

# The New BRUTUS BULLETIN

## ET TU, BRUTE

The New BRUTUS BULLETIN is a newsletter of postal DIPLOMACY brought to you at random intervals 6 to 15 times a year by John Michalski, Rt 10, Box 526-Q, Moore, OK 73165. Subs are available at the rate of 12/\$3 or fractions thereof (like 2½x), and most trades are welcome. There are no openings, but there have been two volunteers for a second 10-day-deadline game, so if five more would show up, I'd break down and begin another wild'n'wooly Special like 79E currently is. Oh, and DIPLOMACY is a game invented by Alan Calhamer and copyrighted by the Avalon Hill Co., as if you didnt know.

### (ODDS 'N' ENDS)

THIS ISSUE is coming out fairly quickly after #39 because I'm tired of licking stamps and would like to have a short issue for a change. Also, no sooner do I get 39 in the mail with Ron Kelly's letter than along comes DIPLOMACY DIGEST with the same letter plus more evidence of "Oaklyn"s fraud. I represent his stuff here with some commentary of my own, in addition to a letter I've sent to numerous publishers concerning this, just in case some are so engrossed in their own activities that they missed this the first time through.

DIPLOMACY WORLD has once again come out, a big surprise to me. As long as Jones is at the helm, there shouldn't be much chance of being taken. Send him \$4 if you don't already get this hobby prozine for a year's sub, 4 issues, at 1854 Wagner St, Pasadena, CA 91107

A NEW SUBBER took revenge on me for the weird envelope he was written to in by the simple expedient of taping an issue envelope back shut, crossing out the old address, and putting a new one on the back. Touche'.

FRED G HYATT, 400 State Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217 has sent me a fantastic pack of stuff that is a variant called Colonia IV. In the old days, I would have repro'd the whole thing as filler, and was tempted when I first saw it, but on examination, it frightened me off. It's a map of the whole world, 10 8½x11 sheets, with 125 provinces in it. I'll send a copy to you if you'll write and express interest, but there's just too much to this monster game to use as general filler. Fred runs a zine called The HOME OFFICE which carries this variant exclusively. Subs are 10/\$2.50, gamefee \$1 and he does have openings. The games have 9 players representing Austria, China, England, France, Netherlands, Ottoman Empire, Portugal, Russia, and Spain. The game starts in Spring, 1750, and the first year results in things likethis from his game 2 (center names deleted): Austria: 10, build 5; China, 7, build 3; England: 10, build 5; France, 9, build 4; Netherlands 10, build 5; Ottoman 10, build 5; ...Russia, 13, build 6... Not quite your typical "Italy, +1, builds F NAP" is it? Mention BB if you write him, as he spent 47¢ just in postage to get that stuff here (when it should have been either 41 or 54¢...)

JOHN'S NOTES

How about some notes from the oil patch? If our company is at all typical, there is a big jump in oil company profits coming soon. Effective June 1, the changes in the law that Carter is putting into effect through administrative changes (rather than formally going to Congress to get a new law) will virtually wipe out the category of "old oil" that has been selling at the gov't ceiling of \$5-6. It will go to "new oil" price, about \$13.50 and climbing each month. Next, all new oil from virtually any wells drilled since 1-1-79 will come on line at the uncontrolled price which is currently \$19.35. It used to be \$15.10 (the so-called "stripper price" due to marginal, 'stripper' wells being 'uncontrolled' at the price-fixed price of \$15.10) and stayed at that price for a year and a half. Then in January, it went to \$16.10. April saw it jump up to \$18.35, and May 1 it went to \$19.35. Where it will go June 1st is anybody's guess. Notice now that as old wells peter out and become strippers, their oil will go to this price, and as I said, new wells will be starting at this price. So, he's burning the candle from both ends, and the middle is virtually all "new" (\$13.50) oil now anyhow. The first proposals for an "excess profits tax" are, typically, the worst of the two possible extremes combined into one. What we heard was that the proposal would be that half of anything over \$18/bbl would be taken as "excess profits tax". That doesn't hit the outfits that are really making the big profits, the majors who are sitting on a lot of old oil they produce at a profit at \$6 a bbl. now; what good does it do to take half of anything they get over \$18 for it? They'll STILL make a terrific killing. On the other hand, companies that don't have a hoard of old wells chugging along will lose the extra margin they could count on when taking a chance on new wells and counting on the high price to cover some of their considerable risk. The net effect is that--would you ever have guessed it?--the big and rich get bigger and richer, the small and marginal get less money, just more risk. It's for those reasons that I think the final law will come out something like that. It's stupid enough to seem great to Washington. And there WILL be an excess profits after the next two quarters' profits are made public. Maybe the majors can cover some of it by hiking salaries or some such to "hide" some profit. Our own outfit, purely out of patriotism, of course, is limiting salaries to Carter's 7%, or just a tad over half of the Cost of Living increase for the year.

The REAL place to be in cashing in on all this isn't the oil industry, though. They, after all, have to put up with federal harassment at every turn. The place to be is in the industries that SUPPLY the oil companies with pipe, equipment, and services. They can hike their prices without ANY ceiling, and get it, too. (The oil industry is already going at full blast, and at these prices, any place that SMELLS like oil is worth drilling into and/or developing further). Demand will certainly be there, so no one will say "keep your stuff at that price", for someone else will pay it if you're not willing to. A few years ago, there was a steel crunch, and pipe/major equipment you ordered at one price would be received 4 months later with a 40% price hike tacked on. Nothing you could do, either, for if you refused it, there were 3 other outfits that would be glad to take it on the spot. More of that ahead, I think.

*June 1st price will be at or above \$25 a barrel!*

DNYMPA LIVES!

Just after I'd made out a big batch of stuff for Nathan Mitchell for his GGM chore in adopting a DNYMPA orphan I'm in, none other than Greg Costikyan himself called me and said that he was winding up one I'm mainly concerned with in his own URF DURFAL, as it was already adjudicated with a win for me, just never printed by Doug Reif. In addition, he is moving on placing others, 74HX and the games from some other DNYMPA fold. NEED ANY ORPHANS? Write Greg and he may well be pleased to unload some of them. I believe his address is 1675 York Ave, NYC 10028. My thanks to Greg for finally getting something done on these, as DNYMPA under his predecessor was a joke.

An excerpt from Mark Berch's DIPLOMACY DIGEST #23, 492 Naylor Place, Alexandria, VA 22304. (If you've already seen/read it, please see my note at the end, thanks *John*)

-7-

////////////////////////////////////  
The Zine Column #14

Oaklyn/Tretick, James Alan: Some serious charges, and a warning to my readers.

Once upon a time there was a publisher of La Guerre named Buddy Tretick. Some of the hobby's top players played there in its heyday in the late 60's. But things went sour. In my screening of old dippy zines for articles for reprinting here, I have never come across a GM so intensely villified. Two things are remarkable about these charges. First, the wide range of those making them, including people (like Boardman and Walker), who normally came down on different sides of issues, and other highly reputed players like Ver Ploeg and Arnie Vagts, and the general lack of defenders. Second, the fact that what he was accused of included some of the most serious things a GM could possibly be charged with: Falsification of players' orders, playing in his own games, placing his own pre-teen son in his games, frequent failure to receive a players' orders, dropping some games while at the same time starting other games, failure to mail issues of his zine --- the list goes on and on. Eventually Buddy left the hobby.

Then on Feb 17, 1978, publication of La Guerre resumed with Vol VI, issue 1-1. It was published by one "Bernie Oaklyn", with the same address as Buddy Tretick. That issue announced the gamestart for 1978XX. A number of similarities between the styles of the two men then lead to a lively debate as to whether the two men were in fact the same person. Bernie explicitly and repeatedly denied this fact. I am not going to even summarize the evidence; a good collection of this evidence appeared in Dragon and the Lamb #23 (Sept 18, 1978). The most compelling item comes from Bernie himself, who in a letter in D & L #22 said that he "looked up Buddy in the local telephone directory", after having gotten his name referred to him by Don Miller. As it happens, I had at that time the local directory for that area of suburban Maryland; there is no such listing. A call to local information revealed no listing for him. Indeed, it was well known that Buddy has always had an unlisted number. And there's plenty more evidence. Fred Davis had a face to face game at his house in early February, 1978, at which time Buddy Tretick and his son Jimmy attended. Fred got to talking to Ted McDonald later, who had met Bernie. The physical descriptions of both men, down to their hair styles, were the same.

Meanwhile, Oaklyn was in 1978IE in John Boardman's Graustark. In the fine American tradition of the bounty hunter, he asked his readers if anyone could honestly say that they had seen both Bernie and Buddy and that they were in fact separate human beings. He got no takers, but he did get a letter from Jack Frost, who had phoned Bernie/Buddy in Nov 1978, begging the conversation by calling him Buddy, and after getting a "Yes" response, continued the conversation referring to him as Bernie. Bernie-Buddy never noticed this change. Frost said some other things which I'll get to later. Boardman then decided that "Oaklyn" is Tretick and insisted that "Oaklyn" either sign his orders with his true name Tretick (as per Boardman's House Rule 11) or include a statement that Oaklyn is the true name and Tretick is the pseudonym. This Oaklyn refused to do, and Boardman expelled him from the game.

All this is background for the following letter from Ron Kelly, concerning the aforementioned game "1978XX". I have edited it somewhat, and the comments in (()) are mine:

"This reminds me ((referring to the Boardman article)) of a previous experience I had with "Oaklyn". On 19 Jan 78 I sent him a money order for \$3.50 for a sub to his zine, and requested to be a standby for regular games of Diplomacy ((Ron included a Xerox of this letter and the Money order)).

I then received the 17 Feb 78 issue of his zine, in which he listed me as the standby player for 1978XX, which had not yet received a Boardman Number.

There was nothing unusual about issue #2...#3, dated 5 April 78 listed Austria as N.M.R. ((Xerox was enclosed)). In spite of the NMR, the Austria units moved, and it was stated that a Becky Cofman had submitted the Aus orders. However, there was no address given for this "Becky Cofman" in order to verify if such a person really existed. There was nothing in issue #3 which requested me to submit standby orders for Austria, and since the FOI moves for Austria had been submitted by a third party, I assumed that my position as a standby for this game had been overlooked, and thus did not send in any WO1 orders for Austria, nor did I contact the GM in any way whatsoever. I assumed that Austria would be played either by the original player or by this "Becky Cofman". This issue lists Buddy Tretick as Co-editor.

When I received issue #4 of ((what had now become Front de Liberation du Diplomacy)) F.L.D. dated May 2 1978 to my surprise and shock, I read that I had submitted WO1 orders for Austria, as the original player had NMR'd ((The zine states: "Moves for Austria were submitted by Ron Kelly")) This is an absolute and total lie; and proves beyond any doubt that Oaklyn-Tretick is an absolute liar and a dishonest GM. I have never submitted any orders to any game whatsoever to Oaklyn-Tretick. ((Ron then states that he declined to submit SO2 orders because))...I do not want to get involved in games run by a GM I knew beforehand to be dishonest. I have been burned enough in my years in the hobby by GMs who I did not discover to be dishonest and/or incompetent until after I had gotten into their games...

((At this point, Ron wonders if there really is a Becky Cofman, or if this is just a front name used by Oaklyn, and asks if anyone has heard of her before. He cites this as an example of one of the reasons why he frowns on the practice of using "phantom" or neutral orders for NMRing orders, except when they are in the HRs. I might add that I think that the neutral-orders-printed-in-the-HRs is the single best way of handling 1901 NMRs.))

In spite of the fact that I chose not to participate in any games in F.L.D., I did want to continue to receive the zine, and therefore I did not request a refund of my sub. However, Oaklyn-Tretick then cut off my sub, and never sent me another copy of F.L.D., NOR DID HE REFUND my sub balance. Thus, in effect he stole the balance of my sub money... in addition to being a Liar and dishonest GM, he is also a THIEF!"

Ok, maybe you think the above letter is just the usual bit of player-GM squabbling and not really worth all this space. I beg to differ. Ron is accusing Bernie of falsification of orders, this time of the identity of the order submitter. Ron could be charged in a rating system for a game in which he never participated.

The problem here is that it's really, at this level, just one person's word against another's. Bernie could deny it all, and claim that the builds were phoned, etc.

However, there is considerable evidence that Bernie is screwing up here, not Ron, and the evidence comes from Bernie. Shortly after the above mentioned #4, on June 10, 1978, Bernie decided to reprint the complete record of 1978XX and also the SO1 moves in 1978YY, in Vol 1, #1 of F.L.D. I have a copy of this. It lists Bernie as editor, with his new address, and states that Tretick has nothing to do with this magazine. The moves have been retyped. Ron is again listed as the player of record for Austria for the Winter builds. But there is printed an astounding special notice. After noting that the original Austrian player submitted SO1 moves by phone and was not heard from since, he states:

"Fall 1901 and Winter 1901 orders were submitted by Becky Cofman who lives in Rockville, Md. Ronald Kelly, who paid his subscription and requested to be a standby player for any of my games, failed to respond to numerous mail inquiries at his last known address. Ron is hereby discharged from that position."

As you can see, Bernie is now singing a totally different tune. Before he said that Kelly submitted the builds, now he says that not only did Cofman submit them, but that Kelly refused to respond to his letters. This is too much. For those of you who just joined the hobby, Ron is in something like 80 games, all of them as

standby player. He has stood by in literally hundreds of games. In addition, I have literally dozens of times seen something like "Thanks to Ron Kelly for submitting the requested standby orders, but they were not needed." published. While of course it is possible that this game was some sort of fluke, you don't get a reputation like Ron has by ignoring requests to standby. Further there was NO request in the zine for Ron to submit those 1901 order. Indeed, that issue still listed the original Austrian player ("Farid F. El-Wailly") as having possession of the country.

In short, Bernie's versions are self-contradictory, and he is ascribing behavior to Ron which is totally out of character for Ron.

Let's go back now to the Frost letter mentioned earlier. Jack Frost is the Original Italian player in 1978XX. He says:

"I have in my possession several envelopes and handwriting samples from persons reported to be "Stephen Andrews", "Brian Edwards", and others from Silver Spring, Md. ((These are the Turkey and Russia in 1978XX)). The unusual thing about them is that they all have the same typewriter and scrawl used by Buddy-Bernie. When I accused Bernie-Buddy of being these persons he said they were kids that he had to help with their mail!"

This prompted Ron Kelly to write:

"When I read Frost's statements, I was reminded of a player from Silver Spring Md I encountered in 1978, a "James Alan", who was a fellow player in a game in Against The Odds ((1978AH)) When I first encountered him, there was something about his letters ((he enclosed a Xerox)), his style of negotiating, writing, etc., which reminded me of "Oaklyn" ((who was also in that 1978AH game)). However, I decided that there was probably no connection, as the phone numbers were different, and dismissed it from my mind. But after reading what Frost had to say, I decided to try to check this "Alan" out. I decided to call there late that night, when I would hopefully wake up the person answering, and thus catch him off guard. I called him a little after 11 PM, and a lady answered. I could tell from her voice that she had ((sneaky character, isn't he?)) obviously been asleep. I said "Good Evening, Ma'am, am I speak to Bernie?" She responded, in a sleepy voice, "he doesn't live here, you'll have to call him at his house. This is where his son James lives." I asked "You mean James Alan?" and she answered "Of course; but he isn't here at the present time.; would you like to leave a message?" I then said "No thank you. I'll just call Bernie over at his house. By the way, you are speaking of Bernie Oaklyn, is that correct?" To which she responded, "Yes, would you like the number?" I said, "No thank you, I already have it," and hung up.

((Ron then points out that James Alan is Germany in Oaklyn's 1978XX)). This is further evidence that Oaklyn-Tretick is engaging in improper activities as a GM. The fact that James and Bernie have different last names is no big mystery, when you consider the possibilities of Divorce((Buddy Tretick was in fact divorced)) step-father, step-children, name changes, etc. There are several possible reasonable explanations.

The fact that Bernie Oaklyn is James Alan's father does not prove that Oaklyn and Tretick are the same person ((Actually, that phone call tends to show that his present name really is Bernie Oaklyn. That being the case, then Boardmen may well have acted improperly in expelling him, since his House rules do not require that a player own up to a "pseudonym")) But it is one more piece of evidence to indicate that Oaklyn is engaging in underhanded and dishonest and illegal acts he has been accused of by various people in the hobby. ((At this point Ron speculates on the true, correct name, and then concludes:)) I think that all games published and/or GMed by Oaklyn-Tretick, even for short periods of time, should be declared irregular by the Boardman Number Custodian due to GM dishonesty and interference in the games."

Again, this is a very serious charge. To GM a game in which your son is playing shows very poor judgement (you wouldn't find Lee Kendter doing that); to do so with-

out informing the other players (especially when the last names are different) is completely unethical, and would render the game irregular. But is the charge true? Clearly a call to James Alan was in order.

James, or Jimmy, the name he was called to the phone by, is 19, and emphatically denied that he is in any way related to either Buddy Tretick or Bernie Oaklyn. He also stated that he had seen both persons and was absolutely certain that they were in fact quite different. I read to him the part from the Kelly letter, describing the phone call to the sleepy woman; How could this happen, I asked? Could it be that a woman there was under the misimpression that he was Bernie's son? No, he said, there is only my sister and my mother, neither of whom would say such a thing. He had no explanation as to why Ron would say such a thing about him, and complained that Ron never answered his letters for the games they were in. So James has directly contradicted Ron Kelly.

I then asked who else had seen the two of them, and could say for sure that the two people were definitely different. Strangely, there were only three such people that he could name, a rather small list. Two were Andrews and Edwards, who I'll get to in a minute. The third was Don Miller, who, James said, had gotten the two together in the first place. He was certain that Miller had seen them both and could say that they were different.

And aside here on Don Miller: In his time he was one of the most important pubbers of all, and his total output of zines puts him in the top 4 of all time. He was very highly respected, there was no hint of scandal; he was one of the true pillars of both the regular and Variant hobbies. He still publishes, but mostly in the fantasy, SciFi, and general gaming hobby. I phoned him, and he denied ever introducing the two and in fact said that he had never met Bernie at all and didn't even recall talking to him on the phone. And he was quite sure of this. So James has directly contradicted Don Miller as well.

I asked if James knew Stephen Andrews and Brian Edwards. Oh yes, real good friends, I seem them all the time, and they saw Bernie frequently. I asked for their phone numbers, but he said he didn't have either one of them. This I find very odd: You're 19 years old, you have two very good friends, whom you're in a dippy game with and you don't have either of their phone numbers, even tho they are both local calls. Also, the gamestart list "Steven Andrews, c/o Cooper"; similarly "Brian Edwards, c/o Kasner" (in both cases followed by addresses). Were these, I asked James, companies they worked for or what? (Having seen Frost's letter, I didn't think they were!) No, he said, those are the names of the people they live with. "People they live with", I repeated. "Yes," he said.

I drew a blank with Kasner, but found Cooper in the phone book; a woman answered and said that Steven Andrews wasn't there. "Will he be home later in the day?" I enquired. I was then told that Steven didn't live there at all. I seems he was a very good friend of Cooper's son, came around frequently, and picked up his mail there. I asked for Steven's home telephone number; She gave it to me:

It was the same as that of James Alan.

I forgot to mention that I asked the Copper person whether Steven had ever lived there; she said no. Thus, James lied to me when he said that the "c/o" was just the name of the people they lived with. And he lied to me when he said he didn't know Steven Andrews' phone number, when in reality it is the same as James Alan's. As both have the same phone number, they must both have the same address.

One final nail in the coffin. Buddy Tretick's son was once entered in a game (other than in La Guerre, that is). This was 1972LM, in Fred Winter's Carton 11, as Germany. His address was given as 3702 Wendy Lane, which was Buddy Tretick's old address. His name?: James Alan Tretick. Sure, James Alan denied ever hearing of James Alan Tretick, but this is too much to be a coincidence. It all ties up.

It's time to wrap this up with some conclusions. I am somewhat reluctant to comment on the GMing of a GM under whom I have not played, and in fact have never done so in print before. But I'm going to make an exception.

1. The person known to the hobby and the world as Bernie Oaklyn is the same person as was once known as Buddy or Bernard Tretick.

2. James Alan, once known as James Alan Tretick, is his son.

3. Oaklyn is an unethical and dishonest GM. This is based on a) his treatment of Ron Kelly b) His lying about Buddy Tretick c) His placing his own son in a game he was GMing with notification to the rest of the players utterly lacking d) his placing at least two players in a game with the same address, and then obscuring that fact by having at least one of them pick up his mail at another address. I might add that there have been proven charges of improper activity by Oaklyn game as Quest GM in a Claw and Fang game, in which he illegally tried to get Alan into the game.

4. There is a significant chance that one or more of James Alan, Steven Andrews, and Brian Edwards are simply fronts for Oaklyn.

5. '1978XX', given the BN of 1978AY, is irregular. If charges of GM impropriety are raised about other Oaklyn games, Oaklyn is not entitled to "the benefit of doubt"

6. Any game with both Alan and Oaklyn in it should be considered irregular, unless there is some reason for not doing so. This would include 1978AP and 1978AH, and possibly others.

7. Oaklyn's game openings should be ignored, or marked with a special warning, by those in the hobby who compile lists of such openings.

8. GMs should under no circumstance place more than one of Oaklyn, Alan, Andrews, and Edwards in any one game. Caution should be observed before placing more than one "unknown" player from the Silver Spring, Rockville, Gaithersburg, Wheaton, Potomac, Bethesda, or Kensington areas.

9. I would warn my readers that under no circumstances could joining a GMed-by-Oaklyn game be considered a prudent move. Players should resist strenuously having an orphaned game transferred to Oaklyn.

Those are my firmly held opinions. Designation of games as irregular is done officially by the BNC, and in a more limited way by ratingsmasters. Oaklyn and Alan will have the right of reply. But please, do me and yourself a favor, and don't just repeat the same old lies. It ought to be crystal clear by now that the overwhelming weight of evidence means that people just aren't going to believe them anymore. It is time to make a fresh start with the truth. Otherwise your general lack of believability will dog you as long as you play postal diplomacy. Think about it. The jig is up, and it's time you both faced that fact.

The preceding is slightly redundant, in that I ran Ron Kelly's letter in toto here last issue. However, Mark adds important evidence above, and in case, as is likely, a lot of you didn't bother with the letter last time, I rerun Mark's entire piece here for your reference.

As Mark says early on, this is not just a case of GM-player villifications. Oaklyn-Tretick is a fraud, out to screw as many hobbyists as he can, every way he can, and nothing is being done about it. I have done what little I could in the way of 'passing the word' right from Rod Walker's initial letter to Cal White. This is now obviously inadequate. Mark's

own response above, after the additional evidence he shows to indicate that James Alan Tretick is no minor dupe, but rather a full co-conspirator in an elaborate fraud scheme, strikes me as astoundingly mild! To say that this--Tretick--(I would use an insulting pronoun, but apparently a "tretick" is about the worst thing a person can be) should be kicked out of the games he's caught messing up is simply a CHALLENGE to this Tretick-thing to be more clever in his frauds and sabotage. Declaring LA GUERRE/FRONT games irregular is a clerical correction, no more, and to boot, Tretick's games don't even HAVE Boardman numbers: the "XX", "YY", "ZZ" designations are his own. Mark's warning is well taken, but I think more is called for. I would suggest and even urge, that any GM having Oaklyn-Edwards-Alan-Tretick-Andrews in any game at all, kick them out without further comment or refund and replace them across the whole face of the hobby. Next, perhaps our farcial IDA or some other core of publishers or some such could take it upon themselves to warn the constant flood of NEW publishers to heed Mark's warning and mention Tretick's black record on occasion, to in some way minimize Tretick's effect as he dreams up new names and arranges new mail drops farther afield. What this person's motives are for his efforts to screw up the hobby even now, ten full years after his own sorry record began, can only be guessed at; however, if his motives have driven him this long, even to raise his son as an heir to his crimes, I really doubt Mark's appeal to rationality will work any more than would an appeal to the tide not to come in. We have Tretick's record; what more do we need? How long can-and-will the hobby ignore his sabotage?

John Michalski

The New BRUTUS BULLETIN

*Since my letter went out, Kauder has finally stepped into the open to denounce Tretick and the hobby movement (?) trying to "adopt" him. John Kelly, is the games away from "old D" if the players wish. Yet why is it that the old lads are all quiet? You fellows in Cottage Grove, accept Tretick! No wonder the fraud works!*

# Bureaucratic Blunders

The bureaucrats can't even get budget-cutting straight. When a greenhorn bureaucrat with the Bureau of Land Management called Santa Fe, N. Mex., headquarters and demanded to know how many cattle guards (interruptions in the road designed to limit cattle movement) there are in the state—a nearly impossible task—the New Mexico bureaucrat sent back the imaginary figure 369,432. Two days later came an indignant order: "That's entirely too many cattle guards. Fire half of them."

(Bonnie McClendon)

West Virginia penitentiary officials were denied permission by the Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco division of the U.S. Treasury to trade antique automatic weapons—including a 1921 Thompson submachine gun—for modern weapons. In typical bureaucratic style, AFT claimed the state had failed to comply several years ago with a federal law requiring registration of such weapons. The antiques are useless for law enforcement purposes, but would be worth thousands of dollars to collectors.

(Donald C. Kosloff)

A weekend retreat for poverty lawyers and their welfare "clients" sponsored by the Legal Aid Services of Broward County, Fla., this autumn cost taxpayers \$4,500. Explained area Legal Aid director Ken Corken, "We need to touch base with the community. Many of our staff members feel out of touch with their clients." The money was spent on renting 36 rooms for a three-day weekend at the Holiday Inn Lakeside.

(Geraldine Lambole)

When a Vauxhall car worker in Great Britain was fired for sleeping on the night shift, the industrial tribunal there ordered him reinstated and given 903 pounds (\$1,870), apparently for the ignominy and inconvenience to which snooping management had subjected him.

(Howard J. Hanson)

The National Science Foundation is paying Argentina \$1 million to lease a research ship—which the U.S. Navy had just classified as "surplus" property and leased to Argentina for free. Nor was this an isolated case. Reports the General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of Congress: "While the Navy was leasing ships at no cost to foreign countries [in recent years], the National Science Foundation was constructing several new ocean research vessels."

Cesar Chavez's National Farmworkers Service Center has been awarded \$349,115 by the Community Services Administration. (The Department of Labor has already given Chavez \$805,000 this year.) Says California Farm Bureau Federation president Fred Heringer, "To provide nearly \$350,000 for the purpose of bailing out the UFW [United Farm Workers] credit union is outrageous."

(Bruce M. Newlan)

The city of Huntington Beach, Calif., spent 60 hours of staff time and \$937 to repair the legs of 10 Ping-Pong tables; \$3,683 in labor and materials for routing, painting and mounting 13 wooden park signs; and 92 hours of labor and \$1,192 in materials for refinishing

benches in front of city hall, according to a Booz, Allen and Hamilton management consultant report.

(Ben Olsen)

Among research projects your federal tax dollars are being used for:

\$64,000 for a study of the mating habits of fiddler crabs by Dr. Michael Salmon, professor of ecology, evolution and ethology at the University of Illinois in Urbana.

\$100,000 for a study of the emotional effects of separating baby monkeys from their mothers by Dr. Stephen J. Suomi, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

A study of Mexican-American youngsters in San Antonio, Tex., that will "make careful notes each time the [subject] child runs, sits down, crosses his legs or stacks his blocks." Although the study is supposedly designed to help prepare IQ tests for Mexican-American youth, the project's director, Carrie Gomez, told reporters she didn't know why Mexican-American children were chosen for the study and laughed when asked if Anglo children sit down or cross their legs any differently than other ethnic groups.

A \$150,000 study of boating by the Department of Transportation, yielding the following invaluable data: In 1973, 4,000 kayaks were equipped with compasses; in 1976, 40,000 canoes were equipped with fire extinguishers; in 1973 only 1,000 kayaks were equipped with engines, but by 1976 the number was up to 5,000; in 1976, 35,000 houseboats were operated in the dark 73.9 percent of the time; 15,000 canoes and 12,000 thrillcraft were equipped with heads in 1976.

(Harold B. Johnson; Harley Carswell; Ryck Lydecker)

BRUCE LINSEY

71 Hudson Terrace Apts, Newburgh, NY 12550

I never thought I'd find myself writing a "Dear John" letter, but here goes: Your letter with my first issue of TNBB was quite gratifying, as was the zine itself. As a relatively new player, I'm not sure yet whether a two-week deadline is for me, so at present I'll refrain from signing up. Perhaps you would consider asking your subbers if seven of them want longer deadlines (I know, there are plenty of good 4 week zines.)

There are two people who I wish to publicly thank for their interest in helping a newcomer (me) into the hobby. They are Mark Berch and Ron Brown, both of whom were willing to give me lots of advice and info over the phone. Thanx, fellas. It's guys like you that are great for Dippy. While I'm at it, these two both publish excellent zines; Diplomacy Digest and Murd'ring Ministers respectively. Also, thanx to Bob Sergeant and Don Horton, who've been helpful too...

John, I notice you are in 16,354,492 games, as well as publishing & running fast games. How do you do it? By the way, the one thing I didn't like too much is the abundance of politically opiated issues debated in your zine. I'd rather see more articles on just DIPLOMACY. Having said that, though, I still feel obligated to comment that the U.S. is "first among equals" and "indispensable". I agree that without the U.S., the free world might easily crumble, but to publicly put it in those terms is to antagonize Canadians, Japanese, Australians, etc.--something that we ought to avoid. A little DIPLOMACY is in order, my friend!

As to the discussion on conditional orders, it was interesting but leaves one wondering if the next question discussed will be, "Can I make conditionals depending on another country's MOVES(!)"?

I think I have a solution to a lot of the problems caused by NMRs. Just charge a ten-dollar NMR fee, and with the first NMR, take five dollars, and with the second, you keep all ten AND the player is OUT! Don't you think that the really reliable players, knowing that ONLY other reliables would sign up, would be attracted to this game? I would! It would be an assurance of a good, steadfast game!

Keep on pubbing, John, you're doing fine. I hope you are at DIPCON, but if not, we'll meet someday.

((Almost sounds like you meant to add "in the middle of Main St at high noon"... Seriously, thanks, I'm always glad to hear from new subbers, as they are pretty willing to give their views and impressions extensively, as you have, which is good. Older hats tend to just take it all for granted, ho hum, another BB already, never got to read all that junk in the last one, etc. Well, as long as they vote well for me in the Leeder Poll, fine.

OK, \$10 to solve NMRs. Based on the experience of others, particularly John Boardman who charges flat \$10 gamefees, you're right that you will still get some takers. Not as many as at \$2, but enough to keep GRAUSTARK full. People ARE willing to shell out, but that is primarily due to John's fantastic publishing record of SIXTEEN YEARS, a period longer than the lifespan of a couple of publishers I could mention. Anyone else would have a heck of a time, and rightfully so. First, even GRAUSTARK has a pretty good number of NMRs according to some recent issues I've seen where he comments on the fact. Quite simply, a lot of time folks can't help but miss, \$1 or \$10 spent. Some moves are mailed but never received. More important, tho, is this: you give someone \$3 for a sub, maybe a gamefee too, and a \$10 "refundable" gamefee. You get 2 or 3 issues and never hear from the GM again. Instead of the usual \$3-5 ripoff, you're out \$13-15. How many of those will you sign up for? Next, even if the GM does his job, what if the game runs for 17 game years? You NMR in S04 and F'15, and you've lost \$10 and your position. Of course you might want to make an exception, but then keeping track of who is where creates more bookwork than its worth. (Lots of GMs flub such simple things as totalling up the centers each fall; what would they do with accounts payable?). A good idea, but impractical. The one effect it would have would be to cut down on the number of people like me who, for one reason or another, find themselves in 14 games all the time. 14x\$13=what?

Orders conditional on moves? Yes, we have that already. In tnBB, the only such

Reply to Linsey, cont'd

case is when the "move" is a retreat from the prior season which, according to the rules, you are entitled to know before you make your orders out. In practice, to save time, we simply allow you to make your orders conditional on the retreats. Other publishers, Randolph Smyth for instance (FOL SI FIE) permit you to make your orders conditional on who submits orders for a country, the original player or a standby. To me, this is a violation, but Randolph and I have hashed that out enough here and outside that I won't elaborate further. You might write him. (Seriously, his FSF has lots of play-of-the-game stuff too; I recommend it to all comers.)

Re: "First among equals". If it embarasses them, they're simply not aware of the realities of the world, which is their problem, not mine. I don't think that pretending otherwise will really help. Additionally, as in the case of political stuff, I figure it is best to speak what I think and let the chips fall where they may. Either people will agree and be glad to see someone speak directly instead of the usual wishy-washy palavering, or conversely, they'll be ticked off enough to sit down and write a response. Either one is fine with me. Even those who disagree provide filler for the zine then, and when their remarks appear, I sometimes get some redirect from folks on my side. Helps keep this from being just another Dip-zine. Others have commented on why there's so little Dip-related material here; I think it's a matter of whether you're a player or not. I sub to almost every zine I hear about, and I can tell you I sure don't follow many outside games. I get the zines for the filler. Letters, commentary, BS, and general ramblings on whatever are what make it interesting for me. I think that holds true here too. Under the old BB, I at one point had less than 20% of the subbers playing in games. They didn't sub to learn tricks of the trade! My own games suffer where I'm a player, but I'm afraid that can't be helped. Some are in such sad shape--2 in BLACK HOLE have been in limbo for 15 months since BH folded, e.g.--that very little is required. Take 78AD, for instance, in WARMONGER. Alan Rowland has published something like 2 issues in 7 months, and the issue just received has only positions, builds, and a new deadline (The last issue arrived on the printed deadline day). How much effort would you put into a game like that? Actually, I'd resign from a bunch of them, but first, it would spoil my record of never having dropped, NMR'ed, quit or resigned from any position at any time. Next, as in two games adopted in Jerry Jones' BLACK SHEEP, I'm doing so embarrassingly well in spite of minimal diplomacy that I'd be crazy to let those positions go. Normal attrition should cut my # of games down, but then along come things like openings in Sergeant's ST GEORGE or some such, or a zine arrives saying, "C'mon, folks, just one spot left to fill and you too can join in the 1901 excitement...", and there I go, getting suckered into it again. So it goes.

Regarding my fast games: if you're new, what better place to gain some experience than in a fast game? You'll either have quick success or sink fast--either way you win. You gain learning experience without waiting two months only to see Italy built F NAP in W'01, either by doing well, or getting blown away fast, in which case you're quickly free to try again in another game with a fresh start. You ought to volunteer for a second 10-day-deadline game here!

In any case, I appreciate your taking the time to share your views with us, and providing me with another springboard for me to spread my own out on. Hope you can enjoy your stay with tnBB.)) J.M.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

HUMOR OF THE MONTH last issue spotlighted an amusing anecdote in EGGNOG; I've found another one for this issue, but I can't recall now if it was in PASSCHENDAELE, TORONTO TELEGRAM, or FOL SI FIE. (I've sent them all to Nathan Mitchell for reviewing so I can't check). Anyhow, one of them had a gamestart with this little gem in the commentary. "Looks like we've got a good geographical spread too, except that three of the players are in the same city". Honest!



# THE JERRY JONES STYLE MANUAL OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1. Make sure each pronoun agrees with their antecedent.
2. Just between you and I, the case of pronouns is important.
3. Watch out for irregular verbs which have crope into English.
4. Verbs has to agree in number with their subjects.
5. Don't use no double negatives.
6. Being bad grammar, a writer should not use dangling modifiers.
7. Join clauses good like a conjunction should.
8. A writer must not shift your point of view.
9. About sentence fragments.
10. Don't use run-on sentences you got to punctuate them.
11. In letters essays and reports use commas to separate items in series.
12. Don't use commas, which are not necessary.
13. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
14. Its important to use apostrophes right in everybodys writing.
15. Don't abbrev.
16. Check to see if you any words out.
17. In the case of a report, check to see that jargonwise, it's A-OK.
18. As far as incomplete constructions they are wrong.
19. About repetition, the repetition of a word might be real effective repetition.  
- take, for instance the repetition of Abraham Lincoln.
20. In my opinion, I think that an author when he is writing should definitely not get into the habit of making use of too many unnecessary words that he does not really need in order to put his message across.
21. Use parallel construction not only to be concise but also clarify.
22. It behooveth us all to avoid archaic expressions.
23. Mixed metaphors are a pain in the neck and ought to be weeded out.
24. Consult the dictionary to avoid misspellings.
25. To ignorantly split an infinitive is a practice to religiously avoid.
26. When an English expression will convey your meaning, foreign phrases are de trop.
27. Your use of comparatives should not be different than accepted standards.
28. Make no mistake's in forming plural's.
29. last but not least, lay off cliches.

Reprints of this article are not available upon request from Lies, Deceits, and Nefarious Schemes.

↳ from GRAUSTARK. John Boardman, 234 E 19, NYC 1122



Large Shadows Missing From The Ground Mean The Plane Is Gone

**The Army's Cops Maintain A Perfect Record: No B-52s Stolen Yet**



"That's not what I meant when I told you to get your act together!"

- Army Reserve 4

More 10-Day Special press:

LONDON: "Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'm profoundly honored to be this year's recipient of The Ergocephalic Society Award for Distinguished Stupidity in Diplomacy. When I heard that I was nominated for the cherished award, I reflected that only a year ago I was sitting on my ass and now it has won me the noblest recognition from all of you, my dear friends and colleagues. (Carefully picks nose. Scrapes snot on lecturn.)

"As you can well imagine, given the outstanding competition for this year's award, I was worried whether my stupidity was absolutely unqualified. I can tell you, I used up a lot of toilet tissue sweating out there tonight! (Hebephrenic laugh.) Everyone expected Idi Amin to take the prize. Again! Of course, the Shah of Iran put up a good fight. I suppose he tried just a little too hard by giving up the throne. But let's not be modest, folks. I suppose it's no secret what won the award for me. That outstandingly stupid stab (if I say so myself) in 1979E will go down in the annals of Diplomacy just as it was born in the anal of my mind. Undigested and foul, it stinks to heaven, suggesting that a more malodorous and undeodorized act will be difficult to equal. There can be no better memory of me than that smell.

"So, fellow Ergocephalics, I proudly accept this award. I realize that you are allowed no sharp objects, so the pencil inscription will be burned in my heart forever: 'Lubricate entire enema tip well. Bending over insert slowly into rectum with a twisting motion'."

John Michalski  
Rt 10 Box 526 Q  
Moore, Okla 73165



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Rod Walker / alcala  
1273 Crest Drive  
Encinitas, CA 92024

The old BB it ain't, but Jim still  
around making myself heard.  
#39 was a biggie (oversize,  
really: 12 sheets) and #41 next  
week looks to be pretty good  
sized as well. Be glad to  
have you back aboard!

Also, the Diplo story is no  
... it's a great