

To all TKO members:

I am writing this because I feel that you should all know the truth of the matters that occurred regarding the fleet and its leadership. To tell you this, I must explain to you (however briefly) how Technical Knights Order staff was intended to function.

TKO was designed to have 3 Leaders and several Council members, number determined by the size of the fleet but always designed to be in increments of three (so three, six, and so on) to keep to a triumverent of careers (Tactical, Engineer, and Science). The three leaders were to do what leaders do – take care of and maintain the fleet. The Council was designed to listen to the members, advise the leaders, and help keep order where needbe.

I tell you this because you need to know it in order to understand everything that I am here to tell you.

History of Technical Knights Order

Originally, Technical Knights Order was ruled by Anishal, Mogenar, and myself (now Tatiana, then Ari). TKO was peaceful; we had a small Council, consisting of only 2-3 members at any given time and the fleet functioned as was intended. TKO was small but happy during those times.

Anishal started playing Star Trek Online quite a bit of time before Mogenar did and before Mogenar coaxed me into trying this wonderful game. During that time, Anishal inherited Technical Knights Order from a friend of his. As that occurred, Anishal tried several times (unsuccessfully) to get me to try the game. Mogenar, however, succeeded in that and both of us joined Anishal in TKO, where we began putting together everything that you know of TKO.

Anishal, Mogenar, and I were not new to ruling things together; we'd done so for quite some time before, outside of Star Trek Online. We worked seamlessly for the most part, having been close friends long before Star Trek Online ever went F2P. I say for the most part because we still had our minor spats that we solved rather quickly.

When the Starbase system was new, we had our disagreements between each other about which projects to slot and how to handle it because TKO was so small that a good chunk of the work fell to us three to ensure that the projects happened. (Many kudos to Mogenar, for being the primary supporter of the projects and making sure they kept being filled up.) One of these disagreements involved the tribbles being added to the Starbase (one of the special assignments that costs 200K dilithium). Anishal didn't want them because he felt that they were a waste and he didn't like them; I wanted them because I expected the “breeder” (that guy you speak to to clean them up) to actually have a function outside of just cleaning them up. (Silly me to expect Cryptic to be realistic.) Mogenar sided with me on getting the tribbles simply due to the fact that he didn't feel that Anishal had provided a legitimate reason to not have them.

Here, I have to rewind just a little bit because at the same time that the “Tribble Controversy” was going on, another event was occurring:

There was always Mogenar and I, before Star Trek Online, before Technical Knights Order, before the season patch that added the starbase. (As there will be when TKO is long past in our lives.) Then, there was Anishal and Sepok. Sepok was a recruit of Anishal's – and the two struck quite the friendship between them. However, for reasons that we can not understand still, Sepok suddenly changed her mind about Anishal completely and ran from him. Sepok was a member of the Council at the time. She decided to quit playing Federation, make a KDF character and solely play that.

Mogenar and I had always found Federation characters and the Starfleet story to be quite boring – and despite Federation getting all of the love from Cryptic, it still sucked. So between the disagreement over the tribbles, Sepok wanting to found her own fleet on the KDF side of things, and Starfleet's general god-awful-ness, Mogenar and I decided to take leave of Federation and go found a fleet with Sepok as the Klingon Defense Force. This fleet is the one that TKO has, for so long, been allied with: House of Shadow Court.

When Mogenar and I decided to quit playing Federation, we stepped down from our roles as Leaders. To prevent hurting the fleet by leaving only one leader (who was, due to home-related problems, unable to be as active as he'd have liked), Mogenar promoted Ioannes and Kiana in our place.

To my knowledge, all of you came to TKO after Ioannes and Kiana ascended to leadership. This means that all you have ever known is Anishal and Ioannes. Kiana did not remain in leadership, for reasons that I lack the knowledge of; I think he simply didn't want to be. Cheyenne (Soulie) replaced Kiana in leadership – and those are the three leaders that you are all familiar with.

Breakdown of Leadership & Council

Let's note all the staff positions:

Leaders: Anishal, Cheyenne, Ioannes

Council: Andrew, Deanna, Mogenar, Selina, Teckelmaster, Zantetzou

Here, I have to outright say that I was involved in basically everything that TKO staff did despite my not being a staff member myself. Half of TKO staff knew this; the other half, I'm not so sure. Of the half that did know, it was Anishal, Deanna, Mogenar, Selina, and Zantetzou. To Andrew and Teckelmaster, I'm sorry that you two were unaware of my involvement with the Council until now. This was not deliberate, by any means. It just sort of happened.

See, Andrew aside, the entire Council Skyped rather frequently (Teckel joined when he could). Literally, from dawn until dusk, we would have a Skype call running. People would come and go as they pleased. Deanna, Mogenar, Selina, myself, and Zantetzou were always a part of these calls. This meant that everything was discussed extensively between us five, until this breakdown. Anything that came up in the fleet was discussed in the call.

Right around the same time that Mogenar ascended to Council, it was brought up that Cheyenne was inactive and therefore needed to be replaced with an active leader. This caused quite the stir, as Ioannes stood on one side praising Cheyenne while the majority of the Council saw Cheyenne as needing to be replaced.

So we had a massive Skype conversation regarding Cheyenne, the fact that he was too inactive to be leader, how active a leader should be, who else would be fit to be leader, and how to decide. Note that only Council was involved in this discussion – Anishal, Ioannes, and Cheyenne knew nothing of it. More specifically, Deanna, Mogenar, Selina, Zantetzou, and myself were participants in this particular Skype call.

During a series of calls (among the same five people) about Cheyenne's inactivity and the need to replace him, Mogenar suggested Deanna as a possible nominee. Everyone agreed that Deanna would make an awesome leader... and this is where first cracks started to appear. A misunderstanding

had occurred, one that we wouldn't come to understand until much later after craploads of damage had already been done. At some point, someone or another volunteered to bring in Andrew and Teckel in on the discussion. Operating on this, Mogenar posted a thread in the staff lounge of TKO's website to consolidate discussions about removing Cheyenne and replacing him.

Here's the exact original post of the thread:

“As has been previously brought to the attention of some of the fleet leadership, I would like to bring forth a motion to change the fleet leadership.

Cheyenne/Soulie, if you're reading this, please know that I think you are a wonderful STO player and addition to this fleet. However, you have not shown the incentive that I felt was necessary for one of the handful of people in charge of TKO. I would like to argue for Cheyenne's removal from the fleet leadership so that we do not have an essentially idle leader roster. If the leadership would like another to fill his place, the fleet council has nominated Deanna for the position of fleet leader.

Thoughts? I would like this to be definitively acting upon (or not) before the year is out.”

The error came in the belief that the entire Council had been consulted and agreed with the concept, so Mogenar acted on that and posted it. Within a few responses, however, it had become quite clear that the entire council had not been consulted and he edited his post, scratching out (but not removing), the statement and added the following note to the bottom, explaining the edit:

“EDIT:

The entire fleet council had not been consulted as previously thought. Therefore, the entire council has nominated no one for a potential replacement, if one is even needed.”

At the same time, it was believed that Cheyenne had also been consulted and stated that he wished to step down. This was brought into question when it was discovered that the entire council had not been confronted as believed and so Cheyenne was spoken to that same day. The record of the conversation that Zantetzou had with Cheyenne regarding his stepping down can be viewed at the end of this letter.

It was at this point that the entire council started to deteriorate. Within two days of the thread being created, “factions” had formed within the council. Ioannes, Selina, and Zantetzou spent an uncounted amount of time discussing things privately amongst them and then denying it outwardly to anyone who noticed (only to later come out and state that they had been discussing things privately). Teckel and Andrew were, quite by accident, left out of the loop a good deal of the time. The shockwave created by the post was quite ferocious and caused irrevocable damage, though this would not be made clear until later.

After the council and leadership came to terms with Cheyenne desiring to step down, attempts to amend the rifts created were made. It seemed, for a time at least, that things would go back to normal and things would be alright between everybody. However, Zantetzou and Selina still seemed distant and this caused a general feeling of discontent. The Skype calls were never re-instated and our small group of friends seemed to be destroyed. Matters moved on and an official discussion was started regarding Cheyenne's replacement.

The new discussion was utterly halted when Ioannes referred to himself as the “stabilizing factor” of

TKO, which thoroughly infuriated (almost) everyone who read the post. (Quote: “I’ve sometimes felt that I am that kind of stabilizing factor in TKO leadership”) The few I spoke to felt that Ioannes had seriously overstepped his boundaries. Coupled with his first paragraph of the same post, in which Ioannes contradicted his actions with his words, concerns began to leap up concerning Ioannes ability to perform. When confronted regarding the contradictions between words and actions, no answer was provided. A screenshot of that post is also posted at the end of this letter.

With that, matters were halted yet again. After that, it seemed that the matter just faded completely and no more discussions were had regarding Cheyenne and his replacement, not publicly anyhow. The rift between the leaders and council was enormous at this point.

Cause & Effect

After matters had stilled regarding Cheyenne's demotion (and replacement), Zantetzou found a new player to recruit to the fleet that really loved Star Trek Online. Thinking he would make a good recruit, Zantetzou introduced him and Teckel and Teckel extended an invite to the player. After joining the fleet, it slipped that this player was only a ten year old boy – a fact that Zantetzou and Teckel were not made aware of until after the invite was extended and he'd joined TKO. This caused quite a stir in and of itself in which Zant argued that it wasn't right for TKO to determine who could and couldn't play STO – that it was Cryptic's job. In the end, the 10 y/o was booted from TKO and he moved on to join Deep Space Assault Squad (DSAS) where he was made council.

Throughout this issue (and slightly before), reports started coming in from the non-staff fleet base regarding a generalized (and growing) belief that Ioannes had intentions to oust Anishal and toss him out of the leadership, taking over the entire fleet for himself. Unable to decide who could and could not be trusted, and due to the fact that Zantetzou and Selina were so out of reach to those of us who knew of the reports, no decisions could be made quickly.

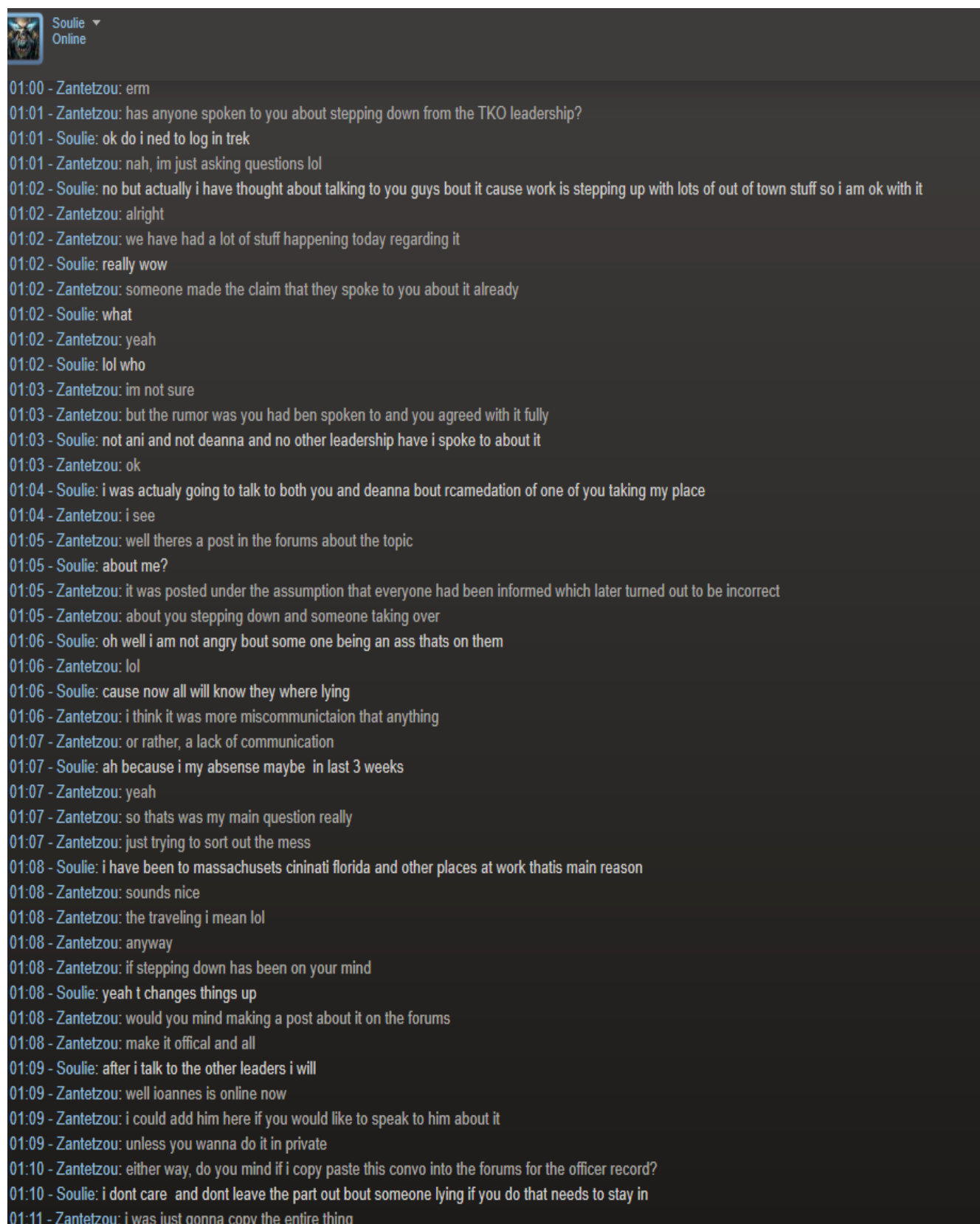
To try to gain control of the issues, Anishal demoted Zantetzou, took away all council powers, promoted Deanna, and demoted Ioannes until an investigation could be done into the entire situation and matters could be sorted out. With three of the now four leaders locked, Cheyenne was officially the only staff member that had any permissions power left. This caused the situation to spiral even further out of control as few people had any idea of what was going on and nobody was willing to talk, listen, or ask questions. Several people (influential) left TKO before anybody got a chance to try to explain anything. By the time that any information could be passed out, the entire fleet was in chaos. Ioannes triumphed, in the end, when Cheyenne stopped the demotion on Ioannes and started one on Anishal instead.

In Retrospect

Matters could have probably been handled quite a bit better than they were by the staff. The rift was caused more by the council not trusting each other and being too quick to anger than by anything else, in my opinion. It also helps that TKO never had any rules written down to guide it, forcing the entire fleet to work in one giant grey area of confusion due to the lack of guidelines given. Add in the fact that few people had any idea what was what between council and leadership and the council and leadership was precarious at best.

Conversation with Cheyenne:

<http://puu.sh/6lJsk.png>



Io's Contradictions:
<http://puu.sh/6lHt7.png>

Ioannes

Dec 2 2013, 11:09 AM

The funny thing about myself I've only really noticed during my time in TKO leadership is that I appear to have a strong conservative streak. I prefer it when things don't change, or when they need to, I usually want to take it slowly. I don't mind if setting a new policy or making a fleet decision takes weeks, or even months, and because of that some people seem incredibly hasty to me in their need to get things implemented right now or tomorrow at the latest. But I guess good leadership, good management needs both - progressives to keep things going forward and improving, and conservatives to keep things from going too far, too quickly, or simply collapsing.

That is why it had never even occurred to me to question Soulie's place in the leadership, and it surprised me to hear someone did. My personal opinion is that I don't see any immediate reason for Soulie to step down, in fact I would prefer if he didn't. However, and it is entirely up to him if you ask me, if he wants to retire from leadership, anyone who replaces him will have to be a similar third leg of the tripod. With that I mean that he or she must be a neutral (or as neutral as possible a) party, when it comes to us other leaders. Someone who can act as an impartial tiebreaker between the other two leaders when needed, someone who will preserve the power balance we currently have in the leadership. I'm not sure anyone in the current fleet council could fill that role as well as Soulie. Everyone else in the staff has a bias of some sort, their supporters, their rivals, their circles. Soulie doesn't.

Am I not right? Think about that.

I have a question. How has the leadership replacement process gone in the past? For example, how many weeks or months was your nomination and election based? The only experience I have with your need to take things slowly is the recent elevation from Guardian to Council for several members. At the Council meeting, at which Anishal and yourself were present, we agreed as a group that there would be a fleet mail and a minimum period of one week, whereupon the promotions would occur. Less than 1.5 days after, the promotions were just given out, by you, suddenly. This was not done in the case of other promotions to council and guardian. I'm confused as to how there seems to be a double standard involved here and different time frames mentioned now, but before shorter time frames and no waiting was OK. While you may present a conservative stance, I feel consistency is important, as well as not changing the rules depending upon the situation.

Regarding your comments concerning your not being "sure anyone in the current fleet council could fill that role as well as Soulie", you continue stating that "everyone else in the staff has a bias of some sort, their supporters, their rivals, their circles". Mentioning that Soulie doesn't have those same biases or feelings speaks for Soulie and I would prefer to hear that directly from Soulie if possible. There are many people in the fleet who enjoy friendships, circles, rivals and the like in every rank, across ranks; old members and new.

Up to this point, that is where my thought process and opinion lay.