

THE FORTRESSIAN LETTER

"As It Develops"

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Major Diplomatic Incident Averted

"Not A Big Deal" - Chief Diplomats

PA – The Principality's chief diplomats made an official statement clarifying that they were aware of the situation, but that they weren't going to turn it into a major incident. Staff of the Exterior Bureau, the Pillow Fortress's main organ for international relations, became aware

of it sometime over the past week, and a decision was made at the highest echelons of power to, in essence, let it slide.

"We decided it was in the best interests of the Principality and our current foreign policy to not escalate it," said a Fortressian diplomat with firsthand knowledge of it. "Don't get the wrong impression," they continued, "it was a terrible slight to the dignity and prestige of our nation, but every potential response must be evaluated for its likely outcomes. Making it into a big deal would not have served our best interests."

Pillowan opinion on the Exterior Bureau's actions have been mixed, with some questioning the wisdom of not responding in kind. "If it is so important, then we must respond, right?" Others were more ambivalent. "I guess this was the right response...?" However, the most common refrain from Fortressian citizens was wondering just what 'it' was, as the Exterior Bureau has yet to comment on the nature of the incident.

"As for what specifically happened to cause all this," said the diplomat, "it's not important."

MicroCon A Year Out

Principality Prepares For First Public Appearance

PA – With MicroCon now only one year away, the Principality of the Pillow Fortress has confirmed that it intends to send an official delegation to the gathering. Preparations are already underway, although

the government has released few details about what those preparations involve. Work is being carried out across several areas in advance of the event, but exactly what the Principality plans to bring, present, organize, or pursue at MicroCon remains deliberately unspecified.

The delegation will give the Pillow Fortress another opportunity to meet representatives of other micronations, strengthen existing relationships, and make new ones. It will also mark one of the Principality's more significant external appearances in recent years. For now, officials appear content to let preparations continue quietly. There is still a year to go. And apparently quite a bit to do before then.

What Is The Department of Culture Up To?

Recent Activity Points To Project C

PA – Rumors have begun circulating that the Department of Culture is working on something. What that something may be is considerably less clear. There has been no formal announcement from the Department, no release date, and no public description of a new program. Nevertheless, there are indications that some sort of cultural project is under development behind the scenes.

That leaves plenty of room for speculation. The Department's responsibilities touch a wide range of Fortressian cultural life, meaning that almost anything from publications and folklore to national traditions, language, art, or some entirely new undertaking could plausibly emerge from its offices. For the time being, however, speculation is all that can responsibly be printed.

The Fortressian Letter will report further developments when the Department finally decides to tell everyone what it is doing.

Telluria Roundup

News From the Outside

TELLURIA – The Alternative for Germany finished first in the state election in Saxony-Anhalt, a historic victory for the party. Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the result had shaken his Christian Democratic Union but again ruled out governing with the AfD. The result has renewed debate over whether Germany's longstanding political barrier against cooperation with the far right can endure.

TELLURIA – King Harald V of Norway died at the age of 89 after a reign of more than thirty-five years. His son immediately succeeded him as King Haakon VIII and formally took his constitutional oath before the Norwegian parliament. Harald's state funeral is scheduled as Norway continues a period of national mourning.

TELLURIA – Russia and North Korea have opened their first road bridge connecting the two countries across the Tumen River. Both governments portrayed the opening as another milestone in their increasingly close strategic relationship. Moscow and Pyongyang have expanded military, economic, and political cooperation considerably in recent years.

TELLURIA – Catastrophic flooding following a glacier collapse has killed at least 1,380 people in Nepal and Tibet, while thousands remain missing. Rescue teams are focusing particular attention on hydropower facilities, where workers may be trapped inside tunnel systems. Nepal has appealed internationally for specialized rescue equipment and other assistance.

TELLURIA – The United States is preparing to mark twenty-five years since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Nearly 3,000 people were killed, while illnesses linked to exposure at the World Trade Center continue to affect survivors and emergency workers decades later. The anniversary has prompted renewed examination of the attacks' enormous effects on American foreign policy, security institutions, and society.

New Legal Code Development Enters Next Phase

PA – Development of the so-called ‘Pillaw’ has reached an important turning point after an extended period of work on the organization and consolidation of the Principality of the Pillow Fortress’s laws.

The project has now worked through the full forty-four-title architecture of the Pillaw. Over the course of development, old statutes, policies, constitutional arrangements, administrative practices, and newer decisions were sorted into a common structure intended eventually to form a coherent body of Fortressian law. This does not mean that the Pillaw is finished. Rather, the first major stage of development has been completed. Attention can now shift from deciding where the Principality’s laws belong and how they should operate toward

assembling the resulting material into a consistent unified text.

That next stage will include bringing the various titles into a common format, eliminating organizational inconsistencies that accumulated during such a large project, standardizing terminology and presentation, and preparing the work to function as a single legal code rather than a collection of separately developed sections. The scale of the Pillaw has grown considerably since the project began. What began as an attempt to organize the Principality’s accumulated legislation gradually developed into a comprehensive reconstruction of Fortressian law.

There remains a substantial amount of editorial work ahead, but the underlying structure is now in place. After years of statutes accumulating one at a time, the Principality is considerably closer to possessing something it has never previously had: one systematic statement of its law.

Review: The Hidden Fortress (1958)

Akira Kurosawa’s *The Hidden Fortress* is probably best known in the West for its influence on *Star Wars*, but it stands well enough on its own as a lively, if uneven, adventure film. The story follows two greedy and perpetually bickering peasants who become entangled with a defeated clan’s general, played by Toshiro Mifune, and a princess who must be smuggled through enemy territory along with a cache of hidden gold. It is a strong premise, and at its best the film delivers exactly what one could want from it: horseback chases, swordplay, disguises, narrow escapes, broad comedy, and some excellent widescreen photography.

Mifune is easily the film’s greatest strength. His General Makabe is competent, exhausted, irritable, and increasingly burdened by the two fools he has been forced to travel with. His physical performance gives the movie much of its energy, particularly during the film’s stronger action sequences. The principal weakness is repetition. Tahei and Matashichi are intentionally selfish, cowardly, and stupid, but their constant arguing begins to wear thin. The movie is also somewhat overlong, and its episodic structure occasionally makes the journey feel less urgent than it should. Still, Kurosawa’s visual direction remains excellent throughout. Landscapes feel enormous, action is easy to follow, and even relatively simple scenes are given a sense of scale. Princess Yuki is also more interesting than the standard “princess in disguise” role suggests, though the film does not explore her character as deeply as it might have.

The Hidden Fortress is not among Kurosawa’s greatest films, but it is an enjoyable and technically accomplished adventure. Its reputation as an influence on later blockbusters is deserved, though its real pleasures are much simpler: Mifune, beautiful compositions, and a good old-fashioned escape through hostile territory.

★★★★☆☆

Principality Establishes Official YouTube Channel

ELEKTRASPACE – The Principality of the Pillow Fortress has established an official channel on YouTube, adding another platform to the growing collection of places where the Principality maintains an official presence online. For the moment, however, prospective viewers will not find much to watch. The channel has not yet been used to publish videos, livestreams, announcements, or any other material. No regular schedule for the channel has been announced.

Its creation nevertheless gives the Principality a ready-made outlet for video should one be needed in the future. Government announcements, cultural programming, archival material, public information, and other productions could conceivably find a home there, although no particular use has yet been confirmed.

For now, the channel exists mostly as a flag planted on another corner of the Internet: officially Fortressian, but conspicuously quiet.

Happy Birthday, Your Majesty!

The Fortressian Letter is happy to wish Her Majesty, the First Princess Julia Platz-Halter, a happy birthday this 6 Zvingaire 8.

We hope this year will be one of health and productivity as you continue to lead our great Principality of the Pillow Fortress into the bright light of a bold new future!

-Editor



“We’re still working on the content.”