

Foolhardy - #3

Just \$1 An Issue!

Foolhardy - A zine dedicated to the open discussion of any topic relating to the Diplomacy hobby. Published four to six times a year by **Douglas Kent, 54 West Cherry St. #211, Rahway, NJ 07065**. 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.

Welcome to the third issue of Foolhardy. We've got a slew of letters covering a wide range of topics this issue, so I'm going to keep my mouth shut and let you jump right in to the good stuff. I'll just mention that if any of you have ideas for questions to put in the "For Next Time" section, feel free to send them to me. Don Del Grande submitted one for this issue, and I'm always looking for more. The deadline for Foolhardy #4 will be **October 19**. Happy reading!

Letters in this issue: Fred Davis, Kevin Brown, W. Andrew York, David Hood, Jim Meinel, Pete Gaughan, Jim Burgess, Peter Sullivan, Mark Nelson, Andy Lischett, James Nelson, John Caruso, Bruce McIntyre, Don Del Grande.

The Concept:

(PETER SULLIVAN) Who is Jack McHugh?
{Do you really want to know? Make sure the answer is an enthusiastic yes before you go any further.}

(MARK NELSON) Thanx for mailing issue 2 of your new zine, although I was slightly surprised that you did not mail me issue 1. Sorry about not loccing Painful Rectal Itch #1 I'll try and loc issue 2 when it arrives.

Hey, hold your horses boy! What's this. You've changed the name of the zine but kept the same numbering system? This is, this is... this is not playing the game. Don't you know boy that the only decent thing to do when you change the name of your zine is to start again at issue one? You wouldn't find me pulling an act like this to get my zine up to issue 100 as quickly as possible, no sir.

(JAMES NELSON) Some people think that the UK and North American hobby have nothing in common and that the two cannot share ideas nor contribute anything to the other. I'd like to think that zines such as Northern Flame, whose contributors come from many different shores, and Foolhardy, where many issues are common to the two hobbies, prove this theory wrong. You

raised the matter of new blood in the Diplomacy hobby, and David Hood mentioned a lack of new zines starting up, two matters which have been mentioned in the UK in the last couple of years.

*{I completely agree. Obviously, the North American and British hobbies are quite different, but at the same time we share many similarities, and face some of the same challenges. By **increasing** the communication between the two hobbies, we can learn from each others mistakes (and successes) and help both to grow. Plus, it does make this hobby even more interesting. If we choose to believe that one hobby has nothing in common with the other, we squander a useful opportunity.}*

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) Finally I have some time to respond to Foolhardy #2. I am pleasantly surprised - I never was interested in HoL because I figured that there are only a limited number of things for publishers-only to take about - feuds, and the nitty-gritty of publishing details. Also, the apparent exclusion of non-publishers smacked of elitism, whether it happened or not. From FH #2 I got the impression that we've matured as a hobby - people seem willing to conduct and carry out discussion without resorting to name-calling or

arguments based on some mythical hobby polarity ("sure you'd say that, look whose side you're on..."). Hobby debates are more interesting without the feuding elements.

(DON DEL GRANDE) Just what I need - a place to let my hobby frustrations out without hearing complaints of "drivel" from my subbers. (And just what your 'zine needed - a new title.)

The Name:

(FRED DAVIS) Thank you for renaming your thing Foolhardy. As my Diplomag is a family magazine, now I can recommend it to others, whereas I could not do so with its original name. There also seems to be much less hate and feuding here than there was in the pages of HoL.

(KEVIN BROWN) Please allow me to be in the minority that prefers Painful Rectal Itch to Foolhardy. Of course Garret says I have a sense of humor, so you probably think I don't. Maybe you should use a different title each issue to screw up the pollsters and Zine Registers and other such anal retentives.

{I actually thought of doing that, but for now I'll just stick with Foolhardy. I'm too lazy to do anything original or entertaining.}

(W. ANDREW YORK) Congrats on the new name. Foolhardy is vastly better than previously; and it won't scare anyone away. Well, at least the title won't.

(DAVID HOOD) Thank goodness you changed the name.

(JIM BURGESS) I kinda preferred the old name, but what the hey.

(MARK NELSON) Mentioning zine names. Painful Rectal Itch as the worst zine name ever? I don't know, Sauce of The Nile may have seemed a good idea at the time... But what's the "worst"/"most descriptive" zine name you've come across?

Iain Bowen once reviewed Utter Drivel shortly

and succinctly "It is". Actually Utter Drivel is far better than you would guess from the name. Crap, believe me it was, and The Thing Which Came From The Dung Heap are other zines which spring to mind with apt titles.

Of current zines Garbage In, Garbage Out was aptly named and has recently folded, praise the prophet!

Iain Bowen's review was short and sweet, much like the man himself. Someone once reviewed a zine called The Road Goes Ever On with the phrase "Doesn't it just". I can't remember if this was Pete Birks or Pete Doubleday at this long distance of time.

Perhaps fellow readers can suggest either aptly named zines or short and amusing reviews?

(JOHN CARUSO) Well, its not exactly as good as my recommendation, but this name will suffice for the Dipdom-wide proclaimed successor to HoL!

Burnout:

(FRED DAVIS) Take it easy. Don't burn out. A quarterly publication that lasts is much better than a bimonthly which fails.

(KEVIN BROWN) You know how it is, the burnout victim is always the last one to see the symptoms. Everything will seem fine until one day you'll wake up and realize you don't feel like doing all of the zillion things you've put upon yourself, and you don't want to just do a little of it because it's impossible to prioritize it all. After a few days more you realize you're never going to feel more like doing it all than you do now, and you get really depressed. So you blow it all off and drop out of the hobby. In the end, burnout is inevitable for some people.

(PETER SULLIVAN) It's all too easy for editors to get over-committed, and I don't think the "Runestone effect", whereby the Poll tends to reward good, large, but obviously unsustainable zeens helps. This kind of over-commitment is rarer in Britain, but this isn't because of any greater sagacity in pubbers; rather it is that players tend not to sign up in such great numbers.

The one exception to this is the zeen Froggy, which grew like Topsy for 18 months before it last published in November 1990. Now, whenever I, with my Orphan Games Re-houser hat on, contact the editor, I am informed that "Froggy will be out in a week...", the new mantra for the Nineties.

(MARK NELSON) Telling people that they are overloading, overextending themselves and that they ought to reduce their Hobby involvement rarely works, people are loth to admit that they *are* doing too much. I can remember many people telling Mark Lilleleht (editor of The Scribblerist) that he was taking too much on and that it ought to set his sights a little lower, only to be met by the calm of confidence and youth. Next issue..., well did the next issue *ever* appear?

The hobby wastebin is littered with editors who stated that "I will not fold" and either folded next issue or didn't produce another issue --- Pete Tamyln and Richard Egan for instance.

(JOHN CARUSO) Just wait until the 1st time you don't feel like publishing on time. I hope it doesn't happen to you, but unfortunately, it happens to all of us with a life.

{Well, that leaves me out.}

Computers:

(MARK NELSON) It's difficult to say how popular PBEM is in the UK because so few hobby members over here have email. Within the student community email isn't that big, at many Universities you don't have a *right* to email access and Usenet isn't piped to all Universities.

On the commercial nets, well there are a multitude of them and I am not aware of anyone over here trying an Eric Klien and linking groups together. I have discovered that there is a group of people playing dip on a commercial net, a former UK pubber is involved in it but they have zero contact with internet people. And if you want to investigate the commercial nets you need money...

For all we know there could be a thriving email scene over here.

(JOHN CARUSO) Send me a copy of WP 5.0 or 5.1 and I too can send you submissions on disk.

Custodians:

(W. ANDREW YORK) Regarding the discussion about irregular games and people from the same area code, I wasn't aware this was a policy. Would it be possible to list all (some) of the situations that make a game irregular? As a GM, it would be quite helpful.

As for having people in the same area code, I agree with you and Robert Acheson. It is more expensive for me to call long distance within Texas (multiple area codes) than someone outside of Texas. Thus, I feel it should be done away.

Conversely, if the rule stands, should it be extended to those on EMail services? Two or more players on a service could be construed as being in close contact. Heck, I write EMail letters more often to friends on CIS that I call friends on the other side of town.

{In Everything #82, Don Williams listed 8 reasons that a game would be treated as "irregular". As of today I've never seen a revision to this list.

1) Local game - Three or more players have the same telephone area code or are otherwise within local phone call service. Computer network games are noted as "PBEM", and not subject to the local rule.

2) Two or more relatives in a game - two or more of the eight in the game (GM, seven players) are related. This includes father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, and similar blood relatives, and legal relationships such as spouses and close step-relationships.

3) Gross GM violations - The GM's methods discriminate against one or more players or groups of players. The party claiming the violation much show inconsistent (and usually adverse/unreasonable) treatment of the players by the GM, and/or inconsistent application of the rules under which the game is being played.

4) Illegal player removal - The GM ejects a player from the game for strictly personal reasons. This presumes, however, that the player hasn't been exceedingly obnoxious, uncivil, or profane to the GM or other players).

5) Inconsistent standby policy - The determination to use/not use standbys is at the GM's discretion. Application of whatever standby policy is used, however, must be consistent over the course of the game.

6) Playing more than one position in a game - One or more of the original 8 people in the game has/have played more than one position during the course of the game.

7) GM is playing in the game - The GM, apart from his GMing duties, is also playing a country in the game. This would equally apply in the case where the GM did so secretly and was later discovered.

8) Other circumstances - Situations not otherwise covered here, but which, in the opinion of the BNC, may have significantly altered the course and character of the game (particularly in a way unfair to one or more of the players), or which are outside of generally accepted play-by-mail practices for non-variant Diplomacy. An example of the former would be a staggered mailing schedule of game reports which favors some players over others, while the latter is exemplified by the "anonymous standby policy", where players in the game do not know who the standby called will be, and therefore can't negotiate with the new player, albeit for only one turn.

I agree that the area code rule seems a bit outdated, in this age of discount calling plans and international computer networks. Maybe it's time to rework these rules.

(DAVID HOOD) I disagree with Robert's views on the telephone area code rule used by the BNC. Though it might be cheaper for you to call people outside your area code, this is hardly the majority rule. The fact is that the closer people are, the more unfair it is to those farther away, even if all communications are by mail. Plus, it is more likely that the people involved will know each other already, which can also mess up a game. Finally, there is a certain value to geographic diversity itself that adds to the enjoyment of the game.

Yes, the "area code" is arbitrary, but you've got to have some sort of diversity rule. Doing it by straight miles would be somewhat unwieldy, and not having a rule at all would lose the benefits cited above. No, I think the rule should stay as is.

{Why would it not be the norm? When it comes to calling within your area code, you can only use your local carrier. Since there is no competition, the prices are higher. Long distance calling, meanwhile, has many choices. My MCI plan costs about 10 cents a minute for LD calls - if I call someone on my "Friends and Family" plan, I save an additional 20% off of that. However, if I call a community 45 minutes away, I'm

paying as much as 25 cents a minute at times. Ugh!

And what about those with Email access, as Andrew mentioned? Or those who use Prodigy, CompuServe or Genie? Don't they have an unfair advantage? Then again, how would the GM or BNC be able to tell if a player had access to a computer network or not?}

(PETER SULLIVAN) I'm not sure that the Miller Number Custodian will have the player details for Gunboat and other anonymous variants (until of course end-game statements are published) - are you sure this is correct? Gunboat is, of course, an anethma, and I refer you to Iain Bowen's article in Y ddraig Goch 38, entitled "I THINK THAT PEOPLE WHO PLAY GUNBOAT SHOULD BE EXTERMINATED AND FINELY RENDERED DOWN FOR LARD*...*IF WE ONLY KNEW WHO THEY DAMN WELL WERE".

*{Well, I know that when I request a Miller Number for a gunboat-type game, I report all player names to the MNC. If I disappear from the face of the earth, he'd be the only one with that info. Of course, if there were standbys assigned during the course of the game, he would **not** have info on that. I imagine that not all publishers supply as much info as I do, however.}*

(MARK NELSON) The BNC rule on players from the same locality may have made some sense when it was originally devised (anyone know who the first BNC to codify the irregularity criteria was?), but makes little sense today.

Not particularly because of geographical factors or the decreasing expense of long-distance calls, but because of increase access to email.

The original ruling stems from a desire to "even-up" postal games. People who communicate stand a better chance of doing well than those that don't. If a player lives within visiting distance or in a cheap-rate phoning band then you have more opportunities to diplomate with them than if your only medium of communication was through the post.

This just doesn't make sense in the age of email. If a game is going to become irregular because of three (or more) players with the same phone code then it should be irregular if there are three (or more) players

with email access. Players without email communication are at a grave disadvantage compared to those that have.

I think the rule should be dropped. If the BNC wishes he can still make a note after any game that x players with the same phone code were in that game and rating-masters may decide not to rate that game, personally I'd rate it anyway.

(JOHN CARUSO) The easiest way to resolve the area code problem is for 3 people from the same area code, (a) not to join the same game together (what, you mean unscrupulous people would actually do this?) (b) the GM could separate the 3 into at least 2 different games.

If in doubt, separate at least 1 of them.

The BNC's rule doesn't need a rewrite. Only people's thinking.

Dipcon:

(PETE GAUGHAN) I like Pete's Board of Trustees idea for World Dipcon, but I probably won't be affected very much by whatever Manorcon decides to do with WDC. I do know that I can afford to get to Dipcon some years, but the chances of going overseas to WDC are nil, and if WDC comes here to some convention other than Dipcon I can't attend both.

(MARK NELSON) I disagree with Pete that voting at any WDC to determine the next site is pointless. SF Fandom gets around the `voters won't be going to the next World Con' syndrome by two means: (1) A not insignificant number of people go to consecutive cons and (2) There are two tiers of membership, Attending and Supporting. A supporting member can send in a postal vote.

If WDC sites were to be determined by voting then WDC's could (should ?) allow for supporting memberships. For \$10 (for example) you get all the Progress Reports, the Con Booklet and a postal vote to determine the next site.

Lack of New Zines:

(KEVIN BROWN) Let's see if the assumption holds water. Using the Zine Register as a base of info we see

that between ZR #19 and ZR #20 there are 22 zines listed as new and 33 listed as folded (Yeah, some of the "new" weren't really new, but some of the folds were from long ago so it balances out). That's a lot of new zines. It would seem that the problem isn't in the lack of new zines but in the massive number of folds. Obviously we should concentrate more on encouraging existing zines to keep them from folding. That's not to say that we shouldn't be encouraging new blood, indeed we should be doing both. David Hood's suggestions are both excellent. Bringing more people into the hobby helps old zines as well as new ones.

(W. ANDREW YORK) David Hood's discussion about the lack of new zines is valid, overall. However, I (as you do) feel that he misses one major area -- publishing is difficult. A lot of the GM/Pubber bashing that has gone on has diminished potential pubbers interest in jumping into the shark-infested waters.

I've received a couple of "how dare you" letters, one of a few months back that almost had me chuck the whole thing. We need to make it worthwhile for the pubber to publish. Fortunately, I receive many more letters o support.

This not only should include support from other zines (adverts, plugs); but, if you can handle it, a trade (at least for a year or so). I'll tell you, when I started, those "established" zines that were willing to trade for my sample effort made me feel like I was putting out a worthwhile zine.

Another that might help would be if established pubbers make themselves available to answer questions, offer advice -- in short, guide the new publisher around. Fortunately, Fred Davis helped me in my early days, smoothing the way. Giving the timid potential pubber the information and expertise he needs to get going can't hurt.

Dave's point about getting the word out on the hobby is important, as well. I completely agree that the hobby should have a one-page information sheet that is handed out at cons (if arrangements can be made, why not put them in the registration packets?). Also, if funds are available (PDORA?), why couldn't there be a large mailing to the addresses found in ads in The General (if I have extra issues of Rambling Way

available, I do mail samples to those listed as interested in Dip -- in fact, I just added a Brazilian subscriber this way). Another source would be the annual "Who's Who Among Play By Mail Gamers" (mostly professional company players; but, who knows).

{I'm not sure what a subber could say in a "how dare you" letter, but if someone doesn't like your zine, they should just not sub to it. What kind of problem could they have?}

Established publishers face quite a dilemma when it comes to new zines - trade (and be willing to lose if the new zine slows to a crawl or folds quickly), or not trade (and risk sending the new publisher negative signals). I prefer to send a letter with suggestions and constructive comments, and maybe sub for a few issues. Heck, when Melinda Holley subbed to MP after the first meager issue, and told me she liked what she saw (heck, there was nothing to see!), I really felt like I had gotten the gold seal of approval! Either way, support of new publishers is crucial to the hobby.

At the same time, its important to let new publishers know that their zine is worthwhile however it is - it doesn't have to open 15 games and grow to 50 pages a month. 6 pages and 2 games is fine, if that's what the publisher can handle and wants to do. Too often recently we've seen the new over-ambitious publisher overload and suffer a high-speed burnout. Slow and steady works much better for everyone, pubber and player alike.

*I'd bet that most publishers (myself included) answer questions from potential pubbers when they get them. I don't think an organized group is necessary - a potential pubber should ask those established pubbers that they respect for whatever advice they can offer, and then try to work that advice into their own **personal** view of what their new zine should be.}*

(PETE GAUGHAN) I thought your comments on new zines were right on the mark in several ways - many current Dipsters probably do shy away from publishing because they subconsciously believe you have to do it big and pretty. But we are also getting fewer and fewer college students into Dipdom and in my experience that's the group that's most likely to have the time and energy to publish.

(MARK NELSON) I think you overestimate the hostility that warehouse zines receive, or at least I hope that you overestimate it. There is nothing intrinsically wrong in warehouse zines. They provide a service. Now I don't think that the service they provide is going to attract people into the hobby and maintain their interest in it but if people want to run warehouse zines then let them.

Paradoxically most of the anti-warehouse zine comments that I have seen come from the very people that believe so much in them, the Turbophreaks.

Have a small error in an adjudication, don't print maps or be one day late in your turnaround and you'll bring down a ton of bricks; you're not fit to run a dipgame! You won't find many fannish fans complaining because there's an adjudication error in a game, because a map is missing or that you're a little late in producing the zine. You won't find the likes of Cal White complaining about zines being two weeks late, though you will find the likes of Garret "Turbophreak and Proud of It" Schenck complaining about it.

(JAMES NELSON) In the UK there were no new mainstream zines for a couple of years and then all of a sudden five or six started up within a couple of months of each other. Prior to this people predicting fire, hail, and brimstone and the syndrome of the-end-of-the-hobby-as-we-know-it was common! The fact is that there has always been highs and lows in activity in the UK hobby and I should imagine that this is the case in North America as well.

The point you raised about the attitude of "powerful" hobby members was, whilst relevant, overstated. Some potential pubbers will get put off by off-putting comments, particularly those which are downright nasty as opposed to constructive criticism. Some guy reading the Zine Register for instance and getting all of Garret's prejudices thrown at him may be put off starting a zine which will not run to three week deadlines and turnaround in an evening or two. Come to think about it isn't that what a good small warehouse zine should do? If so, shouldn't they be popular at the moment? If you are a Turbofreak then you will get

encouraged by comments such as Garret's, but if not you may not get discouraged.

The most important thing the hobby can do to encourage potential pubbers is just that, to encourage them. Novice packages, whilst a nice principal, are not necessary. There has not been a Novice Editors pack in the UK for six or so years and yet the zines which have started in the meantime have not all been disastrous flops. You can't teach someone to publish, it's natural ability [A God given talent? Let us hope not!]. For one or two years there might not be someone who considers he has the natural talent to publish and then four or five come along at the same time. [Not unlike trying to catch the Number 22 bus!]

(DON DEL GRANDE) I think that a one-page flyer at major cons might not be enough information. Perhaps a `zine-type giveaway that describes PBM Dip, the hobby, a number of the `zines, and whatever else we think prospective hobbyists should know.

PDORA:

(JIM BURGESS) I agree with you about the bank account-taxation issue. Don't complicate this stuff any more than you have to. Make it as easy as possible to be a custodian.

(MARK NELSON) I have this great idea to get around your tax problem, and I don't think it's ever been done before! Register yourself with the Tax Authority as an organization that holds money to give to non-profit making groups. You could call yourself The New Jersey Games Board (great name, great name). Then, and this is the really great part, you would have to get any hobby body wanting your money to accept your authority over it for the rest of time! You could try and take over the hobby by making people signing legally binding documents! No-one would ever work out what you were really up to because they would *respect* you for raising money for the hobby. Isn't this a great idea? I'm surprised no-one has tried to take over the hobby by setting this kind of dummy organization up before...

{Great idea! I'll set the gears in motion right away!}

(DON DEL GRANDE) You left out one important point on the PDORA voting system: in addition to the five committee members with one vote each, the chairman decides how many "yes" votes (2, 3, or 4) it takes to award funding - in effect, the chairman has two votes, but can abstain. One of John Caruso's policies as chairman was to always require 4 out of 5 "yes" votes to give money to any poll (Marco, Runestone, Rusty Bolts, whatever).

{Ah, but Don, that decision by the Chairman is not on a personal case-by-case basis. Rather, it uses strict guidelines (see John Caruso's letter below in the PDORA/ZR section). John explained those guidelines to me in detail before I took over the post, and I will continue to use them. They aren't a secret - in some of the letters John wrote to people who were requesting or might request PDORA funding, John spelled out to them the categories and which one the project in question would fall under. You are correct, Polls and Awards must receive 4 yes votes, and rightfully so. That didn't stop the Hobby Awards from being granted PDORA funding last year.}

Polls & Awards:

(W. ANDREW YORK) Polls and Awards are good for the hobby -- as long as they are done in a positive manner. Pete Gaughan's Marco Poll and Phil Reynolds' poll are two good ones. The Runestone Poll is good, for what it's worth. However, too many people take it the wrong way. Should we dump it, I don't think so; however, I don't know how to change people's attitudes towards it.

I think potential subscribers are more affected by what other zines pubbers are saying about something. Again, Phil Reynolds does an excellent job in plugging zines in his two publications; as does David Hood in DW and CCC. Also, the willingness of pubbers to send out samples and answer questions (even those without SASE's) is important. This not only will help the potential subscriber; but the New Blood as well.

(KEVIN BROWN) Polls and Awards are fine. The

"bad" effects are vastly overstated. As for the effect on the attitude of publishers, I think most are pleased if they do well but are not terribly distressed when they don't. I don't want to go too much into this, since I wrote an article on this subject for The Roar of the Crowd and I don't want to give away the ending. As for potential subbers, I can only say that I have never gotten a subber who mentioned a poll or award as a reason for subbing and I have never subbed to a zine based on its result in a poll or award.

(W. ANDREW YORK) Regarding Jack's comments about the Hobby Awards nominating committee, I don't agree at all. Before I forget, I am a member of the committee, so my views reflect that -- to some extent. First off, the committee doesn't actually nominate anyone, though individual members may (but not committee members). Committee member nominations must come from outside the committee.

The committee exists to wean excessive number of nominations to five. If five or less people are nominated, we do nothing in that category -- and that has happened in each of the two years I've served. As for winning two years in a row, that is not permitted in the Miller award. However, it can happen in the other categories.

Articles from The General being nominated is perfectly fine -- as long as they deal with the hobby (in my opinion). Just because someone writes an excellent article doesn't mean that it must, or should, be eliminated from competition. Would he feel the same way if an article was published in a zine and reprinted in The General or one of TAHGC compendiums?

Also, since one of his qualifications for amateur status is that it be done from the home, what if I use the computer at work to write it? Or the publisher has a home office and uses that equipment? In other words, where should the line be drawn?

Term limitations, I take that or leave it. I feel that there is a very diverse group in the committee. It has people from all aspects of the hobby. I think the only common thread is that they were/are pubbers. However, I wasn't one when I started on the committee. I'm not sure about the others.

If someone else wishes to serve, I'll gladly step

down. I am on the committee as my "community service" part of my commitment to the Diplomacy Hobby. It really doesn't take up that much time, or effort, on my part. Fred and Ron (now Dave) do most of the work.

I, since this might come up, will categorically state that there is no conspiracy or collusion in these awards. The only award specific contact I've had is with Ron Cameron -- when he mails the information to me, and when I mail my ballot back. I have discussed my choices with no one else on the committee.

In fact, the only other comments I've received from other committee members was in a longer letter from Fred Davis (he and I correspond regularly) mentioning his feeling about one of the nominated articles and which was mailed after the deadline for our ballots. Further, I haven't (as I remember), ever written to/talked with three of the other members and only had very sporadic contact with all of the others (except Fred).

I'm ambivalent about the plaques. They aren't all that expensive (I don't think) and I feel they are a nice touch. If they can be provided through voluntary contributions, I don't see why we shouldn't continue them. However, if they become a drain on hobbywide funds, then discontinuing them should be considered.

(JIM MEINEL) Polls are just popularity contests so I guess people can argue whether those are good or bad. Awards are essentially the same thing though people may not realize it.

Awards do a lot of good in recognizing the efforts of largely volunteer participants in the hobby but I think have a significant potential downside. Unless the committees running them are following some sort of due process or maintaining objectivity, the credibility of the award is threatened. I'm not accusing any current or past award of a specific violation of this, I'm just pointing out that the potential is there. An example might be the nomination process. On some of the major awards (Walker, Miller) I am amazed how some submissions even made it on the ballot. I would think that no award should be given rather than accept nominations that fall below the norm.

I guess this would all go back to what is the award trying to accomplish? Naturally, to recognize an

outstanding contribution to the hobby. In the end, it turns out to be decided by other hobbyists and is thus a popularity contest.

Frankly, I ignore all of the awards hoopla. Like polls they are a popularity contest for zines, awards are more a popularity contest for individuals.

I like the idea the postal service has of requiring people to be dead before they are on a stamp. No, I'm not saying that hobbyists have to have literally expired before recognizing them. But it would make awards more objective if there was some sort of "cooling off" period for some of the major ones. We have a similar problem here in Anchorage. There are buildings and streets all over Anchorage named after people still living (usually mayors) - named usually within months after they leave office!

I doubt any "fair" way can be developed to give awards. The hobby is too small and in-bred. I think the best award is a nice letter to the pubber/custodian/player complimenting them on a job well done. That's better than any plaque.

(JIM BURGESS) Basically, the politics of polls has been much more damaging than even I would have thought possible. OK, I'm breaking my promise to Eric to be quiet during poll season (perhaps it will be over by print time) *{it will}* - the Runestone Poll is a monster and it should be killed, completely and totally. Even for someone who has been against it for a decade (for relatively well known reasons that I won't bother repeating), I have been surprised at how far reaching its effects have been. There is absolutely no question in my mind that there are fewer publications in the hobby (more folds of both reader and warehouse szines, fewer warehouse szines started) because of reactions to the poll. This is not a criticism of the Runestone pollster - but the poll itself. That's it. I want it gone - the chant throughout the land shall be "No more zeroes, no more zeroes!" I'm agnostic on the Marco Poll and Hobby Awards. I certainly don't think they've hurt anything. The dearth of good writing in the hobby is illustrated by the fact that a fluffy piece like the one Conrad von Metzke wrote criticizing the Runestone Poll was nominated this year. FlapJack's ideas are good, but he's right - I won't prove him wrong.

(MARK NELSON) Shock Horror! Hobby Probe! McHugh Speaks Sense! Hobby Elders Shocked!

On the whole the words "hobby ethics" and "Larry Peery" are not normally associated, except in a negative sense. Still Larry had the decency to disallow his nomination for any of the Hobby Awards he was involved in, an example that the current committee should follow.

The Melinda Holley Award is, always has been, and always will be a complete waste of time! A few pages ago people were suggesting that Doug should keep his fanac down to a manageable size, not to get too involved, not to get lost in at the deep end. A few pages later we find out that there is a hobby award for people who are doing too much! Do we want to encourage people to burn out? Do we want to encourage people to take on too much?

Hobby Awards should be awarded for fanac within the hobby. People writing for The General are getting their kickbacks in another manner.

I agree about plaques. As the bad boys would have loved to comment: You have a plaque in your front room for pushing pieces of plastic around, and it's a major achievement in your life? Get real!

(JOHN CARUSO) But there used to be a burning bush in Alexandria. Now we have a burning bush in DC.

In responding to Jack McHugh's ideas regarding the hobby awards - Jack has some good points, but as is with Jack, he thinks all of these ideas are great, needed, and problem solving. They are not. The 1st idea of not nominating one's own achievements is excellent. The rest are just filler. I mean, if Jack only gave one suggestion, it wouldn't look good. Everyone knows Jack must have at least three ideas on every topic, even if two of them are bogus. But at least its good that he took the time to come up with constructive ideas.

(MARK NELSON) On the whole new Polls do not add very much to the hobby. They don't distract from the hobby, but they don't add. People get tired of Poll after Poll. Many Polls only seem to be voted in by the organizers' subscribers.

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) Do we really have too many polls and awards? I don't think so. All the awards are in a large clump each spring, and the only polls are the Runestone and Marco. The rest are so relatively minor I don't remember them. I don't see that many publishers are affected by their standings as much as some people think - if you don't win, your position could be up or down five based on a single vote, usually, so people realize the difference between 10th and 11th is essentially a crapshoot. Potential subbers don't care about polls, do they? I've never had anyone sub to XL because they read about its Runestone finish, even when I had two consecutive 5th place finishes.

(DON DEL GRANDE) The General may be a professional publication, but the articles are usually written by gamers like us. (And what `zine doesn't give sub credit for its articles?) If the best Dip article appeared in The General, or Alarums & Excursions (a role-playing magazine, albeit amateur) for that matter, it deserves the Walker award. (At least one Miller Award winner probably feels that The General and anything with Walker's name deserve each other in light of "the Gamer's Guide incident"...)

Are there really *that* many polls and awards? (How many polls have a Best 'Zine category?) One thing I noticed when I first came into the hobby was not as much the Leeder Poll ranking as the number of people who voted for it, indicating the popular 'zines. (How bad can a `zine be if 75 people voted for it, meaning that at least 75 people read it?)

Ratings & Scoring Systems:

(JIM BURGESS) Pete Sullivan is right that the scoring system should be semi-secret. You want people to play "win only - stop the leader" Dip. I proposed a great (in my less than humble opinion) cutthroat scoring system in DW a while back that inverted the usual way of thinking about supply center counts and got blasted. Under the system a little survivor did better than a big one on the premise that the big one is more responsible for letting the winner get away and the system causes small survivors to work harder, rewarding them for

succeeding. I still think it's a great system. Pure "supply center count" systems are the work of the devil and promote four-way draws. As long as the system is semi-secret you can do other manipulations to penalize four-ways.

(DON DEL GRANDE) The reason I feel that a 19-center win is not necessarily better than an 18-center win is that the 18-center winner doesn't have a chance to improve on the score; the 18-center powers should be able to reach at least 30 given enough time.

Speaking of scoring systems, this year's DipCon used the "semi-secret system", but just enough of the scoring system was revealed to radically set the players' strategy. We knew that "best two rounds count" and "a win and an elimination beats any two draws"; when put together, this becomes "anybody with a win beats everybody with no wins".

The Future:

(PETE GAUGHAN) Popular Cutlery in Australia has just opened a game of Fax Dip. I'm sure a lot of phone calls will also be made but fax would seem to be a nice compromise between the deceit and precision of writing, and the speed of telephones - sort of a pbem for those of us without modems.

(MARK NELSON) There has been a fair bit of comment over the past few years about faxzines in Australia. Ex-pubber Greg Long may have actually run one or two games by fax, and Adrian Appleyard currently has a waiting list for fax-dip.

A fax-zine is a neat idea and can offer several things that you can't (yet) get via email. Email via Internet is over-rated and not particularly interesting.

(JOHN CARUSO) I can see modem zines a distinct possibility, but a faxzine? A faxzine is extra work and expense. How many people do you think own a personal fax (PF)? Half dozen in Dipdom, maybe! What about a modem? I'd say 1/2 the people in Dipdom who own computers. They even sell new computers (under \$1500) with a modem as standard equipment.

If anyone has ever had to use a commercial fax, they'll tell you - the cost is prohibitive. So let's hope Kevin Brown is wrong and modem zines emerge and set the pass (after the mail zines).

*{Uh, John, first of all it's spelled modem, not modum. Anyway, ever hear of Electronic Protocol or The Armchair Diplomat? Those **are** modem zines!}*

PDORA/Zine Register:

(FRED DAVIS) I agree with the others who have recommended that the PDORA-ZR affair not be blown up into a full-blown feud. Since Schenck is only going to produce one more issue of ZR, I believe we can now begin to let things quiet down. The last thing the Postal hobby needs, with its declining membership, is another Great Feud.

(JIM BURGESS) I agree almost 100% with Bob Acheson. I don't care to be feudish and discuss the details. I would not be inclined to give ZR must monetary support under any circumstances and have said so for many many years. Garret is being hurt partially because he is not familiar with those discussions of the mid 80's, so he expected something he should not have expected. Please don't (to all parties in general) get caught up in petty discussions of side issues. Let's start with the premise that ZR gets no money whatsoever and ask why it should get money. It's fundamentally different from the other hobby services in the nature of the effort required. Believe me, Garret, doing orphan service or number custodian work is far more thankless.

(JOHN CARUSO) For all of the people addressing this controversy as Doug vs. Garret -it is not. It is between John Caruso and Garret Schenck. Two guys who are friends and may not be when this is all done.

To Kevin Brown - Garret has claimed he was denied funding for political and personal reasons. Since Garret is a friend, the personal excuse is bogus. As for political - who's political views? Mine or the committee's? Garret holds me responsible for my "neutral" rating of his service. But I've listed many services just like that in the past and they received

money. Why the ratings at all? They were used to divide applicants into three groups:

Favorable - services which don't charge for their service (BNC, MNC, Orphans, etc.)

Neutral - Services which charge for their service (ZR, MoD, Supernova, etc.)

Unfavorable - Dipdom publications, polls, awards, and joke services (Dip World, KK, Runestone, Marco, Hall of Fame, Feud Custodian, UNCLE, etc). Anyone in Dipdom may create a poll, award, or start a zine.

I did not come up with these alone. Simon Billenness and I hashed these out. The object was to make the committee's job easier. Neutrals require a 3-2 to get funding, favorables require 2-3. Unfavorables require 4-1. That's how the Hobby Awards received money this year (by getting at least 4 yes votes).

To Jim Meinel - The criteria used is what I put in the newsletter to the committee. In defense of Garret - I put nothing puffy in there to aid him. In defense of myself - I put nothing negative about his request, not even that it was too extravagant.

I also left out the breakdown of his expenses (\$150 for advertising and \$250 for trades). I also left out the need of ZR and that it has received no money in three years (no requests - but still no money).

The committee did not shoot themselves in the foot. If anyone blew toes off, it was me and Garret. I could have been more instrumental in getting Garret money, but that isn't my job nor my makeup. I'm not a "pressure artist." And why should I do for Garret what I do not do for anyone else? I try to treat everyone the same and show no favoritism. Garret clearly wanted (or expected) biased favoritism. There is no other way to explain his going off the wall over this.

But I digress - I will take full blame for the whole thing, justified or not. And as I've done at least once before, I'll do again - I'm sorry Garret! I apologize! But I do not control the 5 people who decide. If Garret sees no fault of his own, then I'll bite the bullet.

To Bob Acheson - I disagree with you on pre-judging the ZR beforehand, referring to your comment to give it no money this year if it asks. You should try to judge on the merits, and need, year by year.

Steve Arnawoodian read Foolhardy and has told me I may publically disclose his position if he doesn't get the chance to write. Doug can verify steve's vote right here - Steve voted to give the ZR money. Less than asked for, but he voted yes to funding ZR. Doug?

To Doug - the 50¢ General fee for an ad is in the "Opponents Wanted" section. A 1/4 page ad would probably run \$50-\$100.

*{I confirm - Steve voted to give ZR funding. As for the General ads, all you **need** are the Opponents Wanted ads. They're cheap, and most subbers - myself included - scan them for interesting ads.}*

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) I think we're pretty much in agreement on the PDORA vs. ZR fiasco. I guess the way I read Doug's original response I got a slightly off impression: I had the impression that the members must have consulted one another, or how else would an amount such as \$43.41 be decided upon? Anyhow, your explanation of how the whole thing works clarifies a lot, and I will report this in the next issue of XL. Whoever designed the system of fund allocation (John Caruso?) deserves some praise for a job well done. I also like your idea, Doug, of including breakdowns of requests in the summary sent to the Committee. It might be useful to break a large request such as the one Garret made into the sum of a few smaller ones - especially since some portions of the request might get different ratings.

{Well, I'm not going to break down requests myself, but if the person requesting the funds offers a breakdown, or any other details they think are necessary, I will distribute that info to the committee. This way, the committee will have all of the same information that I have.}

(MARK NELSON) I've been trading with ZR off and on from May 1987 until the time that Garret took over. Garret cut all overseas trades. Well, I'm not too distressed since he can get reviews of overseas zines from those editors that take a more enlightened approach to trading.

In the early days ZR was an invaluable tool for my exploration of the North American hobby. It

pointed out interesting zines and was a source of feud-free reviews of zines I'd neither heard of or seen. Over the years it has ceased to be the crutch that it once was, but even so I still find it useful to read up about potential new trades/zines to sub to. And if you want to get a brief overview of recent hobby history reading through back issues of ZR is a reasonable thing to do.

Still, this is still available to me isn't? The trading option may have been cut but I can always sub to the zine can't I?

Well, now that I mention it... I can't. Garret feels that all non North Americans are not part of the hobby. They're not interested in playing games, only reading zines. As only diplomacy players are part of the hobby overseas readers are not part of the hobby. Hence they are not *allowed* to sub to ZR. That's right, Garret denies overseas people the opportunity to learn more about the North American zine scene.

(I presume that this policy will also extend to use of The Zine Bank. One of the first things that I did when I was first exploring the North American Hobby was to order a stack of zines from the Zine Bank --- as a direct result of the zines mailed me I started trading with Frobozz and The Appalachian General, zines that I wouldn't have seen purely on the basis of reviews elsewhere. I presume that Garret will refuse to honor requests for samples of North American zines from people living overseas.)

But this exclusion of internationalists isn't just a one-way mirror, it works both ways. Over the years I've had numerous requests from North Americans as a result of reviews in ZR and have gained some of my favorites readers/trades in this manner. How can North Americans learn about zines outside their own borders when ZR is closed to such zines? But, Garret no doubt believes that such people are not interested in playing Diplomacy and therefore are probably not part of the American hobby. Why should he support them? (Things have slightly changed with ZR #20).

No reason. After all he's entitled to run the zine anyway it wants. After all he pays for it. But, and it's a big but, if he wants funding from the North American Hobby he must be willing to recognize the interests of the North American Hobby and that means not running a feud oriented zine and running reviews of zines that

people are interested in.

But let's consider this funding angle again. The PDORA auction raises money from North American Hobby members to support services for North American Hobby Members --- perhaps we should decide what we mean by who is a North American hobby member before deciding if Garret should receive funding?

The PDORA takes a wide ranging definition of the term North American hobby member. Anyone who wants to submit items for sale can do so by contacting the organizer. Similarly anyone can bid (and win) items in the sale by contacting the organizer. You don't need to be living in North America to take part in the auction!

Now let's look at some of the services that the PDO have supported in the past. Anyone can subscribe to Everything, anyone can subscribe to Alpha & Omega and anyone can subscribe to the MNCuc zine. As I understand it anyone can be nominated for one of the American Hobby Awards --- there is no formal requirement to be actually living in North America.

The PDO support services which anyone can use. You don't have to be living in North America to subscribe to Everything etc Yet you have to be a North American to subscribe to ZR. My question is this: As a matter of principle should the PDO be supporting something which has a smaller Hobby base than the PDO itself? I think not.

Now, I have actually seen (through the usual 3rd party) a copy of ZR 20. This zine contains a great deal of bitter reviews and hobby commentary from a biased angle.

There is nothing wrong *per se* with such an approach to running a listings zine. However, such a zine should not be eligible for PDO funding. If Garret wants to run a more controversial listings zine then previous custodians then that is his right as editor --- but this is not the kind of listings zine that the hobby should support financially. After all if we supported this kind of material then we would open the floodgate to many other applicants.

Now let's consider in detail the funding request for \$400 that Garret submitted.

I agree that hobby publicity is something that should be supported. And I would not want to see someone going ahead and spending his own money on this, as this is the kind of thing that the PDO should be supporting *but* I do not think that the PDO should fund any such request unless more detail is being provided. Details such as which zines are going to be plugged, how the hobby is going to be described etc.

I disagree with John Caruso. Surely PDO money is perfect for advertising in more 'unusual' places which may not hit a rich seam but which may bring in some new blood? I can't speak for the American hobby but in the UK there has been a steady trickle of people from the fantasy side entering the dip hobby ---at least three of the UK readers of Foolhardy fall into this category! And I can only think of one person who went in the other direction.

I've stated a number of occasions that SF fans will make ready and good converts into dip fandom. Literate and interesting zines such as Penguin Dip and Northern Flame are the kinds of zines which will readily appeal to SF fans. Curiously enough, I guess that most of the zines that Garret would recommend would *actually* turn potential sf fans *off* the dip hobby! This is why any request for funding for publicity should be contained with details of how that funding is going to be used.

As I understand it Garret did not provide any of these details, so I would have refused him money for it. \$150 down, \$250 to go.

Before asking ourselves is \$259 a reasonable sum to give to the ZR we must first decide, what is a hobby service? In short anything that anyone wants to describe as being a hobby service is a hobby service.

Thing that there should be a custodian giving out numbers to Kremlin Gamestarts, then set yourself up as the KNC. Thing that there is a demand for different Titan Variants, then set yourself up as the TVBC. The hobby is anarchy --- you don't need permission to set up a hobby service if you think there is a demand for that service. Go ahead, set it up and see if there is any support for your new service.

So, ZR *is* a hobby service. So is YZOZ and CCCRoZ. Anyone can bid for money. What the PDO committee have to decide is how valuable a hobby

service you are running and to what tune your funding request is reasonable.

The PDO is a organization set up by hobby members who saw a need for a funding body to raise money for hobby services. It has no official hobby approval, because none is needed. Whilst hobby members continue to believe that (a) The PDO is necessary and (b) That they are doing a good job then they will

What costs does ZR custodian occur? Well he has to print his originals out, get the zine copied and mailed out. He also has the `cost' of trading with a large number of publications. Or does he? Personally I feel that the custodian gets paid back in kind. He gets to read all the zines sent to him.

Furthermore, is he trading with that many zines? After all I presume that Garret was already trading with zines with Upstart --- does he have any reason to send copies of ZR to editors of zines that he already sees? I think not. Does he have to trade with those zines that he does not already trade with? I think not --- he may make a decision to trade with them but that is a policy decision.

Hobby Custodians do not have a right to run a service that breaks even, many Custodians are happy to run their show in the knowledge that they lose money. If Garret doesn't like the fact that he loses money then he shouldn't be doing the job!

And what's one of the reasons that Garret is losing money? Because he laserprints out each individual copy on recycled paper. Should the PDO fund a Custodian's losses when that Custodian is choosing one of the most expensive means of production, when a Custodian is ignoring cheaper alternatives? I think not.

Based upon this criteria I believe that I would have given Garret \$50 for ZR. This provides some cover for the costs of printing out a set of originals and provides some money towards recovering other costs. I do not believe that he deserves any more.

I do not believe that Garret should receive any of the 1991 money --- you can't change your decision without setting a precedent for future controversy. You may decide to give the Custodian more money next year, but you can't do anything more this year.

*{I don't know if know if Garret did **refuse** requests from overseas Dipsters for the Zine Register, but Iain Bowen now reports that Brits can get a copy of ZR direct from Garret for \$4 US.*

}

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) Your letter on PDORA/ZR *{printed in XL #44}* was a fine reward for my work in trying to summarize the controversy in XL #43. I hope you'll reprint some of it in FH #3; it answered a lot of questions, and clearly showed that PDORA is well thought out to make controversies like this the exception rather than the rule.

{Well, John Caruso's letter above covers a lot of the same ground, so I'll let it pass for now. I am glad you found the information useful - there seems to have been some misconceptions as to how PDORA works, and I'm glad to see them cleared up.}

(DON DEL GRANDE) Garret may have given perfectly good reasons for asking for \$400 for the ZR - but all I saw was a sheet stating how much the PDORA took in and what organizations asked for what amounts, along with John's recommendations (which indicated how many of the five committee members needed to vote for it to allocate the money - and note that all members, whether they vote for or against a request, also assign an amount to be given to that request should it pass; the average of the middle three amounts (in this case, the chairman has no say) is the final amount).

Attracting New Blood:

(KEVIN BROWN) I don't have any concrete proposals, but it's been my experience that organized hobby groups aren't usually very organized and that efforts from individuals are generally more effective.

(DAVID HOOD) As much as I hate to say it, I believe our recruitment efforts would be more successful if we had some sort of organization as the front man. Not to "run" the hobby, mind you, but to provide some sort of legitimacy to the hobby. I, for one, believe Diplomacy could be a much bigger deal than it is now - the game itself is that good - but not if there is no hobby "Federation" or "Association" or whatever. We could

make it completely voluntary, such that the organization does not speak for everybody in the hobby. But let's have some semblance of order to project to the outside world.

What would such an organization actually do? Well, first off it would sanction FTF events that met certain criteria. Then the results of each would be used to rate N. American Diplomacy players similarly to ratings that exist for Chess and other games. Sort of like Don Del Grande's thing but on a wider scale.

Second, the North American Diplomacy Federation, or whatever, would lend its name to the various novice recruitment packages that exist. So, when I or past DW editors get novices from the box flyers or directly from Avalon Hill, we would send or have sent to them a Federation Novice Packet, consisting of an issue of DW, Supernova, Masters of Deceit, Pontevedria, and the ZR.

Third, the organization would be responsible for sending press releases to the media concerning upcoming events, as well as concerning winners of past events. If, for example, Doug Kent wins DipCon some year, the Federation would send a release to local media outlets in the Rahway area. There are more Diplomacy players out there than we think, and lots of local papers looking to canonize local winners. Media attention might help bring in folks who are familiar with the game but not the hobby.

See, the Federation wouldn't have to take sides in anything. There will be feuds, just like in other human endeavors from church to school to Kiwanis Clubs to politics. But if we understand the benefits of such a named organization, I believe we can make it work.

Comments, anyone?

*{I'm sure the masses out there will have an opinion on **this** one!}*

(JIM MEINEL) I've always had the feeling that the hobby has been shrinking rather than growing the last five years or so. Even if the absolute numbers of participants stayed the same it would still be a loss, as the population of potential participants is increasing. If we are to bring in more people I believe we have to first identify our audience; which people will be predisposed

to playing postally in the first place? Looked at in this light, I don't think FTF or conventions are the prime route. Granted, we should have some level of publicity there, but these people are predisposed to playing FTF. The type of people who play postally and the type who play FTF are different.

People play by mail because they can't scare up a game locally. They have a box but no one to play with. Because of this, I think the number one recruiting effort should be to have the **best possible recruiting flyer** in the game box sold by Avalon Hill. Besides the flyer I saw when I bought my game in 1980, I've never seen it again. This flyer, I think, should be familiar to all of us publishers and reviewed by us at regular intervals to insure that it is putting our best recruiting foot forward. The absolute best time to snare people is when they have purchased the game and realized they may not be able to get enough people to play. Another reason this avenue is so important is that, at least once, we get some postal Diplomacy information into the hands of every single purchaser of the game.

I would be very interested in seeing what flyer is in there right now (if any). I would also be interested in finding out from Avalon Hill how many copies of the game they ship annually. I would suggest that we offer some real inducements to get purchasers to send away for data, i.e. free copy of Diplomacy World or Zine Register, or a voucher for a free game of Dip(?!). These free copies or games could be funded as a hobby service. (Whether this is workable would depend on what the exposure is to free copies being distributed - why I'd like to know the sales figure ahead of time). This is the key point I think where we are going to get new blood. It's cheap, it's easy and it hits the direct population we want to reach. Does anyone know the status of the flyer?

*{David Hood has reported that Rex Martin contacted him about helping with the **new flyer** (for the Deluxe Diplomacy set, to be released ~~in January 1992~~ ~~in July 1992~~ ~~in November 1992~~ sometime in the future). Perhaps David can provide some further details of that discussion?}*

(JIM BURGESS) Much of the new blood problem has to do with deeper social issues in this country over

which we have no control. For the most part this hobby is populated by bright mavericks of one sort or another. Society at large is pushing all of us to consider social recreation like Dip as "wasting time", whatever that means. Collecting stamps or baseball cards is a competitive way to make money on the side. Playing sports is only acceptable with things like golf because it's an extension of work and with things like running or lifting weights because it puts you in shape to work harder (other sports fall in between). Call me cynical, but some of the hobby pressures on PC for Dip szines comes from similar psychology. None of this is what Dipdom was about. We're playing the ultimate competitive game and I'm suggesting we do it uncompetitively. That's right. That's precisely what I'm suggesting. Now we come back to new blood. Before we search for success, we have to define what we want. I'll start there. E-Mail Dip attracts lots of new blood, but by my definition that I'll come to next - mostly the wrong kind. If we do want bright maverick types who will stay around for a while and keep hobby oriented fannishness in and competitive...dare I say it?...no, let's say competitive extensions of work out, then we have a tough row to hoe. As I asserted at the top there is little or nothing we can do about the fact that what we (as I've defined it) are looking for cuts against the grain of current social trends.

Okay, but we can still do something. We can be as open, nationally and internationally, as we can be with the things about our hobby that would attract people we want. For publishers, that means relatively open trading of szines and an active Zine Bank so we remain connected. For the orphan service it means being careful to place those games from little warehouse flyer szines in larger szines so novices don't get discouraged and lost. It means not doing things in an organized way, but each individual has to do their part to stay open. It's never easy since the natural tendency is to be insular, but ultimately we are a hobby of individuals and people will stay here only if they like being associated with other individuals. It's all about connectedness and a sense of distant family - the eternal pull of the pen pal.

Another pet peeve (and the exception to organized new blood searches) I have is about gaming

conventions. My particular scheduling problems preclude my attending many cons so I know this always sounds like an outside attack, but our best hope for interested new blood is active participation in the major gaming cons. Dipcon should on a regular basis be attached to a major national gaming con. Yes, we might be swallowed up a bit by Avaloncon or Origins, but it would be good to be there periodically (at an absolute minimum once every four years) and we as a hobby should be at each one.

(FRED DAVIS) I would agree that the very best way of attracting new Postal Diplomacy players is with ads in The General. Rex Martin has advised me that anyone can place a small ad for just 50 cents. It might also be comparatively inexpensive for a hobby group, such as the editors of Diplomacy World or Zine Register to place a larger ad, listing the names of some of the top-rated zines. Years ago, such zines were listed right on the "Play Dip by Mail" flyer in the game box, but the constant turnover in zines caused Avalon Hill to simply list one P.O. Box instead as a contact point. (At this time, I believe the contact point is a POB maintained by Larry Peery).

The second best source of advertising for new players, in my opinion, would be an ad in the Mensa Bulletin, the monthly magazine sent to some 55,000 members of American Mensa. Many Mensans are interested in games. I've found that many are familiar with the game of Diplomacy, but didn't know that it was being played by mail. The Mensa Postal Diplomacy Special Interest Group has attracted 100 people into the hobby over the past 17 years. Not that they all stayed - turnover in the Diplomacy SIG seems to follow the same pattern as elsewhere in the hobby - but it has brought us several good zine publishers over the years. (I, myself, was recruited into the hobby by another Mensan many years ago).

Other games, mostly from smaller companies such as "Wiffenproof", have been advertised in the Bulletin over the years. Jim Fixx's book, Games Bright People Play, was also advertised. (Mr. Fixx was a Mensan). The Dip SIG, of course, gets a free plug every six months, when all of the Mensa SIGs are listed, but I think an advertisement would catch more

notice.

We can obtain information on the costs for various size ads by writing to American Mensa, Ltd., 2626 E. 14th St., Brooklyn, NY, 11235. I would be glad to participate in such a project, but I would not want to use my home address to handle responses. Any such committee should include the editors of Diplomacy World, Foolhardy, Zine Register, and World Diplomacy. Perhaps Peery's POB address could be used as the contact point, to maintain a single such point. The cost for such an ad, which ought to run for at least two consecutive months, could be shared by all of the above people.

(MARK NELSON) In the ideal world there should be little problem attracting new blood in the States. Flyer in the Box, regular plugs in The General and several dip tournaments in large wargaming cons. All this should ensure a good targeting of potential new blood.

A one-page or two-page flyer outlining the joys of postal dip and containing a list of recommended zines (such as Diplomacy World) is a good idea. The best way to do is for someone to go ahead and do it! Don't wait for "hobby approval", don't wait for "hobby consensus" on what to put in the flyer. Go ahead and write one and distribute it!

Incidentally, I wouldn't stick at aiming at diplomacy players. These days there are a whole host of games being played postally which can attract new people into the hobby. David has run a number of articles in Diplomacy World on the different non-diplomacy games that are being played. Why restrict publicity for these games to people already in the hobby?

(JAMES NELSON) Y'all listening? The best way of attracting new blood into the Diplomacy hobby is via the flyer in the Diplomacy box. Whilst this should try and sell the postal play of Diplomacy I feel that it should also bring to the attention of the buyer that there are many other boardgames played by post. There is no "Civilization" hobby, nor a "Rail Baron" hobby, yet both games are fairly popular postal games, and someone may feel more tempted to enter the hobby if

s/he knows there is a variety of games played. In fact there is a case for putting flyers in other games that Diplomacy on the principal that such new blood might start playing Diplomacy along the way. [I learnt Diplomacy from a photocopy of the rules having entered via the role-playing hobby. I only started playing Diplomacy because a Lew Pulsipher fantasy variant, Song of the Night, looked very interesting and hence I needed the rules to follow the game and become a standby for it. I have never owned a copy of Diplomacy. I finished fourth (out of five) in the game. Sigh. Some things never change!]

But there are many other ways of attracting new blood, although none as effective as the flyer. The organizers of Diplomacy conventions should ensure that local gaming, wargaming and role-playing clubs, local game shops, local press and radio are all aware of the event and what it offers. Again, emphasis should be made that it is not just Diplomacy which is being played. Some mention could be made that there is a wider postal hobby as some local players may be interested in not only attending a local gaming convention but also playing postally.

Lastly advertisements in professional magazines may attract newcomers. The General is a God-send to the Diplomacy hobby, but again is the Diplomacy hobby ensuring that readers get to know that games other than Diplomacy are played? Wargaming and role-playing magazines' classifieds are another good place if it is not too expensive to advertise. John Caruso moaned about Garret spending \$34.50 on an ad in a role-playing magazine. I don't consider this to be a waste of money, and neither do I think that John's argument re, people it brings in, is relevant. When I joined the Diplomacy hobby from the role-playing hobby (which I am no longer a part of) there were a significant number of people moving from role-playing to Diplomacy and no one that I heard of going the other way. If only two people respond to an ad how many zines do they have to sub to before the hobby gains? Only two or three I should imagine. I don't think it is effective to advertise regularly in role-playing magazines but perhaps the hobby should advertise the ZR on an annual basis in a couple of role-playing magazines?

(MARK NELSON) Hobby Publicity is best organized by individuals getting up and strutting their stuff. If you leave it to hobby groups you get all kinds of delays (who get's in on the group, who shall we publicize, who will draw up the list etc) and nothing much ever happens.

And if you don't like the way one particularly person is organizing hobby publicity there are two things you can do (1) Offer to help him out and point out where you think he is going wrong and (2) Set yourself up and get out there!

I believe that the best way to attract new members is to emphasize the variety of games that are being played postally --- through publicity at Cons (adds in the convention booklets, freebies etc) and through The General (which provides, more-or-less, free publicity through adds/reviews to a prime target audience.

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) It seems to me that the biggest thing preventing people from joining DipDom from FTF play is the slowness of the mails! Every time I explain what I do as a GM, people always ask how long a game takes. Since we can't do anything about the postal speed short of dismantling the PBM hobby and moving en masse to PBEM, all we can do is look for the intersection of two diverse sets: **a**) people who have the long-term patience to play PBM Dip, and **b**) people who enjoy games like Dip. Game box flyers get **b** but not necessarily **a**. The General ads get **b** but not necessarily **a**. Where can we find people fitting both descriptions? Well, the Mensa SIGs is one place.

(DON DEL GRANDE) The best way of attracting new PBM Dip players probably is the method used now - a flyer in the box. This is the only way of guaranteeing that someone who owns the game will know about the hobby.

Computer Diplomacy Aides:

(KEVIN BROWN) I doubt the computer Dip player will have much of an impact. It might be useful for playing out 1-center-lost-cause types of positions, but I

don't see it as being a regular player in a game.

(JIM MEINEL) Computers can play poker but they can't bluff worth a damn. So much of Diplomacy is psychology, I seriously doubt a tactically flawless program could be any good at the game. Actually, I'd rather ALL the players have the program to map out his optimal moves and then negotiate from there. We would pretend that our computer is our perfect Panzer Commander, and we are the Foreign Minister winning the war on the diplomatic front. That actually results in a *purier* game of Dip. Yeah! Go for it dude!

(JIM BURGESS) You read about this from me. Judge is not flawless because the computer can go down, and often does, though that's not really a serious problem. As Eric Ozog has said - (paraphrasing) "where's the fun in being GM unless you adjudicate (accent on the "jud", uh sound in the u, d silent) it yourself." The AI people are serious researchers in France - a professor and group of graduate students, I believe. Daniel Leob is the leader and he may be found via the Internet network at "LEOB@geocub.greco-prog.fr", and his actual address is: LABRI Universite de Bordeaux I, 33405 Talence Cedex, France.

I've been amazed at how far they've come and how well organized the umbrella protocol is. They will produce something that plays the game well, I think they will. Realize this statement comes from a skeptic. I'll spare you guys technical details about Nash equilibria and randomizing solutions, but I think they're onto something. Unlike chess, there is no danger of a computer being "the best player in the world" in any real sense though. As we all know - we can always beat it on the personality issue. The computer will be a really boring player, no flair (unless it's programmed in). It will be fun to watch but it will always lose if people gang up on it.

(ANDY LISCHETT) A computer program that plays Diplomacy? Who's going to teach it how to know when Pete Fuchs is lying? Who's going to teach me how to know when Pete Fuchs is lying?

(MARK NELSON) They will have no effect

whatsoever so long as the diplomacy hobby and the email hobby remain so separated.

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) No effect. A computer might win a no-press Gunboat game in a bad field. So what?

The Age of Laser Printers:

(KEVIN BROWN) I liked my zine better when it was done on a Typewriter. Computers are good for record keeping and the print looks nice, but you lose a little of the "personal touch" when you laser print instead of typing. Or it feels that way to me. I'm sure everybody else thinks they're great.

(W. ANDREW YORK) It has increased the subbers' expectations of the pubbers. In some ways it has helped bring New Blood in and invigorate portions of the hobby. But, I feel that increased expectations brings dissatisfaction with the pubber who doesn't have the fancy machines. Maybe this will bring further polarization into the hobby, though I hope not.

(JIM MEINEL) The advent of computers is nothing but a plus. I don't think that could be argued any other way in terms of facilitating the actual production of a zine. I think where the debate comes in is has the method of producing a zine changed the content. Just as the typewriter replaced handwriting and allowed a clearer expression of ideas, so has the word processor allowed ideas to be communicated better than the typewriter. The ability of a lowly hobby publisher to adjust page layout, fonts, graphics, pictures has merely empowered us with the same tools long available to the mass media.

To pick up on your comments last issue, Doug, I think it would be very sad if potential publishers are scared away from starting to publish by the expectations they feel the general hobby may have towards what constitutes a "good" zine. Us publishers get all hot and sweaty over laser printers and desktop publishing programs, but I will insist to my last drop of toner that content overrules all style considerations. A crappy looking zine with excellent content will beat out a sharp-looking product written by a bozo every time, I guarantee it. My zine, The Prince, might be a good

example. Very warehouse, produced on a crummy dot matrix printer until a year ago. Then I discovered...the laser printer and Word Perfect. Almost overnight the zine became (in my humble opinion) a pretty nice looking zine. But over those last 10 or 12 issues my subscribership hasn't gone up appreciably even though I've had game openings announced. Why not? Because the *content* didn't change. It's still a warehouse zine. Had I started printing some outrageous material (hard to fathom a CPA doing, but go with me on this one) I'd bet I would have picked up some new subbers. So I hope people realize it's the read, and not the cover, the subbers want.

A related topic is all this talk of "turbo-phreaks." The whole debate seems silly to me because a question has to be asked first: what turnaround is the pubber advertising? If the pubber says ahead of time "I publish when I damn well want to, and that happens to be once every three months" and I decide to play there under those terms, then there is absolutely no basis for ANYONE in the hobby to complain about a slow turnaround time for that publisher. But...on the other hand, if Superfast Zine advertises to the hobby that it has next day turnaround time, and he mails out his zine a week later half the time, then let the Turbo-Phreaks feast. You simply have to base your judgements on what is being represented. To do otherwise is just pigheadedness - foisting your values on others who are happy with what they are getting.

(JIM BURGESS) Hey Doug, you don't remember unreadable dittos!! There is no question that computers are a plus, but a laser printed szine is not better simply by definition. Content is #1.

(PETER SULLIVAN) Overall, it must be thumbs-up to personal computers. The ability to spread work about and do as much typing as possible before the deadline improves turnaround, and makes it much easier to keep on cranking the thing out, even when you're not really in the mood. The downsides are (a) Railroad Tycoon, and other distractions, and (b) that the emphasis on D.T.P. layout and laser quality production can (although it doesn't have to) mean that editors spend so much time messing around making it look pretty that it

slows down the turnaround.

(MARK NELSON) Incidentally re laser printers. After ManorCovern I plan to write an article on Zines and The Technology used to produce them. One point that I will be making is that the very best zines produced via duplicators and stencils are better looking and more satisfying than any of the DTP/laser printed zines that I have zeen. 8-) (Of course the average DTP zine is normally better than the average duplicated zine but since so much emphasis is being put these days on fanzines as objects of art I shall be concentrating on the Monet's, Gaughan's and Cezanne's of the fanzine field.)

(ANDY LISCHETT) The proliferation of computer stuff is (to me) a small minus. Most computer zines look too much alike. I also get the impression sometimes that publishers spend time playing with software that they would otherwise spend on content. Also, I've never seen a publishers say his zine is two months late because the info he had in a manilla folder was erased during a thunderstorm.

Good zines (the best zines?) have been done on typewriters, and all that computers have added is graphics that give zines the personality of a Publishers' Clearinghouse form-letter.

(JAMES NELSON) The main trouble with PCs and Laser printers is the syndrome of Presentation over Contents, Blandness over Interest. Too many pubbers spend too much time on worrying whether their zine is going to look fancy. As long as I can read the zine all I am interested in doing is that, reading it. But if the zine is fancy but the contents boring I am going to stop getting it. Some editors manage both, Northern Flame for instance is both nicely laid out and very interesting.

There is also the syndrome of using too much desk-top publishing or using the wrong software. An example was a British zine, Garbage In, Garbage Out which has recently folded. The editor not only used inappropriate software (some Art package I believe) but used about twenty different fonts! He even threatened to use all ninety-eight available to him! A zine needs one size for reading material, one for titles, italics for

the pubbers comments, bold for emphasis and underlining for titles and extra emphasis. OK, so maybe I'm simplifying things slightly, it's nice to use a couple of different sizes for titles depending on whether they are sub-titles or main titles, but is it really that important?

(MARK NELSON) Zines have increased in prettiness and readability, but this has had no effect on the content of the zine. Who cares how good the reproduction is if the zine contains nothing worth reading? (Exception --- warehouse zines, but in this case who cares how pretty the zine is if the games aren't running well).

As I wrote in The Mark Nelson Experience Issue Five: despite the proliferation of dtp and laser printers the most attractive fanzines that I've seen (and most fannishly satisfying) have all been mimeographed.

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) Both are mixed bags. Pluses for computers are pretty obvious: word processing saves time and typing (the previous game report file generally is good for half or more of the next report), computerized record keeping helps keep track of subbers and address lists, and desktop publishing makes zines look better than ever. Pluses for laser printers are pretty obvious to anyone who has ever strained his eyes reading small print. The minus factor in laser printing is that not everyone can get it, and this creates an obvious difference between laser and non-laser zines. Look alone isn't everything! The negatives of computers are that most publishers have two choices: get some zine-producing procedure that works and stick to it without doing much to utilize the machine's capabilities; or, keep changing things to find the combination that takes most advantage of the machine, a process that takes up valuable time and probably is the biggest reason zines are delayed (OK, maybe #2 after "general laziness"...). With 4MB of RAM, I am at about the same point on the power spectrum as I was in 1985, when I had only 40K of RAM in a C64! While computers have helped writers in the hobby, I look back to early typewritten issues of my zine, and find uniqueness in the "just wing it" writing style there - not very refined, but an "edge" that you lose sometimes when you can edit your stuff easily. The net is a plus,

but it isn't a shutout...

(DON DEL GRANDE) Computers and laser printers didn't hurt me one bit. Certainly, when I switched from a dor-matrix to a laser printer, the print quality of Lemon Curry improved dramatically. And the main advantage of putting the `zine onto a computer is the ability to cut and paste each issue to specific page sizes.

When typing the `zine, the order in which things were typed pretty much determined where they appeared, and if something was too long, the `zine was usually extended by an extra sheet.

You are the ZR Publisher:

(KEVIN BROWN) The main change I would make in the ZR would be to only print reviews from people actually playing or otherwise contributing (through letters to a lettercol, etc.) in a zine. If some zines are left with no reviews then so be it. I do not think the hobby has "outgrown" the ZR. I have gotten several new subbers from people seeing the ZR, so it is definitely useful for attracting new blood to a zine. I don't see the hobby as especially surly. Compared to the time when I started in the hobby (1982), things are downright placid. There will always be some clash of egos in the hobby. That doesn't mean that hobby services can't function without being a party to them.

(W. ANDREW YORK) Nope, not me. No fancy computer, laser printer...Has the hobby outgrown ZR? I don't know. I do feel that ZR puts off novices and definitely should have the SuperNova packet go with it to help blunt the overwhelming information.

To replace ZR, I think Pontevedria and ZR should be combined in some way. Each pubber would have 100 (or so) words to describe his zine. That plus all the information current in Pont would be printed up regularly. The pubbers could change their information at any time (effective the next printing).

This would reduce the immense size of ZR and give the potential subber (and the novice) a package that they could easily handle. Lists or codes could be used for quick indexing for zines with maps, lettercols, types of games available, frequency of publication,

international membership, etc. It also is imperative that pubbers offer free/low cost samples so that potential subbers can see what they're getting before they send in any money.

The review portion of ZR could be placed in a YZOZ type of zine. Three to four zines would be reviewed on a monthly basis. The next ones in the spotlight would be announced a month ahead of time, and anyone could contribute their views and comments.

(JIM MEINEL) There isn't too much damn different you could do to the Zine Register to improve it. The Peel-Nash-Schenck editorships have raised the level of the publication to stunningly excellent heights; top notch production, wide circulation, large amounts of contributors and wide coverage of zines. I rather expect any subsequent efforts to actually go down in quality.

I don't see how the hobby has "outgrown" the register. Why outgrown? There should not be a single listing and description of all current zines? Why not?

I sense this topic is dancing around the real question: what level of editorial content/slant is acceptable in a publication like The Zine Register? Before you can answer that question we first have to ask what is the zine for?

1. For publishers:
 - a. Advertise their product.
 - b. Get players.
 - c. See what the "other guy" is doing.
2. For players:
 - a. Get information on zines to subscribe to.
 - b. Introduce new people to the hobby.
3. For the hobby:
 - a. Provide an archival record of zines published.

These are all positive things that shouldn't require much editorializing. Where the slant comes in is in 2a, where the editor has made a decision on behalf of a potential subscriber on what he thinks is good/bad in a zine. This is a value judgement that an editor can

fall victim to.

Zines can be fast, zines can be late. GMs can be good, GMs can make a lot of mistakes. Content can be adversarial, content can be mealy-mouthed. Whose to say if its right or wrong? In any event I think they can be communicated in an objective manner. I hope that any successor editor will try to adhere to less slanted approach to the write-ups.

(JIM BURGESS) ZR would run like this - it would be available for trade around the world. The primary (and sole, in general) review of each szine would be the one written by the szine's editor. The ZR editor would be a compiler who wanted to trade with virtually every szine in World Dipdom. There would be virtually no editorial content. This is very, very possible. Simon Billenness (and even Tom Nash to an extent) did it right. The hobby will never outgrow the need for this service. Szines like YZOZ also should exist, but not as a novice service. Damn it, the hobby is not any more (and it's probably less) surly than it's ever been. There always will be controversy and a bit of freedom fighting. The fact that ZR is so overblown now practically guarantees that the next custodian will take a low-key approach. The ZR should be directed to and written for novices!!

(PETER SULLIVAN) One way to render the Zeen Register much more manageable from a financial point of view would be to cut all those trades! The British Zeen Register, Mission from God, does not trade. Reviews are written partly by the editors from the trade copies they receive for their normal games zeen, together with contributions from as many other people as they can cajole reviews out of.

For the U.S. Zeen Register, this could be combined with a mail-out of Publisher Info Sheets, as per current practice, to sweep up the remaining known zeens. If a publisher doesn't return an Info sheet, then presumably they aren't that interested in getting a listing. Completeness is pointless if the last x% of information is out of date or just plain wrong. Garret is quite right to "cull" zeens who never responded from the listing.

Best of all, by not trading or sending out

freebies, the Zeen Register would get itself a hard core of subscribers, in the form of editors who want to know what is being said about them! At the moment, I'd guess most of the people who actually pay for the Zeen Register only buy one copy at a time, rather than a subscription in the normal hobby sense.

The only problem with this is that the Zeen Bank could no longer be operated linked with the Zeen Register, although there's no reason why there can't be a separate Zeen Bank operated by someone else.

(FRED DAVIS) Perhaps the Zine Register has grown too large. I recall that the earlier issues, before Tom Nash became Editor, were much smaller, and mainly contained simply useful information on each zine, such as frequency, game openings, and sub rates. Perhaps we should avoid detailed criticism, and just go back to such a simple formula. It would be necessary to include warnings only for those few zines which are demonstrably inadequate or obvious rip-offs. This would also make it much easier to produce, and less expensive to sell.

(ANDY LISCHETT) The Zine Register could avoid the problems it's had and lots of work by being simpler. After the cost and deadline info, include a description of each zine by its publisher, and (usually) that's all. If no description is provided, or the description contains inaccuracies or glaring omissions, the ZR publisher could add one or two lines such as, "I've only received 6 issues of XXXX in the last year, so the deadlines are closer to 8 weeks than 4" or "XXX didn't mention that his zine has won the XXXX Poll for X years in a row."

(JAMES NELSON) I don't sub to the Zine Register but I have seen the last issue as well as issues by previous publishers. The one and only problem with it is that Garret's personality comes across in the zine. Now whilst this is OK in your own "gaming" zine, a hobby service such as the ZR should be fairly non-confrontational. Some zines do deserve bad reviews and they should be given them but there is more than one way to skin a cat. Garret does not know the meaning of the word subtle, his prejudices come across crystal clear. He is biased against anything he doesn't

agree with. There is no middle ground, you're either a Turbofreak, which in Garret's book is a good thing, or you're not, in which case you're a disgrace to the hobby.

So I'm putting the point strongly, but then doesn't Garret? For instance he slagged off the International Column in Diplomacy World when it printed two editors' lists of the Top Ten Zines. Why? Paraphrasing him, "Because they are mainly British Zines and Americans are not interested in seeing overseas zines." The whole idea of the column is to get people interested in overseas zines, the whole idea of printing two people's top ten zines lists is to give an idea of which are the best overseas zines. Garret missed the whole concept, as he did when reviewing Excelsior, Northern Flame, etc. So he may not be interested in seeing British zines but that is no reason to make destructive reviews.

The ZR is not a patch on what it used to be. The ZR first and foremost needs to be unbiased. That is not to say that reviewers cannot be critical as otherwise you go to the other extreme, a bland product such as the current Mission from God [The UK zine directory]. The publishers personality should not impose onto the zine. Constructive criticism is required as well as praise. For instance it is right and proper that Excelsior should be described as a slow place to p[lay games but in the same review it should praise the letter column and other non-gaming aspects to the zine. Small warehouse zines need to be described as boring but essential if you want to play a game to quick deadlines, etc.

As to whether it is still required the answer is an affirmative. There has to be some central place where novices can get reviews of all zines in fandom. Furthermore it has to be an unbiased one. The ZR is also required to keep track of the fringe zines so that the hobby at large can know of their existence.

Can the zine not be dominated by hobby politics? Yes, if the publisher is willing to keep them out of the zine. For instance if Garret had kept all of his controversial views to Upstart rather than the ZR the North American hobby would have had an unbiased central directory of zines.

Confession: the column was my brother's and the two lists were his and mine. I had six British zines

in my list, the "foreign" zines being placed 7th (Lepanto-4-ever, Swedish), 6th (Victoriana, Australian), 5th (The Canadian Diplomat) and 1st (Northern Flame).

(MARK NELSON) I'd run it in the way that previous Custodian ran it.

(BRUCE MCINTYRE) I want a smaller ZR. That's not to say that I want anything taken out of what's there now, just that if the ZR is such a big job, nobody will ever do more than two issues without saying "enough - somebody take this job from me, quick!" One way would be to have a staff of ZR editors - but this would probably be unworkable. Perhaps a useful idea would be to cut down on the review space by letting the publisher describe, the ZR editor clarify, and the guest reviewers confine their comments to a single theme question that could cycle through "how good does it look?", "how well are the games run?", "how interesting is the material?", "how punctual is it?", "how good is the writing?", and so on. The ZR, even in its current form, is a hobby luxury which is needed - its more important to keep it on track than to keep it large and full or verbiage. The key to keeping hobby fighting out of the ZR will be the hobby's willingness to provide other venues for it. If zines and games are delayed as much as Garret likes to allege, we ought to have an ombudsman for players/subbers to complain to. I the Turbofreak crap is riling Garret, it'd be better if there were a zine (like FH) for him to express his critiques, instead of trashing Cal and Brad in ZR.

*{Of course, Garret **does** have Upstart to say anything he wants. However, don't expect him to join in the discussions here. After sending him a copy of #1, Garret asked that I never send him another copy, saying he "just wasn't interested." I guess it'll have to be Upstart or somewhere else, but not here.}*

(DON DEL GRANDE) The hobby needs a ZR - I got into the Dip hobby (as opposed to just PBM) through a zine description in the old Zine Directory. If a zine's description was left to just its publisher (or in his/her absence, the ZR publisher), the only thing the reader has to worry about is what the descriptions don't

mention.

For Next Time:

1) (from Don Del Grande) Here's a question: each country's hobby tends to stick to itself, with a few exceptions like USA/Canada and Australia/New Zealand. (Probably because international mail causes international-sized headaches.) Should there be more attempts to form a worldwide hobby of some sort, and if so, how?

2) David Hood has been contacted by Rex Martin to help in the creation of a new hobby flyer, for inclusion in the soon-to-be-released Deluxe Diplomacy set. What are your thoughts on this new flyer? Any ideas about what needs to be included, and what should be left off? How about in the new Gamer's Guide, which will also be included in the deluxe Diplomacy set?