

# Foolhardy - #9

Just \$1 An Issue!

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

Letters in this issue: Jack McHugh, Fred Davis, Jim Burgess, Stven Carlberg, Nicholas Fitzpatrick, Robert Acheson, W. Andrew York, John Caruso, Pete Gaughan, Brad Wilson, Don Del Grande, Xavier Blanchot, David Hood, Pete Sullivan, Paul Kenny, Michael Quist. *Next Foolhardy deadline: November 14, 1993.*

## The Concept:

(JACK MCHUGH) Since your readers are now taking my name in vain so often I feel I must respond to the latest issue of Foolhardy. By the way why wasn't my name on the front page?

*{Didn't you see that smudge in the lower right hand corner? That was you.}*

(JIM BURGESS) A lot of interesting things were said in this section last time, including the issue of US vs. UK Dip hobbies. That might make a topic of its own (hint, hint). I liked Paul Kenny's comments best. One of the things that makes Diplomacy and all its variants more interesting than hex games, sports team games, and rail games is that there aren't lots of weird arbitrary rules that always have you running to the rulebook. I find the basic concept of Diplomacy rules to be completely intuitive.

*{...unless you happen to be playing in Boast, that is.}*

(NICHOLAS FITZPATRICK) Its a wonderful concept . . . , something similar to what we have in E-mail, an open forum, where anybody can say what they please. Something like a newsgroup, or a mailing list.

(JOHN CARUSO) I suppose Brad Wilson's not being interested in Brits writing in American zines is simply a matter of style. Brits seem to write in dictatorial manner. I suppose its their arrogance. ever notice - when they write like that, it's okay. If Americans write like that, they're feuders.

(PETE SULLIVAN) In reply to Brad Wilson, I can't speak for any of your other overseas contributors, but when I write for the zeen about the British hobby, it's mainly to throw up a contrast or a different way of doing things as a point for discussion. If someone else picks up the ball and runs with it (as with Stven Carlberg's comments on stand-bys), fine; if not, Doug's wasted a bit more toner. And yes, this is a two-way process - there are several features of my own zine, CMag, which I originally stole form U.S. zines, and at least one of them has spread out into the wider British hobby.

In Foolhardy terms, I would consider myself as (conceptually, if not geographically) a member of the American hobby - I probably see more U.S. zines than the average Joe Hobbyist. All that said, there's absolutely

no reason why Brad should feel "obliged" to be interested in the international hobby. British hobbyists are just like American hobbyists. Some are rabid, some are thoughtful, some are assholes, and some are all three at the same time!

(MICHAEL QUIST) Are the opinions of those crazy English folk of any value? I probably won't find my self on the opposite side of an issue with Brad Wilson very often, so listen up folks. The function of Foolhardy is simply an exchange of views among hobby fanatics. Unless England was recently taken over by space aliens, the English hobbyists are still human and they are addicted to the same game as we in the US hobby. As such we have much more in common than Brad seems to think. I am certainly interested in the English hobbies views and I don't find them so strange and foreign. Keep in mind that most of F's subscribers are zine publishers (I think?) and I suspect that publisher oriented issues discussed from a British perspective might provide ideas which could improve our US zines, and perhaps the British zines might also benefit from this sort of cross pollination. Now lately there has been a lot of weird stuff about the World Dip Con charter much of it from English Dipers, and as a good right wing anarchist, Brad doesn't seem to give a dam about World wide DIP organizations and their fool charters. I agree with Brad on this matter, but I am quite capable of skipping letters which deal with a subject which does not interest me. I'm sure all of us find much in F which is not to our liking, but please lets keep F inclusionary and not exclusionary.

## Census:

(JACK MCHUGH) McHugh thinks Bowen has seen his MP because Bowen makes comments about McHugh's WDC comments, which have only appeared in MP. You don't have to be a Vulcan to make the logically assumption that Bowen has seen MP, duh! (See Iain, I can be ignorant and talk in last names like you too.)

*{Kent already knew Mchugh could be ignorant, but at least Kent learned from this letter that McHugh could use last names.}*

## DipCon:

(PETE GAUGHAN) DipCon: Well, some of the criticism is justified, and most of it isn't. Pacificon publicized DipCon quite a bit in their reg

packet, far more than I expected. The packet being mailed out late (and it was, I admit) is *perfectly normal* - every year the Pacificon packet arrives just three or four weeks before the con. I am aghast at people who say they didn't have enough information before that. I began producing promotional flyers last November! The date, city and approximate price of a room were all known in 1992, at the time we bid for DipCon (and that approximate price was within 5% of the eventual figure). Anyone who wanted to come to DipCon could have reserved their flights last year, they didn't have to wait for an engraved invitation from Pacificon.

Worse, if DipCon XXVI is a flop, then we face a growing pattern of having tiny DipCons whenever DipCon stands alone west of the Mississippi (San Antonio, Kansas City, San Diego) and poorly-conducted ones in some of the instances when DipCon joins up with a general game convention (Dallas, San Francisco). It's not that DipCon is in a slump - DixieCon and CanCon seemed to be what most of us wanted out of DipCon.

I never argued that every DipCon needs to be at a big con. And I never argued that tying in with a big con would recruit dozens of new pbm players. I hope that when DipCon is hosted by something larger that it gives DipCon-goers a bigger selection of things to do. The price of that longer menu way be that we don't get to organize things ourselves. And if the cross-continent rotation is maintained, then we have to be prepared to lose attendance every fourth year. If "successful" means both well-attended and well organized and fun, then the only "successful" DipCons since Seattle in 1985 have been in the Eastern time zone, and Seattle had only three MadLands representing the East.

At this point it is time for West Coast Dipsters to consider the establishment of a central Diplomacy event. I would like the Los Angeles postal players, as the largest single group, to consider building one of their holiday cons into a Western event. With the rest of the hobby showing so little interest in travel out here, I would like to have at least one Dip tournament where I could meet postal players from outside my own area.

**Cathy and I will continue to host our own housecons** - in fact, since my sister is getting married on the weekend that would normally be our next event, we've moved **NovaCon to New Year's Weekend** this year. And I hope that others in the Bay area will keep the momentum building, as we have now had two other housecons introduced this year.

But in order to have a true tournament among postal Diplomacy enthusiasts on the West Coast, we're going to have to do it ourselves. That means building up one of the current cons to the level of Atlanticon, instead of fragmenting ourselves among Dragonflight, Pacificon, and Strategicon every year. (And here we thought that diversity was a strength!) Perhaps the solution is Memorial Day in L.A., with the Labor Day cons continuing as regional events.

The "sermon" portion of this letter is completely my own fabrication over the past two weeks - not having discussed this with anyone, I could very well find that the Lozangelenos aren't interested in recruiting from far away, and that Seattle players have no wish to fly down for a Dip tournament. I suspect I'll attend one of the next two DipCons, so maybe I'll have another chance for Easterners to tell me what we've done wrong Out West.

(BRAD WILSON) If I can work out the kinks, starting in 1994 I will host/run a "DixieCon"-style con in Chicago with tourneys in Dip, Gunboat, and other variant, and perhaps Titan, 1830, Kingmaker, Circus Maximus and/or Risk. It will be end-of-July, roughly.

My hope is to turn this into a regional gathering for Midwesterners a

la DixieCon. If it works out I will bid for DipCon in 1996.

Now, given that I have been a loud and frequent supporter of DipCon with "big" cons this may seem odd - that I would bid for a "small" con - but my position has long been that we need a mix - big cons, small cons, mid-size cons. What happened is that for years we nixed the big cons - that was a mistake. Now we may be close to achieving balance: '93 big, '94 Dip-only, '95 big (probably) and if my con gets it in '96, small again. That is the kind of rotation we need. With Origins becoming "anchored" in Baltimore, I'd advise that we go there every 4 years. It is a perfect marriage!

Anyone interested in helping with ChiCon or whatever I name it, please get in touch.

*{It seems you and Pete agree on the big con versus small con thing, anyway.}*

#### Lack of New Zines:

(JIM BURGESS) Do you think we should point out to Brad that Chicago is not on the east coast? Nah, we'll let him live on in ECC fantasyland forever. I would reiterate that new zines that will fold quickly are not helpful to the hobby. Don't encourage new zines just because we aren't as big as someone thinks we should be.

(STVEN CARLBERG) I find it extremely difficult to believe that the high quality of existing zines has any intimidating effect on very many people who contemplate publishing a zine for the first time.

When I first decided to publish a zine, I was 13 years old, was only just beginning to learn how to type, had virtually no talent for drawing, and all the (meager) quality of my layout work came from copying what I saw in other publications.

My lack of ability did not deter me, because I had an enthusiasm for the very *idea* of publishing that transcended any question of how good I was going to be at it. I did my best to produce a good-looking zine full of interesting material; my best efforts resulted merely in what was known at the time as a "crudzine."

But I *liked* publishing, and nobody was going to stop me. I kept at it and I got better.

I still believe that, basically, people who have that inner drive to publish *are* going to publish. Either they'll get better at it as they go along, or they won't, but the quality of their work is only secondary to the fact that they are getting the work out.

(JOHN CARUSO) Everybody dances rings around Brad when it comes to publishing. I wonder what Brad's going to do now? I mean, no self-respecting ECC pubber would ever move to Madlad Territory and still claim to be ECC.

(BRAD WILSON) Sure, Doug, you dance rings around me - but I prefer quality to quantity. Then again, you have both!

(DON DEL GRANDE) David Hood says that he sees game openings in established zines stay open for a long time before filling. It depends on the zine; I can't remember ever filling any sort of game in my zine in less than four months. (Usually, all but one or two of the spots are filled in the first two months following the announcement, but it's getting those last few players that takes time.)

There's another problem with subzines: the games they run have to

have shorter deadlines in order to get the subzine to the zine's publisher in time. When I had Dick Martin run a game in a subzine for me, there were a number of times when the subzine didn't arrive in time because he extended his deadline by one or two days to get the last set of orders; having to send the subzine across the country didn't help matters either.

*{Well, the subzine GM could run two games with 6 week deadlines, publishing the results of one game on alternate months.}*

#### Polls & Awards:

(JIM BURGESS) When one uses a preference matrix as part of a poll, I would assert that style over substance wins out. In a hobby this is bad, in my opinion. Go for substance. Note how much preferences affect rankings.

#### Novice Zines:

(JIM BURGESS) I make the pretense of reaching out to novices, but I think editors just need to be a little sensitive by writing out acronyms and the like. Otherwise ultimately people will like what we do or they won't -- that's what will determine whether they dive in or not. Aside to Danny Collman: Crazie Markie has a reputation that must come from something different from what he writes to the U.S. hobby as a whole. I think very few of Markie ideas are crazy, except perhaps giving points on his hacking test for publishing a zine while drunk and then asking whether it makes sense in the morning.

(W. ANDREW YORK) I agree with you that just because someone is new to the hobby doesn't mean that they are inexperienced. However, you can be a novice to PB Ming and you can be a novice to Dip. Playing by mailing is quite different than a face-to-face encounter and just because a person may be well versed in Dip, doesn't mean that they will be able to quickly master the translation into PB Ming. Thus, I still feel the idea of a Novice Clearing House is a good idea for those who are novices to Dip, to PB Ming or to both.

(BRAD WILSON) Andy York's novice clearinghouse is a good idea - but who's going to do it? Quite a time-consuming job, so it seems. I'd support the idea.

#### Burnout:

(JOHN CARUSO) Sign me up.

(PETE GAUGHAN) I am facing a strange combination of burnout, depression, anger and disappointment. In some regards this year has been the most enjoyable of my Diplomacy career, but in many more it has been a horrible experience. Now, Cathy tells me that I run up against this particular wall every summer ("Just before DipCon" is how she puts it), but the discouragement is there nonetheless.

First, I'd like to point out that some of my emotional turmoil has nothing to do with Dip. We are still grieving my mother-in-law's death, and Cathy and I are both facing unusual job stress. But let me confine myself to hobby stuff here. What I have to say can be divided just like Gaul; in three parts. Why this letter, what I'm doing about it, and then my sermon to the hobby. This is not a Not For Print letter. There is nothing

here that I wish to keep secret, but most of this will seem to be pointless navel-gazing to the general public. The only section that might be interesting is the screed at the end - we'll see.

In the summer of 1992, Perelandra won its first Runestone Poll and I published the 100th issue (my tenth anniversary as an editor). At that time, I was thrilled with Dipdom. I was as happy and enthusiastic about gaming as at any time since the fold of Magus.

Very soon after that, Garret Schenck chose a new editor for Zine Register. I immediately turned this into a near-feud by mouthing off about Garret's decision as if it were a done deal. In the following months I grew wearier and wearier of pettiness and bickering in the hobby around other topics - DipCon, World DipCon, the new flyer/Gamer's Guide, the whole "Turbo/nonTurbo" stupidity - and tried to brush it off as merely high spirits and strong personalities.

(I've been around long enough to have seen plenty of feuding, and avoided most of it. For some strange reason, little spats recently have been preying on my mind much more than massive fights did in the past! I'm not making the claim that feuding has been a bigger problem this year, just that it's had a bigger effect on me.)

After Zine Register came out, I felt relieved that I could finally concentrate on DipCon, only to find that the vast majority of the hobby had decided it wasn't worth their time. Suffice to say that instead of the 30 out-of-state pbm players I had hoped for, I'll be glad to get half a dozen, though there's still a chance that two or three people will attend from France.

I have been getting criticism such as the prices and event schedule were not published soon enough, the host convention isn't doing enough publicity for DipCon, nobody's going to attend. I'll save comment on the criticism for later *[[ed-see the DipCon section]]*, but understand that after finally getting ZR out and sinking more than \$130 of up-front money into DipCon, I was not open-minded about people saying this was a poor convention even before it happens!

*I'm excited about it, but it feels as though nobody outside the Pacific Time Zone is.*

**Effective immediately, Bob Acheson is in charge of the Marco Poll.** I have my ideas on how it "should" be run but its success or failure will be entirely his.

**Effective immediately, Jim Burgess is in charge of the International Subscription Exchange.** I enclose to him a check for the current ISE balance of \$64.14. In this action I owe a large, public apology to Iain Bowen: I told him I would not pass the ISE along until after Zine Register #23. I find that I can't keep that promise. Iain, your fears about the ISE having trouble after finally getting on its feet are unfounded - I have more confidence in Jim to do what he says than I have in anyone else in the hobby. I'm sorry if British ISE users are nervous or upset at a custodianship changing hands a year and a half after being rescued, but I don't see that as being a valid objection since your end is staying the same. And I think North American hobbyists will be *glad* to see me spread the responsibility around.

*Just in case you were wondering, I hope not to serve on the DipCon committee in the future.*

**ZR will stay on a twice-a-year schedule.** I will definitely continue to edit Zine Register, but the plans I had to produce it quarterly are kaput. We will have June 15 and December 15 estimated publication dates under my editorship.

### E-Mail Dip:

(JIM BURGESS) See my zine...

(NICHOLAS FITZPATRICK) Following a rather lengthy discussion on the net, some of which has been reproduced in AP 132 (thanks Jim for providing us with the forum) I have asked both Vince and Lee to appoint me as Internet BNC and MNC. This should allow me to easily apply BNC and MNC number to old games. There will be something akin to Everything, for both of these jobs (I will keep them separate, to make distributing to someone else later on easier), it will be available postally and by E-mail. (Much how EPC2 is distributed, and Abyssinian Prince, Lepanto 4 Ever and Inoculated City come to think of it!)

(DAVID HOOD) Actually, aren't Nick and Mark right on this? We should get BNC numbers for Email games already started, and set up a separate BNC for Email games (to keep up with their quicker start/end pace - the overall BNC is already doing enough.) I firmly believe we should be doing all we can to increase hobby contacts here - the postal world has a lot to offer to all the new blood playing Dip over Internet, etc. At the very least, we ought to try to attract Email Dippers to Dip tournaments, and to hobbywide stuff like Awards and discussion/article zines.

(NICHOLAS FITZPATRICK) Recent discussions with Mark Nelson, have indicated that there is quite a large DIP community at CompuServe. This is somewhat surprising to those of us at Internet, as our main forum (rec.games.diplomacy) is open to CompuServe mail (through dipl-l@mitvma.mit.edu), and they can receive as well if they wish, though that would probably be prohibitively expensive.

The result, though, seems to be that there is a bigger void between Internet and CompuServe than there is between either Internet and snail mail or CompuServe and snail mail. What do Foolhardy readers think of this?

### Old Dirty Laundry:

(JIM BURGESS) Thank you, Iain. Your statement was enlightening.

### The Future:

(DON DEL GRANDE) Showing a Diplomacy game on TV might work if it's edited properly. Just showing people talking to each other and, at 15-minute intervals, have everybody gather together to read the orders, won't work. Instead, have a commentary team discuss the previous turn's moves and show some snippets of current negotiations, and show all of the orders for a turn simultaneously. When PBS used to show World Chess Championship matches, they had to deal with the occasional hour-long wait between moves. Even in Japan, they don't show full-length Go matches on TV, but have to invent "lightning" tournaments to show.

### Scoring Systems:

(STVEN CARLBERG) Amidst all the discussion of various means of scoring at tournaments, assigning values to wins and draws and survivals and dots, a "direct approach" has occurred to me. Has anyone ever floated the idea of a tournament where all games end at a specified point (say, after Fall 1909), and supply center count at that point would be the

sole criterion of scoring?

This would at least out every player on an equal footing in the tournament. Granted, it would change the goal of the game from winning or getting a piece of a draw to simply getting dots. But as the goal of the game is already changed for those players more interested in doing well in the tournament than in doing well in the game, I think this might "level the ground" for everybody in a simple, easily understood way.

Just an idea. I'd be interested to see what people think of it.

### PDORA/Zine Register:

(BRAD WILSON) Well, if ZR isn't a zine, let's get it out of the polls, eh?

*{Why? Is it hurting your performance?}*

### Attracting New Blood:

(JACK MCHUGH) I wouldn't count on the PBEM hobby having many more people than PBM or cons do over the long term. Most PBEMers don't even stay in as long as FTF hobbyists or PBMs. Also, given the speed at which things work at the PBEM level, it is almost impossible to catalogue the hobby as by the time any census is done it is out of date. Given that, it is impossible to prove or disprove what anyone claims about the pbem hobby.

Is PBEM growing? In absolute numbers, yes, but beyond that we know next to nothing about PBEM hobbyist individual or as a whole. As far as know there is no comprehensive census of all PBEM games--i.e. Internet, GENie, Prodigy, Compuserve, America Online, etc., etc.--and PBEM participants. Until we get a census or an Everything for all PBEM games I will be wary of any claims by the PBEM hobby or its leaders. There is just not much data, and it isn't comprehensive, to support any generalizations about the e-mail hobby.

(JIM BURGESS) My answer to question 2: I think business and Wall Street are undersought areas for new blood. I suggested before writing a "corporate" variant. We could put it in the U.S. and use large conglomerates like GE distributed where they have plants, or one company like GM where corporate headquarters has some "special control" rules. I am working (slowly) on these variants. Then...well, I haven't thought much about the next step, but I think it would be popular. PS - Hobby politics as a subject? You're right, Doug!

(STVEN CARLBERG) I am still waiting to hear a cogent argument stating benefits which would accrue from the Diplomacy hobby becoming bigger than it is. David Hood lists several supposed benefits which still boil down to "Bigger is better because it's bigger." (I am characterizing, not quoting.) David even states, and I do quote, "Growth is almost always good, in any context."

I'm still not buying it. Let me tell you how my experience argues against such a presumption. The first science fiction convention I went to was a DeepSouthCon in New Orleans in 1971. There were just over 100 people in attendance. I got to meet the guests of honor, to converse with more than half the people there, and to feel that we were all a part of a friendly group with interests and attitudes in common. Nowadays a DeepSouthCon may attract nearly 1,000 attendees. The guests of honor are inaccessible to all but a few (usually those who have contributed extra dollars under one pretext or another), the very people running the con are

inaccessible to all but a few, there are dozens of subgroups of people who have no interest in the other subgroups, hotel rooms and con memberships have become more and more expensive, rules about behavior have to be imposed because the sense of common good has been lost and a fringe of vandals has apparently become inevitable, and the number of convivial people dwindles year by year as the dilution of the spirit of DeepSouthCon takes its toll on the true amateur's interest in attending.

I've seen it happen, and I'm telling you. Bigger is *not* better, per se. In fact, it's frequently worse.

There is *one* sense in which it is better to increase the numbers of people in the Diplomacy hobby, and that is that it makes it easier to find enough people to get a game up. But as we're in no apparent danger of running out of game openings in the PBM or PBEM arenas, I think we would do well to proceed with caution about trying to increase our numbers at a much greater rate than is currently the case.

(NICHOLAS FITZPATRICK) Doug comments that there are lot of players dropping out of E-mail dip, and perhaps they are better left unrecruited. I think I should clarify some of the reasons that people drop out of E-mail. 1) They lose the Internet connection, either long term, due to graduation, from University, holidays, or short-term, due to technological problems. 2) They miss the deadline, and get replaced (gee, people never miss deadlines in postal play eh? So how many NMR calls does the average GM make?) 3) They give it up.

It is only the third type of player to watch out for, and they normally won't have the patience to get involved in postal play anyways . . . I have had 2 or 3 people make comments that there is no incentive for E-mail players to look into postal play. The response to this is that about 40-50 percent of our players are in university (I think that is called college in the states, which is what we use to refer to a high-school, trade-school, or semi-autonomous [often religious] part of a university). About 90 percent of these players will not have E-mail access after they graduate. They will then be wonderful targets for postal play. Perhaps I should start selling people mailing lists (yes, we do have postal addresses for almost everyone, it is required as part of the registration on a judge) to people :- ) (Hmm, that would meet the theme of "one original idea to promote the postal hobby . . . )

(ROBERT ACHESON) To promote the hobby - where does most board gaming take place? 1) University game clubs and offshoots of large comic & game stores. Make up a quick flyer about the zine and hobby and drop them off.

(W. ANDREW YORK) Maybe, in conjunction with a hobby store, have a demo game on a Saturday afternoon (with some adverts). Another thought would be to play a game in a food court in a mall. I've played chess there, and you get a lot of walk-by questions and commentary.

(BRAD WILSON) Hmm...at GenCon there was a guy (maybe guys) walking around the Con with a sign saying "Ask me about (some role playing game)." I must have seen that guy or his co-carriers 20 times in 2 days. Perhaps we could do this at major cons (Origins, Pacificon, GenCon, AtlantiCon, etc - all the role-playing cons too, SF cons as well). Get volunteers to carry the sign for 1-2 hours apiece while carrying Caruso's Dip stuff to hand out, or free MoDs or the like.

(DON DEL GRANDE) How do you promote the game of Diplomacy?

Get a celebrity to play it. Maybe WARTHOG can talk Chelsea Clinton into a game. People have to think that it's the "in" thing.

*{Is Chelsea Clinton "in"??}*

(DAVID HOOD) Will somebody with Email access please try the ideas Nick has put forth here? (Jim Burgess, call your office.)

(PAUL KENNY) Just thought I would update you about the Diplomacy games at work: that introduced quite a few people to Diplomacy. I GM one game that ended in a 18 center win for one person, and am currently playing in another that may end soon. There were 2 or 3 other games that I had no part of. But the Diplomacy games were getting to be such a success that we got called in by management and told to stop! There were a couple maps that had gotten scanned into the vax computer, and that.

### **Diplomacy Federation:**

(JACK MCHUGH) David is again missing my point. First I don't control Mark Nelson. I control Iain Bowen and he controls Mark Nelson, get your hierarchy of toadies right!

Second, I understand David doesn't want to do it. That's my point, who does or is able? David is proposing at least a part-time 10-20 hours a week job with no way of funding it or any support for the poor slob that agrees to do it. What good is coming up with jobs no one can afford to do it?

Third, I agree with Randy Cox--strange but true--in that comparing Dip to the World SciFi hobby is comparing apples and oranges. I think David's comparison of us to Chess/Bridge is equally faulty. Bridge and Chess each have tens of thousands of members in national hobbies worldwide. We don't have ten thousand members in toto world wide. A slight difference there and that is why we can't support the type of organization David wants. We simply don't have enough people to generate the revenue to support an American Bridge Club Bulletin or a Chess Life and a staff to run it as the ABCL and American Chess Federation do. Or pay out big bucks to tournament winners like they do.

I agree with David that it would be nice and I also wish we had a large enough hobby to support it. But we don't and all of David's planning isn't going to change that. Don't forget Chess and Bridge have been around alot longer--both as games and hobbies than Diplomacy. All I'm saying David, is let's not try and run before we learn to walk that's all.

I also don't care if the media doesn't take us seriously--I don't take us seriously. We're a hobby after all, so let's relax and have fun. Isn't that what we're all here for?

(JIM BURGESS) Nope, don't like it, never have, never will. I'm glad that the people interested in creating one don't have time to do it. But if someone wants to try go ahead. People in our hobby, the way it currently is, wouldn't join. They won't even sub to Dip World which presumably would be the centerpiece publication and membership perk. Anarchy forever.

(STVEN CARLBERG) David Hood tells us that "Hobbies that show some level of cooperation/organization to the outside world are the ones that flourish. Look at Chess/Bridge."

Surely, he's got it backwards. Wasn't it the great flourishing of

interest in chess and bridge that led to the establishment of organizations, rather than the organizations that led to people's interest in the games? I have played chess since I was in grade school, and bridge since I was in college, and have enjoyed both games immensely without ever feeling any inclination to support their national or international organizations. Can anyone honestly say that it was the existence of such an organization that interested them in playing a game? I think not.

Now, a *local* organization would be another matter. The high school Chess Club or the local Duplicate Bridge Club is certainly a useful organization for those interested in playing the game.

However, I *would* like to distance myself from Brad Wilson on the point of Brad's objection to a Diplomacy Federation on the grounds that David Hood would be running it. My observation has been that David accomplishes good things, with a minimum of acrimony, when he is in charge of a project. While I might not agree with what David is trying to accomplish, at least I never worry that he'll stir up a lot of ill will in the process.

(DON DEL GRANDE) Do we really need an organization like Chess and Bridge? What **real** purpose do they serve other than conducting championships and sending teams to international events?

#### Zine Register:

(JOHN CARUSO) John Caruso no longer will be doing a thing called Zine Directory. Pete Gaughan's 1st effort seems to be an excellent, even-handed job. ZD is unnecessary.

(BRAD WILSON) What Per wants to see as my "Xenophobia" is, in reality, merely an expression of hobby preferences - albeit a preference that is unpopular and rare. For years, the powers that be in the hobby have published, cajoled, and thumped or more "international" involvement and exchange. It appears to be a given that everyone would enjoy international contacts. This is a hobby rule, so it seems.

Well, I don't agree. I have faithfully done my best over the years; I have gotten foreign zines, played in overseas games, had international subbers. I just don't see the rewards, don't see why it's so great.

Now, let me say that **personally** I have enjoyed "meeting" people like Per, Ulrich Blennemann, and John Cain. And I'm sure I'd find other hobbyists personally friendly. But that's not the point; pen pals can be found everywhere. Hobby-wise, where's the beef, I might say, in overseas stuff?

It's very hard to play in **most** overseas zines - the deadlines are too close. Unless the overseas GM sets up separate deadlines for "international" games, but those tend to attract the same old "international" set and we are rarely representative of "playing" in an overseas zine.

It's also expensive to play overseas - those airmail letters add up. Quickly. And people, therefore, don't write as often as they might. So playing overseas is not so hot.

Foreign zines? Sure, they are neat to look at, many of them; neat graphics, etc. But frequently the discussions are next to impossible to follow - local politics, overseas hobby stuff, local sports. If you're a soccer, cricket, rugby fan great, if not...and they are expensive - it's not cheap to airmail zines. Surface mail is affordable but badly dates the zine by the time it is received. With limited exceptions, I don't find overseas zines worth all the hassles.

As for foreign subbers, I love 'em, but they cost me \$\$\$ big time. I

subsidize the average overseas subber **much** more than my other subbers - to the tune of \$2.50 - \$3 a copy. I am seriously considering raising the price of V for overseas subbers to \$3 a copy - just to even-out the subsidizing of N. American/overseas subbers. To some, it may be worth its while to greatly subsidize foreign readers, I don't see that it is **any more** important (or less so) than subsidizing my other readers.

Finally, there's something else. The **tone** of foreign subbers to U.S. zines is insufferably superior. Everything's better overseas of course - overseas hobbies have **no** feuding (sure), are **much** better to play and publish in (see James Nelson's putdowns of Colonia and hosannas for Mercator, for example) and American zines/players are dull, less diverse, feud-filled, etc. etc. etc.

And, of course, American politics are degenerate, our leaders idiots of worse, our culture unworthy, our sports dull, our attitudes provincial. I find this sort of lecturing and hectoring annoying at best and infuriating at worst - and, in general, it's not something Americans do in foreign zines. I, for one, am tired of it - **especially** criticism of baseball by people who haven't a clue. Perhaps if the typical overseas hobbyist participated in a less superior style in US zines, I'd have a more receptive attitude. But they don't, so I don't.

What it comes down to is that I simply don't buy the hobby orthodoxy that "everyone" should get overseas zines and that everyone will enjoy them, that overseas contact is somehow superior to our own hobby, that foreign contacts are somehow "necessary". I don't think so. I think anyone can have a rich, diverse, and fulfilling hobby experience and not send one letter overseas.

If that be Xenophobia, so be it. It may not be fashionable, it may not be the hobby's own style of "PC", it may not be orthodox - but I prefer **American** zines, hobbyists, and games for all the reasons listed above. And I'm not going to apologize for it.

#### North American Team Tournament:

(JIM BURGESS) Who cares? But again, let me not ruin anyone's fun...

(DON DEL GRANDE) The North American Team "Tournament" (more accurately called "North American Team Championship") sounds like a good idea, but the scoring system has a problem: if it's different from the tournament's scoring system, each player has to decide whether to go for the team points or for the tournament win. It might be better to base team tournament ratings on tournament results rather than game results.

(DAVID HOOD) There has been little response to this idea, so let's just drop it. Hey, some things just don't work.

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

(JOHN CARUSO) Paul - get real. The Dip hobby publishing the game? At \$15 no less! I think NOT! Dipdom can't agree on simple things. And where would the advance money come from? Who would create the game company to take the orders? I don't think it could work, even if TAHGC relinquished their rights.

(DON DEL GRANDE) I was told that the trend is away from "bookcase games" and more toward the larger boxes, at the request of gamestore owners who can't find proper shelf space for the smaller boxes. The "Regular" version of Diplomacy could be moved to a larger box when it's reprinted, but AH would have to make sure that the two versions couldn't

be confused. Note that there is currently a "regular" and an "advanced" version of **Third Reich**, both in bookcase boxes.

(DAVID HOOD) In response to Brad Wilson, and others, I think it a little bizarre to criticize the way this flyer thing was set up, and at the same time castigate me for suggesting we need a Federation. Since we have **absolutely no** mechanism for making group decisions, how can we as a hobby get anything done quickly? Answer: by just doing it yourself.

#### Apologies:

(JOHN CARUSO) I'm one of those rare people who is not afraid to admit a mistake. I am not too big to apologize for it. It's just how I feel. I don't try (and never did) to hurt people. But sometimes, something hurts or offends people unintentionally. Whether I think it should or not, if the person is hurt by it - I will apologize. As for you - apologize? Never! It's your place on earth to type all my scribbly letters. Go to it!

#### Jack McHugh:

(JACK MCHUGH) First of all, I don't control anyone in this hobby. I do not now, ever have in the past, nor will in the future take responsibility for what others write in this zine. Christ, I don't even edit this zine!

Second, despite the fact that all most every issue of this zine makes references to my evil machinations and outright thought control, I have not, as yet perfected my technique of mind control. When I do you I'll let you know, or, more likely, you'll all be agreeing with me on every page of this zine and I will be in total control of the hobby.

Third, as flattering as it is to have a whole topic devoted just to me (Bob Acheson eat your heart out!) it is rather a waste of space when the zine of hobby matters devotes as much or more ink to me than to other more mundane hobby matters, like attracting new blood or new pubbers.

I consider the incident with Cal to be closed. Since both Cal and I refuse to continue to discuss it publically, in Foolhardy anyway, perhaps we could let it die the natural death it so richly deserves. If anyone wishes to discuss it further I suggest they contact either Cal or myself privately and we leave Foolhardy for discussions of more general hobby interest?

(JIM BURGESS) John should apologize to me too, while he's at it. I hope that tone is maintained here in this issue. I propose changing the name of this section to ECC. Let's all remember that blowing off some steam as Cal did in his letter is almost always representative of anger over something more personal. Maybe, sometimes, they don't need to be printed. I received a letter similar in some ways to Cal's. It won't ever see print and it led to more good feelings than bad. Ghod, I hate to sound like such a fucking good feelings pop psychologist...that's better. Thanks, John, for you obsequious toady letter..what's Jack have to say?

(JOHN CARUSO) Jack has cut me off. I am not his friend anymore. He quit my baseball league. All this because I dared to apologize to/for Cal White. It isn't easy being me. It's even tougher being Jack. Try it some time Doug.

*{You can call me Doug, you can call me Jack, you can call me Cal, you can call be John, but never call me late for dinner!}*

#### Brad Wilson:

(STVEN CARLBERG) Brad Wilson suggests that I have a "vindictive, nasty voting philosophy." Not at all! Brad has jumped to the conclusion that I detest amateurism and fun in the Diplomacy hobby. Again, not at all!

What I suggested was that voters should be able to register their displeasure in the Runestone Poll about zines that hurt the hobby. Because Brad has a personal crusade to defend his idea of "fun" and the "amateur hobby," he jumps to the conclusion that I must be against them, and that the zines representing "fun" and the "amateur hobby" must be the ones I think hurt the hobby.

As a matter of fact, Brad's conclusion is completely wrong. (Furthermore, as he has had a letter or two from me on this subject, he knows better.) Permit me to state my position.

First, "fun" can consist of various things: conviviality, competition, aesthetic enjoyment, and sense of accomplishment being the main components that spring to mind. These things are treasures to be sough after and shared.

Amateurism is also a quality to be highly prized. An "amateur" is one who loves what he does (from the Latin "amator," one who loves) and does it simply because he enjoys it, not because he gains any monetary profit. Obviously the hobby would be in dire straits were the vast majority of us not amateurs in the best sense of the word.

On the dark side, there is a variety of cruel "fun" which consists of sneering at others and attempting to increase one's own sense of esteem by depriving others of theirs. This is an abomination which humanity is still struggling to put behind them and which infests the Diplomacy hobby to about the same degree as it does the rest of the human race. I'm against it.

It is the zine which sneers at the efforts of others which I believe deserves not to be rewarded by a Runestone Poll or by any other means of acclamation. Brad has it backwards. I am against vindictiveness. I am in favor of fun.

#### Orphan Games:

(JACK MCHUGH) Stven brings up a number of interesting points. However they all go back to his constant whining that this amateur hobby is run by--HORRORS!--amateurs! You get what you pay for Stven. You complain when I publish quickly--six games in one night--with mistakes, you complain when Brad delays Vertigo to make sure it is accurate, in fact, you just complain in general. You want prompt, accurate GMing, then play in a professional pbm game and pay for \$2-5 a turn. Stop expecting Rolls Royce service at Yugo prices.

Everyone makes mistakes and that's the way it will be as long as this an amateur hobby. Sorry if we don't all measure up to Stven's standards, but he only rates games on one standard--THE GAME. That's right, put a \$100 bill in your zine and make mistakes in your all important game adjudication and Stven still will say you don't measure up. I'm afraid I just disagree. Some of us do look beyond the games when we get a zine.

As for Touche, why would you send \$15 to a zine, sight unseen? Okay, it was an orphan--fine, but get out now as it is obviously bad news.

I agree with Jim Boob completely and I fail to see the satisfaction one gets winning a game over six other Civil Disordered countries. If you're that hungry for a win, play it solitaire. Diplomacy is a game of interaction with the other players, period. The mechanics of the game are ridiculously easy. I don't see what 'skill' it takes to take, say an eight

center country to a win, when most of your neighbors are in CD.

Does anyone really consider writing their orders to be the main reason they play? If they do then they can always play gunboat. Even in Gunboat you're measuring your tactical ability against the other players. But Stven's so-called 'victories' against unplayed powers strike me as hollow.

(JIM BURGESS) As is now public, Eric is looking for a new Orphan Service director and may already have found one. I offer my support assistance to whoever takes it over. All of this stuff that Stven and I were debating has been debated before and I'd be pleased to provide written copies to the new custodian and debate this some more. Until then, I'll be quiet. As should have been obvious, my "response" was carefully considered not to be a personal attack on anyone. Where I "missed Stven's point" or launched off on tangents it was entirely intentional. I'll take praise from Brad Wilson anytime - especially since I'm about to launch a campaign proposing him for DW editor!

*{Paul Kenny is now the new Orphan Service Director.}*

(DAVID HOOD) Stven, going into CD instead of calling a standby **absolutely sucks!** No game is any fun when an opponent is not ordering his pieces. Just because the British have this screwed up doesn't mean we need to import that over here.

(PAUL KENNY) Well, I just found out that it is official: I am the new Orphan janitor. I guess this is the best place for me to state that I strongly favor rehousing games from folded zines, actively finding which players wish to continue to play, and which don't. However, let me also state that I plan on doing some homework on the zine in question. If it is known for being slow but has operated for years this way, then I will take that into consideration. I hope that publishers will let me know if they are ready to take on an orphan game and what type: regular Dip, gunboat, or variant. That way I will be able to develop a list of volunteers. Any help with this part would be appreciated. Obviously, I don't plan on rehousing any contests. I also hop people will let me know when a zine is orphaned.

Here's a question: how long does a zine have to be late before the games should be rehoused? Maybe I should start thinking of a orphan game player standby list. One thing I have thought about it why we should rehouse orphan games. In my eyes, it is solely for the players who want to continue the game. If there is no interest, then why do it?

Now comes questions like what if there is only 1 player out of 5 or 6, or what if there is a GM that insists that he will restart or "get the zine out soon"? And here's a question: what if a GM disappears for a while, then reappears, and starts publishing again after they folded? Should they get their game back?

One of the ways to find out if a GM is going to fold or not is to call them on the phone. I think I'll have less problems with this since I go to sleep around 1am. This way I could call around 12:30am, when the chance is someone would be home. Or for those west coast people, since I get up at 4:30am, I would call them at 5am (est) which is 8am (pst). Most people are awake then.

*{Ahem, uh, Paul? Two things. 1 - if you ever try calling me at 12:30 in the morning to ask about a Dip game, you had better be prepared to have me hang up on you - maybe after screaming a stream of vulgarities. Also, please note that at 5am eastern, it is not 8am pacific, but rather 2am*

*pacific! That kind of mistake could make you enemies real fast!}*

#### Deluxe Diplomacy:

(BRAD WILSON) Hey, Doug, why don't you call up your ol' buddy Rex and ask how it's possible to have 2 misspellings on a \$55 Deluxe Dip board? Can't he or Greenwood spell? It makes the \$55 seem even more annoying. There is no excuse for this kind of mistake - remember, Dip is often used in schools as an educational tool - and I find the sloppiness appalling.

#### Improving the BNC:

(DON DEL GRANDE) "Who needs the BNC?" There should be a service of tracking game starts so a game that gets orphaned and "lost in the shuffle" can be identified. One of the games I picked up from the USOS had its information dug up by the BNC (I can't remember if it was Vince or Gary) with the only information being the original players, GM, and the approximate date of the start.

#### Variants:

(JOHN CARUSO) Like British hobbyists, all variants should be exiled to some mythological island. This way anyone who wants to play a variant, or visit a Brit, can take a vacation on fantasy island.

*{John, your life is a variant...maybe Deviant?}*

#### Costliness of Publishing:

(FRED DAVIS) First, please note that since the time Bruce Reiff wrote his letter, the price of Supernova has been reduced to \$1.00, or to \$0.50 for members of the Mensa Diplomacy SIG. My original price of \$1.50 was based on the assumption that that was the original price which had been charged by Bruce Linsey when he first offered Supernova for sale. As for the \$0.50 price reduction for Mensans, that's simply a recruiting device to encourage more people to join the SIG. I have been offering discount rates to Mensans for game fees and subs to my old zine Bushwacker ever since 1974, so this was just the continuation of an old custom.

Furthermore, I had had to purchase my first batch of 25 Supernovas from Bruce Linsey several years ago. I had expected to have to pay the cost of shipping the current batch of Supernovas from Bruce Reiff when they arrived. Bruce did not send me a bill. I know I should have asked him for a bill, but with all of the other things going on here I just never got around to it.

Finally, there are other expenses connected with my acting as the point of sale for Supernova. For one thing, I try to update the enclosed list of Custodians and top zines every six months or so, and that costs money. So, it's not literally true that I received these books free. Nor did I know that I'd received around 200 copies until about a month ago, when I finally took them out of the box and counted them. I had thought that I'd only received about 100, and expected to have to have another printing made in about two years. It was when I realized that there'd be no need for a reprinting job that I was able to cut the cost to the current price.

(MICHAEL QUIST) Costliness of Publishing (A readers viewpoint) - To much is made of the cost of publishing both by publishers grumbling

about the cost and subscribers grumbling about the cost. Clearly no publisher with under 100 subscribers is going to get any significant revenue from the hobby. The economic reality is clear on that. Also hobbies all have monetary costs associated to them and PBM dip is relatively inexpensive compared to other hobbies. However, the hobby consumer must be prepared to pay the costs of his participation. I believe that subscribers should expect to pay approximately the full cost of production and mailing for a zine he receives. Subscribers should only cover the costs of subscriber copies, however, trade copies is the functional equivalent of a subscription for the publisher so these costs should be borne by the publishers. Clearly the "Large Zines" such as Perelandra, Maniac's Paradise, etc. cost a lot more to produce and mail that smaller warehouses and the subscription costs should reflect this reality. I personally don't know of one zine that I subscribe to which I feel is over priced, if this was so I would drop the things. Actually I would pay a bit more for most of my subs without complaining. I benefit from the operation of the Zines and I expect to pay for that benefit.

I am fast approaching 40 subscriptions and because I am not a publisher I get none of the benefits of trading. My subs run more than \$30 per month and add to that the 60 to 80 letters per month I am running another \$20 for postage means the hobby is costing me about \$50 per month. Put in perspective, that is just what I pay for cable TV.

I do not agree with Stven Carlberg's comment about "bargain zines". I find it hard to believe that solid hobbyists would eliminate a sub to a well established and high quality zine to take up a bargain priced new zine with no reputation or track record. At the same time clearly offering bargain rates may well be needed to get a new zine started at a critical mass level needed. Sure many new zines fail or fold as the publisher finds that his heart was not in it or his skill failed to keep the interest of the readers. Still zines fold every year and new ones must arrive on the scene to keep the hobby healthy. All of the best zines were freshman zines once and many offered low cost subs a way to get started. Stven's zine is remarkable for it's high quality publishing standards and uniquely clear maps which is not too surprising being I believe that is his profession. I am on Stven's subber list and I won't drop it because some 2 page rag arrives on the scene for \$0.20 per copy or for free even. Now I might take a sub with the new zine, all I am saying is the Hoodwink's sub is safe probably until Stven decides to fold it. What I try to do is get a sub for a new zine for 12 to 18 months and then when the sub reaches expiration and I am not playing in the zine I will have to decide if I wait anxiously at the mail box each month for it's arrival or not. If yes I will resub, if not then I will probably not.

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

(JACK MCHUGH) I like Bruce Reiff's idea only I'd give it to me to use to make money over football season. Take the Eagles opponents and the points!

We could always have Fred Davis buy us some more those great plaques for Rusty Bolts hobby awards!

We could give it to Larry Peery for "Death Valley DipCon" in Death Valley, CA. I'm sure lots of people wouldn't mind playing in a convenient site like that!

(DON DEL GRANDE) "Give \_\_\_% of the PDO Relief Auction surplus to the person doing the work", eh? Remember when Bruce Linsey started the "Diplomacy Alliance Against Cancer" and then decided to keep a

small amount for expenses (before being talked out of it)? When I donate money to charity, I fully expect that the whole thing goes to the charity *except when I am told otherwise in detail and in advance.*

*{Seriously [for a change], it'll never happen while I'm head of PDORA.}*

#### World DipCon Charter:

(JACK MCHUGH) First, yes, Iain I typed your WDC Charter and article up and your welcome. I see my ancestors, the Romans, never did quite get around to teaching you British good manners. What a shame! Well, at least your not painting yourselves blue and worshipping trees anymore. Most of you anyway--Dennis Jones after a bottle of Maddog is the exception.

Second, I believe the rotation was as you had it but I can't check the original as I already threw it out. It was typed up over three months ago and I figured all complaints about typos would have been forwarded to me by then. However, since you are the author I will accept your word.

Third, "giving" for "given" is a typo not a spelling error since giving is a word. As in, "Iain is **giving** Jack the shaft". Newsflash to England: We've had our own dictionary, thanks to Daniel Webster, for almost 150 years, Iain, you cultural imperialist.

Fourth I believe Jim-Bob may have found another typo in his letter in the last Foolhardy, but I'll leave you, Iain, to ferret it out the rest since you wrote it.

Fifth, we speak correct English--you guys in England have a dialect. Let's not forget who is the superpower here and who supplies you with Trident missiles. Stop whining about the "Americanization" of Diplomacy. It was invented by an American in America. Jeez, what's next? Are you going to complain American TV programs are "too American".

Sixth, I remember thinking the regions were weird but I'm only the typist not the writer. It wasn't my place to change the regions and as I remember I did check them against my copy. If you don't like my typing Iain then send me the stuff on disk or by e-mail in WordPerfect format and I won't touch it--except to edit. (I notice you didn't complain that I made your WDC letter into an article--yes, you're welcome for that too!)

Finally before you whine about not getting courtesy copies let me check my mailbox....nope, no courtesy copies from England. By the way how many do you mail out, Iain? And as I recall I do pay to see your zine. Since you make about three times what I do my sympathy for you is limited.

I agree with Doug, you want to see my comments get MP. Neither of us can afford to throw around copies overseas. And its not like you won't get your money's worth with MP thrills, chills, Markie Nelson letters, Brad Wilson whining about Markie Nelson letters, essays, polemics, top ten lists, hobby politics, even more Mark Nelson letters, movie reviews, more polemics, GM questions, feuding, bad GMing, what more could you ask for!?

*{As for American Tv - remember than many US sitcoms have been revamped Brit sitcoms.}*

(JIM BURGESS) Just to be clear, my comments were sent to Mark Nelson via Email to hand to Iain and be passed around electronically. Now I see that Iain has backed out until Round 2 in the fall. I'll withhold further comment until then.

(W. ANDREW YORK) As for me attending another DipCon, it is a

remote possibility unless my financial situation changes or I stop pubbing (putting the \$50/month or so into a vacation fund). With the flack over the Kansas City DipCon, I don't see one being placed in an area I can get to easily. KC was a stretch to make by driving, so all those East Coast/West Coast functions are beyond me. And no, whether WDC was being held with DipCon wouldn't matter one whit - if I had the money (and vacation time), I'd go.

(BRAD WILSON) Oh, **bravo, bravo, bravo** to Andy york for his unselfish, rational, and thoroughly thought-out philosophy of voting on cons - if I can't go, don't dictate to others where to go! By God, this is the attitude we need more of in the hobby - less selfishness, more common sense! I urge **everyone** in Andy's situation at Dipcon or WDC to do the same - I certainly will! If you **can't go**, don't dictate to others! If everyone voted this way, we'd be a **lot** better off. (Don't hold your breath, though...)

(DON DEL GRANDE) If WDC is to be rotated properly, we need to determine how many "distinct" hobbies there are. For example, the USA and Canada hobbies tend to "merge", but this North American hobby is separated from, say, the Australia/New Zealand hobby, and both are separated from any European hobbies. Each one that is capable of supporting WDC should be given a chance to run it. I might suggest North America, Australia/New Zealand, UK, "French" Europe, "German" Europe, and Scandinavia.

(XAVIER BLANCHOT) *[[Please see the last 2 pages of this zine for a copy of Xavier's letter to numerous international Dip individuals regarding WDC rotation. He also has produced a flyer promoting the French bid for WDC V in 1995. I didn't include it, but if you want a copy just drop me a card or give me a ring.]]*

(PETER SULLIVAN) Lots to comment on here, although obviously I can only state my own opinion (they rejected my application to be Grand Hobby Poobah of Albion after they read that sealed reference Doug sent 'em - what did you say, Doug?)

Stven is right in saying that no amount of rules will avoid a bad situation - if someone wants to try and twist things they will. The point of laying down fairly detailed rules is to help people avoid genuine misunderstandings. There's a lot of potential "cultural gap" out there that the whole process could fall into, even will goodwill on all sides.

Shaun Derrick seems to have misunderstood Iain Bowen's position as regards WDC debate - Iain is refusing to discuss WDC because he's going to have to chair the Hobby Meeting at WDC IV, and feels he needs to remain officially neutral. This doesn't mean he wants other people to stop debating the WDC charter - on the contrary, the more we hack things out now, the more likely we are to reach a consensus, or at least an understanding of each other's positions, before the final meeting, and the easier that meeting will be for him to run. Put it this way - if you were presenting an amendment at the meeting for compulsory Snurples at WDC, and Iain, the great anti-Snurpler, had been slagging you off in print, how would you feel about him running the meeting?

I like Shaun's proposed rotation - not least because it gives North America a chance to choose its own site once each rotation (e.g. 1997 chooses 1999), which is something some Americans seem to feel strongly about. The only change I'd make is to carve off one of the two European zones to make it a British Isles zone. Firstly, the British hobby is

probably 20-25% of the world's hobby. Secondly, if we are lumped in with Europe, this means that a British con can bid every time it's Europe's turn. Given that we have a lot of experience running conventions, and since the decision will be made by English-speaking Americans or Australians, putting Britain in a Europe zone would probably mean we actually end up with more than our fair share!

I have no problems with absentee voting, but I don't see there's any real demand for it. I am against proxy voting. An absentee vote is a real vote from a real person with an interest in the subject, but who just can't get to the convention. A proxy vote is, to all intents and purposes, a second vote (or third, or thirteenth...) vote for a delegate broker at the convention. If you really want absentee voting, what I'd do is modify the Qualified National Vote rule so that absentee votes count for a separate block for each nation. Thus, if there are 20 absentee ballots from the U.S., and 15 U.S. voters at the meeting, each of the absentee ballots counts half of a QNV for a total of 10, and the voters present would have two-thirds each, also for a total of 10. Thus, the voters at the meeting have slightly more say in the matter, which must be right. Obviously, you couldn't vote both as an absentee and at the meeting! PERSONALLY, I doubt that many people would be prepared to pay \$10 or whatever, just to get a vote, but I may be wrong.

I don't agree that "big" countries should always receive their maximum 10 QNV's. Where you draw the line between "big" and "nit-shit" will always be arbitrary, and hence contentious. And if, say, Britain can't get 10 people to a WDC in, say, America, then really they don't deserve a full 10 QNV quota.

Brad is absolutely right to say that DipCon must not be sacrificed to the alleged "greater good" of World DipCon. As it stands, the draft charter makes no reference to DipCon, except to "borrow" its system of regions as a way of specifying that a WDC cannot be in the same DipCon region if North America has it twice in the same rotation. Whilst other people may have grandiose schemes to suspend the normal Diplomacy rotation to impose a WDC/DipCon tie-up, I would be as opposed to this as Brad. Let each organization choose its own site by its own charter - let's face it, they're going to choose the same site most of the time. If not, well, maybe the DipCon site wouldn't have made a good WDC site anyway.

I have my own opinions on the "Imran's Protocol," but the point surely is that, if we can get a charter agreed, and everything up front and open, there will be no opportunity nor need for that sort of thing to happen again.

The reason WDC in 1994 picks both 1995 and 1996 is that, up to now, WDC has been every two years. everyone now seems to agree it should be yearly (the "Caruso Protocol"?), but consensus seems to be that the site still usually needs to be selected two years in advance (1995 picks 1997, 1996 picks 1998, and so on). The only problem comes in switching over - there is no mechanism for selecting 1995 in 1993 without pre-empting the new charter. So, like Fibonacci numbers, you need to start off with two to get the process running. And remember that this meeting, with its "British bias" can have as many Brits present as you like, but they're still not going to have more than 10 Qualified National Votes between them. I suspect at least three other countries (USA, France & Sweden), and possibly more, will have at least ten people each at the meeting for their full complement as well.

On Jim Burgess' points, I don't like the idea of national caucuses, but I agree that they're likely to happen anyway, so possibly we may as well institutionalize them. It'll probably make it easier to count the Qualified

National Vote that way, anyway. The one thing that a caucus must not be allowed to do is impose a "delegation line" - people are voting as individuals grouped by country, not as countries.

Jim has picked up on a very major point as to what constitutes a bid. I agree with his minimum of a proto-committee. Obviously, bids can be much more detailed than that if possible, and as a potential voter, I would almost certainly vote for a con with dates, venues and organization all set up over "me and these two guys will try to organize something." I would have no problem with a bid for "DipCon in year +2" as Jim puts it, however.

Enough of charters - let's remember the conventions themselves are just as important as the charter for WDC to be a success (he says hypocritically, after having just spent far too long discussing the charter). The big news is that World DipCon IV is go! **World DipCon IV/Manorcon 12** will be Thursday 21st to Monday 25th July 1993 inclusive *{methinks he means 1994, kids}*, at Birmingham University, England, in a student hall of residence by the lake (hence called, imaginatively, Lake Hall!). As well as the Individual Diplomacy Tournament, and the Team Diplomacy Tournament, we'll also have tournaments for 1830, Railway Rivals, United and several others. Plus loadsa pickup games of different stuff, probably starting at all hours of the day and night. The con fee will be £15 for all 5 days, and single rooms (bed and breakfast) will be £20 a night, subject to any increase in sales tax.

If you want to stay at a hotel or hostel instead, you must pay the convention fee. Overseas attendees can pay when they arrive, and we'll even accept U.S. Dollars at whatever the prevailing rate is by then. Watch your letterboxes for the expected deluge of publicity!

#### You Control Diplomacy World:

(JIM BURGESS) I've thought about this and talked to a number of people about it. I propose Brad Wilson as the next editor. If we are to be a fannish hobby that is not excessively organized, we need someone with that philosophy and more personality than I or David Hood possesses. I'd **really** like to convince Mark Fassio to do it if his life ever became stable enough, but Brad could be even better. Generally, I would keep everything it has and add to it. I think it needs a sportswriter to write hobby notes like the Sunday paper baseball columns. I'd love to convince Peter Gammons from the Boston Globe to join our hobby and write them, but Brad could be the next best thing. Does my analogy make sense to everyone?

(ROBERT ACHESON) If I had Diplomacy World (too much for me) I wouldn't change anything. I like the format that David took with DW. I found the previous DW's to be flashy on the surface, but, seemed to be an avenue for resale of Peery memorabilia.

Well, maybe one minor change. I'd try to include as much as I could on ratings systems. I for one like ratings.

(JOHN CARUSO) I wouldn't cater DW to foreigners. I'd include foreign news, articles, etc., but not let it become a foreigners haven.

(BRAD WILSON) I'd try to encourage more livelier writing - less dry, less inoffensive, more spicy, more tasty. I'd hire 3-4 "columnists", excellent writers who would be allowed to have opinions and express them pithily and directly, not in DW's bland-as-white-bread house style. I see nothing wrong with some controversy and strong opinions in DW.

The 4 columnists? 1) myself as editor; I'd also invite, oh say: Conrad von Metzke, Stven Carlberg, Brent McKee, David Hood (as Editor Emeritus), maybe Jim Burgess. I'd keep most of DW easy to read and well-presented. My efforts would just try to liven DW up, to make it truly fun and entertaining to read. Maybe add a Hobby History section, too. Also I'd strive to keep costs down as much as possible.

(DON DEL GRANDE) The one thing I would like to see in DW is a recap of hobby news throughout North America since the last issue.

#### Hobby Custodians:

(JIM BURGESS) The first thing and just about only thing that a custodian should expect **and** deserve from the hobby is the support of the previous custodians so that history and experience is passed on as much as possible.

Other than that, you're on your own. It's nice if you don't lose too much money (and some jobs are rightfully pretty well protected). I guess people should try to avoid blatant influence peddling and blackmail (do what I want or I'll slam the job you're doing), but knowing how Dipdom Megadipping is, you certainly should **expect** it, even if you don't **deserve** it.

(W. ANDREW YORK) A hobby custodian should expect assistance and support from whatever aspects of the hobby that use their service (especially in the use of SASE's). For instance, using Pont as an example, publishers should be willing to keep me informed of their game openings if they wish to be listed in the game openings publication. In the case of the USOS, the GMs should forward game records and addresses to the Custodian for proper rehousing when they can't continue. In return, the Custodians should provide a reasonable product or return. In the case of Pont, a regular publishing schedule for those with subscriptions and prompt responses to requests. In the case of the BNC, a response within a week to a request isn't out of line. However, some consideration must be given to the Custodian for those times that they are on vacation (it's hard to respond within a week if you're out of town for ten days). However, a note with the response explaining the delay wouldn't be uncalled for. As to what they deserve, I would say pretty much the same thing.

(JOHN CARUSO) [Hobby custodians should expect] cooperation and support. Both ways!

(BRAD WILSON) Deserve: as much cooperation as possible, with the caveat that some hobbyists may not find the service as necessary as the Custodian (Carlberg and Orphan Service). The Custodian should deserve common courtesy and politeness - should deserve his letters to be answered, deserve toleration while he learns his job, deserve **fair** criticism.

Expect: not much cooperation, unanswered letters and calls, lots of criticism, not a lot of it enlightened. People will generally be courteous, though, I'd bet.

#### Dip Players versus Role Players:

(BRAD WILSON) I have been to a bunch of Cons this summer, most recently GenCon in Milwaukee. What struck me about GenCon - the premier Role-Playing/Fantasy con, with some boardgaming and miniatures - was how stunningly **young** the crowd was. The 14-22 age

group was, I'd bet, the plurality, and there were swarms of younger kids, too. A **ton** of youngsters in short - no worries about the future of the hobby here! (AtlantiCon had a decent youth crowd, too).

This is what Origin's crowds in the 1977-1983 era used to look like. Sure, there were veteran gamers, but **a lot** of kids - kids like me, Tom Swider, Jack McHugh, Mike Berno, and many, many others who have become big parts of the Dip hobby.

Now, compare AvalonCon this year. This was by far the **oldest** game con I have ever seen. If there was anyone under 25 in the Dip tourney other than the 15-year-old on Hood's board I missed him. There was a smattering of under-12 urchins in Greenwood's "Jr." tourneys but these were mostly if not all children of gamers. I'd bet the crowd at AvalonCon was less than 15% 14-22 years old. Maybe less than 10%.

There's been a lot of concern about bringing new blood into the hobby, and getting younger players into boardgaming and Dip. It is something we need to do - but I think we're just paying it lip service. We **really** don't want kids around, I think...

1) Note all the ads in The General for "mature" gamers. Or "no kids".

2) Note all the boardgame clubs that say "over 21" only. RPG clubs never say that.

3) Note the boardgaming hobby's orgasms over AvalonCon - no kids around. Since DipCon will likely be at AvalonCon in '95 (as AtlantiCon loses out again, I think, to TAHGC's muscle) we are tying ourselves to the oldest bunch of gamers around.

4) Note how most boardgamers hate and sneer at RPG's.

I think the boardgaming hobby's hand-wringing over no young players and blaming it all on Nintendo is a largely self-inflicted wound. All those kids at GenCon play games, and you're telling me none of them have Nintendos? Posh!

Sure, the kids are into D&D or fantasy or whatever - but **they are playing games!** And in my experience, many, many of those kids have, in time, joined the board-game hobby and then the Dip hobby. This is a source of recruits we **can't** overlook - it's a huge group of youngsters **already** interested in games.

Yet it seems to me we **do** overlook it. We sneer at roleplayers and fantasy types - I too am guilty of this. We set up our own cons (small DipCons, AvalonCon) to get away from all the RPG's at Origins, AtlantiCon, etc. We segregate ourselves from the biggest group of young gamers and then we wonder why they don't join us.

It seems to me **this** is the biggest reason to have DipCons and the like at a **big** all-inclusive con (Origins, GenCon, etc.) every 2-3 years, by the way. We should run Dip tourneys at all RPG and fantasy cons that will take us, too.

My questions: 1) Am I right? Do others see this too? 2) How do we get at that group of youngsters?

## For Next Time:

1) See Brad Wilson's letter above. What can be done to attract those role-players into the Diplomacy hobby?

2) See Paul Kenny's letter regarding the USOS. How long, generally, should the Orphan Service wait before attempting to rehouse a game?

3) What issue of what Dipzine, past or present, do you remember most fondly, and why?

**Next Foolhardy Deadline - November 14, 1993**