

# Foolhardy - #10

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## Just \$1 An Issue!

Foolhardy - A zine dedicated to the open discussion of any topic relating to the Diplomacy hobby. Published six times a year by **Douglas Kent, 54 West Cherry St. #211, Rahway, NJ 07065**. Also available on CompuServe [73567,1414]. Subscriptions are \$1 an issue in the US and Canada, or \$2 an issue overseas. Trades are not always accepted, but if you're interested ask away - if I don't already get your zine I'll consider it. Letters can also be sent in ASCII or Word Perfect 5.0-5.2 format, on 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" disks.

Letters in this issue: Pete Gaughan, W. Andrew York, John Caruso, Robert Sacks, Don Del Grande, Stven Carlberg, Jim Burgess, Brad Wilson.

### The Concept:

(JIM BURGESS) Jack McHugh, Jack McHugh, Jack McHugh....

*{How much money did you just make yourself?}*

(BRAD WILSON) In response to Michael Quist and Pete Sullivan, I did not wish to imply that I wish British/overseas input to Foolhardy to be excluded as I'm sure many others enjoy it. And I can see Pete's point about picking up ideas, if that's what people are writing about as opposed to 'Stupid Americans...', etc. Inclusion is wonderful, to a point, and I wish to exclude no one on a basis of nationality, etc. (There are Americans I'd rather not see in Foolhardy ahead of most Europeans). I just judge different contributions in a different way; for example, I'm quite sure there are those who skip every word I've written in Foolhardy. The more the merrier! (By the way as I type this I'm listening to the 2nd Symphony of Sir Edward Elgar, a British national favorite. Rule Britannia! [except re World DipCon]).

Census: *{Just a quick update - I'll probably be starting work on the next Census sometime in late January, which means it should be out in late March. That's my tentative schedule, anyway.}*

### DipCon:

(W. ANDREW YORK) [Regarding regional cons in TX or FL] Well, I sent out feelers last summer for a convention in late fall here in San Antonio both through my zine and through AHIKS (a pbm gaming society). All I asked was for anyone interested to let me know and I'd start working on the details. Well, the sole responder was from New Mexico (AHIKS), definitely not enough to even look at trying something.

As I live in a small efficiency apartment, there is no way I could hold any type of a house/apartment con. For sleeping, if folks slept toe to toe in the kitchenette, I might squeeze in six if they didn't mind being chummy about it. Thus, I would have to arrange for a meeting hall, motel rooms (the best combo in the area I found was if I could get twenty rooms rented, I could have one meeting room for free). Also, all food would have to be brought in. Thus, the cost would be high for both myself and for the participants - and I could lose a fair chunk of change if I didn't get the twenty rooms. Thus, the chances of me holding a con here in San Antonio is moot; unless there is a groundswell of committed interest.

My experiences at the one, large, regional convention (DalCon) is that Diplomacy won't fly. This year, it was held in conjunction with Origins, and couldn't bring in much more than a board's worth of local players. I'm sure you've all heard about the dearth of boardgames played

at Origins. Part of the cause was a lack of offerings; but on the other side of the coin, for those scheduled tournaments, there was a serious lack of players (except for railroading games).

(JOHN CARUSO) Ooo, Brad is going to host a Chitcon. Now there's a thought.

(DON DEL GRANDE) Well, DipCon XXVI has come and gone, and I wouldn't call it a flop, although there are a couple of things I could have done better, like posting the "substitute player" policy in advance. There was also a complaint about my rule where players could agree to a draw with whatever SC totals they could agree on, rather than drag a game on and on until they actually ordered the pieces into those positions, but I don't see a problem with it. There still is that one question: **what am I supposed to do if 36 players show up for a round?** (I don't want to hear "six boards of six".) As for those of us (yes, US) who had to stay at another hotel because the host hotel was full - I tried to reserve a room on **August 1** and found out I was 25th on the "waiting list"!

(JIM BURGESS) I'll be doing E-Mail publicity for DipCon/DixieCon - David wrote me a real human letter as he presumptuously put me on the committee...I doubt I'll go, but will publicize it.

(BRAD WILSON) Pete's litany of woes touches on some very sore points I think need addressing.

1) Pete is 100% correct to complain about those who claimed there wasn't enough info on DipCon/Pacificon to make early plans. That's just a handy excuse for those who were looking for reasons not to go. Pete provided all the necessary info for travel arrangements and hotel rooms plus a *approximate* time(s) for Dip rounds. What more do you need? I mean, you don't need to know the exact minute-by-minute schedule of the con to book your flight/rooms, right? Pete did an excellent job of publicizing DipCon and spreading the word. An idea Pete and I talked about over the phone was that, given Pacificon's sluggish mailing of the booklet (AtlantiCon gets its in the mail 6 weeks in advance, usually, and we find that too late; however, again as with Pete, the New York Game Board knows its schedule as early as, in some cases, November), Pete could have sent his own pre-reg out with instructions to return to him, and he could then forward that to Pacificon, but Pete wanted to avoid getting directly involved with money and registration and it's hard to blame him. In the future, however, if such complaints continue **re** lack of notice/info for DipCons at 'big' cons it may well be a practice worth beginning.

2) That said, I hardly think it fair of Pete to complain about lack of participation from easterners/midwesterners. To an extent, **every** DipCon is a regional event sprinkled with some *auslanders*. DixieCon/DipCon '89

was an exception because of the 'World' DipCon tie-in that attracted more long-distance travelers than usual. Pacifcon/DipCon's crowd of 56 is quite respectable by current DipCon standards (which are sadly low, but...), really, although disappointing for a con located near a major city and tourist attraction like San Francisco and also disappointing compared to the 1982-83 numbers that we may never reach again. Looking at my (somewhat dated but still useful) 1990 census I see 145 Dippers in the Pacific region -- the lowest total of the three regions. Within 16 hours' driving distance (the most driving many people can/will comfortably do in one day) of San Francisco there are at most 200 Dippers. 56 isn't bad of that. Pete notes the higher Eastern attendance numbers but that's simply a function of location of Dippers; within 16 hours of Chapel Hill or Toronto there are 350-400 Dippers. And I remember breaking down the 100 or so at the largest DipCon since Detroit Origins ('83), Hood's successful '89 con, and take away the foreigners and Hood's very, very strong local group and there were about 72-75 in attendance. Given Chapel Hill's proximity to higher concentrations of Dippers than San Francisco, 56 does not compare badly to that 75. If Pete had had 'World' DipCon he'd have had 70-80, I bet.

But there are other reasons than geography, too:

a) Timing. I don't think Labor Day is a good time to have a major con, as it's too close to the start of school/work for many. Many college students are already at school, just settling in or just have traveled to get to college and unwilling to pick up gain and travel so soon after the trip to school. Teachers, etc. are often already working, with the trend to start school before Labor Day, and thus families with children might find it hard to travel and miss school, especially traveling so that daddy or mommy can play games. Also many people plan vacations to resorts, etc., over Labor Day. Conflicting with the world science fiction con probably hurt a little, too. It's true that I have scheduled my housecon, **VERTIGO GAMES**, over Labor Day, but for many years that was the ONLY weekend I could have it, and I'm thinking of moving it to stop losing people due to the reasons above.

b) The economy. Every day now, it seems, I hear from a friend who: lost his job, was laid off, was fired, had hours cut back, etc. Who can afford to travel at all? I know job/financial considerations cut back many non-gamers' travel plans this summer so it's safe to assume that affected gamers too. (Pete recognized this in our phone talk.) Until people feel more secure at work (or **have** work, period) and with their money (who dares ask for an extra day off these days?) traveling to game cons will continue to dwindle.

c) Lack of DipCon experience. Yes, it's Brad making this point again, but since the 1982/83 DipCons that drew almost 300 people combined in Baltimore and Detroit, we have avoided the Northeast/Great Lakes region for DipCon. That area, in the 1990 census, accounts for 287 Dippers that haven't had a 'local' DipCon in 10 solid years. They don't know how much fun a DipCon can be because they've never had one nearby. So, they are not going to travel 3000 miles to an event they know little about and haven't ever experienced. I know I went to Detroit in 1983 largely because I met so many neat people in Baltimore in 1982. It's no coincidence that Jim Yerkey and Dan Mathias, who've experienced fun DipCons, made the trip from the east. Also, speaking personally, I am sure as hell not going to go to California to an event that has openly snubbed my home area for 10 years. If no one wants to come to the Northeast for DipCon, why should the Northeast put itself out to go to DipCon, especially when attractive options (AtlantiCon, Avaloncon, Dixiecon, Cancon, Gencon) are available much more cheaply and closer?

I will dispense with a ridiculous reason advanced for low DipCon numbers, however. I have been told from sources I trust that one person

receiving blame from some hobbyists for a lack of attendance at DipCon is -- get ready -- that evil hobby monster Brad Wilson! How in God's name? Well, these hobbyists say that I scheduled my annual house con, **VERTIGO GAMES VII**, over Labor Day weekend to draw away from DipCon. Poppycock! My con has been on Labor Day for years; I should be angry at Pete for scheduling DipCon opposite it (grin)! It was set a long time ago. Of the people who attended all of **three** came from four-hours plus away: Jack McHugh, Robin Barbehenn, and Michelle Goldstein, all personal friends of mine and none of whom would have traveled to DipCon even if V-Games had never existed. Find another straw man to beat, conspiracy theorists -- I want DipCon to succeed, especially the first 'big' DipCon since 1983!

#### **Lack of New Zines:**

(JIM BURGESS) Well, Don Del Grande and Dick Martin can hook up by E-Mail now so "cross-country" doesn't matter so much. I'll take on anyone, anywhere as a subzine if they have E-Mail access. Isn't that the way you work with Jack, Doug?

*{Yes - Jack Emails me his subzine zipped up on CompuServe.}*

(BRAD WILSON) Mr. Carlberg may find 'it extremely difficult to believe that the high quality of ((some)) existing zines has any intimidating effect on very many people who contemplate publishing for the first time' but it's quite true. Paul Kenny admitted it was true in print in a past Foolhardy; I have had others make the same comment to me verbally. It is true and it does happen, although perhaps it will occur less often now that new zines don't risk Schenckian savaging in the Zine Register.

As for Messrs. Caruso and Burgess, a) Chicago is **NOT** 'Mad-Lad' territory. I do not live in Wisconsin; I am not a cheesehead; I do not root for Bucky Badger; and I am not afflicted with Packer Sickness. Chicago is 'FIP' territory ('FIP'='Fucking Illinois Person', Wisconsinese for those of us from a civilized state). b) The East Coast Clique, as both of these hobby *savants* should know, is a state of mind, a state I have lived in all my hobby life and couldn't leave if I wanted to, which I don't. The ECC: Love It or Leave It!

*{...and you left it, right?}*

#### **Burnout:**

(JIM BURGESS) Why? Just do what you want and don't get delusions of professionalism - then you'll be fine. My zine has varied in size between four and 25 pages over its lifetime and it represents a near-perfect correlation to my hobby interest level. In case anyone hadn't noticed it hasn't been higher since I started publishing in 1983 (of course, it isn't even close to my total fanaticism in the two years before I started publishing). Very few hobbyists burn out except publishers. The problem is that you can do more than you really want to do for very short periods. Anybody else remember Bernie Oaklyn's old masthead motto? It's perfect. (No, I won't tell you what it was...)

(BRAD WILSON) Hell, Snagglepuss (an affectionate ECC term for the one, the only, the great...John Caruso), you've been burned-out forever, so you say. I think the flame still flickers, my old friend. Even burned-out John adds more to the hobby than many live-wire types.

As for Pete, I sympathize, but I get a lot of zines and I saw no one saying, 'DipCon was a poor tournament' before it happens!'. I saw plugs,

friendly comments, lots of reprints of Pete's flyer. I know -- I hope -- the hobby appreciates all Pete's hard work and energy on our behalf of late on DipCon/ZR/ISE/Marco Poll/Perelandra; I know my hat's off to him. But where was all this negative stuff pre-DipCon? I hope it was limited to a few whining malcontents.

#### E-Mail Dip:

(W. ANDREW YORK) Yes, there is a cost to receive Internet mail on CompuServe. Depending on the volume of letters passed, this charge can be minor or major. I expect the latter, as I know how much Dipsters like to write. Thus, though I'd like to see what is going on in the Email side - I can't due to the cost.

*{I will soon have true Internet access as well.}*

(JIM BURGESS) Andy York is now volunteering to coordinate Boardman numbers for E-Mail Dip. Let's see what happens. Andy's access is through CompuServe.

*{Great! I took on the task of doing CompuServe's stuff a few months back. I collected all the delinquent data and sent it to Vince, and he and I are now 100% up-to-date with current game info.}*

#### The Future:

(JOHN CARUSO) I like Don (DG's) idea to put Dip on a TV commercial (or ET). Let's hope Don can find a way to accomplish this.

(JIM BURGESS) Let's do it!! We can have our own cable network!! Four six-hour game broadcast per day!! With editing, we can show both sides of all negotiations. Special shows on variants...we could hire Terry Tallman's distinctive voice as an announcer, Mark Nelson interviews, hobby news, Larry Peery projects, Doug Kent as Larry King, and Xavier Blanchot/Iain Bowen/Per Westling with foreign specials. Let's do it!! P.S. I think John Caruso can play Tattoo on the Variants from Fantasy Island show.

*{If I'm going to be Larry King, do I have to get married and divorced numerous times in rapid succession first?}*

(BRAD WILSON) I think if we showed some FTF games that I have played in on TV and aired the language used in negotiations we'd attract 'NYPD Blue'-style controversy! I nominate this board for our first TV Dip game -- Austria: **Eric Voogd**. Fine player, could show Austria's not always dead meat, and from California so he should be used to show business. England -- **David Hood**. Dangerous stabber; attracts the southern demographic and, since he's an attorney, shows that professionals play silly games too. Also photogenic in a Lassie sort of way. France -- **Tom Johnston**. Should provide lively interaction with David, his total opposite. Wacko style and hilarious over-board expressions good for audience used to Fox comedies. Germany -- **Bob Acheson**. Adds that McKenzie-brother touch; witty and clever once you penetrate the accent; brings in redneck and chauvinist audience. Fine player, too, which this Germany will need. Italy -- who else but **Kathy Caruso** coming out of retirement to defend her crown as Queen of the Italies. New York native, so the networks would love her; brings women audience; closest thing hobby has to true legend; our Babe Ruth. Russia -- **Jack McHugh**. Pure comedic effect here, brings out best of Bob and Kathy for comedic

purposes; the Shemp of the trio, so to speak. Also rugged, bearded look should appeal to rural demographic. Turkey -- **Andy Lischett**. You need one 'straight man' with all these characters. Suburbanite should attract middle-class audience. GM -- **Fred Hyatt**. Has that distinguished look people expect hosts/judges of TV shows to have. In this role, the hobby's Bill Cullen. Panel of Commentators -- **Pete Gaughan** (play-by-play) Dependable, reliable, willing to share the spotlight; **Fred C. Davis Jr.** (historical analysis, appeals to older set, critical as America ages); **Jim Yerkey** (tactical and negotiations analysis). Let's get it rolling!

#### Scoring Systems:

(JIM BURGESS) The problem with Stven's idea I see would be the "luck of the country draw" problem. Some countries like Russia can do better at that system than countries like Austria - even more than the "probability of winning or sharing in the draw" differential.

(BRAD WILSON) I see what Stven is driving at with his idea but as soon as you 'chang(e) the goal of the game from winning...' you irreparably damage the game and the tournament. I fail to see what is wrong with systems that recognize wins and strong play and going from there. As Robert Sacks says at AtlantiCon, 'Play well, do well, and you'll score well.' To get more detailed than that means that you're playing the system, not the game, and that's not the point. Perhaps the **real** problem in this whole discussion is Stven's '...players more interested in doing well in the tournament than in doing well in the game...' Seems to me that those people who are at the tourney to play and enjoy Diplomacy are there to do well in the games and those that are there to manipulate the scoring system to 'win' the tournament's meager prizes are the ones causing the difficulty with scoring systems. Can we agree that if everybody played every game to win that scoring systems would never be a problem? It's those people who don't play to win who are the problem, and why play if not to win?

#### Attracting New Blood:

(JIM BURGESS) I've been actively hooking individual E-mailers up with individual postals. I will continue to do so. Anyone interested - contact me, preferably by E-Mail at [burgess@world.std.com](mailto:burgess@world.std.com).

(BRAD WILSON) Burgess' business idea is intriguing, but is there anyone left in most American businesses? I think we should put up posters at unemployment offices; I suspect that's where most businessmen now are, and they've got plenty of time on their hands and are looking for something to do.

Stven makes some good points -- a look at GENCON's size and bureaucracy supports his thesis about bigger-is-not-always-better -- but I feel he's a tad shortsighted. First, as the hobby ages, we need to replace 'retiring' hobbyists, especially pubbers. How many pubbers are under 30? Second, if new blood means younger people, I think that could bring fresh outlooks and ideas to the hobby that could benefit us all. Third, I like meeting new people and making new friends and new blood provides chances to do that. Fourth, many GMs **are** experiencing trouble filling games; I think we could use 100-200 new, active hobbyists. The best diplomacy con I have ever attended -- the most fun -- was the second-largest DipCon ever, Detroit in 1983. I think **too** large is a problem, but it's a problem we have a long way to go to reach and one I think we'd enjoy having to handle rather than its opposite dilemma.

### Diplomacy Federation:

(BRAD WILSON) Now, really, Stven, are you so touchy that you have to, on one (rare) point when we agree, explicitly `distance yourself' from me? Ye gods, man, this is a *hobby*! Don't get so excited. As for `not stirring up ill will'...a) I resent the unspoken intimation that I do stir up `ill will' (as Jack McHugh as so cogently noted, `My friends discuss; my enemies feud' and b) speak for yourself about David's `minimum of acrimony'. From you, maybe; but not from all -- the game box flyer thing certainly stirred up fuss albeit not directly of David's making. By the way, the prior attempts for Dip federations and the like, no matter who tried it, **did** stir up acrimony and David's would too; the nature of the project dictates it. I strongly oppose the concept but if a majority of the hobby clearly wanted it I would support it as long as the federation wasn't harmful to fannishness and fun. But -- as Jim said, `Anarchy forever'. Amen to that!

A query for my distinguished friend and colleague, the fine senior editor of Dip World from the grrreat state of North Carolina: what do you think of the federation idea after all this discussion?

### International Dip Participants:

(PETE GAUGHAN) I heartily disagree that overseas Dipsters are `insufferably superior." Foreign subbers in US zines present the same mixed bag that we present ourselves. (I like Pete Sullivan's comment that Britons and Yanks alike can be rabid, thoughtful, or assholes.) If Brad feels that writers like the Nelsons put down the US, than either he is focusing on individuals who don't represent the true, wide, spectrum, or he;s taking offense where none is given. It's generally Americanophiles who participate in our hobby at such great distance and expense! And many foreign Dipsters are reading U.S. zines without writing at all (Joel Gronberg, Stephen Agar, David Oya) because they are so fascinated with us; and others are former exchange students (Joel G.) or travellers (Andreas Gomolka) or even expatriates (Mark Weseman, Fritz Juhnke) who have plenty of good things to say about the U.S.

As for whether Americans reading foreign zines is a big hassle, many of us feel the inconvenience in time and money is more than overcome for the exchange of ideas and culture we get. Brad doesn't have to like it (he at least specifies that his is an individual feeling, not a blanket recommendation for all Dipsters), but many of us like to be challenged with topics we're unfamiliar with. I've never seen a cricket match but when I read a cricket fan's comments I find out about his personality because some things are universal to sports fans everywhere! Local politics aren't so different (only the names change...) but if I hadn't read British zines, I'd have never guessed that the U.K. has something called the "Naked Chat Show" where someone in leather could be interviewed on the topic of sodomy! Without trading for Beautiful Losers I would still think that our ftf tournaments are pretty interesting and exciting events (they pale by comparison with the descriptions from Down Under!). And I was able to sign up for a Bourse in Belgium's Dipsomania during a year when no American zine offered it.

What it comes down to is that Brad thinks a few people run this hobby, a few people who don't like him. Well, there may be people who don't like him, but there is no "hobby orthodoxy that everyone should get overseas zines." You can enjoy Dipdom without them! My interests and inclinations lead me to read them, and I refuse to be classed among some kind of cabal. ("The powers that be in the hobby"? Give me a break. PC is certainly a real threat to our society, but it's much smaller than people give it credit for and certainly hasn't reached into Dipdom in any important ways.)

(W. ANDREW YORK) I find that I thoroughly enjoy receiving the foreign zines that I do get. It gives me an insight into another country, and the chance to meet folk around the world (at least by letter, that is). Of course, my exchanges (bar two) are to those that write in English. My knowledge of foreign languages is abysmal (I might get by with a German one, though), so a French or Norwegian effort would go by me. I do receive two Italian zines and I can sometimes puzzle out sections; but, I'm playing Gunboat and exchanging letters (in English) with the pubbers.

I also enjoy the variety and differing viewpoints. Granted, as Brad says, if you're not a Rigby, Soccer, etc. fan, some of it goes by you. But, then again, I'm not a fan of football, basketball, hockey or any of the other sports chat in North American zines. I skip it just as well in overseas publications. I just wish I had the time and the money to subscribe to more.

### New Diplomacy Flyer/Gamer's Guide:

(BRAD WILSON) Well, David, there could have been discussion in various zines about the flyer thing or at more cons than just a 35-person DipCon or discussion in Dip World or discussion in Foolhardy or, well, you get the point. I concur that someone would have to take charge, but there's a difference between taking charge and acting as a tiny cabal or in secret. I suspect, however, that the hobby will reap great benefits from the flyer and gamer's guide, and no one was really hurt, I will drop this topic as long as no one pretends this whole topic was dealt with totally inadequate discussion and hobby input.

### Apologies:

(JOHN CARUSO) [Apologize] To Jim Burgess? Ha ha ha! OK - I've been humbled. I'm sorry your Red Sox choked Jim!

(JIM BURGESS) Doug Kent is hereby declared immune from burnout. He must, above all other hobbyists, produce zines and stable page counts even when he would rather play video games or eat pizza (or both). I'm sorry, Doug, but that's the way it is. I also apologize to John Caruso and Jack McHugh. They, too, must bear their fates stoically.

### Jack McHugh:

(JOHN CARUSO) I don't want to see this topic dropped. We need to have someone's bones to analyze.

### Brad Wilson:

(JOHN CARUSO) What, another personality ~~ripped apart~~ analyzed? The nerve of him - cutting in on poor Jack's domain.

(JIM BURGESS) Hey, how come Brad & Jack get all the fun!?! I agree with Stven **except** that if he's completely in favor of fun, why register displeasure in Runestone Poll voters at all? Nay, I say!

(BRAD WILSON) Hey, as Jack said last time, it's sure flattering to see **my** little ol' moniker in **Bold Double Underline** type! Even David Hood hasn't `arrived' like that; I'm just put off that Jack got his first. Whine, whine, whine!

I think casting votes of zeroes, etc., in what is (regrettably) the hobby's benchmark poll to denigrate and humiliate amateur pubbers and zines is about as appalling an example of `cruel fun' as I know. Dislike a zine? Fine; don't get it. No one's forcing anyone to get any zine; `turn the

channel', as it were. Stop trading, ask for a refund, whatever. It's no secret that I dislike several pubbers and zines out there now. I do not castigate them with low votes or try to influence people to avoid them EXCEPT in my personal, signed, opinion columns in my zine, and if someone objects then I'll cheerfully refund their VERTIGO sub money. I think negative poll voting and the damage it inflicts on pubbers' self-esteem and confidence is as much `sneering at the efforts of others' as anything in the hobby and certainly `deprives others of their (own sense of esteem)' as much if not more as anything I or anyone has ever written. It is for that reason that I totally oppose the poll that allows such viciousness and feel it is extremely hurtful to our hobby. I, too, am against vindictiveness and I don't doubt that Stven is also, in his way; but what he sees as encouraging fun I see as encouraging vindictiveness. Too bad.

By the way, I'd like to volunteer myself in the GM poll and VERTIGO in the zine poll as permanent last-place finishers. I could care less about the damn thing so no one else will be hurt if I occupy those spots on a permanent basis. (Of course I can hear my players saying: `The way things are going, you will without asking for it.' Patience, people.) How about it, Eric?

#### Orphan Games:

(PETE GAUGHAN) Thanks for straightening out Paul Kenny on time zones and phone calls. But I'm not worried--we have so few zines on the West Coast anymore that the odds are he won't have to call anyway!

I think the Orphan Service director should start making inquiries if a zine has missed three deadlines, or six months, whichever comes first. After six months, a game begins to get so stale that players have a hard time recalling what was going on, and even the players themselves have probably moves (how many games have most of us been in that didn't have any COA's in that kind of time period?). I say "three deadlines" because some zines you'd worry about sooner than six months; for example, with the speed and regularity of Maniac's Paradise we'd all be worried by the 15th of the first missing month!

In general, though, it's up to players to decide to write to USOS when they're worried. If nobody cares that they didn't get MP two months, why should Paul step in?

(W. ANDREW YORK) I think we talked about this a few issues back. In short, my position is that it depends on the particular zine. Maybe setting an artificial limit of twice the normal deadline would work (barring other notifications from the pubber). For The Canadian Diplomat (which comes out three-four times a year), you may wait six-eight months before worrying. For my Rambling WAY (a monthly), two issues may be too long.

(JOHN CARUSO) The sooner the Orphan Service moves on a game, the better. Most games end up abandoned because of the Orphan Service (or the players in that game) give the GM "another chance."

(DON DEL GRANDE) If all of the players knew that a USOS existed to rehouse a game just in case the GM left the hobby for whatever reason, then the "waiting period" wouldn't be a problem, as the USOS would get involved whenever any of the players in a game complained to them that the GM was no longer responding. Besides that, I would suggest waiting until an "additional deadline" passed before taking action. (In other words, in a 5-weeks-between-deadlines game, I would wait until five weeks after the last published deadline, which is about 10 weeks since the last issue came out.) Of course, the first step is to make contact with the

GM; it could just be a case of the zine getting lost in the mail or having the wrong address on it.

(STVEN CARLBERG) Standby Player or Civil Disorder for an abandoned position? Which makes the better game for the players who continue?

The Rules of Diplomacy give us the concept of Civil Disorder. My understanding of the rationale of this concept is that the players who give up on the game and leave their positions in CD are those who have been maneuvered into lousy positions by the more successful players. The more successful players **deserve** to gobble up the dots of the abandoned positions, because they have done the hard work to **make** the positions untenable.

Now, on the other hand, in a game played by mail, where the time span of a game can be years instead of hours, people do drop out of games for reasons other than how bad their positions are. (We must also acknowledge that the reasons given for dropping out are often mere excuses for people who are really dropping out because their positions are so bad.) There is an important difference between the player with a strong position in France whose life no longer conveniently includes Dip correspondence and the Turkey whose long campaign against Austria has suddenly been turned to rubbish by a brilliant ploy and counterthrust. It **would** be nice for the rest of the board if the French player expressing his regrets for resigning were replaced. On the other hand, to replace the Turkish player who has stalked out of the building in a huff would be **entirely** unfair to the Austrian who pulled off the coup.

To give a real-game example, I've been playing in an orphan game from California Acres which was rehoused in Jim Meinel's excellent zine The Prince. As France in that game, I was first misled by Germany, then attacked by England, then lied to by Austria, then attacked by Italy. Although I still had five dots, my position was bankrupt. I'd been stabbed by every neighbor. There were no prospects in any direction of any offer that would keep France in the game. I had no interest in making things easier for anyone else in the game. I simply had no remaining stake in the outcome.

In my opinion, the **appropriate** action for a player in this position is to go into Civil Disorder. As the house rules in The Prince would insert a standby player if I were simply to stop submitting orders, I seriously considered ordering my retreats off the board and all my units to hold, as **if** France were in CD. Perhaps I should have. But instead, I let the conventional mode of operation in the American hobby prevail; I resigned from the game, and now the rest of the board is having to deal with a standby player whose prospects in the game are actually **better** than mine were, because he doesn't have the past history of having been stabbed by everybody else.

I'm not completely pleased with this. For one thing, it gives an advantage to whichever player talks to the standby first rather than to the one who has the tactical advantage already established. But I'm not enough of a rulebook purist to stay and enforce Civil Disorder when there are house rules designed to avoid it.

I guess the point I'm making, in my longwinded way, is that Civil Disorder has a legitimate place in the game. It's easier to tell in person than through the mail when CD should really be imposed, but the possibility shouldn't be ignored for PBM, either. As GM, I try to split the difference; my house rules call for CD if the position is down to two dots or less, and this has worked out just fine.

(JIM BURGESS) I've argued this until I'm blue in the face. I'll be short and sweet this time. Every game, every GM, every player, and every zine

is different. The Orphan Service director needs the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon, and a whole lot of luck. I wish Paul Kenny all the best of each. Ideally, it should be negotiated with the GM and practically should be started by **player** complaints. When is a game/GM late? When the players think it is.

(BRAD WILSON) Hard to disagree with David and Jack here. CD - yuck! I am glad to see one major U.S. hobbyist -- David here -- standing up for the way we do things instead the constant kowtowing to overseas practices we get from so many American hobbyists. In the past I seem to remember no-standby games being offered here and there may be again if there's enough demand, but I feel most will agree that beating a bunch of nobodies -- literally -- is less satisfying than playing against real people.

I see Jack is making friends again with his comments directed at Stven. I'll only add that tolerance, patience and understanding on both sides greatly improves the player-GM relationship.

[As for how long to wait before getting the USOS involved] In my case, God only knows. In most cases, two months late, perhaps?

#### Deluxe Diplomacy:

(BRAD WILSON) Call Rex yet?

*{Nope! But, speaking of Avalon Hill...Monarch Avalon, the corporation that owns Avalon Hill, has its stock traded on the NASDAQ exchange. In the past two weeks it has been trading higher on what is (for this stock) unusually active volume. Trading at 1 3/4 bid - 1 7/8 offer a month ago, it now stands at 2 9/16 bid - 2 3/4 offer, higher than it has been in about 4 years if memory serves. Is this just a temporary blip in an otherwise ignored issue, or does this mean Wall Street sees good things for this company (and the wargaming community) in the future?}*

#### Costliness of Publishing:

(PETE GAUGHAN) My problem with Fred Davis charging for Supernova is twofold: he's collecting more than it costs him (all he pays is postage and a single two-sided update, that can't cost him a dollar); and he's giving a Mensa discount for a project that Mensa never paid for or sponsored. It's akin to the Sierra Club giving members a discount on copies of a government trail map--if they can afford it, why can't they sell it to all of us for that much?

(STVEN CARLBERG) To respond to Michael Quist, I agree that it is unlikely that someone would **eliminate** a sub to an established zine in order to get involved with a "bargain" zine. A player shopping for a gamestart, however, is likely to have little more information than prices in front of him when comparing possible zines.

As for getting a zine started, I always recommend the method I used with Hoodwink. Write personally to some good players you know until you've got seven who've agreed to play in a game you're going to GM. Make this gamestart and/or a subscription to go with it free. Then make country assignments and set a deadline for Spring 1901 in your first issue.

At this point, you're off and running. You can send samples to other potential players if you want to run more games, set prices, and the whole bit.

Also, as for publishing being my "profession," I certainly hope that six months from now I'll be able to say that's true. I've enjoyed being an amateur publisher for \*sigh\* - well, more years than I care to admit - and it's only because I've liked my work doing that that I'm daring to try to turn it into a career. Wish me luck!

(BRAD WILSON) If you don't want to ante up for Supernova, remember that MASTERS OF DECEIT, the superior novice packet (not least because my writing is featured in it) is free. I'd say you can get it from Tom Mainardi and that his address is 45 Zummo Way, Norristown, PA 19401 and that MoD is brought to you free by the New York Game Board but Doug would probably cut all that as a blatant attempt at a free plug so I won't trespass on Doug's well-known forbearance and wonderfully generous nature.

*{Yes, how dare you stick that plug in there? I've cut it right out!}*

#### You Control PDORA's Extra Money:

(DON DEL GRANDE) Question: did Bruce Linsey start the "Diplomacy Alliance Against..." or did Simon Billenness do it first and Bruce took it over from him? I seem to remember both being involved somehow, so I'm not sure that Bruce "started" it.

#### World DipCon Charter:

(ROBERT SACKS) Comments on the WDC charter v 1.03 - I am disconcerted in having been excluded from the discussions on the Charter, since I authored drafts 0.0 and 0.1, and was one of the 4 North American delegates named by the Hobby Meeting. Many of the problems with the current drafts could have been avoided earlier if I had been involved.

Please submit these comments to your correspondents and raise them at DipCon and World DipCon; I will raise them myself at the Hobby Meeting and the New York Game Board meeting.

I am amazed that in the growth from under 1 page to over 3 pages, all of the original simplicity has been lost. I am concerned by the omission of the original provision, "2. It shall be an act beyond the authority of World DipCon to impose on any national or regional hobby or association, or on any independent hobby office or publication, any order, enactment, or settlement whatsoever that is not voluntarily accepted or agreed to."

Provision 1.5 is repugnant to the North American Hobby. The 12 member states of the European Communities, with a common citizenship, can exercise 6 times the voting power of the 2 continents spanning federations in North America. There are 3 possible alternatives:

a. change to qualified continental voting (the contents being Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Australasia and Pacific Islands, Europe, North America, and South America).

b. for purposes of this provision the European Communities shall be counted as a single nation; for purposes of this provision the Commonwealth of Independent States ((the former USSR)) shall be counted as a single nation.

c. for purposes of this provision the states, federal districts, provinces, territories, and republics comprising Australia, Canada, the Commonwealth of Independent States ((the former USSR)), the European Communities, and the United States of America shall be counted as separate nations.

The provisions in article 2 refer to bids by groups for sites. I do not have a problem with this as it will allow groups other than the DipCon Society an advantage in bidding for North America. I therefore believe that the North American Hobby will require the addition of a provision: "In the absence of any bid for a definite site in the eligible region, bids by groups for sites in the eligible region that have not been confirmed will be considered."

Provision 2.4.2 excludes Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, San Marino, the Vatican, and should be corrected.

Provision 2.4.3 is repugnant to the North American as it omits the national capital of the USA, and mistitles Puerto Rico and Mexico. It must be corrected: Canada, Mexico, and all states of the United States of America plus the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Reference to "the National Boardman Number Custodian" in Provision 3.4 is repugnant to the Hobby, and violates the original provision 2 I quoted above. It must be rephrased as "the hobby officer responsible for the assignment of Boardman Numbers for a zine published at the site".

I trust these 5 problems can be speedily resolved.

On rereading I find provision 2.5 highly ambiguous. It supports any of the following interpretations for 2003 and beyond:

2003-I, 2004-II, 2005-III, 2006-IV, 2007-V, and repeat I-V in order.

2003-V, 2004-I, 2005-II, 2006-III, 2007-IV, 2008-V, and repeat I-V in order.

2003-II, 2004-III, 2005-IV, 2006-V, 2007-I, 2008-II, 2009-III, 2010-IV, and repeat II-V, I-IV in order. This has to be resolved.

*{Robert's World Dip Con Charter draft 0.1 follows}*

1. World Dip Con shall be held every 2 years for the sole purpose of allowing and encouraging the meeting of international Diplomacy fandom.

2. It shall be an act beyond the authority of World DipCon to impose on any national or regional hobby or association, or on any independent hobby office or publication, any order, enactment, or settlement whatsoever that is not voluntarily accepted or agreed to.

3. World Dip Con shall rotate among the continents as follows: Europe (including Britain) in 1988; North America in 1990; Australia & Pacific islands in 1992; and then repeat indefinitely.

4. This charter shall be registered in Europe with Richard Walkerdine, the British Hobby Archivist, and his successors; in North America with Robert Sacks, the Registrar of Projects, and his successors; and in Australia with Luke Clutterback, the Diplomacy Ombudsman, and his successors. Each continental registrar shall enforce the Charter within their respective continents, and supervise the site selection or coordinators thereof for sites within their continents. In so acting each continental registrar shall attempt to act in the best interests of the Hobby as a whole and according to the predominant opinion in their respective continental hobbies. Initially the site selection coordinators shall be Richard Walkerdine in Europe, David Hood in North America, and the Coordinator of the Diplomacy Association of Australia or his designee in Australia, but they may be replaced by their respective continental registrars. There is no requirement that World DipCon be linked to any particular convention, nor is there any requirement that the site selection coordinator or continental registrar be unaffiliated with a bidder to hold World DipCon.

5. An amendment adding a new continent to the rotation, and designating the initial continental registrant and site selection coordinator shall require the agreement of a majority of the continental registrars. An amendment altering the office the holder of which serves as continental registrar may

be made by that continental registrar acting alone. Any other amendment requires a 3/4 vote at a business meeting held at World DipCon, ratified by all the continental registrars.

6. Should the office the holder of which serves as continental registrar cease to exist or function, the serving site selection coordinator, or his most recent predecessor willing to so serve shall succeed as acting continental registrar. If no acting continental registrar can be found, a majority of the other continental registrars may appoint one.

(DON DEL GRANDE) Didn't you know about the TV deal between Great Britain and the USA? We base our sitcoms on their shows (only ours are much less funny), and they base their game shows on ours (only theirs have much smaller prizes).

I talked to Robert Sacks about the WDC Charter's provision of "qualified national vote" (if more than 10 persons from a country are voting, their votes are reduced proportionally so that the country's total is 10). He said something along the lines of either the EEC members should be counted as one country together or that each of the 50 United States be counted separately...

(BRAD WILSON) Jack, Jack, Jack...it was *Noah Webster* who did the lexicography. Daniel did the Senate thing.

Wow -- those French FTF numbers are really dazzling. It's enough to make me dig up the old Larousse and try my *français* again. Then again that might set Franco-American hobby relations back 100 years as one of my French teachers said once on a report card that 'Brad hasn't yet been convinced that French is a spoken language as well.' I could pick on Xavier's occasionally fractured English ('most influent US hobbyists') like the curmudgeonly, misanthropic copy editor that I am but I won't as a gesture of good will. And how could I snipe at any *auslander* (especially a Frenchman) who said: 'The United States are (sic) the most powerful and richest country in the world...their hobby is the primary one, the most ancient, and their DIPCON is the most famous Diplomacy tournament in the world. Diplomacy is an American game...' Hmm...maybe there's something to this international hobby after all! Xavier, you can sub to my zine, come to our DipCons and vote on the sites all you want! Maybe the way to deal with all these Anglocentric U.K. types is to gang up with the French and squash them like bugs. Well, maybe not. And Xavier, Americans don't like soccer because it's boring as reading a Larry Peery issue of Dip World.

If Peery is one of only two Americans the French hobby reads then we need to broaden their perspective. Pete? Doug? Jim?

I don't agree that we need a WDC every year. Seems to me that if it's every other year, it'll have more of a 'special' feel and might attract more hobbyists (this assumes that it's a good idea to start with which I grudgingly accept).

If we move to this 'Qualified National Vote' thingie (I leave the details to those more interested than I) for WDC then I think it's time to amend the North American DipCon charter to (here it comes, David) to adapt something of the same when it comes to overseas attendees being allowed to vote on where the next **DIPCON** (NOT WDC) will be. If my vote is going to be reduced should I go to a WDC overseas then I want the same to happen here to overseas attendees or that they take the 'York Pledge': If I can't go next year, I won't vote on the site.

Glad to see that Pete Sullivan is against some people's 'grandiose schemes' (Don Del Grande phone your office) to impose a WDC/DipCon tie-up. If that is the general consensus then I feel better. I also like the French rotation plan and will support it. I do not support a separate zone

for the U.K.

*{As for the French, I'm sending Xavier CC's of this zine for a few issues, anyway.}*

### You Control Diplomacy World:

(BRAD WILSON) Me as editor? As I've written Jim, very flattering and totally impossible. Maybe much later...but the thought is nice. I concur with both John Caruso and Don Del Grande on their excellent points in this section. Future editors, please read!

Bob likes ratings so he can see his name in them. Right, Bob?

### Hobby Custodians:

(JOHN CARUSO) What my statement should have said was - there should be cooperation and support between Dipdom and its custodians. Both ways!

### Dip Players versus Role Players:

(PETE GAUGHAN) I don't think big cons are going to recruit non-boardgamers to Dip. At most multi-game conventions, the groups segregate themselves by choice; at Pacificon, the role-players complained once again that they weren't given enough space to themselves, they didn't want open gaming to be shared with boardgamers. It's kind of like baseball and basketball--inner city kids play basketball because it's cheap (one ball for ten kids or more) compared to baseball (18, or even just nine gloves, plus balls and bats and watch out for windows!); and because basketball has developed into an individual, showoff, trashtalking stylefest where baseball still generally frowns on "standing out from the team."

So in some ways, people's personal style will lead them into one type of game or another, and for adolescents role-playing serves a lot of psychological needs that aren't met elsewhere.

That said, we can have a higher profile at big cons. Everyone at Pacificon knew that DipCon was in town, even if they hate the game (or had never heard of it before). But any Dip tournament could get the simple kinds of publicity that we got (taped-up flyers and a program display ad).

Not every Dip tournament will get on CNN, though. (Snicker, snicker, snicker!)

(W. ANDREW YORK) I don't know that you can really recruit them. I'm an RPGer; but, that came after boardgames and before Dip. I got into Dip from a boardgaming society (the SGS). I've tried some aspects of the RPG PBM hobby to gain some interest; however, there've been few bites. Until the escapism of RPG's pale in the players' minds; movement into Dip won't happen - or will happen slowly. But, we can only keep trying.

(JOHN CARUSO) Dip players are superior! Why? All they have to drag around is a conference map, pencil and paper. Role players need costumes, makeup and worst of all - dice!

Offer them a free hat and a set of 3 to 10 sided dice. What FRP could resist that?

(DON DEL GRANDE) I seriously doubt that you can attract most role-players into the Diplomacy hobby, just as I doubt you can attract most Diplomacy players into the role-playing hobby. The only thing they have in common is the requirement of a relatively large number of people

in order to have a decent game. You can't even get role-players to play "normal" games set in fantasy settings. We don't sneer at them as much as they sneer at us. (Well, I shouldn't say "us"; I have an entire shelf on my bookcase dedicated to GURPS titles...)

(JIM BURGESS) I helped to found and was president of a Simulation Gaming Club when I was in college. We used that name because we had hex gamers, Dippers, and role players all in the same club. While there were a few rare birds like me who liked all three and tried to get everyone together, eventually we started to have three meetings a week. One was open, but we tried to play Dip whenever possible (i.e. numbers were right). One was a vast continuing game of War in the Pacific with multiple players on each side. And the other featured running the dungeon of the most popular DM. I couldn't figure out how to break it then and can't now. The experience convinced **ME** that Dip was the best game, but not anyone else. At SimCon I (which still runs annually at the Univ. of Rochester), I had to play in my own Diplomacy tournament because I couldn't attract enough players, and won it. That's a long-winded way of saying "Beats Me."

### Fondly Remembered Zines:

(PETE GAUGHAN) An issue of a zine that I remember fondly? Wow. I remember certain eras or periods. Everyone knows about my wistfulness for the latter half of Magus' run; I also miss the old Benzene, back when the Deviant Dip game was running and MARk was outrageous instead of academic (though I like academic also). I think the last issue of Fiat Bellum with ten pages of press for one game, including the Law West of the Hobby, epitomized the Golden Age style for me; and I still have the issue of No Fixed Address wherein the hobby was converted into the Rocky Horror Picture Show, with Dick Martin and Gary Coughlin as Brad and Janet, Steve Arnawoodian as a hamster lover from asexual Pennsylvania, Larry Peery as Rocky and Rod Walker in the Meatloaf role. Maybe Graustark 3550 (?), or the issue that came out when Grenada was attacked. Or...maybe I've been in this hobby too long...

(When I got the Zine Bank, I did thin out the collection quite a bit, but even saving just the gems and four or five complete sets (NSWG, for instance) takes up three bankers' boxes for folded zines and two for currently running ones.)

(W. ANDREW YORK) I can't rightly remember any individual issue, so I'll go with the "No Comment".

(DON DEL GRANDE) I don't know about "most fondly", but the one zine issue that sticks out most in my mind is the fake Diplomacy World issue 40 - to be more specific, the one John Dods brought to World DipCon III in Canberra and put on a table of samples as if it was a genuine DW.

(JIM BURGESS) That's really hard. I remember the issue(s) of Thirty Miles of Bad Road by Mark Leudi featuring campaign letters for Toad and Toady of the year. That one came out of my pen first, so I'll go with it. It was the hobby at its fannish early 80's best. We had a great time and I won 1982 Toady of the Year. I think it was my greatest Dipdom achievement. There are many, many others I could name....

(BRAD WILSON) I can't single out one issue (except maybe the anti-Dave Perlmutter one), but Dick Martin's Retaliation in 1980-82 had it all: super games, hilarious press (often with pictures!), fascinating personalities (not the least of which was Dick), excellent writing, diverse

reading matter, a certain chipper irreverence, and a *joie de vivre* about the hobby that we don't have much anymore. A pity, that. Runner-up: Konrad Baumeister's much-overlooked Give Me A Weapon! from 1985 or so.

## **For Next Time:**

(from Brad Wilson this time)

- 1) Is there a better way to spend all the money raised in the hobby than on our own services? Does the BNC, MNCs, USOS, etc. really need all that cash? If not, what should we spend it on?
- 2) The nefarious, vicious Chris Carrier appears to be making a Dipdom comeback of sorts. This is bad news, as he feeds solely of the misery and agony of his victims. I'd like to propose a `round-robin' letter, similar to the one draw up the late 70's re Buddy Tretick/Bernie Oaklyn, to GMs and pubbers warning of Carrier's attitude and offenses in the past. This would limit his audience and, one would hope, keep this hateful influence out of our fun. Opinions?
- 3) Is the quality of postal Dip play getting better, worse, or staying the same? Why?

**Next Foolhardy Deadline - January 16, 1994**