you that Luke is immoral—"final turn to the bad side" and "Luke is the one with the problems", can be interpreted in more than one way. Others have mentioned this before, but you don't seem to believe that any interpretations but your own could possibly be right. You again brought up the fact that Lucas said that Luke's costume was supposed to look "Vaderish", but you neglected to mention that he also said that the costume was "more Jedi." You seem to ignore quotes or parts of quotes that don't fit your theories.

There are two quotes that I would like you to address if you would. If you still truly believe that Han Solo is a hidden Jedi, I would really like to have you explain to me why Yoda told Luke, "When gone am I, the last of the Jedi will you be." And if Yoda truly believed that Luke would be an evil Jedi, why would he encourage him to "pass on what you have learned," knowing the great risks involved in training Jedi Knights? I would really appreciate it if you would respond to these quotes in your next LoC.

Marcia, you made some very serious accusations about "the concerted and often nasty effort being made to shut Luke's critics up." You said, "Every means, fair and foul is being used. Anything to get us to stop writing." However, you didn't present any specific examples of this in your LoC. Cheree seems to be allowing you issue after issue to say WHATEVER you feel like saying. Who is trying to keep you from speaking, and how are they keeping you from criticizing Luke? If this sort of thing is going on, it needs to be stopped.

As to your sweeping generalization about Luke fans, this is one Luke fan who does not hate George Lucas! I admire him and his creativity, and I'm grateful to him for sharing his universe and his characters with us. Although I would have preferred more emphasis on the story and more on-screen time for the three principals in ROTJ and fewer special effects, monsters and Ewoks, I basically liked ROTJ, and I was very pleased with Luke's growth and maturity in the film.

Before seeing ROTJ, I wanted the Princess to marry the Jedi Knight and live "happily ever after". However, I have accepted what George Lucas presented to us in ROTJ: Luke and Leia are brother and sister and the children of Darth Vader, Han and Leia will almost certainly marry in the future.

It's not Luke fans who seem to be unable to accept ROTJ and who are angry with Lucas for it; it seems that more Han fans than Luke fans found that film difficult to swallow. A few overzealous Han fans don't seem to be willing to accept the "surface" story of ROTJ, although they have no difficulty accepting the "surface" stories of ANH and TESB. WHY IS THAT?

Well, I have a theory to explain it. (And I'm sure it's not my theory alone!) I wasn't going to torture everyone with this, but since it's been over TWO WHOLE YEARS now, I've decided it's about time to present the truth as I see it. My poor penpals, who have suffered through my "Treatise on the Reason for the Great Luke Controversy", are hereby invited to skip the rest of this LoC and go on to the next one! I don't want to bore you to

tears! (...and I hope I won't put the rest of you to sleep!)

I think that this whole anti-Luke campaign came about because of the disappointment and betrayal some people felt when things did not turn out in ROTJ the way that they had anticipated that they would. Some people really wanted and expected Han Solo to be Yoda's "Other", and I think some also thought that Luke Skywalker would die in ROTJ, and that Han Solo would be revealed as the true hero of the SW saga. Unfortunately for them, not only did Lucas' story not unfold the way they expected, but they found that Han's role was actually reduced in ROTJ. Even more surprisingly--lo! and behold--the "Kid" had grown up! Luke Skywalker had a real presence in this film. His character showed much growth and maturity--much to the disappointment of those fans for whom Han Solo was the be-all and end-all of the SW universe. In ANH and TESB, Luke could be tolerated by these people as the idealistic, unsophisticated kid with the sky-high goal of attaining Jedi Knighthood. No one really needed to take him seriously. In fact, in TESB, Luke was much like a little boy, really--always dirty, sweaty or bloody, or some combination of the three. Someone was always rescuing him or helping him. (Han rescued him on Hoth; Leia & company rescued him on Bespin; Ben talked to Yoda on his behalf; Yoda got his x-wing out of the swamp). Meanwhile, Han Solo had the fun, exciting, heroic and...yes...cleaner part. Han rescued Luke, was involved in the thrilling asteroid sequence, won Leia's love, got to say the best lines and was the center of attention in the carbon freezing chamber. Luke spent most of his on-screen time alone or interacting with the little green guy and the Big Guy in Black. Han, meanwhile, spent most of his time interacting with Leia. It's easy to see who had the best part in TESB!

Then along came ROTJ, and things were different. Luke Skywalker was presented in this film as an intelligent, talented, self-assured young man. He was now more in control of himself and the situations in which he found himself. He was now the rescuer, the one with the exciting parts. He also now had abilities that Han did not possess, and some Han fans found this difficult to accept.

Some of these fans were so devastated by the way in which Lucas presented his characters and his story in ROTJ and were so crushed by the knowledge that Han Solo was not the "Other", that they couldn't deal with it, and they tried to convince themselves and others that the story that was shown on screen was not really the true, important tale. They dreamed up all sorts of far-fetched theories to try to invalidate the on-screen story. They tried to deny that their own expectations for ROTJ were wrong by "proving" that the surface story of ROTJ was not really the story that George Lucas intended to tell, and that the "real" story, with Han Solo as the ultimate hero, was "hidden" under the surface story.

Of course, in order to elevate Han Solo to the position of chief hero of the SW saga, Luke Skywalker HAD TO GO! Since George Lucas didn't do them the courtesy of killing him off in ROTJ, they had to get rid of him somehow--and what better way than to claim that he was Evil and had fallen to the Dark? If Luke was now the villain, it would leave the door open for Han to fill the position of primary hero. These overzealous Han fans utilized questionable interpretations of quotes and of characters' actions and motives to "prove" their theories, and they started to wage a vicious campaign

against Luke to "prove" that he was indeed a wicked person, and not the heroic individual that the surface story presented. Since Lucas didn't give Luke Skywalker an easy victory in ROTJ, some people chose to believe that he never gained his victory; that he never became a Jedi Knight and they did their best to convince others that he did not.

Fortunately, from all the letters I've read in SE and personal letters I've received, it seems that their attempts to assassinate Luke's character have backfired on them. During the past two years, Luke Skywalker seems to have gained far more fans and admirers than he has lost because of the relentless efforts by a few to convince others of his immorality, and to diminish his importance in the SW saga. More people have come to appreciate Luke as a result of their campaign. It's nice to know that truth usually does win out in the end! In a way, though, I do feel sorry for these people that started and are still actively engaged in the anti-Luke campaign. They must have been terribly disappointed by ROTJ to persist in their beliefs for so long.

Well, I'm sorry for putting all of you through all that (Hey! Wake up! I'm about to sign off now!) but after reading over the SAME old quotes and accusations in some peoples' LoCs in SE#8, I thought it was important for them to see the truth (at least as I see it!) in print. I promise you that this is the LAST time that I will ever respond to these unfair and repetitious accusations against Luke. Luke's critics have received more than enough attention. They won't be getting any more from me. Hopefully, next issue, we can go on to new and more pleasant topics.

Once again, Cheree, my sincerest apologies for taking up more than my share of the space in your zine. (Talk about repetitious! It seems that all my LoCs end with an apology for my "long-windedness!") (SIGH) Will I never learn to control my runaway pen?

Clear skies, everyone! And remember--good guys can wear black!



Lisa Thomas
7606 Lady St.
Charleston, SC 29418

July 5, 1985

Hello, all! Hope everybody had a great holiday! SE#8 was very interesting, as always, and now I've finally got time to comment.

One question that was brought up recently that I, too, had been curious about for some time was a Jedi's immunity to falling to the Dark Side. A Jedi is apparently not immune, as many pointed out in SE#8, because Anakin fell after he had become a Jedi. With that in mind, can anybody figure out why the Emperor was so quick to give up on converting Luke once he reached Jedihood? If Anakin could be turned as a Jedi, then why not Luke? Seemed like once they were both aware of Luke's status, that was it.

Mary Keever: Hi! Hope you have/had a happy birthday! I agree with you about Han (talent, wit, etc.), and you already know what I think of Luke's sexy legs (and the rest of him! Drool...) Leia running off with Han? Why not? The war is over for the most part. She has no real obligation anymore. Sure!

"Bantha fodder" is the perfect description of that SW IV mag. Reminds me of those tabloids you see at the checkout counter with headlines like "16-YEAR-OLD GIRL GIVES BIRTH TO CABBAGE PATCH DOLL!" (My reaction to that one practically got me banned from that particular grocery store. Hysterical!)

Hey! I've got Vader in my car, too! He's perched up on the rear-view mirror--lightsaber drawn! Boba Fett used to be in there, but I think my beloved feline has dragged him off to a fate worse than Sarlacc Pit.

Rose Arnold: Well, although I am rarely referred to as reasonable and never sensible, I'd like to comment on WITNESS anyway. I just saw it for the first time about 3 weeks ago, and I thought it was great! I am a Ford fan, though not to the extent that I want my ashes sprinkled over his body (have you informed your lawyer of this, Cheree?), and that's the main reason I went to see it in the first place. As it turned out, I got so involved in it that, at times, I didn't even remember Harrison was there. I thought his performance was excellent, though, as usual.

Marlene K: I agree that Luke didn't have to tell C3PO the plan unless by choice. I still believe that if Luke had told 3PO, he would've given something away, however unintentional it may have been. I realize he never really gave any reason for us to believe he would divulge secrets, but I think the fact that he was the worrier that he was caused Luke to leave him uninformed.

1987!! That's two years longer than I think any of us would care to wait, but it doesn't really matter as long as we DO get to see the rest of the saga. Still, the sooner the better!

Michelle Malkin: I never found humor in Han's "I know" line, either. In fact, I was too busy crying my eyes out because he was being put into carbon freeze to laugh at anything!

Terri Black: How did Vader know that Luke had constructed a new lightsaber? He felt it through the Force, of course! (groan...) Just kidding! Is it just my eyesight and memory going bad at a very early age, or did Luke's ROTJ saber look different (other than the color) from Vader's and the one he

previously owned? The hilt appeared longer and somehow different to me. Maybe it LOOKED hand-made. Vader did examine it rather closely as he made the comment.

Tim Blaes: Greetings! I must be paranoid (I get it from my cat) because the other night I had the strangest dream that you were trying to kill me! Really!

Anyhow, for months I've been trying to think of the name of that show--LAND OF THE LOST! Yes! Thank you! Here's one--does anyone remember Ultra Man? Few of my friends remember it. I used to watch it religiously.

Your "mind games" theory is very plausible. I've often wondered how Leia resisted the mind probe, and this is the best explanation I've seen yet. I don't accept the theory that it was simply because she possessed the power of the Force. Some training of sorts would have to have been involved.

Pancreas ripped out? Hmmm...there's a thought.

Marcia Brin: What was it that Reagan said? Oh, yes--"There you go again."

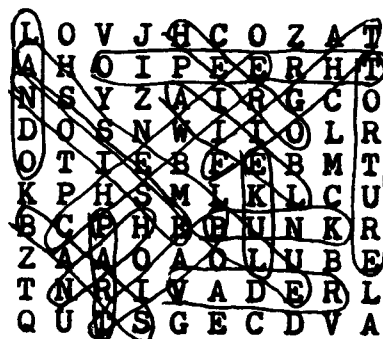
Ann Wortham: Thanks for sharing your trip to Broadway with us. Some of us weren't so lucky. (sigh...)

Did anyone catch the story on CNN about the authors of business management books putting out video tapes of their lectures? It was short, but they went on to say that the prices of these tapes are exorbitant so, since nobody wants to pay over a thousand dollars for nothing but hours and hours of lectures, there is a little entertainment mixed in. The example they gave was the tape by the author of THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER. The clip showed the scene from TESB where Yoda raises Luke's x-wing with Luke's "I don't believe it" and Yoda's "That is why you fail". Then the guy cuts in and says, "Poor Luke. He didn't visualize his goal; therefore, he couldn't obtain it." I don't know why, but I thought it was hilarious. Then again, my sense of humor has always been a little warped (better a warped sense of humor than no sense of humor).

Melody Corbett: I read in STARLOG that there were three different endings filmed for ROTJ and not even the actors knew which would be used until the screening. In TIME magazine, I think Harrison Ford best explained why we got the ending that we did, "George has a predisposition for happy endings." Too bad we can't see ALL of the endings!

Well, I guess that's about it for now. My fanged feline won't leave me alone and he's too little to put outside (besides, he has a severe case of neurosis). Until next time--clear skies!

(38) CLOUD CITY JAIL



Carole Regine
458 E. Elkhart St.
Philadelphia, PA 19134

July 10, 1985

I enjoyed seeing four pages of photos from MediaWest. Now, if someone will write an account of his/her experiences at that con...

Annie Wortham: Sounds like your trip to NYC was really worth it. Thanks for sharing your experiences and thanks especially for your comments on HARRIGAN 'N HART. Mark Hamill in a dress and goldilocks wig? I guess I'd have been...spellbound, too.

Liz Sharpe: I hadn't known that you were of the same tentacled race as Annie. I'd thought Annie was the last of her kind.

Jean Stevenson: Glad you agree that Dr. Mary U.'s idea of separate fathers for Luke and Leia is a nifty basis for fanfic. Truthfully, I'd had something less scientific than high tech surrogate parenting in mind but your idea is certainly interesting. That's the beauty of fan fiction, isn't it? One stray thought can lead to a long, complex story, or a Moral Outrage. As Danaline said, IT'S A WIDE-OPEN, FREE SPACIN' AREA WHERE ANYTHING GOES...at least until the letter from Lucasfilm's lawyers arrives.

Melody Corbett: The theories you've heard, about GL's motives for ending the Middle Trilogy as he did, are, as you've said, very extreme. Good grief, do you mean there are people who actually believe that Lucas would trash a multi-million dollar project to "get even" with an actor? "Get even" for what? Have I missed something? So far as I can see, Harrison Ford is among those who helped make the SW saga the roaring success that it was. Hardly a reason for GL to hate the man... ((Ed: Not to mention the piles of green stuff that Harrison has helped earn for George, not only in SW but in the Raiders films and even a bit in AMERICAN GRAFFITI!)) If (as these fans have suggested), Lucas deliberately tried to trash the film so that "no one would ever bother him about it again", he fell ridiculously short of that goal; fans holding very different opinions of what happened on screen have gone to see ROTJ repeatedly. Considering this film's popularity, I was surprised to hear that anyone believes ROTJ "pleased just about no one". To answer your question, I don't know why GL ended the trilogy as he did, but my guess is that he did want to please a wide audience, and that he succeeded in doing so. As for those he didn't please, those who truly hated the film, I'm sorry. Sincerely, without sarcasm, I hope I never have the experience of waiting years for a film, only to find that I'm completely disappointed with it.

I loved ROTJ, but like nearly everyone else, I'd had my own ideas of how the trilogy would end. I'd hoped to learn more about the Jedi Knights' destruction, hoped to see more of Yoda, and hoped to learn more about Han's past. I'd assumed that Han would be "the other", that Boba Fett would be a major character, and I'd never expected Luke and Leia to be siblings. I'd been strictly a Hanfan, but when I'd seen the ROTJ trailer and had seen "the kid" grown up to be a Jedi Knight, my glands cried out for a strong rivalry between Luke and Han, over Leia. I'd hoped Leia would mirror my own sudden attraction to Luke and have love scenes with both guys. I don't know how I'd have broken such a triangle...but alas! the problem was solved and my hopes were dashed when Obi-Wan opened his Big Mouth.

Yet despite all this, I loved ROTJ. I've seen it 22 times and would gladly pay to see it 20 more. It's not the story I'd have told, but it wasn't my story to tell, and what I saw on screen, despite my preconceived notions, was a great story that left me feeling thrilled and satisfied.

I can sympathise with those who didn't like ROTJ, but I hope that after all this time, these disappointed fans are doing something more constructive than theorizing on why GL failed to satisfy them. A/U endings and "What If" speculations interest me much more than a list of grievances.

Mary Keever: Like you, I bought the SW IV magazine, expecting idiocy, and I enjoyed it for the idiocy it was. Have you ever seen the SW "Special" magazine, claiming that aliens had persuaded GL to tell their story? It was filled with pix from ANH, some offered as "evidence" of alien participation in the making of the film. On the last page, there was a shot of the Vader-Kenobi duel, captioned "During a break, Alec Guinness takes lessons using the lightsaber, from alien dressed in Darth Vader's costume."

Cheree: Thanks for answering my question about characters wars in ST fandom. I kinda suspected that other fandoms had their share of people yelling MY DADDY FAVORITE CHARACTER CAN BEAT YOURS.

Marlene Karkoska: We have no proof that Threepio and his metal brethren are sentient, but the very existence of a Droids' Rights Issue suggests that they are. Someone in the SW universe thinks so and has obviously made a lot of noise about it. Even Luke, isolated on Tatooine, had been aware of the issue and, apparently, he'd been in favor of granting certain rights to droids. In the novelization of ANH, when the cantina bartender insisted the droids wait outside, Luke had realized that "this wasn't the time or place to force the issue of 'droid rights'". This implies that Luke would have forced the issue under different circumstances. (Had he forced the issue then and there, drawing attention to the two droids, he'd have jeopardized his life, Kenobi's and the Rebellion, itself.) Threepio addressing Luke as "sir" is an acknowledgment of Luke's superior legal status; there's no reason to assume that it was Threepio's denial of his own sentience. Servants/slaves ordinarily do address their masters by honorifics. In science fiction, "man-made" doesn't always equal "non-sentient". SF is replete with sentient androids, robots and computers. SW droids may or may not be sentient, but let's not slam the door on a strong possibility that they are.

This doesn't mean that I condemn Luke for lying to Threepio. Here, you are absolutely right. It requires a double standard to condemn Luke, then excuse/justify Obi-Wan and Yoda for their deceit. I don't condemn any of the three; I think they exercised sound judgment.

True, no one's ever ready to hear that his father's a monster, but consider this: Luke had barely known Obi-Wan when he'd asked, "How did my father die?" There's been no guarantee that Luke would've believed Obi-Wan's side of the story; no guarantee that Luke wouldn't have gone off to learn his father's side of the story. Luke had never seen Vader; he'd never had first-hand experience with Vader's evil and it's likely that Luke's hatred of the Empire was a second-hand emotion based on hearsay. Luke had had no reason to automatically accept that Obi-Wan's crippling of Anakin had been justified and he'd had strong emotional reasons to seek out his father and ask his side of the story. Kenobi

would've been a first class fool to presume that he, practically a stranger, could have claimed Luke's loyalty against Luke's dreams of an absent father.

By TESB, Luke had seen Vader's and the Empire's evil. He'd known his teachers longer and I agree that they should've told him the truth before he'd left Dagobah. Here, their sound judgment reversed into stupidity. I can't imagine what made these two--ordinarily--intelligent beings even hope that Vader would keep the truth to himself. Even if they hadn't known that Luke and Vader would meet, they should've taken the precaution of telling Luke the truth, before he'd left. But they didn't tell him and that, I agree, was a big mistake. Their second mistake was underestimating Luke; they'd expected to lose him.

You're right to point out that Luke's ordeal on Bespin could've destroyed him. He'd lost a hand, learned that Vader was his father and, from his point of view, he'd been betrayed by his teachers. He'd had every reason to doubt all he'd been taught, yet he'd been willing to die for his own belief in the Light. I agree with your statement in a previous letter: "What more did Yoda and Obi-Wan want?" It does seem strange that Yoda hadn't acknowledged Luke as a Jedi, when Luke had returned to Dagobah. Stranger still that Yoda and Obi-Wan would send Luke to face Vader, after having agreed that only a fully trained Jedi Knight with the Force as his ally would conquer Vader and his Emperor. Strangest of all, that Yoda would tell Luke that he wasn't a Jedi "yet", then die in peace, leaving Luke to restore the Jedi Order. "What more did Yoda and Obi-Wan want?" Maybe they just wanted Luke to do what they'd said only a Jedi could do--take on Vader and stop Palpatine. Maybe they'd wanted it badly enough to lie twice.

Michelle Malkin: Lots to say, here... First, I'm looking forward to your story in PERFECT FUSION, in which members of the Alliance fear that Luke and/or the new Jedi Order will create more problems than they solve. Second, I'd love to see on all-Darkside SW zine. Dark droids? Yes, I think it's possible, even probable, assuming that droids are sentient. IG-88 didn't look very Lightside to me. I have no objection to seeing any character presented as a darksider in A/U fiction, and I'd love to see a Dark Yoda! ((Ed's note: Stay tuned for A TREMOR IN THE FORCE #3, in which we'll premiere "The Dark Side of the Force", an all Darkside zine-within-a-zine. We already have short stories and vignettes by Mickey Malkin, Robin White and Gail Small, with art promised by Jenni Hennig and Ye Ed! -- Hey, it's my letterzine. I can plug my own stuff if I want to--so there!))

On prejudice against clones: Whether or not the stormtroopers are clones, I don't think they'll be welcomed by communities that suffered under Imperial rule. I think many ex-troopers will try to conceal the fact that they'd served in the Imperial military. Marlene Karkoska has suggested that the Imperials should be given a place in the new government, but how many will want a place among their former enemies? This may or may not appeal to high-ranking Imperials, depending on the individual, but what about the ex-stormtrooper who's looking for the non-government job, a place to live in peace? New Republic law may say that ex-troopers must receive fair treatment, but hatred usually manages to circumvent law. I see hard times ahead for the average ex-Imperial. Assuming ex-troopers are ill-treated, how will their former leaders react? (I'd

like to hear views on this from Imperial fans, as well as from Alliance-side fans.) On the other hand, is it possible that many worlds were, and remain, pro-Empire? Will ex-stormtroopers flock to these worlds and will these worlds view the Alliance as conquerors, not liberators?

Michelle, you're right about Ben Kenobi's age. I tend to see human SW characters as sharing our limited Earth/human lifespan, but with SW technology, that's not necessarily so.

I hadn't meant to suggest that Kenobi had been the only Jedi who'd served in Alderaan's military. I'd meant that Jedi had been free to join the military of any Republic world, and that many (perhaps most) had done so, during the Clone Wars. Of course, there's no reason to think that the Jedi Order hadn't had its own military branch and that Kenobi had served Bail Organa by commanding a Jedi army sent to defend Alderaan. That would certainly eliminate some of the problems I'd imagined a Jedi would've had with divided loyalties. Operating from my theory (not "mine" in the sense of originality; Danaline Bryant had mentioned it in an earlier issue of SE), a Jedi might've found himself caught between a commander's orders and Jedi ethics. I'd wondered if such a situation might've contributed to Anakin's fall.

Bail Organa, Secret Jedi...? Sounds like a preview of Character Wars, Part Two... Seriously, I'd never considered this possibility, but since you and Tim Blaes have brought it up, I've given it some thought. We have no on-screen evidence against it, and I thought Tim's suggestion that Bail had taught Leia "mind games" might help to explain her resistance to the mind probe in ANH. My only question would be, why would Bail have received Jedi training, secretly, at a time when the Jedi had been a respected, legally-recognized organization?

We have slightly different views of the Jedi, but thankfully, neither of us seems prepared to... er, live or die by statements made in a SW letterzine. Rest assured, mortal combat doesn't appeal to me very much, either, but be careful what you say; there may be folks who believe that the Southern Enclave is not to be travelled lightly...

MORE ON TWINS

Pamela La Vasseur
1650 Wabash
Denver, CO 80220

Barbara Brayton
1550 Sherman #303
Denver, CO 80203

July 5, 1985

Marlene Karkoska: (Barb) I can agree by and large with your comments about Imperials being included in any new Republican Government. However, we would want to be careful about who we include. It would avoid later embarrassment (to say the least) such as the U.S. government is now experiencing over its having given aid to several infamous Nazis

after WWII. As recent events have shown, reconciliation is possible, but it should not be forgotten what was done in the name of the Empire, and by whom. I also agree with Chris Callahan's remarks about the subject.

On the subject of droids, there might be room for argument as to how much their personality (I'm thinking of R2 and 3PO) is programmed, and how much develops on its own. Certainly they have a lot of the quirks and foibles we associate with people. They are also capable of independent thought; 3PO got the idea to hide from the stormtroopers on Mos Eisley and R2 took it upon himself to fix the hyperdrive on the Falcon in Empire. It seems to me that Luke sees both of them as equals, he doesn't treat them like machines. I think he told R2 the whole rescue plan, and R2 chose not to tell 3PO, for reasons of his own. If we ever develop mechanical beings on this level, we might have to face the question of whether or not they have rights.

Thanks for your compliments of Han. They are much appreciated. I think you have a very good attitude. (Cheree--I used to be strictly a reader [and how] but in the last few years I've had things published, mostly poetry from time to time.)

If you want somebody to talk rationally about Harrison and WITNESS, you've got the wrong person.

Terri Black: (Pam) I wonder if the word disdain isn't a bit strong. I wonder if you should be looking at the committee that did the scheduling of the Trilogy? I believe I was told that the LA Con had both the Hugos and the movies on the same night. I was also told that the movies weren't shown until after the Hugos anyway, sometime around midnight. The Denvention committee, however, had the Hugos one night and the SW/TESB presentation the next night. No muss, no fuss, no heads beating against the walls. It boils down to whether you feel a duty to see the Hugos or go see a possible once in a lifetime event of all three movies together. If you wanted to do both that night, I guess you were out of luck. I think LA Con made a judgmental error.

Sally: (Pam) I don't know, it might have been a riot. We probably would sound like Sparkie, Bubba, Smokie, and gang from that new beer commercial.

Barbara Tennison/Tim Blaes: (Barb) I also think popular terminology would consider twins of whatever type as having the same set of parents. I was not familiar with the scientific definitions before, and this is what I interpreted Kenobi's statement to mean. As you say, anything is possible, but my personal feeling is that Luke and Leia are fraternal twins and thus have the same parents.

Maybe we can put Palpatine's taunting of Luke down to a case of massive overconfidence (as Luke pointed out). He had Luke where he wanted him (or so he thought) so why be subtle?

(Pam) Back on Dagobah Ben tells Luke "The Other he spoke of (Yoda) is your twin sister." Luke and Leia aren't identical and they aren't siamese; it really doesn't leave us much choice, that's two of the three types. My curiosity was sparked and I looked up a book called The Biology of Twinning in Man by M.S. Bulmer. It's a little technical, but a prior grounding in basic human biology or physiology will do you. The author mentions 5 types of twinning and even details how they would form. Get this, Tim, 3 types are by splitting an egg before fertilization. Hooked? Well, the postulate of a third type of twinning doesn't work when tested. All three types of twins produced before an egg is fertilized won't produce viable individuals. Only one type of splitting called dispermatic may meld

back with the other egg at a critical stage and produce an individual known as mosaic. This individual shows characteristics of 2 sperm cells having been present. While I'm on this subject, put your brain on the rack, Tim; I'd be very interested in reading that article you spoke of if it's updated and not a rehash of the above research. You ask what sort of twins would Luke and Leia be if they had two different fathers? They wouldn't. According to the same book, it had always been assumed that siblings born at the same time were fraternal twins, same mother and father. Blood tests in some instances however have shown these "twins" had different fathers and were in fact no closer than "half-sibs". Fertilization of two eggs by two different males is thought to be very rare. He could only come up with two documented cases in 147 years. It doesn't mean that it can't be a little more common than that, but it seems very odd that he didn't cite more cases since he is big on statistics and medical surveys.

Anyway, regardless of whether you believe them to be twins or half-sibs, same father or not, it doesn't change their relationship. Either way they still come out being brother and sister.

Elsie Bartok: Han might be expected to be an enemy of the Empire if he were operating outside the laws, and drummed out of the service to boot. He said he did not believe in the Force, not that he didn't know what it was. He might respect the Wookiees' beliefs and practices without following them himself.

Yes, Han is a brilliant pilot, and he may be Force sensitive, thus it works through him without conscious thought. But that is not the same as saying that he is a Jedi. I was prepared to accept him as such, but I honestly don't feel that he is.

No doubt there are a number of commanders, but only one Jedi extant that I know of. Poor Luke, not only is he "a dime a dozen", but he's expendable as well. The belief that commanders outrank generals was an honest mistake, which has since been corrected. On the other hand, if this universe has asteroids that are close together, faster than light travel, and noises in space, it may have a different command structure too.

The explanation of Luke and Leia's twinship was an idea, and a good one. An interesting note: if Luke and Leia are 18 and 16 respectively at the time of SW, and there is a three year gap to TESB, then they should be 21 and 19 respectively. However the Empire gum cards put Luke at 22 and Leia at 20; the Mediascene issue of Empire put Luke at 23 and Leia in her "early 20's". In the novel, Luke is said to be 23. He seems to have picked up a couple of years somewhere.

Yes, I understand what Barbara Izzo was talking about. I interpret "Keep your distance", and "Fly casual" differently than you do.

Speaking for myself, I don't see Luke as a "shining, perfect hero". Not even Han can lay claim to that title. But he is a hero, no question about it, and he should receive the credit due him for his accomplishments as a person and a Jedi.

Jean Stevenson: (Barb) I think Leia's love for Luke (and his for her) is a major factor in enabling him to resist falling to the dark and accomplishing what he set out to do. Far from being removed from her influence, I think it is very much with him.

