



DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU
(b. 1925)

Some of us just sing -
others communicate

AN APPRECIATION

The other night I had occasion to call Bruce Linsey. Before I could get started on the reason for my call, Bruce - quite obviously in shock - informed me that Daf Langley was suffering from a brain tumour, and was not expected to survive.

It eventually developed that the prognosis was premature, and at last report Daf was doing rather nicely.

I do not know Daf. I have only begun to make the acquaintance of her husband, Steve; my only knowledge of the lady's quality comes from her contributions to the Langleys' shared publication, MAGUS, and from the esteem in which others who know her better hold her: Besides Bruce, Kathy Byrne and I talked about it, and there are many others as well. Had she died, Steve would have been hurt the most; but there are many others who would have lost a being of great importance as well.

We are, all and each of us, mortal; some day we shall die. When this event threatens out of natural schedule, each of us and all of us suffer. When the event impends against one so warm and so talented as Daf, we beg indulgence, and we cry.

And when the inevitable is thwarted, and such a being as Daf Langley survives to warm us all another day, we cry again. Only this time, the tears are those of cartwheels and celebration: One of great importance has been restored, and the aftermath transcends mere gratitude and approaches unrestrained glee.

I will know this lady, and her husband, and I will gain from them both. And I glee that my opportunity, like Daf, has not died.

This issue is for Daf, and Steve, and the future....

"YOU, SIR, ARE A GENUINELY CERTIFIABLE NUT!" (B.Linsey)



U D A Z A
U O H T A



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Cops, didn't space the horizontal too well there, wot? Hi, I'm COSTAGUANA, a journal of postal diplomacy and extraordinary postage bills (circ. 83). My publisher and typist is C. Friesner von Metzke, 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117-3813. 'Phone at home (619) 276-2937. 'Phones at work, (619) 273-4830 or 273-1208. Subs 10/\$5. Game fees: None, just hold down a sub. Trades all-for-all, and still no game fees. Conrad tells me he has to go to the bathroom just now, so if you don't mind, I'll just keep typing myself until he returns....

OPENING SALVO: This ought to be unique. I've never typed myself before; Conrad's always done me for me. And now that he's off performing a presumably natural function, and I have the chance to do me myself, I begin to appreciate the problems.

First off is the filing system. I kid you not, Conrad is an utter disaster when it comes to orderliness. I swear, if it weren't for Jean, he'd misfile the lamps and the piano too! And then there's the little matter of typing; I fear I am no expert at this activity. Conrad only uses two fingers, which is slow enough (though he does, indeed, have a Certificate of Proficiency from ninth grade for earning a 'B' at 47 words per minute; he's gotten faster since then, too), but I have a small problem in that I don't have fingers, so this is proving to be a real challenge. Thank God Conrad had the electric set up, the touch is pretty light, but even at that I've already snapped three of the old chicken bones that Jean wrapped in me last week...well, we'll come up with something.

Hmm...no toilet flush yet, he must still be reading his latest Dick Francis mystery. Okay, I'll keep going....

That April Fool's Issue that was done of me really did sucker a batch of you in, didn't it? I mean, gee; the sympathy card from Craig Mills, the ten dollars from Jim Burgess, the calls from Bob Acheson and Bob Greier and Dave Anderson and an only half-fooled Nelson Heintzman (but half is better than zero, heh heh) and at least five others - and, to spare embarrassment, I won't even identify the person who sent in his subsequent moves based on the results printed in the fake....

Now losses here (still no water running in the loo): Connie-poo promised you an interim catch-up issue, #18½, right? Well, he didn't do it. Everything intended for that issue is in this one, so you don't lose out; but a realistic re-appraisal of how much I cost to print and mail called him back. So don't freak, nothing has been lost in transit. Unless, of course, you haven't received this one....

Whups - there goes the toilet...no, never mind, now he's going outside to throw a baseball for Ross. I think I'll just keep going. I have one more...

another
up on the basis of that possibility.
Hum. I'm having a little trouble with the ---

Ahh! Thanks, kid - now get that goddamn popsickle out of my hairs



It is one thing, of course, to make an honest appraisal of a situation and elect a wrong option; that's called a 'mistake.' It is rather a different thing to view a situation so myopically, owing to mental defect or advanced Alzheimer's or inherent amorality or excessive gullibility to bad advice or whatever, that the ensuing decision is so thoroughly outrageous as to verge on the criminal. That's called 'stupidity.'

For all his pancake-makeup charm, many of us in this society have long viewed Ronald Reagan as a stupid man. What horrifies us, I suspect, is not so much that he is a fool, but rather that his constituency allows him to get away with it so soon after Vietnam. It is now just eleven years since the last elements of our Indochinese expeditionary force fled the paddies, most of them young men as innocent as the civilians they had been napalming, but nevertheless shoved into a thicket of whispered disgrace because that was less traumatic than sounding out the lunatics whose bi-partisan cerebral bilgewater had sent them out. Eleven years is not ancient history; not one reader of this journal is too young to remember at least a bit of it. If one is "fortunate" enough to live in the right city, one can actually still see it. Come with me to Linda Vista, a community three miles from my house which is now a Vietnamese ghetto; I will be pleased to show you disfigured teenagers and adults whose acquaintance with Agent Orange is far more than theoretical.

But I guess we've forgotten. Never mind that some aficionado of grotesquerie has seen fit to snap a photo of a maimed Cambodian woman standing in front of a newspaper rack in which the headlines scream, "U.S. ATTACKS LIBYA." Early reports: Gaddafi's baby daughter killed. Bombs blast a civilian block of flats in Tripoli. Never mind any of that; Gaddafi is the harbinger of terrorism, and by God and apple pie, we are going to show that sonofabitch a thing or two and make the German discos safe for enlisted men once again. Some pundit has dubbed it "John Wayne Diplomacy." It is no such thing; it is Godzilla Diplomacy. Start with a brain of no demonstrated capacity whatever; add a few fire-breathing bombs, zip them up in an F-111 monster suit, and let 'er rip. Full circle: "From the halls of Du Pont Chemical, to the shores of Tripoli...."

Ah, but perhaps I am the simple-minded one after all. Perhaps my idea that an understanding of the terrorism we wish to combat proves clearly that an armed assault represents a challenge, not a warning, is naive. Perhaps my recognition that death is not a deterrent to the Abu Nidals of this world is silly. And just perhaps, I need to fix a nagging fear in the back of my skull: The fear that we need to act so stupidly precisely because we have NOT forgotten Vietnam; we have some compulsion to redeem the ignominy that we cannot escape, and since we cannot go do that one over, we'll do another one in its stead. Grenada and Nicaragua aren't sufficient; there's no polarization of irrational anger. Gaddafi, the personification of all we hold to be evil, is perfect. So let's go blaze him,

get him for the Gipper, and maybe get a few more too - say, one for each of those names on the stark memorial in Washington, and most especially for those who never had an honest chance to shoot their own Gooks.

What are we really trying to do? Solve something? Or merely find redemption? If the latter, perhaps there are better places to look than in the tenements of Libya....



FRANK AND ERNEST

Bob Thaves



As was stated earlier, the essence of this issue is going to be "let's catch up with the backlog." I have enough letters, several of them actually scoldy, lying about this domain to make the best of editors scream in agony. And the writers deserve their moment in the sun, and it is about damned time I provided it.

I also wish to finish off the Rules Forum, and maybe have a little off with music, and then of course we have a buggery of games to do; and one of these times I have some book reviews, a movie review, a bit on the Florida panthers, a journey down the Amazon, more Doug Brown photos, a reprint series from old COSTA issues if ever Rod dredges up his file...hey, Leroy, we is gonna be BUSY 'roun heah....

To close the page, here's this issue's Schubert song theme:

GESCHWIND



IM WIN-DE, IM STUR-ME BE-FÄHR ICH DEN FLUSS, DIE KLEID-ER DURCH....^{etc}

aways? Well, for one, 1983CL ended in a draw, but "you" forgot to say who was in the draw; also, 1985D had 34 failed orders (although not unheard-of; I do remember when a Dick Martin/Mark Lew 17-17 ended one game year later with Lew controlling all 34 centers - however, highly suspicious); the way the games are listed on the back cover; finally, as a government employee myself, I know that the unions are too good to allow a 40% employment cut, especially in the USPS. With my luck, that's probably the one thing that's true....)

One thing keeps me from calling the April 1 a fake; the mailing label matches the March one, and the March address is different than usual. Okay, make that TWO things.

P.S. I see that Marin County is big enough to rate its own TV series, even if it is only syndicated. Only, why is it set in Mill Valley if the views are all of Sausalito, four or five miles away? Who knows - it's taped in Hollywood, after all....

((Well, of course we all know about my fake by now. The honest truth is that I never did start out to fool anyone; the plan I had for the fake was to start out semi-serious, inject a little silliness as I went on, and gradually deteriorate to total idiocy. Assuming one read from start to finish, I fully expected that, by the time I got to the line (on Page 2) about the kids skipping breakfasts, nobody would still be wondering....

((The bit about the numbers on the cover - well, hell, I had just said, the issue before, that one of these days I was going to get all the numbers wrong, and - voila! As for 34 failed orders, well, I could have done a better job; a few more cut-supports and a convoy or two might have looked spiffier, but I didn't allow myself the time.

((The hell with government unions, they won't help me; I'm management, not craft. There is, of course, no 40% shakeup here, but there has been a shuffle in the top levels and it has resulted in some firings and demotions. In fact, one of the people who was sucked in by the fake was Jim Burgess in Providence, and in his case I can see why he bit; one of the real shakeup casualties was the Providence postmaster!

((Hey - by the way, you're not supposed to be getting COSTAGUANA any more! Where's my sub money? Better still, wanna trade?

((Sorry, I don't know about this TV series - tell me about it. If nothing else, I think I'd like the scenery - meaning memories. I remember Sausalito well. More than that, I used to live in Mill Valley - halfway up Tamalpais - in case you care, it was right on the corner of the highway and the turnoff to the Marin County Gun Club, about a mile downslope from the lodge, and up the hill from Muir Woods, which latter remains my favorite spot on earth.))

Jeff Richmond: "I'd be delighted to trade my skinny 6-pager for your big, fat 'zine! Such a deal!"

((Well, sir, I'd be delighted too. PROBOZZ is a gem, skinny or not; fine graphics, puzzles, literate chat, nicely-done games - and one big problem. I take the liberty of a quote from PROBOZZ 27:

"...I've acquired a post office box...the main reason I decided to do this is that I have been less than satisfied with the letter carriers' service in this area. Far too often mail is delivered to the wrong address. Just two days ago, I received a letter addressed to my next-door neighbor. When I went out to put the letter in her mailbox, I noticed a letter to me (a player's orders) was sitting on top of the stack in her mailbox. Now, we all know the U.S. Postal Diservice is slow enough without having my mail routed through a neighbor or two (and maybe from there to the trash). I suppose I could complain to some postal authority, but getting the box seems the most practical solution...."

((Kogashi I mean, I know you're new to COSTA, Jeff, but it's time you learned the truth - I am an 'authority' for the USPS! Mail carriers are people, and people screw up. And there is only one way that anybody will ever solve the problem, and that's to discuss it with an 'authority.'))

((Approach it politely and humanely, but do not be deferential. I am amazed, almost every day, at the people who will settle for poor service merely because it's too much trouble, or "it won't do any good," to complain. My job is to correct mail carrier errors. There is no way in the world I can do this unless somebody tells me that there's an error being made!))

((On the other hand, those people who stomp into the office screaming that their carrier is an idiot, and unless I fix it yesterday they're going to have my ass, and his, and write their congressman, and it's all the union's fault and besides we hire too many spics and niggers - well, hell, their mail can go to Antarctica for all I care. For the rational ones, I work my butt off, and I demand that my carriers do so as well. For the loonies, I but chortle.))

Paul Gardner: "Since we talked, it's occurred to me that I know pretty much where Donald Avenue is - heading south on Genesee, just before you get to Clairemont Mesa, there's another light first - that's Donald, isn't it? ((No.)) Is the 92117 P.O. in the mall on Clairemont Mesa west of Genesee? ((No.))"

((Well, I hate to disjoin the letter, but let's clear up the geography. The P.O. is across from the mall, not in it. Nyaah. And the light before Clairemont Mesa is Appleton on the right and Lehrer on the left. To get to Donald Ave., go down Genesee to Clairemont Mesa; turn right; go two lights to Rolfe; turn left; follow Rolfe until it ends. That's Donald. It is not more than a mile from where you thought it was, and considering that this really isn't your turf, I'm amazed that you came as close as you did.))

((Oh, about your tree-climbing photos of Newfane - wow. You've got ten points up on God's country, I'll say that. Except...what is that white crap all over the ground?))

I do have two cents' worth of opinion on preference lists. You are really telling us how you made your random draws (in an opaque Tupperware dish!) - Conrad, quit being silly. The results of your three pref. lists represent the extreme right of the bell curve of random selections - it should be highly unlikely that the random looks like the pref. In fact, random should fall about halfway between the optimum preference and what I will call the optimum anti-preference list. In other words, flip all your preference lists around and pick everyone's worst-case choices in the same way you pick their favorites. A perfect pref. score is 7, a perfect anti-pref. is 49, a "perfect" random score is 28. Something like that, anyway. The idea is to flatten out the result, i.e. no-one gets exactly what he

...chance of getting exactly what he doesn't want.

All this sounds like an endorsement for random drawings - which is not what I intended. I actually go along with Elmer, to an extent; give the players their preferences, but completely, i.e. for everyone or none. In Not New York I use preference lists, in fact I solicit them actively, but if I don't get one from each I don't use any.

Look at it this way: In chess and checkers everyone starts with an even chance to win (maybe to the masters first-move advantage means something, but at my present level of play it sure doesn't), in poker and bridge someone is usually dealt an upper hand (but who?), and in Risk you get a hand in choosing your starting position. But from there on it's all luck. Only in Dip can you have a guy start in a position that statistically does twice as well as one of the others. Of course people want to choose Eng. or Fra. If only half submit preference lists, for whatever reason, the "don't submits" stand a poor chance of seeing E or F. Country selection is the closest a GM comes to actively participating in the game. It's of great importance that he does it even-handedly.

Having said that, my next position will seem like a flip-flop. I disapprove (wildly) of neutral orders for '01 or halting the game because of an '01 NMR. True, play is hurt by the NMR, but that's within the nature of the system. The most the GM should do is contact players he hasn't heard from in a while to make sure they're still interested (if the game has been open a while before filling). If the GM gets a nod of assent from all seven at the time that the game start announcement goes out, then play should occur in '01 the same as in '07. Life affects PBM Dip; we all accept that for '02 or '10, why not '01? Who's to say what's critical or what makes a better game? Once you're given the sled, it's push at the top of the hill - don't mess with it, let fly as it will!"

((And what, pray tell, is wrong with a preference list based on ratings? You're probably right, that is precisely what is going on, but so what? Some people enjoy and prefer to play by ratings. In my own case, I like preference lists because that way I am almost guaranteed of never getting England, which I don't want. It interests me, though, that Stephen Wilcox, who compiles and publishes the biggest of the ratings charts, is one of those who specifically does not play by ratings - he likes random draws! Interesting apparent dichotomy.

((Yes, I've seen Dragon's Lair, and I agree it is beautifully and lovingly done. Ratings don't much interest me - never have - but TDL almost makes them palatable. The relative 'success rates' of the seven Powers, however, are just about what they've always been, and I don't foresee any major shifts occurring in the future - ever. Austria will always be on the bottom. France and England will always fight it out for the top. Russia either wins or gets squished, it rarely is a big factor in draws and stalemates - this is because all stalemate lines go across the middle of Russia, they do not encompass it. Only Italy, in my estimation, has a possibility of a radical change in its relative ranking: The biggest problem it has is that too few people take it seriously, it could be a much stronger power than is shown if only a few serious people would work with it. A few of the great names in the hobby - Smyth, Birsean, Saythe, Beyerlein,

Phillips - have done some remarkable things with that country, but - perhaps because it is the butt of so many jokes (hobby-related and otherwise) - a lot of people find they've been given Italy and proceed to write the game off as a loss without giving any effort to what they might do if only they'd try. Much the same could be said for Austria, though in this case there's more justification for the negativism.

((On neutral '01 orders, I'm not sure what I want to say. I continue to insist that 1901 is the most crucial season of the game, but I also acknowledge that the single most crucial aspect of the season is the negotiation, which has nothing whatsoever to do with merely pushing units about. Ideally, of course, there would never be a missed move any time, but again, if some clunker is not negotiating, what's the real difference anyway? Walt Buchanan used to solve the problem by having standbys for every position every season, but then he'd only run one game at a time; for us with several games, that's unmanageable.

((I hate to just shrug it off and say, 'Yeah, Neutral '01 ain't that big a deal, let's just forget it,' because I am utterly convinced that a missed 1901 move skews the game too much. But the whole issue has me in a quandary at the moment because no solution is demonstrably superior to the others, I'd offer. I think I am inclined to the Kleiman et al. "hold the game and appoint a new player" theorem, precisely because it does the least harm.))

Bruce Lindsey: "I've now finished reading through the April Fool's issue. You, sir, are a genuinely certifiable nut...but I love ya anyway! Great job!"

((Now you know where I got my front-page header.

((This is a serious statement: There is no way I can ever express to any of you how your responses to my April Fool effort have made me feel. Vital? Happy? Renewed? Barin' to go for more? Yeah, that covers about 10% of it....))

Simon Billenness: "I've just had a fund-raising letter from the Committee for Congressman Ronald W. Dellums. It seems strange to receive a promotion letter in New York which has been mailed in Minneapolis on behalf of a California congressman! Still, he wants to stop Star Wars and prevent further U.S. involvement in Central America, so he'll no doubt receive a small contribution from me. American politics is weird!"

((No it isn't. Minneapolis is just where the postal permit was taken out. Ron Dellums - an old acquaintance of mine from the anti-Vietnam protest days - may be a regional MC (our equivalent to MP), but he also has a national following as a leader of various causes. If you were black, you'd also be getting letters from Ron as national chairman of several minority-advancement organizations. He's sort of like your Ian Paisley, only of course not crazy; his power base is localized but his following and influence are more widespread.))

Mark Bergh: "Here's proof that I'm right on the Sarawak pronunciation biz!" ((Mark insists it's SARAH-wack, and he appends to his note a concert review from the Washington Post of violinist Sarah Kwak, which I guess conclusively proves his point.

((But what size violin does a duck use?))

Kevin Tighe: "Thanks for mailing Totally Buff for me. Already received a call from Keith. Didn't fool him for a sec. Also, Gardner guessed it was me. So

that I didn't understand, but a few references back to my old TILs cleared a few cobwebs, and overall I was truly and royally funned. But Handel? What Handel? I remember seeing one from a Scarlatti oratorio which you had for some reason translated into English...was that it?

((I already said I was sorry for the shuttle joke, so why rub it in? As to the Linsey stuff, hey, that was the best part! Ain't you got no Klan tendencies?))

Randolph Smyth: "A couple of points regarding the 'real' COSTA of April 4 (the April Fool issue didn't fool me for long - after reading that you were fired, I glanced at the date, then the evidence piled up quickly once I was on the alert. Since when does the government ever fire anybody?).

I notice that you didn't mention FOL SI FIE in the alphabetical listing of 'zines you receive. This is not a request for a plug. I just want to make sure that you have been getting the issues that I've sent so far. ((Er...nope, haven't seen a one.))

Most of your readers might miss the questions on Page 17, but I'll answer anyway. I think the entire question can be cast in terms of your final query - can a GM throw one player out for moving in with another? I think not. Objections by other players and/or warnings by the BNC have no direct bearing on a player's right to continue play. Certainly the GM has an obligation to avoid putting "closely allied" players into the same game, and may request one to step aside if a problem develops later; but unless a player deceives the GM to gain entry (which should be covered by other rules), there is no power of ouster after participation begins.

I also suggest that the fact of two players moving in together may actually improve the diplomatic position of the others. If two players friendly enough to consider becoming roommates in the first place, their on-board co-operation is already as close as it's gonna get. The fact of actually moving in together puts the others on notice, at least, of the relationship and allows them to seek diplomatic remedies if desired. It's the alternative that I find more unfair, where friends outside the game don't disclose the fact to the others.

There is always the matter of having direct physical access to the other's correspondence. A third player might feel prejudiced by being unable to correspond without 'monitoring' by the other roommate. In most cases the roommates would be able to protect their own individual interests with proper arrangements - in extreme cases, alternate addresses could be used for receipt of 'sensitive' communications. Beyond that, the other players have no "rights" anyhow - there's no law against letter-passing, and nothing that the original writer can do about the possibility, roommates or not.

I don't want to leave anyone with the idea that consultations with the BNC and other players are irrelevant. On the contrary, the only small criticism of anyone's actions that I'd have here is that you didn't request John Walker's feedback. The most important thing is that everyone knows where they stand. As for the regularity, I'll certainly include the game in the CPCRL, and see no reason why other ratingsmasters shouldn't include it in their lists."

((No, no FOLs yet. I was thinking maybe you shipped in batches?

((Your comments about the roommate situation generally parallel my own, and I will mostly let them stand without further amendment. A couple of minor notes

prove useful: Your discussion of the receipt of mail brings to mind the John Piggott/Andy Davidson problems of several years ago, where Andy took the liberty of looking over the orders John had received for KHLL. This is a tad different, John and Andy weren't roomies, Andy just happened to be in John's dorm room at Jesus at the time. But the effect is the same; carried to extremes, if I am not allowed to select a roommate who happens to be playing a game with me, then logically I ought not also be allowed to invite any co-player over for dinner. You listening, Alan Stewart and Fred Davis? You join games with me, the offer of room and meals when you visit is kaput.

((I agree, I ought to have consulted John Walker. I didn't solely because at the time, he was in the midst of the radiological therapy that had driven him out of the game in the first place, and I felt it inappropriate to intrude. It doesn't change your point that I may have advanced a good reason; ideally, John would have been consulted. However, may I remark that, had it been comfortable to consult John in the first instance, it's likely that the situation wouldn't have existed at all.

((Finally, I might note that in the specific case to hand - the EMU game - there is one flaw in your 'diplomatic advantage' comments (which are otherwise quite valid, I'd aver). David Pierce can gain nothing here. There are only three players left; against the other two, the new roomies, with whom is he going to exploit his "advantage?"

((In line with your statement about including the game in CPCRL, I would really love to hear from other ratingsmasters: Stephen, Elmer, anyone else? Given the facts as I've stated them, and presuming that I'm not omitting or hiding anything, will you rate this game?))

Fred C. Davis, Jr.: "I think the enclosed material on the Cline 9-Man variant IV is self-explanatory. I think we are going to have to split this variant up into "IV.1" and "IV.2" versions, since both you and Elmer Hinton will be running sections. They will be identical, except for the rule on 'Moses Crossings.' It seems that your revision of that rule makes your version "IV.2." I can't call it "V" since there is already such a version, thanks to Andy Poole and the UKVB.

Since I was very much taken in about 6 years ago by your famous "lung cancer" April Fool's issue, I've been very careful about reading any 'sine dated 1 April, so I suspected right from the start that this was not a real issue. (However, the way the FEDERAL TIMES describes the way the Administration views the P.O., I wouldn't be surprised if there was a big RIF coming up. Then, when the P.O. couldn't handle all the mail, service in the big cities can be contracted out to certain deserving Republicans.) I can't imagine anyone reading the game reports and falling for them, however.

The current issue was very good. I, too, agree that Postal games should all be non-DIAS. I would not play in a DIAS game. This was the one backward step taken when the Rulebook was rewritten in 1971.

Frankly, I'm so busy that I'm rather glad I didn't get into the Cline IV game in COSTA. Still, for my own knowledge, I'd like to know whether I was left out because I failed to confirm that I was interested, or for some other reason."

((The 'enclosed material' consisted in some questions from Elmer Hinton and Fred's responses to them. The questions essentially dealt with a bit of confusion over which version of the game is which, and of course I did not help it at all by providing two entirely different maps for mine....

but without exception they are relatively minor ones - a few provinces added or redrawn, a fleet exchanged for an army, the "Moses Crossing" rule transposed from various Davis games, etc. These have all been changes to improve the game, but if we were to kick them all out and go back to Bob's original, we'd still have a decent game. Anyway, I'm not sure anyone knows how many versions there really are; depending on the map and rules Elmer plans to use, we could have as many as seven for sure, and that is with the understanding that I've never seen the rules used in Britain. And Bob Acheson is starting a section, under what map/rules I don't know, so...are we opting for an eighth here?

((The "cancer" issue was far more than six years ago, I fear. I sure wish I still had a copy of that issue...along with several others....

((You and I, and others like us, need to keep in mind that a lot of the people who get sucked into believing outrageous April Fool issues aren't really used to the line of lunacy that engenders them. I get the impression that the Glory Days of fakes is past; it ain't much done any more. Thus far, I am only aware of Kevin faking Keith, and me faking me, this year, but there was a time when there would be ten of them at a time, all criss-crossing and driving us all bats. Among the current crop of players, many are new, and don't have this background to draw on - in fact, of the 83 readers of this issue, I can only think of seventeen who might have been around for the "cancer" fake, and I'm not really sure about two or three of them: Baumelster, Berch, Beyerlein, Buchanan, Cartier, Connor, Cusack, Davis, Hinton, Morton, Palter, Peery, Piggott, Smyth, R.Walker, Walkerdine and Weidmark. Hmm...there's a list of hobby history right there, eh?

((Well, about you getting in Cline, it's like this; I guess I never really did discuss it with you, but I wound up with eleven players somehow, and you kept telling me how busy you were and I just sort of logically extended your situation and - er - left you out. I should have at least told you this, though, so I do apologize. The other one excluded was Bob Acheson, in his case by the simple expedient that his was the last application/preference list to arrive. Anyway - absolutely nothing personal intended in either case.))

Mark Berch: "A sad update on your fine condor essay: All of the wild birds trapped turned out to be males, so any discussion of a stable wild population would be moot. Of course, keeping the males in place would make it (politically) easier to maintain their habitat. The last wild egg was recently found broken. One idea the essay didn't mention is foster-parenting; this involves establishing the Andean condor in California, and then replacing Andean condor eggs with California eggs obtained from zoos - if they can be gotten. However, given the fact that the California condor seems to be unable to survive in California unless it can be bred in captivity, the biologists will have to find another habitat for them, probably in South America. If condors are required politically to 'hold' the terrain in California, then we may need to establish an Andean condor colony here until the California condor can establish itself elsewhere.

Alternatively, failure of zoo breeding programs can be circumvented by ovum transplant procedures, although that procedure hasn't been done much on non-mammals."

((All of the Andean condor schemes have been bandied about of late, though I hadn't heard the ovum-transplant idea leveled. The problem at the moment seems to be that nobody can come to an agreement. Some authorities insist that the existing habitat is hopeless, that the condor can never survive there because of encroachment. Still others say that, as far as they are concerned, the species

is effectively extinct, and why don't we spend all the money somewhere else? Yet others say, leave the few wild ones alone precisely because they are all males (though one may be a female, it's never been banded so nobody knows), thus if they all die we haven't lost any of our breeding stock. On the other hand, there isn't a single actively breeding female in existence just now, so where does that leave us?

((Moving the California birds to the Andes poses one massive problem: In order to properly monitor the birds down there, the zoos would have to set up a facility on the spot, and that would cost far more money than they currently have available. And finally, the San Diego Zoo at least is in the throes of its own administrative trauma: Not long ago, the general director, Sheldon Campbell, died very suddenly of heart failure. His successor, Dr. James Bacon, lasted all of two or three months, and then he too died suddenly of heart failure. So a lot of programs are on hold while the administration is settled and the future directions of the zoo are reaffirmed.))

(Still Mark Berch): "Your account of 1962A was a bit incomplete. What about the fraudulent restart in SEITENSTETTEN? Also, I think you left out a step. Originally, the 1962A story was put out. Later, Walker said that it was all a hoax, that you had only thought of the idea but never organized the game (i.e. a story pretty similar to what you're now saying). This was in TURNABOUT 13. Then years later, around the time Rod restarted EREWON, he disavowed that story, saying that it had only been called a hoax because no proof was available. But Rod had then 'found' the five issues and even reprinted them in one of his mini-zines - in short, re-running the hoax again and insisting that the original it-was-a-hoax stance was false."

((Thanks for reminding me of SEITENSTETTEN, I had totally forgotten it. That was my one big contribution to the hoax, purporting to "re-begin" the game - with all new players - from the point at which it had broken off in 1962.

((I was never really privy to all the ins and outs of Rod's hoaxing and re-hoaxing; a great deal of what he did was read to me on the 'phone, but I never actually got involved. I did, of course, willingly lend my name to the proceedings, in the spirit of fun and let's-bug-Boardman, but to this day I have never seen the five issues of "MONGO" that Rod created in my name and held forth as Great Rediscoveries.

((It has since occurred to me that, back in 1965 when I first made John Boardman's acquaintance, he asked me about my early attempt to play postally, and I told him the truth then. I cannot imagine that he still has my letter, but he may well remember getting it, and he may also recall that it was written long before I ever renewed my lapsed friendship with Rod.

((But let us proceed further in this letter column, and eventually we shall have Rod getting in on this subject....))

(Still Mark Berch): "Why are you so all-fired anxious to run so many games? Let's face it, writing is your forte, and I daresay the majority of people who get COSTA do so to read your writing, so why divert your time to GMing? There are plenty of good GMs. And your track record as a GM is, shall we say, not sensational. You do recall 1971DM, right? I thought so!"

((...))

Elmer is suggesting that there is but one "official" ("central") Hobby Archive, and that his private 'zine collection is it. There is some history connected with this claim, which is phoney. You will note the alleged tie-in with Walt Buchanan's "Hoosier Archive", as if Elmer has Walt's blessing to be his "official" successor. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In the earliest days of the hobby, there were many very extensive private collections of Dipzines, but as time went on, getting anywhere near a complete collection became very difficult. By 1972 there were only 2 relatively complete collections that I know of: Walt's and mine. Walt's was pretty generally recognized as a "hobby project" (and later on a good bit of my collection went to fill holes in his). It was this consensus recognition which made Walt's archive something like "official". Since Walt is inactive (although still acting as caretaker for his virtually complete 1962-1978 archive), the question is, what about an "official" archive for now? Do we have one? Should we have one?

To answer the last question first, it seems to me that perhaps we should. There should be one location to which record copies of all hobby publications get sent, which provides catalogue information on its holdings, and makes copies of out-of-print material for people who want them. It seems to me that everyone would agree with that, even if they did so without enthusiasm and would never intend to use that service. Even if one argued that such a thing is not a necessity (and I believe it is), it would at least be nice to have.

It seems to me that there are three criteria on which a private archive's status as an "official hobby archive" should be determined.

1. Hobby consensus. The members of the hobby would need to accept the "hobby archive" status in order for it to be "official". Elmer, of course, is approaching this backwards. He assumes he's "official" and is trying to force a choice between him and another archive (which I'll discuss in a moment) in order to create a consensus which, in fact, doesn't exist. That has to be earned, not merely claimed or voted on in a referendum of strictly limited participation and even more limited (approaching zero) value. The consensus, ultimately, will have to be based on the other two criteria.

2. Service. This must be actual, and over time, not claimed or offered as pie in the sky. A working archive would need to be conducting published bibliographic studies, publishing catalogues of its holdings, offering copies (at cost, of course; not free), and so on. One does not see these sorts of things from Elmer, that I know of. In fact, in his case, the question of providing copies "at cost" arises immediately. By that I mean that the question arises as to how much Elmer might inflate prices...after all, here you have a person who charges \$3 per season merely to adjudicate a Diplomacy game!!! (John Boardman, the best in the business, only charges \$18 for an entire game.) [However, it also occurs to me that more than one archive could provide these services. Who says that "official" archives need be singular. Only Elmer seems to want to grab a "one-and-only" title.] It seems to me that earning any sort of consensus recognition as a "hobby archive" would take at least a couple of years of continuous and useful service.

3. Authorized succession. For the last 20 years (and the postal Diplomacy hobby has only existed for 24 years), established and functioning hobby projects have changed hands through a sort of anointing or laying-on-of-hands. Thus John Boardman, the first BNC, made Charles Wells his successor...and so on, down to Bill Cullin today. Walt Buchanan's Hoosier Archive was an established and functioning project when it ceased to accept additions to its holdings in 1978. If someone could establish a "line of succession" back to Walt as an Archivist, he/she would have a claim to be "official". It is exactly this claim that Elmer Hinton makes in his "poll" (item 5), and it is exactly that claim which is wholly false. The situation is in fact somewhat tangled, but it leads away from Elmer, not toward him.

Let me preface a discussion of the archive question with another observation. Elmer Hinton has been trying for years to be "official" in the hobby. He has made attempts to gain

control of some important hobby project...DIPLOMACY WORLD, MNC, BNC, Archives...he's tried at least those and I believe others. Unfortunately, his methodology in each case has been some sort of strongarm tactic, trying to hijack the project instead of inheriting it. In the case of the Archives, he has been forging the will, so to speak.

If you ask Walt Buchanan, he will tell you that at no time has he ever approved Elmer as his successor as hobby archivist. That much is clear and simple, so Elmer's claims fall to the ground. What did happen was that the then-functioning International Diplomacy Association, with Walt's approval, selected an archivist of its own, to function in succession to Walt. That was as close to a direct anointing as we got. The person selected (and tacitly accepted by Walt) was Scott Marley of Santa Ana (in Orange County), who founded the ORChives as the new Hobby Archives. (In terms of wittiness, at least, Scott is to Elmer as Oscar Wilde was to Kaiser Wilhelm II). Scott began collecting, cataloguing, and publishing...but his enthusiasm for the project gradually waned, and the ORChives were eventually reduced to a considerable collection of boxed materials. And there matters rested for some time.

If we are to consider any question of "legitimate succession", then, we will have to consider whether, and to whom, the ORChives may have passed. For the successor to Scott Marley is also the successor to Walt Buchanan. It happens that the ORChives have indeed been passed on. Last year, Scott turned them over to Larry Peery. To the extent that there can or should be an "official" hobby archivist, therefore, Larry is that person.

That said, however, let me emphasize that a Postal Diplomacy Archive does not need to be a unique thing. Unlike something like the Boardman Numbers, for instance, multiplicity is not rivalry...in fact, only Elmer (who wants so badly to be "official" he even has a nonexistent "organization" as a front) is insisting there is any rivalry or any need to make a choice between who's "in" and who's "out". Frankly, any Diplomacy player could assemble a reference library of Dipzines, publish bibliographic surveys and catalogues and articles, and offer copies at cost. ANYBODY. I hope several people get interested and do this. Because archive collections are perishable, redundancy is not only not-bad, it is very, very good. It is ridiculous for Elmer Hinton to seek self-importance by claiming to be "the official archive" when he plainly is not. If he has services and information to offer the hobby, let him do so. If not, let him shut up. And if there are people who wish to recognize an "official" archive, then the heir to what Walt Buchanan began is Larry Peery.

Let me also offer some current bibliographic tidbits for the delectation of Elmer and others. The earliest "archivists" in this hobby were simple collectors. We wanted to amass collections which included everything ever published, neatly stored and catalogued. Dan Alderson, Walt Buchanan, and myself were the most avid of these, although there were other very extensive collections. Dan, Walt, and I each had unique items which the others could never obtain originals of. We even collected variant and oddly-printed versions, coveted complete sets of 'zines (right down to the most worthless flyer), and so on...like stamp collectors, you know. In that spirit, I offer some sidelights.

1. DIPLOMACY WORLD 36 actually exists in two different printings. The first printing has a normal cardstock cover similar to that on the other issues when I was editor. The 2nd printing, however, has a slick cardstock cover and is a lighter shade of blue. I still possess a copy from each printing, but the rest of the copies are scattered all over the hobby. Any serious collector would, of course have to have a specimen of each printing. Have fun....

2. EREHWON 117 consists of 2 printings. The 2nd printing is just ordinary xerox; I could send you a copy for 15¢ plus postage. But the first printing; ah, that was something else. It consists of only 10 copies, each with a full-color xerox cover. It is the only Dipzine ever produced with a color-xerox cover (insofar as I know). The cover of D.W. 37 uses the same picture, but of course on ERE 118 it's in color. Since the master has been destroyed, there can never be any more of these. I retained 1 copy and the other 7 were sent to the players & commentator in the D.W. Demo Game at that time. This is a true bibliomaniac's treasure. If you can locate a copy (ack!)

Diplomacy magazines, when left to rot in a barnhouse in Lebanon, Illinois, or a draughty old garage in San Diego? I do not for one minute hold forth that Elmer Hinton is perfect. But he is by training and profession an archivist - for the New Hampshire Historical Society - and he has begun recently to do something useful with his still-limited but increasingly important collection. When the same can be said of his ostensible "competitors," then - and only then - will your arguments justify the expenditure of the paper you used to make them.

((Enclosed please find one dollar. I really suppose I ought to see these MONGO issues that you faked in my name....

((At one time I toyed with the idea of using color Xerography for a COSTA cover, but when I enquired the prices...GEEZ!! Maybe one of these days, like for Ross' birthday or something, I'll plaster him all over the front page and go bankrupt. It's a fun idea. And in the meantime, we can all go scour the countryside looking for the two copies of your effort for which you don't account, which is to say that seven plus one rarely equals a two-digit integer....))

Steve Langley: "I was sorry to hear about your loss of income. There is a silver lining if you can appreciate it - your problems made us realize that Daf's brain tumor was only a minor problem.

I just don't feel that \$50 for all those windows is reasonable. It isn't as though you can afford it, and I do have my standards to maintain. I'll do them for \$10 if you will pay my transportation costs. By taxi, I can get there for only \$3,526.

I'm truly shocked that Linsey would open the door to a NEGRO. Is there no depth too low for that slime? I mean, after all, when an Amerind slipped into the hobby it was bad enough, but a NEGRO?

You might consider putting a large sign on Eric with Doug and Marie's address and 'phone number. Then just drop him off at the nearest freeway. I'm sure Doug or Marie could find time to collect him when he got into their vicinity, always assuming whoever picked him up was going in that direction.

Enclosed you should find a slip from an old adding machine. When I saw the machine I immediately thought of you.

I must say I like your new style of game presentation. I could run another ten games easily!

PS: I assume your review of DIPLOMACY DIGEST was some sort of April Fool's joke - right?

((Steve's letter, I might note, was dated April 1st.

((I just don't understand Brux. And it gets worse; Dan Stafford recently told me that Kathy heard from Woody that Ed Wrobel used Ken Peel's CIA contacts to tap Gary Coughlan's phone, and - damned if Brux ain't letting a Mongolian in next! Will it never stop? Next thing we hear, it'll be a Nepali, then a Bruneian, and one of these days - gasp - a JEW! Once that happens, I'm going to have to get out; my wife (the former Ms. Kaplan) wouldn't hear of it!

((Elsewhere in this issue, you'll have my comments on adding machines, and on the minor inconvenience of brain tumours in general and Daf's piddling little crisis in particular. As to shipping Eric off with a sign, it seemed a good idea, so I tried it. But it looks like he goofed: Is there anybody who could pick him up in the stockyards of Alliance, Nebraska? He's been there a week, and he must be hungry by now....

((And finally, as to the matter of the review of DD, I'm sorry, I don't follow you. What is an "April Fool joke?"))

Anonymous: "My father was an alcoholic, but, God bless him, I can't charge him with ruining anyone's life but his own. Perhaps not even that - he was probably not a happy man even before he became a practicing alcoholic, as it were. Possibly we (his family) could have helped him more - but I've never felt that consuming guilt that children of alcoholics are supposed to feel - we (the children) were all simply too young to understand. I would be interested to hear your views on treatment - can an alcoholic genuinely become an occasional, or social, drinker, as is sometimes said?"

((It was precisely because of this incorrectly-based but all-too-common guilt among spouses and offspring that such A.A. support groups as AlAnon and Alateen were set up. There is no basis, as far as I'm concerned, for any guilt feelings from anyone, including the subject. All that does is make it worse....

((As to the potential for recovery to the point of being again a social drinker, the problem with answering a point like that is that there are far too many levels of alcoholism to give a pat answer. In some cases it probably is possible. The big problem would come in knowing whether or not a given individual is such a case. The risk in testing the possibility is massive, and the benefits to be gained if one is successful are so slight, that it is generally held by therapists and A.A. members that once dry, always dry. But in fairness, this theorem is set forth to cover all comers, ranging up to the extreme hard-core cases. There is no question at all that the true hard-case souse cannot, absolutely can NOT, go back to it. But there are so many degrees that a firm rule is not possible, or purposeful.

((One of the largest difficulties is, of course, that nobody seems to agree on what causes the problem in the first place. There's an element of physical addiction, but it appears to be far weaker than for nicotine and much weaker still than for, say, heroin. But before the physical must come the psychological, and what brings that on is an utter mystery. Is it hereditary? Some say it may be. Is it merely a function of stress and depression, as the Freudians (and many others) insist? Well, that was certainly my motivation, but to ascribe my troubles to all others is folly. Is it a response to a chemical imbalance? So some claim. Lack of vitamins? Insufficient closeness to the Savior? These and other theories all have respected adherents. The real answer, for the moment, is that there is no answer. These theories are also the same ones advanced as causes of asthma, homosexuality and several other things about which we know too little.

((There is, however, general agreement on the treatment. The A.A. method has had a far greater success rate than anything else ever tried, and virtually all competent treatment programs connect up somehow. The underlying point of A.A. is that one must want to stop drinking; given that, A.A. is amazingly simple, and in boiled-down form involves first the act of stopping, and second a system of continuous supportive encouragement and reinforcement. Virtually all else is gloss.

((It works partly because of the nature of the product. The results of giving up drinking, in terms of feeling better physically, can be felt almost immediately; in my case it took half a day. In most cases there is little withdrawal, as in cigarettes or heroin, and the 'craving' is far weaker. That's where the support comes in; because the craving is not insurmountable, it can be met in 'ordinary' terms) if one has enough support and enough 'phone numbers, one can normally suppress the craving long enough to get on the blower and get talked out of it. For myself, I found my own resolve sufficiently strong that I rarely used the

People who were unconcerned about what I thought of as genuine affronts to human dignity were up in arms over this in Ontario (our legislation must be fifteen years old now). Perhaps it's because I have a dogmatic mind: People don't travel on the highways by right, but by generous permission of Her Majesty, and they have no natural rights upon them whatsoever. I buckle up by habit, having lots of other ways to die in store.

My opinion on 1901 moves has been that it's the player's game, and if he wants to screw himself by NMRing, it's entirely his business. Now I'm playing in a game essentially ruined by someone else's 1901 NMR, and have had other reasons for second thoughts. No conclusion.

Firm views about preference lists. I look first at the first choices. Let's say they are F-F-G-G-G-X-X (X = no choice). F and G are allocated randomly, and the two dim bulbs (no choice) each get assigned one of the other five countries, chosen randomly. Thus one may get E, even if E is the second choice of all the players who didn't get their F or G. The idea is that dim bulbs don't automatically get stuck with A and I just because they are too lazy to submit preference lists. Why am I so considerate to bozos? I'm populist, and resent the many advantages that the thoroughly competent seem to get everywhere. I interpret no pref list as desiring an equal chance at every country, not just a desire for leftovers. (Haa, wrote that before seeing Bruce Linsey's opposite remark.) I tolerate (in myself) no "stage managing" whatsoever. Conrad Minshall's procedure as described by Stephen Wilcox takes my above-mentioned beliefs to a - not-unreasonable - extreme.

Thank for mentioning my pref-list success in PRAXIS. Actually, I was disappointed. Throwing the die to decide who gets which country was fun, and I was sorry not to have more of it. All of my 'juggling' actually was geographical - the happy coincidence of pref-list fit was just that. Luck of the Scottish, I guess....

Can't see tossing a player out because of his press, but then I would edit out anything that might suggest that sanction. In particular, I would be reluctant to toss a player out for abusing the GM in the press it's press, after all, quite possibly meant to influence the players in some way, not really something for the GM to officially notice.

If a GM has to expel someone, he needs, yes, proof. But proof is anything that convinces him, even on the balance of probabilities, that the player has broken the rules. A 'phone call can be proof - rather, the player's statement on the 'phone constitutes the "proof" and is all that is needed. The GM is the tribunal here, not the readers of the 'zine, or even the players. All the lack of documentary evidence does is prevent the GM from "proving" the offence to someone else, if that someone else will not accept the GM's oral statement. But the GM is under no obligation to "prove" the statement to anyone else.

"Proof" seems to be treated as a totemic word, a magic symbol, in the hobby, probably because the concept has been so integral to recent feuding. No reason to let loose thinking seep into real Diplomacy activities. (How was that last sentence for sneering highhandedness?) ((Superb. You're learning, son....))

I am worried in theory about the abusive use of black press, and so do not allow it in my 'zine. The danger may be only theoretical, but it only takes one lunkhead to spoil a game for somebody. One thing I strongly disapprove of is something you just did, something Bob Acheson (otherwise an estimable fellow) did in his 'zine: Change the rules to allow black press in the middle of the game without the players' consent. If someone is going to be able to smear me (and insults are a big part of press, often) I want to have the right to protect myself by sticking to white press games and not have ((the limitation)) arbitrarily removed. In practice I don't object to playing in black press games, but I do object to abrogation of vested rights.

((Could I interrupt to clarify something while it's still fresh? I am guilty of an extreme error, and thanks to Alan for pointing it out. On page 25 of COSTA 10/17, I stated, "Formerly, in COSTA, black press was forbidden. From this moment on, it is not." I neglected, however, to add an operative sentence: "This will, of course, apply only to future games!" I concur completely with Alan; changing rules in mid-game without consent, except in some very limited and basic cases (e.g. "Deadlines are on Friday" changed to "Saturday") is not an appropriate GM action.))

Some omissions in your list of nations where peace is a fantasy: Poland, Cuba, the Soviet Union. They say "peace, peace" where there is no peace....

Please alert your readers to the dangers of mouth cancer. Still not common, its incidence has nevertheless been increasing with alarming rapidity, particularly among smokers. To test yourself for the first signs of the disease, spit into a small transparent bag 'till it's about one-third full. Add equal amounts of iodine and baking soda. Tie the bag, take it out onto your front lawn about the time your neighbours are leaving for work, whirl it over your head three times and scream like a chicken.

Congrats again for your recent fine issues. Glad I plugged COSTA - yes, I knew Conrad before he became a superstar by finishing in the top 5 of the Runestone Poll. Good luck!

((Gee - what an incredibly nice and interesting letter, chickens and all. Actually, mouth cancer is a danger to be reckoned with, though I imagine there must be an alternative test available? Of course, if one is fool enough to smoke, one deserves what one gets....

((To a great degree, the mandatory seat belt legislation that is all the rage these days is aimed in two diverse directions: Protection of the innocent (children); and reduction of various levels of claims for maiming or death. When it comes to the former, I fully approve of any and all legislation, no matter how seemingly 'arrogant' or 'infringing.' As to the latter, I have no personal interest in paying - e.g. through the welfare system - for the medical maintenance of those who are rendered helpless for life, and thus wards of the state, because they were too stupid or too negligent to buckle a bit of canvas. I think perhaps the new interest in laws of this sort is aimed specifically in this direction: People may well do dumb things, but they can bloody well stop insisting that we who are smarter pay for the consequences.

((On the question of a GM "proving" an infraction for expulsion, it may be that the recent feuds have fired the coals, but a certain amount of this dates from quite a different feud of many years ago - the Reinsel-von Metzke Feud. Among other fun things, this one involved my expulsion from a game run by Charles Reinsel on the grounds that I knowingly associated with homosexuals, and that I was a blatant liar in claiming that my first wife left me the same day my father died when in fact the events happened two or three days apart. There was more, of course, quite a lot of which I've utterly forgotten. Anyway, I protested - to no avail - and then tried to get the players in this and all other Reinsel games to resign in protest. A few did, but most said, well, hey, what has this got to do with postal Diplomacy? The feud wound up dying for lack of interest, but only after I had made a complete fool of myself by spewing forth reams of self-righteous defenses to lunatic charges, and after Reinsel had pretty well made himself the laughing stock of the hobby as a raving loonie. Curiously, several years later, Charlie 'phoned me completely out of the blue, and suggested that we bury the hatchet and that I join a game of ... and cleaned for the receiver

out again, why not let each publisher make his/her own determination, and let the readers handle it on their own? As a simple example - let us suppose that I do, in fact, associate with homosexuals (and, in fact, yes I do). Does anyone really care?

((I fear that the number of omissions to my list of non-peaceful countries is probably a greater number than my list of inclusions. And it could get worse if we wished to talk in terms of emotional, rather than merely physical, peace. There is apparently little violence in Hungary or Bulgaria these days, but I fear the inhabitants do not necessarily sleep peacefully. Sad, wot?

((Sorry to have to disabuse you of a nice notion, and thanks for the good words, but - COSTA has long since finished in the top Runestone Five. That was back in the 'seventies, when the poll was new. I don't expect that result this year, though, and in all candor I don't think it would be justified if it happened. Trying my damndest to be objective, and with the understanding that I do not see all the truly fine 'sines, I would place myself ninth. If you care, PRAXIS rates above COSTA in my book. Maybe some day I'll feel loquacious, and tell you why.))

Paul Gardner: "Ever write about what boring stamps Dipdom uses? Letter after letter comes in with the U.S. Flag stamp, or the sea shell series - don't any of these folks have time to stand in line at the p.o. for all the good stamps? Silly of me - I like color!"

((Well, at least a few people must have time to stand in line, because that's the only way you can get the sea shells - they aren't loaded into vending equipment. And, having spent many years as a postal window clerk, permit me to amaze you with the fact that an astonishingly high percentage of the customers specifically demand Flags and flags only; offer them something else, they practically call you a Communist. I once started pointing out to these types, especially the really grouchy ones, that they were guilty of conspiracy to deface the U.S. Flag, by putting its image on a letter knowing full well that it would be smeared all over with hideous black ink. I actually suckered a few people with that line, too!

((The U.S. is notorious for making poor stamps - even the colorful ones are too often poorly-designed, and the colors unnecessarily garish. Good examples: Next time you buy a stamp booklet at the window, ask for the Fish. Wonderful concept gone awry; the colors are too brash and the result looks slightly trashy. Last year's horses, same problem. It wasn't always this way, it's a result of saving money in production by using photo-offset instead of gravure. I have a friend who could, if I asked, sell me discount postage - old commemoratives in bulk. One of these days, maybe I'll stock up on a few of the older U.S. stamps that I think are real works of art. In my view, however, there hasn't been a really fine multi-color U.S. stamp in at least ten years.

((I even considered mailing COSTA from Mexico, to advantage myself of the better stamp designs and the cheaper rates. But transit time would be horrible.

((It's sad, in a way, because we could do so much better. Quite a few countries do some wonderful things: Canada, much of Western Europe (Austria and Sweden are particularly good), New Zealand, the U.N., Malaysia come to mind. On the other hand, many are much worse; some day you must see the rubbish that Russia and Paraguay sling onto the planet. They give you headaches and double vision!))

PLEASE RETURN TO SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY

Chris Greaves:

Volume 10/15 arrived yesterday, and I was so excited that I read it right through. Almost without stopping, except to play with Hazel (sometimes pronounced "Hassle"!) aged five months, and to eat tea, and to listen to another life-insurance salesman try to sell me life insurance (rough translation: take money off me and give it to someone else). And how did you know that I did most of my reading in the bathroom? The rest of my reading I do riding Toronto's wonderful public transportation system, known as the TTC ("Take The Cab" for the derogatory heathens amongst us). I have used public transport systems in Perth and Adelaide, Australia; London U.K.; Paris France; Singapore and Ottawa. Ottawa is the most FUN, since it is the only place that I have heard a 'bus in regular duty SQUEAL ITS TIRES while rounding a corner. They have no bus conductors on the Ottawa-Carleton buses, because people are holding on to the seats with both hands, and can't dig into their pockets. Also it is fun to guess whether a bus driver is an old lag, or a new driver. The newer (inexperienced) drivers change down one gear before going through a STOP sign.

Where was I? Oh yes. Toronto's public transport system. A beauty. Best one I've ever used. Clean, friendly, and pretty easy to understand. And large parts of it are computerised, too. One of the five bus depots ("Wilson") has equipped all two hundred and fifty buses each with microprocessors. Each half-revolution of the front wheels causes a signal to be sent to the central-site computer, and the bus' position is updated on video screens monitored by TTC staff. A bus' position is represented by a lozenge travelling around the inside or outside of a rectangular route (as an example, buses on a North-South route might be shown to travel clockwise around the outside of the rectangle when travelling in the northerly direction, and anti-clockwise around the inside of the rectangle when travelling in the Southerly direction). Or counter-clockwise as I think you call it in North America. And devices "count" the passenger load, so if a bus is half-full, the lozenge is half-size. Or a quarter-size, and so on. And then if several (I think it is "more than three") buses bunch together, the lozenge turns Red (from white). And if a bus is more than three minutes behind schedule, the lozenge flashes (i.e. blinks on and off)

Don't complain. In the folksy newsletter that I publish, most of the chat is about babies, one baby in particular. YOUR readers get to hear about computerised buses.

Well, what else is there to comment on? Poetry? I liked your slogan, and was tempted to do a parody for you:-

The Hills are alive with the Costra Guana - - - - and carry it on from there but "the cost of guana" made me look at the stamps on the

Erie. Here in Toronto, artifacts moved, but no damage was reported by the press. The earthquake was, I believe, 5.5 on the Richter scale. Canada's premier newspaper, The Globe And Mail, reported the tremor, and ran the article on to an inside page, part of which I reproduce here for your benefit.

Note especially the bit about there being "...no concrete reason for the earthquake..." which caught my eye. I was thinking of the (millions of?) tons of concrete that would have tumbled if the 'quake had had a higher Richter reading.

And if THAT doesn't unsettle you, then try the quote from the woman at Niagara Falls, Ontario: "At first I thought I was imagining the shaking because I was angry at the time, then I thought the world was ending. Then I thought the worst - my <<heating>> furnace was blowing up"! It's true, folks, worse than the end of the world is your furnace blowing up - you don't have to worry about insurance claims and third-party damage if it's only the end of the world, but a furnace blowup is a MAJOR disaster.

And how about: "The chairs were shifting on the floor," said platoon chief Hector Lapierre who was attending a meeting, "It only lasted about thirty seconds". I'm not surprised. I wouldn't hang around for the auditor's statement if they pulled the chairs out from under me.

"...my tools were swinging" said Roger Brown, "I thought I was going nuts". Well, be grateful that he didn't think that he was going TOOLS!

Or even "... a few older people ran out the door. They thought the world was coming to an end and they wanted to get somewhere closer to God". He doesn't do house-calls?

In case you'd like to know a few more personal details about me, I thought to tell you about my BREAKFAST

Breakfast on a weekday is a funny meal. Or non-existent. Or revolting. Like the other day.

I rose at the usual time - between seven and seven-thirty, put the kettle on to boil, collected the Globe and Mail, perused the zillion pages of "news" about the exploding shuttle. Made the pot of tea, poured the pot of tea, contemplated the dishes left over from last night, decided not to wash them (yet!), and took the two mugs of tea plus paper upstairs. Valerie gives Hazel the first feed in bed. This means that she (Valerie) has a cup of tea in bed. I drink my tea while shaving and showering. Yes, I know that that sounds tricky, but you know what I mean. Then I dry myself, of course, check to see whether Valerie wants a second cup or not (which is silly really, because I know that if I have made Earl Grey, she'll have a second cup, just as she knows on a Saturday that I always have a second cup if it is Lap Sang Soo Chong. But I digress. Downstairs for a second cup, then back upstairs to get dressed. Then back downstairs to make my lunch (two rounds of sandwiches) and to wash up, unless there

are only a few light dishes to be done. Then, sometimes, I have breakfast.

If the mood doesn't take me, especially if I think that I know the answer to the interrupt problem on the PC at work, I zoom off to the subway without breakfast. Other times I make four rounds (two for me, two for Valerie) of toast and marmalade and listen to the radio while travelling in style on the streetcar. When I don't really feel like living at all, I have a bowl of Kellogg's Corn Flakes with cold milk and sugar. Have you ever noticed how it's always us poor suckers who end up having to brew more coffee at work - someone else takes ALMOST the last cup full, leaving half-a-cup in the pot. At home, it is always us who have to fill the sugar bowl. Until I grew up, my Dad used to reckon that it was always his turn, and why didn't someone else fill it up when they saw that it was getting empty instead of leaving it for him etc etc etc. Anyway, in our house it is always ME who has to fill the blessed thing up, so I carefully collected the big glass jar of sugar from the upper shelves in the kitchen. Don't ask me why we keep our sugar in a glass jar. We just do. Valerie knows why. It's jolly awkward to pour the sugar out, because the mouth of the jar is so wide. But I managed to fill the sugar bowl, get the jar back onto the shelf (with the lid screwed on properly this time!) and get back to the business of breakfast. What goes on first? Why, the milk, so get the four-litre jug of milk from the fridge, pour milk onto the corn flakes, put the milk away. Get a spoon from the cutlery drawer and spoon a generous helping of sugar onto the flakes. The milk goes on first because that way the sugar will adhere to the flakes. Put the sugar away (it really is a mechanical way of getting going in the morning) and trot off to the dining-room table with the bowl of cereal and the rest of the Globe And Mail. Sit down, find a good spot in the paper, take a spoonful of cereal, thrust it in the mouth, begin to chew the cereal while scanning the paper. Realise TOO LATE that (don't ask me why, ask Valerie) we also keep the cooking salt in a big glass jar on the same shelf as the sugar. Without labels. Anyway, as I said, Breakfast on a weekday is a funny meal. Or non-existent. Or revolting. Like the other day.

In my previous letter I indicated that I enjoyed reading the music non-trivia stuff. Well, I enjoyed reading about Schubert, the man who didn't finish much but started a lot. At least he didn't start with "We'll deal with question one last...", or "First of all, please read the announcement in the middle of page 21...." or even "On the next page we bring you...." and at the head of the NEXT page "First, before we start.....". Or "So what are we waiting for? Let's boogie. Well, no, let's not." Not that I'm complaining, mind you.

What else did I have to say? Oh yes! The bits and pieces about condors was rather interesting. Given your fondness for names espagnol, are you going to do a musical piece next issue on the passing away of El Condor? I can already dream up a horrible Simon and Garfunkel song-title pun for you!

No, I really must go on praising your journal. Steve Sorenson's piece kept me engrossed all the way from St George's subway station to St Andrew's. One day, maybe, I'll do an article like Steve's "Fourteen minutes of Bad Jokes", describing part of my daily trip to the office. I would, however,

Does that give me an excuse to trot out my two Postal services jokes? OK. Here they are. "You know, twenty-two cents to send a letter from Los Angeles to New York is not too bad. It works out at only a cent a day". And "Why does it cost thirty-four cents to mail a letter from Toronto to Ottawa? Twenty cents for transport and fourteen cents for storage!".

Oh yes, I knew when I wrote that bit about the "El Camino Real" variant that I had something to say. Thank you for naming your variant "Hazelrigg", after our baby daughter. I have played through the variant a few times with my wife now, and we would like to propose a teeny modification. Would you consider surrounding Lebanon and Hazelrigg (which we assumed to be land masses, since they start with armies) with a body of water? It could be a sea or an ocean, I don't think it matters too much. Since there are only two supply centres, the scope of units is limited, but in the event of one of the armies getting dislodged, rather than annihilate the army, which, we feel, would leave the survivor somewhat lonely in a desert isle-like situation, we'd propose an old schooner vessel, cruising just off the shore, to which the defeated army could go at their leisure to practise some of the more gentlemanly arts of sailing vessels. Not a Battleship or an Aircraft Carrier, but something like those Cutty-Sark ships, sails (all of them!) billowing in the wind. If you wanted, you could call the variation on the variation "Hazelrigged" in honour of the type of sailing vessel. We feel that that's not too important. If I can think of any other ways to help you, I'll be in touch.

I'm rambling, I know, so I'll get onto something concrete now. You have a typing error on page twenty five. You refer to Mark Berch's "Diplomacy Digest" as the PREMIERE publication, whereas I think that it should be the PREMIER publication. There's the makings of a good article in this for someone who doesn't get turned on by the "Rulebook Dilemma" style of feature, but who has the gift of words. I'd have a shot at it myself, but I don't feel up to it. Anyway, it's an ill wind and you have served to remind me to ask Mark Berch if I owe him any money yet. He sends me copies of DD most regularly, and hasn't decided (touch wood) to liquidate my money like some publications I could name, neither of which is SK or CD, or even P for that matter. Great stuff on seatbelts. When I was at high school (Governor Stirling Senior High School, Midland Junction, Perth, Western Australia (aka GSSHWS W.A.)) we sat through a slow-motion movie of bodies (dummies, actually) being hurled around inside a car at its moment of impact. If I think about it carefully, it is ALWAYS the dummies that get thrown about in cars on impact, right? Well, we had a pretty good Physics teacher at that school at that time, and what we didn't know about Newton's laws of Physics doesn't bear repeating. I (we?) were convinced. My parents let me borrow their little Vauxhall Viva during the school holidays, and besides paying for the petrol, I paid for the purchase and installation of a set of seatbelts. In those days (1962?) seatbelts were a novelty. We were being educated out of calling them Safety Belts, for fairly obvious reasons. I think that the Australian state of Victoria was the first to legislate any form of mandatory seatbelt law. Then I went to University, graduated, got a job, married and bought a car of my own. Yes, I drank too much, and it took me many years to realise it, but during those years, besides the many miracles of my not killing or injuring anyone

(we're talking physical injury here, right?) I was involved in, and indeed probably caused, three major accidents. In two of the cases the car I was driving rolled over. In all cases I was wearing a seatbelt and escaped with nothing more serious than a small (and now unnoticeable) cut above my nose. Now that most of my employment is in downtown areas, I use public transport a great deal (see "TTC" above). It is cheaper than owning a car, as long as you have no children of toddler age or above. We rent a car occasionally on a weekend to go for a short trip. We taxi if we are out late at night and are tired or it's raining or the route home involves multiple transfers of TTC vehicles. And I don't drink either. I've stopped smoking too, but that's another story. I'll stand up with anyone and argue for the use of seatbelts at all times. I feel *UNCOMFORTABLE* in a car without a seatbelt. And yes, I cringe whenever I see a child standing on the back seat of a car. Ask the parent or driver if they would willingly hand over their child to be a "human cannonball" shot at the windscreen (from the outside!) at thirty miles per hour. They will, of course, refuse permission. So then ask them if they'll let you fire the child cannon-like from *INSIDE* the car. They'll refuse you on that score, too, but they'll do it themselves anyway. Don't bother with the free subscription for me; you're preaching to the converted here. But consider this: I NEVER get into a car (my car, whenever I've owned one, my in-laws' car here in Toronto, when they lend us their car, or the rented car if we've gone that route) without buckling up the seatbelt. So why do I willingly hop into the front passenger seat (generally acknowledged to be the most dangerous position in a car) of a taxi for a seven-mile trip home - and not worry myself to death about there being no functioning seatbelt? And why don't I get to wear a seatbelt in a bus?

((We should have more photo-ready copy, like Chris' here and Rod's earlier, though I do wish these sleasies would measure my margins and stay with them.

((This is the sort of letter that requires no comment; it is wholly self-contained. About the only thing I would remark is the proposal to add sea spaces to the Maselrigg Variant, but we'll get to that later in the issue when we come to my comment on Malc Smith's latest publication, in which he has opened a section of the game. Hey Malc - can I play?))

Tom Ockert: "Sorry to be so overlong in replying to your COSTAGUANA invitation, hi, I'm Tom Ockert, I guess we meet through PRAXIS. I'll take a rain check if you don't mind; it is not that the price is prohibitive, and I enjoyed your writing, and other parts and articles also intrigue my sense of the untoward; it's just that I've been laid off from a position I would never have figured being laid off from this time of year (I drove a school van for a private school to support my photography, which supplements my writing, which helps pay rent and allows an ecstasy of dining, on occasion, at McDonald's, if I save up).

Heidi ((John Walker's temporarily-interrupted press character)) does seem to have a darling temperament. I should introduce her to one of my inventions of characterization: Devlin Adair, Stoney Dimple, Bosco Diawaddle, Spazz Kommando, Fingo, The Bag Ladies' Share-the-Wealth Guild, Mother Lode's Swedish Gladhand Massage Parlor and Wild West Show, who have all been regulars at the Hogshead Tavern of Bushbally County at one time or another.

your first freebie. I'll try to put together the back issues you've missed since writing your letter, as a sort of apologetic sample-packet....

((I hope I'll see more of your characters and writing in future issues of PRAXIS, or here, or wherever. Meanwhile, I hope you got a job in the intervening months....))

Peter Sullivan: "Thank you very much for the copy of COSTAGUANA...C'EST MAGNIFIQUE will be wending its way to you when it's out. Oops, forgot to put the date on this; it's Thursday, 18th March 1986. (Our budget day, and I really should be paying more attention for my Economics 'A' level.)

Which reminds me (real 'stream of consciousness' stuff, this), I suppose I'd better do the introduction bit. I'm 18, and doing 'A' levels at school this summer - unless I mess them up mightily, I'll be off to Durham University in the autumn. (I did try for Oxford, but 't'would seem I've not got the breeding.) I'm currently studying history, maths and economics-with-politics; the University course will be for a B.A. in Politics. Other hobbies are rather restricted at the moment due to forthcoming exams; I used to help out with the local Amateur Hospital Radio, and get involved with the school debating society. In the UK hobby, I'm a fairly loyal Walkerdinite insofar as we bother about that sort of thing. I'm also, as you probably know, Lee Kendter's Asst. MNC for this sceptered isle.

Interesting to see the discussion on seat-belt wearing. We've had a compulsory seat-belt wearing law in the UK for several years, originally as an experiment. (Abolition of capital punishment was originally an experiment too - if you want to get anything done in this country, propose an experiment.) It's cut deaths in road accidents quite a bit, although some people claim that it encourages reckless driving, pointing to the increase in pedestrian casualties. Our law isn't really enforced by the police, but upwards of 90% of people comply anyway. Fortunately, we don't have any 'constitutional rights' in this country, which means we can be protected from our own stupidity in not belting up."

((I cannot for the life of me understand why the enhanced use of seat belts should result in an increased incidence of pedestrian casualties; the implication is obviously that people slap on their belts and then drive like lunatics in the misguided belief that the bit of canvas will protect them from bloody all! Somehow I find this tough to fathom. Somebody, I'd warrant, is trying to find a way out of wearing seat belts without admitting that what they really want is an excuse for not wearing seat belts!

((There are substantial advantages, I often think, to your lack of a written constitution. For one thing, you escape all those idiotic arguments that stretch through our legal system questioning whether this clause of this Amendment allows someone to be a twit in yet another imaginative way. For another, you have a much easier time settling disputes in equity; it seems to me that the essence of our ostensibly enlightened society is that as few people should be harmed by the actions of others as possible, and all else is mere frosting. Ergo - if it hurts someone, and it might have been done in a way that hurt them less, it is wrong.

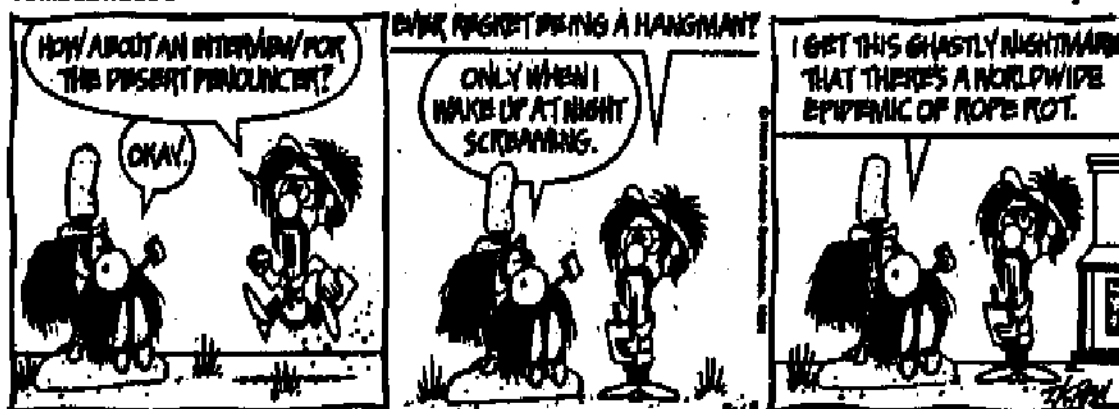
((Too simplistic? Well, yes, of course. But it would be nice....))

THE END OF THE LETTER COLUMN

Oh, don't misunderstand; there's lots more on hand. It's just that I do have another item or two needing to be crammed in here, so I thought we'd best break off for now and pick it up next round. Don't panic, Elmer....

TUMBLEWEEDS

T.K. Ryan

A SAIL ON THE MOLDAU

Disgusting, really, how insecure some people can be....

For any number of reasons, the U.K. hobby has after a fashion ostracised Malcolm Smith, publisher of *BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY*; somehow he's not properly "British," I guess, merely because his employer had the audacity to post Malc to the Continent. Such insularity....

Well, you Kingdom types may call him what you will, and assort his magazine into any list you choose; in this haven of sense and sensibility, *BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY* is a superior effort regardless of peripheral diddling.

Quality notwithstanding, there are precious few Diplomacy journals that I read cover to cover, without a break. BR is one of the few. It boasts superior graphics (courtesy of Martin Le Fevre), wit, charm, and unpredictable variety. It comments on subjects of interest to any reader, regardless of domicile. Malcolm suffuses his chat with intelligent perspective, and leaves the reader thinking - and, almost incidentally, wishing for more. My only criticism, in fact, is that BR needs a modicum of improved proof-reading for spelling and typing errors; but, given that Malc has of late been pushed all about the European coasts in a great haste, perhaps we will give him time to settle in, eh? Then we'll snipe....

Malcolm is currently to be found at: Granliveien 11, 1086 Oslo 10, Norway. Sub rates not given, but who cares? Send the bugger a few bucks and he'll adjust. The way he travels, you can practically pick your own currency: Dollars, pounds, roubles, shekels, rand, plastres, Nepalese rupees, Paraguayan guaranis, all t'same!

In his latest issue, Malc includes a sumptuous review of COSTA in which he includes this line: "...it's like what I want *BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY* to be." No it is not! It is like I want COSTAGUANA to be, but believe me, Malc, what you want *BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY* to be is like *BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY*. I know what you meant, but please do not fall into the "I wish I could copy that bit" trap; you have a magnificent product, evolved entirely without reference to mine. Keep it that way, i.e. unique.

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 BILLENNESS, Simon - 61-A Park Ave., Albany, NY 12202-1722
 BOTIMER, Larry - 13833 11th St., #3, Bellevue, WA 98005-2948
 BROWN, Doug - PO Box 584, Penngrove, CA 94951-0584
 BROWN, J.Ron - 1528 El Sereno Pl., Bakersfield, CA 93304-4601
 CROSBY, John - 1496 Washington Lane, West Chester, PA 19382-6871
 CUSACK, Blair - 1208-1375 Prince of Wales Dr., Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA K2C 3L5
 DENNY, Bart - 1410 Meadow Vista Rd., Meadow Vista, CA 95722-9533
 FLEMING, Matt - 4158 Monona Dr., Madison, WI 53716-1662
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 GORHAM, Daniel - 800 S. Euclid, Fullerton, CA 92632-2613
 GREIER, Robert W., Jr. - 35171 Grouley Rd., Salem, OH 44460-9510
 HAGER, Ken - 15434 Sherman Way, #2-114, Van Nuys, CA 91406-4239
 HEINTZMAN, Nelson T. - 2255 Delaware Ave., #C-4, Buffalo, NY 14216-2621
 HENRY, Edwin - 31507 106th Pl. S.E., #S-207, Auburn, WA 98002-3084
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 MINSHALL, Conrad S. - 3702 Tarragona Lane, Austin, TX 78727-6049
 O'DONNELL, Robert A. - Star Rt. 1, Box 732-37, Winston, OR 97496-9527
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 von METZKE, Conrad - 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117-3813
 WALKER, John C. - 4819 Corian Oak, San Antonio, TX 78219-1848
 WALTERS, R. Jacob - P.O. Box 1064, Brookline, MA 02146-1064
 WILCOX, Stephen - 5300 W. Gulf Bank, #103, Houston, TX 77088-2906

The complete mailing list, all-inclusive, consists in 86 names (if you include me as a player).

Just for fun - the best-represented state is California, with 14 (incl. me). New York and Michigan follow with six each; Texas and Maryland have five each; and Wisconsin is represented by four. Ten recipients live in Canada, of which six are from Ontario. There are seven in the United Kingdom, and one in Norway.

The biggest surprises, for me, are that the supposedly 'teeming' states of Pennsylvania and Illinois are represented in my lists by just one person each. Of course, the longest list of all would be the one of states and provinces where I have no mailings at all: Yukon, Saskatchewan, P.E.I., Nova Scotia, N.W.T., Newfoundland and New Brunswick are vacant for Canada, and for the U.S. - well, there's NV, AZ, NM, ID, WY, CO, UT, NE, IA, SD, ND, AR, LA, MO, MS, AL, DE, SC, GA, FL, ME, CT, AL, HI, KY, MT - well, hell, there's half the Union, and that was strictly from memory!

My not-too-famous offer still stands - \$50 to the person who first gets me a (legitimate) player from St. Pierre et Miquelon!

GAME 1985HE - The Delirious Dik-Dik - Spring 1903

AUSTRIA (J.Walker, per J. Walters): a alb (s) ser-gre. a bul-con. a tri (s) vie.
a ser-gre. a vie (s) tri. f gre-aeg.

ENGLAND (Billnesses): a wal-yor. f lon-nth. f edi (s) lon-nth. f nwy (s) lon-nth.
f bel (s) lon-nth.

FRANCE (Acheson): a gas (s) par-bur. a bur-ruh. a par-bur. f pic (s) ENG bel.
f mid-eng.

GERMANY (Gorham): a ruh (s) hol-bel. a hol-bel. a mun-bur. f den (s) nth. f nth (s) hol-bel.

ITALY (Rauterberg): a tyo-pie. a ven (h). f tyn-lyo. f ion-tyn.

RUSSIA (J. Ron Brown): a mos-sev. a ukr (s) mos-sev. a war-gal. f sev-bla. f run (s) sev-bla. f swe (s) ENG nwy.

TURKEY (R. Anderson): a arm-ank. f any (s) bla-con. f bla-con.

The German fleet has retreat options from North Sea to Helgoland, Skagerrak, or the Norwegian; Fall moves may be conditional on this one.

Fall 1903 Moves are due Saturday, MAY 31, 1986.

FRANCE TO RUSSIA: Notice that gaping back door? Make yourself at home....

JANUL TO RUSSIA: No, no; not here! You gotta knock first - git 'im, Eric!!!....

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GAME 1984HI - The Extroverted Emu - Fall 1909

The retreat for France was ION-TUN.

AUSTRIA (Pierce): a con (s) any. a tri-ser. a alb (s) tri-ser. a apu (s) ion-nap.
a any (s) con. f ion-nap. f gre-ion.

FRANCE (Flewing): a ven-tri. a vie (s) ven-tri. a lvp-nth (sic). a ser (s) GER
run-bul. a bur-bel. a pie-ven. a gas-nth (sic). f roa (s) nap. f wal-eng.
f nap (s) tun-ion. f aeg-any. f tun-ion. f lon-nth.

GERMANY (J.Walker, per P.Rauterberg): a bel-ruh. a bul-con. a run-bul. a ank (s)
FRE aeg-any. a bud (s) FRE ser. a boh-gal. a tyo (s) FRE vie-tri. a gal-ukr.
a kie-mun. a mun-boh. f hol-nth. f nwy-nth. f edi-nth. f hol-nth.

Retreats: Aus a ser annihilated. Aus a any to arm or syr. Aus f ion to tyn, adr, aeg, or eas.

CENTRES:

A: 2: gre, con. Remove four. (Wheezel)

F: 16: par, bre, war, bel, spa, por, lon, lvp, tun, nap, roa, ven, vie, tri, ser, any. Build three.

G: 16: mun, kie, ber, hol, den, swe, nwy, edi, stp, mos, war, sev, bud, run, bul, ank. Build two.

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HOBBY SERVICES (America North)

Lee Kenditer has just announced that he is relinquishing the post of Miller Number Custodian (the official responsible for keeping track of, and cataloguing, variant games) in favour of Fred Hyatt, 60 Grandview Place, Montclair, NJ 07043-2422. After three-plus years of "service under fire" (mainly fending off the damn-fool challenges of this hobby's most beloved crazy, Robert Sacks - a worthy successor, albeit a far more annoying one, to this hobby's most beloved cerebral basket case, Charles Reinsel), Lee is more than entitled to a respite, and in my view he can't have made a better choice for a successor than Fred. At this time, only Fred Davis garners more respect in the world of variants than Fred Hyatt, and Mr. Davis is busy in his own endeavours as custodian of the North American Variant Bank - so I strongly support Lee's choice, and endorse his actions to the fullest. (N.B.: Lee tells us he isn't exactly leaving the hobby, he's just cutting back. Among other things, he suggests he may be guest-GMing games in various places. Lee, if you'll have us, we of the COSTAGUANA dominion would be honored to take you up on your offer. What game would you wish to GM if you had your choice? Please, God, no 'Gunboat'.)

And speaking of retirement, my father-in-law just did. After half a century in the florist's world, he has finally - at the age of 77 - decided to stay at home, play bridge, and soak up some sun henceforward. Bravo, Grandpa Bill!

The Boardman Number Custodian for North America, Dr. Bill Quinn, has just appointed an 'apprentice' and heir-apparent: Steve Hainowski, 12034 Pyle, Oberlin, OH 44074-9729. I don't know Steve. He's got a hell of a music school in his town, but as far as Diplomacy, he may be a total incompetent for all I know. However, I rather doubt it; Dr. Bill is a very precise and very sensible gentleman, and I rather imagine he has chosen wisely. COSTAGUANA now goes to Steve, as well as to Bill, on a complimentary basis, to indicate support both for the office and for the succession. Until further notice, however, the Custodian is still Dr. Quinn, and he can be found at: 301 Conroe Dr., Conroe, TX 77301-1967.

Want to play in a game, but don't know who has an opening? Want to be a standby but don't know who needs you? Do you need standbys or players, but don't know who's available? Elmer Hinton, Jr., 20 Almont, Nashua, NH 03060-4327, operates a service designed to bring the needy in contact with the available - on all these levels. It is among the best ideas currently in force in our hobby. Use it!

And if you play in a game that seems to be lagging because your Gamesmaster has flown the coop, there are answers. Games which have been 'orphaned' by a publisher in distress are dealt with by Jim Burgess, 100 Holden, Providence, RI 02908-5731. If a problem seems to be in effect, do not hesitate to enquire.

And finally, player ratings. There are two major Ratingsmasters active just now. If this type of hobby statistic appeals to you, I commend them both: Elmer Hinton (above) and Stephen Wilcox, 5300 W. Gulf Bank, #103, Houston, TX 77088-2906. Unlike the other services listed, both of these data-sources involve subscription fees, so enquire.

SING A SONG OF \$7.98

(List price, plus tax of course....)

That's what is required to sample the art of the gentleman on this issue's cover. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (b. 1925) is not just the greatest interpreter of German Lieder alive today; he might well be called "Mr. Lieder," and the cognomen would be apt. Armed with a phenomenal sense of style, dazzling technique, superb training and an endless variety of taste, he has performed and recorded practically every Lied worth the effort, and quite a few that aren't, that can be imagined. For over thirty years, performances of Schubert, Schumann, Wolf, Brahms, Pfitzner, Beethoven and a nearly endless string of other names have been measured against this one man: Any record review of a new recital will inevitably use Fischer-Dieskau as a comparative, and - no matter the reviewer's taste - "Mr. Lieder" rarely is found wanting.

Born in Berlin, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau was forced to break off his studies to fight for the German army in Italy. He supposedly insists that this "sabbatical" was just what he needed to focus his ambition on his eventual career: The quote attributed to him is something like, "Two years of helping to kill people fired irrevocably my desire to communicate with them instead." Apocryphal or not, the story has truth in Fischer-Dieskau's activities since being demobilized in 1945; he returned to his studies with a renewed intensity, and began his career in opera and the recital halls of Europe as early as 1948. One of his first all-Schubert evenings was attended by the greatest piano accompanist in the history of music, the Briton Gerald Moore; the latter went backstage all aglow, and immediately began a partnership - and a warm friendship - that revolutionized the approach to Lieder performance in the Western world, and ended only with Moore's death in the late '60s. From that pairing came a vast quantity of recordings, including the monumental survey of the Schubert oeuvre (460 songs in two huge albums!) - the energy that must have been required for this effort is unimaginable, because of course at the same time both men were pursuing separate careers all over the world. In Fischer-Dieskau's case he also achieved fame in opera (he is a superb actor!), oratorio, as an interpreter of French and Italian song, and as an author (his treatise on Schubert songs complements Richard Capell's classic, and the pair taken together is quite definitive). Since Moore's death, Fischer-Dieskau has hardly flagged; his principal accompanist these days is the almost-as-good Joerg Demus, and the recordings continue to pad the catalogues. In many cases this results in the comparison of Fischer/Demus with Fischer/Moore, and it is worth noting that the comparisons usually focus on the pianists; if age is beginning to rob Fischer-Dieskau's voice of a little of the flexibility and warmth that it once had, maturity has more than compensated.

In December 1986, Diplomacy's Larry Peery will host "Beethovencon," a game meet focused on the obvious birthday. It is my plan, if my accompanist can be scheduled, to give a recital of Beethoven songs in conjunction with this Con. And as a principal part of my study, I can do no better than listen to, and learn from, the Fischer-Dieskau/Demus album of the principal Beethoven works in the form (Deutsche Grammophon 139,197) - fifteen songs, including the major ones (there aren't that many, Beethoven was frankly no Schubert), and the cycle "An Die Ferne Geliebte." The joy of this record is, quite frankly, not the music except in a few cases; it is the delicacy, the precision, the feeling, the control of that incredible voice.

Lord of the Rings about twenty years ago.

Beethoven's cycle is a sequence of moods, contrasted but linked, and as each element wends to a finish, the mood is somehow altered slightly to form a lead-in the next; at the end of all, there is a return to the opening to unify it all.

As a painter of vocal mood, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau has no peer. Examples could fill pages; I'll settle for one. To hear the first line of the first song as it flows across the melodic line, never once wavering in smooth intensity - to contrast this with the bouncy staccato of the third song is to wonder if it is really the same singer. Can anyone really do both things?

In a sense, this recording of Beethoven has been thrown out of balance by putting the best first. To follow immediately, we have "Schilderung eines Mädchens," a thirty-second throwaway from Beethoven's twelfth year which is cute and fun and wonderful to use for opening a concert, but absurd in the middle of one. Still, it's good to hear it again. "Sehnsucht" (poem by Reissig) is one of the composer's toughest assignments; the line is simple, but the phrasing is a killer, and to give contrast in the three stanzas is awfully tricky: You can not match the piano (which is doing its own contrasting) because the vocal line is not written to permit it. You must find your own ground, and (heresy!) actually let the piano go its own way. And, having done that, you must then mesh with the accompaniment so as not to be at cross-purposes! Whew! - preparing this one is EXHAUSTING! Fischer-Dieskau gives it to us so effortlessly, so "correctly", that your first thought is he knew it all along, and needed maybe five minutes of refresher; in truth, singers who come across that way have a lifetime invested in this one three-minute browse.

Coming into Side Two and "Adelaide," the grand Italianate 'scena' which is Beethoven's best-known song (but which I can't sing effectively because the tessitura is too high and the piano part too low to be dropped far enough), we hear the ultimate in Fischer-Dieskau's art: the "high float." Long, languid phrases at the top of a singer's range are the bane of all of us; in this event, training is absolutely all. And I suggest that every vocal student, in moments of despair over the difficulty of this, hear this performance of this song to see what can be aspired to. It is quite an experience!

And then there are the Italian songs, seven of them, uneven in quality and interest but containing two items of note. First is the 'comic' version of Metastasio's "L'amante impaziente," a little gem which bounces all over the place and can actually bring forth giggles; and then that classic training-piece for all basses (Paul Robeson turned it into a best-seller in the '30s), "In questa tomba oscura." Well, now, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is no basso, no matter how hard he tries; but to colour his voice with such depth, now that is an art! Carpani's lines are trite, just the stuff of which over-emoted theatricality is made; but Fischer-Dieskau resists the obvious, he simply thickens his voice and lets the music sail on its own. Done this way, the composition is by no means the trash that most scholars have claimed.

To be sure, the appreciation of German song is an acquired taste. Some grasp of the language is a requisite, and it also helps to know a little of the fundamentals of classical singing. It is perhaps Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's greatest achievement to have reduced these 'background requirements' to the barest minimum. He cannot entirely transcend language, but he comes close; and his technique is so polished that it transcends itself! May he sing long, and prosper....

GALLOWS HUMOUR OF THE MONTH

What would it take to get the Beatles back together? (Three more bullets....)

/ / / / / / / /

Latest word from the White House is that Reagan is going to give John Hinkley a full pardon. Hinkley will get a suit of clothes, \$50, and a candid photo of Muammar Khaddafi dating Jodie Foster.

A MAJOR, LATE-BREAKING LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Roberto Della-Sala: "On press: Peter Sullivan's letter concerning the use and misuse of datelines is very interesting and complete, so far as he goes. Peter comments on how he'd "rather get a cryptic press comment than nothing at all"; however, this is not necessarily true, from the point of view that the press is 'cryptic;' the crux of the problem lies in establishing what press is 'cryptic,' what press is 'necessary' and what press is not.

In the society that we live in today, the advent of the telephone and other technology has made 'press' (in the sense of press being the late afterthought of an idea) defunct and inane, for the simple reason that anything important that needs to be said at the eleventh hour can be done over the telephone.

This leads to the question of whether press is, or ever was, 'relevant.' By the time the players in a game read the press, adjudication of the game will already be complete, so trying to 'mislead' people or trying to get them to change orders will already be futile since it will already be too late!

I put forward the claim that press in games other than Gunboat, or where the only means of communication is by press, is defunct, and serves no purpose whatsoever except to entertain readers; and, since it is established that it is for entertainment purposes only, "screening" and "authenticity" are over-used (mis-)concepts.

Also, since 90% of the press will be fake anyway, I would doubt any player would take any press seriously, especially as of the 90% a good 80% will probably not even be relevant to the game.

Your response ((I assume he refers to me here - CWM)) to the initial question was most comprehensive, but I don't believe totally accurate, through misinterpretation if anything. In Britain, the only unique datelines are those of the GM for obvious reasons. No person may write press under that dateline. However, this does not mean that a GM in another 'zine may not use the same dateline as "Messrs. Walkerdine, Sullivan or von Metske;" by mutual consent it does not normally occur, but it could. The only dateline reserved to one player is that of his/her own country in the game - any others are not protected from fraud or by copyright or whatever....

Continuing with your reply: The degree to which the volume of correspondence sent/received can be measured is very limited. As an example, in a recent survey of 44 hobby members, the following figures were revealed:

AVERAGE LETTERS SENT BY EACH PERSON, PER DEADLINE : ± 5

AVERAGE LETTERS REC'D. BY EACH PERSON, PER DEADLINE : ± 4

would be the cheaper means of communication.

My final point on the subject: Should press ever be cut at all? If it is stated by the GM that press is relevant, then no press should be censored EVER, and doing so could be constituted as being GM interference in the game! However, if any ruling is made on press concerning cutting/censorship, then it is the duty of the GM to inform the players of this fact."

((In the early days of the postal hobby - please know that I started in 1965, when things were different - press was intended almost exclusively as a literary form. One did not 'negotiate' in the press in those days, one wrote letters and used the press to have fun. But gradually, the transformation from "silly" to "serious" press took place, and the cause of this change is well-accepted: Postal Diplomacy had its genesis in the science-fiction/fantasy fan world, where imaginative writing was a Good Thing. Later, the so-called "true" wargamers entered the hobby, and in many cases they had no interest in creative writing, rather only in playing and winning games. Another example of this is that it was quite a while between the first postal game (1963) and the first strategy article (1966). What the hell did all of us early birds do without the knowledge of the 'Lepanto' and so forth? We wrote press!

((Given my original orientation, I quite agree with you, Roberto, that press ought not to be treated as "relevant." In the States, it costs 22c to post a domestic letter - roughly 15p - and delivery time is anywhere up to four days cross-country (longer to Canada). Obviously it costs a lot more to 'phone, but even that isn't all that outrageous if one is not in too many games and doesn't ring too frequently. Personally, I find the time difference from California to the East (3 hrs.) far more a barrier than cost; the rates are cheaper after 6 p.m., but by that time it's 9 p.m. in (e.g.) New York, and I hesitate to bother people very often. My most recent telephone bill, for Diplomacy negotiation calls only, was \$12 (E8). Not too bad. But I do this fairly rarely. My own experience with number of letters received per deadline is - rough guess, I haven't charted it - six. I'm in five games. I also get about three calls per deadline, and make as many myself. The theoretical survey you suggest would be fascinating, and I have every intention of doing it if Elmer Hinton doesn't.

((As to censorship - many GMs will insist on some latitude here, if only to exclude material that they cannot, in their own good conscience, present to their readers. Deeply religious people will not want to print blasphemy. Committed political conservatives will balk at a defence of the Marxist system. And so forth. I agree, of course, that any such limitations ought to be set forth in advance, but there's no way in the world that a GM unalterably opposed to something can ever be expected to print it. I'm using examples unrelated to the game, of course, as they are the ones where the "grey areas" exist mostly. As to game-related "black press," well, in general either a publisher prints it or he doesn't. Forewarned, a player can plan accordingly. I'm quite in agreement, now, that placing a limitation on press is silly, and in future I won't. What I'm wondering is, why did I ever bother placing a limit in the first place? The answer is - I frankly gave it no thought. I just did what the rest of the hobby was doing at the time.))

GAME 1979JZ - The Misshapen Meerkat - The End!

This one ended last issue as a draw at 15 Centres for Austria (Melinda Holley) and 17 for England (Marshal Linder); Russia (Bart Denny) survived with two. I've had charge of the game for so short a time, that I have no background on which to draw for a game summary, so I can do no better than report the final result and let it slip into the records on that basis. Perhaps when John Walker recovers and resumes THE ALAMO CITY TIMES, he will grace us with whatever data he has.

The only final statement received is from Melinda, for which thanks:

"Actually, I inherited a nice position when I took over (I think in 1912). I decided to ally with whoever didn't attack the new standby (i.e. me); that turned out to be England, and I never looked back. Marshal has been one of the nicest people I've allied with. Bart is a good player - just outnumbered here. His tenacity surprised me; he'd make a good ally as well."

Well-said, young lady, and a fitting note on which to say good-bye to what was, until now, the oldest active postal Diplomacy game. It's also, I regret, time to say goodbye to all those players who don't get COSTA for any other reason. That means you,.....er, wait a minute....how nice! You're all staying! Well, that's a pleasant change!

Thanks, you three.

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GAME 1983XL - The Suicidal Suni - Fall 1910

All three draws were voted down, and the Italian fleet Ionian retreated to Tyrrhenian, and Ken Hager has moved (see player list this issue). Whew! That was quite a busy off-season....

ENGLAND (Bakken): f iri (s) wal-eng. f wal-eng.

FRANCE (Rauterberg): a sil-ber. a kie (s) sil-ber. a ruh (s) bur-mun. a pie-tyo.
a bur-mun. f eng-iri. f nth-ny. f lon-wal. f hol-hel. f edi-nyg. f mid
(s) eng-iri.

ITALY (Baker): a alb-ser. f nap (h). f tyn (s) nap.

RUSSIA (Henry): a pru-war. a gal-bud. a boh (s) ber-mun. a swe (s) hel-den.
a ber-mun. f nat-lvp. f hel-den.

TURKEY (Hager): a tri-tyo. a van (s) rom. a rom (h). a bul-ser. a con-bul.
f aeg-gre. f rum (h). f sev (h). f ady-tri. f eas-ion. f ion-tun.

Retreat time: Russian army Berlin to Prussia or off the board; English fleet Irish, well, why bother?

CENTRES:

E: 0; whoops!

F: 13; par, bre, mar, spa, por, bel, hol, kie, mun, ber, ny, lon, edi. Build two.

I: 1; nap. Remove two.

H: 8; stp, nos, war, bud, vis, swe, den, lvp. Build one.

M: 12; bul, gre, ser, tri, van, rom, tun. Build one.

TURKEY TO GERMANY: I must have spent at least half an hour agonizing over whether to attack Moscow with support or try for Warsaw. How long did you spend?

JAMUL: Must have been less, 'cos he settled for the end-around play.

ROCKVILLE: OK, so what's the big deal about rock music? Face it, we can talk about that anywhere. But this is the only zeen that worships insignificant performers of a dead art form - enjoy it while it lasts.

JAMUL: Boy, you sure know how to make friends....

More to the point, why not discuss rock here? Hey, I'm liberal. You'd be amazed at what I'm capable of learning. For instance, just last night I learned the difference between Jeff Beck's music and that of Kiss: Beck's songs go "thumpa-thumpa" whereas Kiss' are "thumpa-thumpity-thumpa." Bitchin', huh?

ITALY TO GERMANY: Up yours too.

ITALY TO JAMUL: Think he'll NMR now?

JAMUL: Depends entirely on what thing of his it's up!

KT TO GM: Haydn...Haydn...oh yeah, he used to write great horn sections.

GM TO KT: Damn right! Ever heard the sounding e'' in the second movement of the 51st?

FRANCE: Jeff Beck? Frans Beck? Which one makes the beer?

JAMUL: Neither one. Bud used to make it, but he's wiser now....

ENGLAND TO ITALY: Hang in there, your day will come.

JAMUL: Yeah, but when's yours?

ENGLAND TO TURKEY: Thanks, let's see if I can't make it worth your while.

ENGLAND TO G.M.: They can call me egotistical, reckless and a real idiot, but only you can call me a fool!

JAMUL: Hey, man, I'm in this for the friends, not letter bombs. What kind of fool are you to think I'd call you a fool?

P.G. TO K.T.: 'Zine on time, orders late. Orders on time, 'zine late. This axiom may not enjoy universal truth and acceptance, but it works with the two of us.

JAMUL: You mean, like how dinner's always late the day I skip lunch?

PAUL TO JAMUL: I'm sorry I mentioned money - not because it doesn't have 'beans' to do with the discussion, but because it distracts from our agreement on the issue of taste. I like the way you put it.

JAMUL TO PAUL (and all the kibitzers): Well, thank you, sir. Besides, how can I miss at anyone for reasons of taste? I wanted a lady who'd like 'Dollars'

Notice that shiny new Boardman Number up there?

AUSTRIA (Heintzman): a vie-gal. a bud-rum. f tri-alb.

ENGLAND (Denny): a lvp-edl. f edi-nwg. f lon-nth.

FRANCE (D.Anderson): a par-bur. a mar-spa. f bre-eng.

GERMANY (Crosby): a ber-kie. a mun-ruh. f kie-den.

ITALY (Greier): a rom (H). a ven-ple. f nap-tyn.

RUSSIA (Cusack): a mos-sev. a war-ukr. f sev-rum. f stp sc - bot.

TURKEY (Wilcox): a con-bul. a smy-con. f ank-bla.

Golly, it seems awfully empty down here without a line about retreats! Oh well, we'll get there. Meanwhile, Fall 1901 moves are due Saturday, MAY 31, 1986.

FRANCE TO GERMANY: Oh no! It's you again!!! Run for your lives! The only luck I have is all bad. YUCH!

JAMUL: Aw, c'mon; chin up! Every cloud has a silver lining. It's always darkest before the dawn. And, no matter how many snails you squish, a few more will always crawl out of the weeds....

ITALY TO AUSTRIA: Great letters, thanks!

JAMUL: His 'R' is particularly nice....

ENGLAND: My moves are honestly meant to be neutral, yet keep my options open. F Lon-Eng is entirely hostile and so I consider it undesirable as an opening move.

JAMUL: Next, Chapter Two of his book, "Famous Hostile Moves I Should Have Made."

ITALY TO G.M.: Of course, if Austria is in Venice I look like a damn fool, but I play the part with dignity.

JAMUL: No, no, that's the last game!

SWITZERLAND: Italy is attacking France!

1/1

GAME 19860 - The Convoluted Cassowary - Fall 1901

AUSTRIA (Givan): a gal-mar. a ser (s) alb-gre. f alb-gre.

ENGLAND (O'Donnell): a yor-lon. f nwg-nwy. f nth-den.

FRANCE (Botimer): a pic-bur. a spa-mar. f eng (s) ENG yor-bel.

GERMANY (Pustilnik): a kie-hol. a bur (s) ITA pie-mar. f den (h).

ITALY (Greier): a rom-tun. a pie-mar. f tyn (c) rom-tun.
 RUSSIA (J.Ron Brown): a sev (h). a ukr-war. f rum-bla. f bot-swe.
 TURKEY (Holley): a bul (s) AUS ser-rum. a arm-sev. f bla (s) arm-sev.

Another empty retreat line? Yeech!

CENTRES:

A: 5: vie, bud, tri, ser, gre. Build two.
 E: 4: lon, lvp, edi, nwy. Build one.
 F: 4: par, bre, mar, spa. Build one.
 G: 5: ber, kie, mun, den, hol. Build two.
 I: 4: rom, ven, nap, tun. Build one.
 R: 6: war, mos, stp, sev, rum, swe. Build two.
 T: 4: con, smy, ank, bul. Build one.
 NEUTRAL: 2: por, bel.

Note the list of player addresses in this issue; Bob O'Donnell has moved.

Winter 1901 builds (not Spring also; there's always a separation in this xyn after 1901) are due Saturday, May 31, 1986.

TURKEY TO G.M.: I'm not looking! Did it work?

JAMUL: Yup. Sure did. Unless, of course, you meant something in this game....

AUSTRIA TO TURKEY: Maybe I'll be able to explain this later.

JAMUL: Make me a tape, Melinda, I gotta hear this one....

AUSTRIA TO FRANCE: OK, I'll be over to help real quick. Just a short stop by Libya....

JAMUL: Well, there go his other kids....

ITALY TO GERMANY: Many thanks, my trustworthy ally.

JAMUL: Now to make it work!

ITALY TO BOARD: General Robert (Mussolini) Greier announced at the regime's Benefit Fish Fry that Marseilles would fall into Italian rule. The citizens would be terrorized into submission, and I quote, "We'll rape all the cattle and stampede the women."

JAMUL: There'll be a seminar on this next month, hosted by Masters and Johnson.

FRANCE TO GERMANY: Okay, you wart on the south end of a northbound toad, just see how many of my centers you get!

LONDON TO PARIS: You die, Kreep!

FRANCE TO ITALY: Why do the Italians have mirrors in the bottom of their boats?

.....
GAME 1985AJ - The Tergiversatory Tapir - Winter 1906

The retreats were: AUS a bud-tri; ITA a ven-tus. England built A Lon. France built F Mar. And, having just retreated there, Italy removed A Tus.

AUSTRIA (Walters): a tri-bud. a vie (s) tri-bud. a ank-con. a ven (h).

ENGLAND (Fleming): a mun-boh. a den (s) ska-swe. a lon-nwy. f nth (c) lon-nwy.
f nwy-bar. f ska-swe. f tun (s) FRE tyn.

FRANCE (J.Walker, per R. Acheson): a ber-pru. a fin (s) ENG lon-nwy. a tyo (s)
ENG mun-boh. a hol-kie. a pie-tus. a ruh-mun. f nar-spa sc. f tyn (s) nap-
tun. f nap-tun. f lyo (s) pie-tus.

ITALY (Pustilnik): a bud (s) RUS gal-vie. f rom-nap. f apu (s) rom-nap.
f ion-tyn.

RUSSIA (D.Brown): a run-ser. a gal-vie. a sill-boh. a arm-ank. f stj nc - bar.
f con (s) arm-ank. f aeg-swy. f swe-fin.

The Austrian army Ankara is no longer with us. The Russian fleet Sweden may retreat to Bothnia, Baltic or nowhere; the Italian fleet Ion has options of (hold your chairs!) Adriatic, Albania, Greece, Aegean, East Med., or off the board. Fall moves may be conditional on these, and are due Saturday, May 31, 1986.

And with those moves, could we have votes on a proposed E/F draw? One 'nay' kills it, votes not received don't count.

The awkward spacing in this report is because the typing is a pastiche of two machines, owing to a broken ribbon in the middle.

ENGLAND TO WORLD: In light of Russia's inability to build this winter, I have proposed an E/F draw, and I hope everyone votes for it.

RUSSIA TO WORLD: Interesting to see Germany cooperate with the E/F alliance only to be obliterated. Such kindness! And now it's truly fascinating to see Jake in Austria cooperating with them. Is he seeking Caruso's fate? Or perhaps he's after that all-elusive third place. Hell of a strategy!

JAMUL: Hmm. Looks like I'd better start a press series here too, or I'm going to have a big bit of wasted space

right

down

here....

GAME 19668cn05 - WILLIAM R. D. KING - Fall 1901

Let's do this one backward, and start with the press....

Well...actually, let's start with telling us all that Robert O'Donnell has moved, and his new address in in the player list this issue. And now, the press!

LONDON TIMES: Prime Minister Anderson announced that a partial blockade was successful against Iceland, but the occupation had to be cancelled due to being low on fuel. Instead, a landing took place in Oslo, where supplies are being gathered. Asked about the attempted landing in Denmark, the P.M. said, "During the American Civil War, some Confederate soldiers were going to a small town in Pennsylvania for shoes and supplies. It was called Gettysburg. Well, I don't want to deny our men the chance to get the types of shoes they want to wear." Then the P.M. went into helpless mumbling: "I don't know how they'll fit their feet into those wooden shoes!"

AUSTRIA TO RUSSIA: Well, phooey on me! I have to attack somebody, and you're the most obvious one!

TIGHE TO VONNETZKE: Sorry to burst your bubble, but Larzalere has been naming his games after U.S. vice-presidents for the last four years.

VON NETZKE TO FINKGHE: Oh. Okay, let's try obscure Postmasters General. "William R. DeVane King" now becomes "James Campbell." (He served 1853-1857.)

AUSTRIA TO TURKEY: I thought we agreed to a truce?

AUSTRIA TO ENGLAND: Congrats. You win the prize for the most boring Spring 1901 moves in a variant game.

GERMANY TO RUSSIA: I will consider the initiation of a press series tantamount to a declaration of war. Don't do it!

RUSSIA TO GERMANY: Oh. Okay.

SOMEWHERE IN THE CARPATHO-URALS: General Mikhail "Irwin" Slutovsk, Commander of Russian Army People (CRAP), was fraught with fear. "What to do, what to do?" he muttered to himself, "Not only are we being smershed in the field, but I can't even write a big long blurb in my diary about it, or else the fool English will attack too! Aye, a terrible dilemma; bad enough to be bounced by the worst army in Europe. But now I can't even write a pack of lies to cover it up! I'll bet Lenin won't have this problem when he comes to power in seventeen years; he'll just send a batch of Cubans to Vienna to foment discord and unpleasantness. Oh dear oh dear oh dear...."

Poor General Slutovsk. And yet, his worries were none compared to those suffered by the various Fleet Admirals. Not only were they losing, but they had to live in constant fear that General Slutovsk would start writing things, thereby causing the English warlords to descend. And, naturally, where would the onslaught occur? Certainly not on land,...

It was a very surprised Russian Commandant of Military Procurement, therefore, who looked over the latest fleet requisition for supplies and noted, mixed in with

((Note: Simon advises that a couple of other press bits were not entirely legible, so he omitted reading them to me.))

Note from the Gamesmaster: At least one player has rung Simon asking for move results on the telephone, in advance of publication. He has no objection to this as long as none of you does, and so unless there's a formal objection, so shall it be. However, as Simon rightly points out, if such a possibility exists, it pretty well makes all those restrictions I placed on myself rather absurd, so they'd be dropped if the 'phone bit is agreed to. Personally, I (Conrad) couldn't care less. I'm getting squished anyway - SCREECH! - so who bleedin' cares? (Somewhat more seriously - I really don't care.)

Now about those disgusting (SCREECH!) moves....

AUSTRIA (Tighe): a gal-war, a rum (h), f alb-gre.
BARBARY (Walters): a lib-eth, f wes-lyo, f sao-can.
ENGLAND (D.Anderson): a yor-den, f nth (c) yor-den, f nwg-nwy.
FRANCE (Hoffman): a mar-spa, a bur-bel, f mid-por.
GERMANY (Pustilnik): a kie-mun, a ruh-bel, f hol (s) ruh-bel.
ITALY (Minshall): a ven-tri, a tus-pie, f tyn-cor.
PERSIA (Crosby): f sas-cre, a jor-egy, a aim-iran.
RUSSIA (von Metzke): a ukr-sev, a geo-iran, f bot-swe, f nos-kas.
TURKEY (O'Donnell): a bul (h), f aeg-cre, f bla-ank.

CENTRES:

A: 5: vie, bud, ~~##~~, rum, gre, war. Build two.
B: 5: alg, mor, tun, eth, can. Build two.
E: 5: lon, lvp, edi, den, nwy. Build two.
F: 5: par, bre, mar, spa, por. Build two.
G: 5: kie, mun, ber, bel, hol. Build two.
I: 6: rom, nap, ven, tri, pie, cor. Build three.
P: 4: ara, jor, ira, egy. Build one.
R: 4: nos, sev, stp, ~~##~~, swe. Even.
T: 4: con, say, ank, bul. Build one.

And still neutral: Crete and Serbia (2). SIMON: Note, either I mis-copied what you gave me on the 'phone for Barbary, or...er...you goofed. (I'm fairly sure the former, my writing is all scribbled here. Above s.c. totals are right, yes? Oh, and let's let it be clear, I am not double-checking Simon and correcting his work; I only caught this one because he and I were having a discussion on how many total centres there are in the game, and we couldn't agree, so as I searched the map I discovered the problem. (There are 45 centres; victory is a majority, 23.)

Builds are due to SIMON BILLENNESS (see address on player roster; telephone (518) 463-8485 if you've forgotten) on FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1986! That's one day before all other COSTA games.

SCREECH!

GAME 1989rb32 - Richard M. Johnson ("Gunboat" Variant) - Winter 1903

I assume you all got my note that Serbia is Austrian, thus Austria has three builds and Turkey none.

AUSTRIA: Builds a vie, a bud, a tri. Has: a's ven, rom, tyo, war, vie, tri, bud; f nap (8).

ENGLAND: Builds a edi. Has: a's stp, edi; f's mid, nwy, nwg, den, eng (7).

FRANCE: Has: a's spa, bre, bur, pic; f wes (5).

GERMANY: Builds a kis. Has: a's hol, ber, bal, aun, kie (5).

ITALY: GM removes f tun. Has: a ple (1).

RUSSIA: GM removes a gal, f bal. Has: a lvn (1).

TURKEY: Has: a's ukr, rum, sev; f's bla, gre, ion, aeg (7).

No standbys will be called. There's a proposal for a five-way draw, A-E-F-G-T; votes with Spring moves please, no vote received (under John's rules) is "nay."

Spring 1904 Moves are due Saturday, May 31, 1986. (A check ___ means I have 'em.)

TURKEY: Pretty nifty, how I made my move on Serbia!

JAMUL: Yeah, but I helped!

MR. X (FRANCE) TO G.M.: Glad to see your concern over Serbia. Actually, we French own it. I was just saying to my wife, Mrs. X, "Gee, honey, let's go back to that land we love in Serbia! We'll build a fleet in Marseilles and take a Mediterranean cruise past our friend QGKhadafi."

JAMUL: I assume the 'Q' is silent?

AUSTRIA TO TURKEY: Fine, let's head 'em up and move 'em out!

BERLIN TO EDINBURGH: Okay?

MR. Y TO MR. X: You big imposter! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Here I am, a grubbling little fill-in player of a measly five-unit country, and you have to try to jam my only source of communication. Actually, my only hope in this Gunboat game is through Diplomacy - a difficult situation. But if you call me secretively, between 2 and 3 a.m. at (619) 276-2937, I'm sure we can work something out. Use the code, "Good morning, Conrad."

JAMUL: Anybody want Rice Krispies stuffed through the 'phone lines into their face?

MR. X BECOMES MR. Y: Hey, all this X and Z shit has got Conrad in a huff(a). I promise, this is the same and original Mr. X. The one who agreed to give Germany Belgium and vowed to cooperate against England. Now that we got that straight, "Hello Everyone!"

AUSTRIA TO JAMUL: Is he a poor sucker for playing Italy?

GERMANY: No builds sent! Has: a's pru, hol; f swe (3 - 2 short).
 ITALY: Builds a ven. Has: a's tri, apu, ven; f tun (4 - 1 short).
 RUSSIA: Builds a war. Has: a's sev, ukr, war; f bal (4).
 TURKEY: Builds f ank, f smy. Has: a's bul, arm; f's ank, smy, rum (5).

I don't precisely have any standbys on hand for Gunboat games, but I can think of a couple of people who would probably be willing to do me a favor. So I'm asking one of them for German orders, and one way or another we'll hopefully have a full board....

Spring 1902 Moves are due Saturday, May 31, 1986.

ST.PETE TO LONDON: How about some support into Sweden? Let me know, OK?

JAMUL: And now for a contrasting viewpoint....

ENGLAND DECLARES WAR!: We English are building a fleet in London and vow to see it in Kiel before 1903. We intend to support France and Russia at every possible opportunity.

This Fall (1902) we will support Russian Baltic fleet into Denmark and French army Belgium into Holland.

In the spring, I intend to take Sweden so I can support Russia into Denmark successfully. I also hope to vacate the Channel so as not to worry our French friends. I will have London support E.C. to North Sea.

I expect my friends in Brest will take this promise and sail to Spain and on to Italy. Together, I firmly expect we'll own Germany by '03 or '04.

JAMUL: We got ESP operating here or something? Is that why the missed move?

VIENNA (Apr. 13, 1986): Sorry Conrad, but it's pretty obvious that nobody in this gunboat thing is interested in anything I have to say. Except you, that is, and it would be just as easy for us to swap fantasies over a brew sometime.

JAMUL: Hey, I mean, we tried, eh? Wrong time, wrong place, but please don't get sour, young lady. You're a heck of a person, and you damned well know it, and if you haven't read Ken Peel's letter earlier in the 'zine, do so. We'll try something else pretty soon, promise.

ST.PETERSBURG TO BERLIN: Well? What now?

BERLIN TO RUSSIA: Stay out of Sweden and support me in and I'll leave Warsaw alone.

TURKEY TO WORLD: The Black Sea is a Turkish lake!

FRANCE TO ITALY: Lissen, Dago, we open to be able to fight the heavy guys, not you wops. So don't worry about being antagonized, everyone knows you 'boys' ain't got no feelings...so don't try to act as if you were really human!

ITALY TO JAMUL: Me? Complain? Sweet-tempered soul that I am? I don't complain; I remove the source of complaint!

JAMUL: Me too. I complain until the source gets sick of listening and runs away!

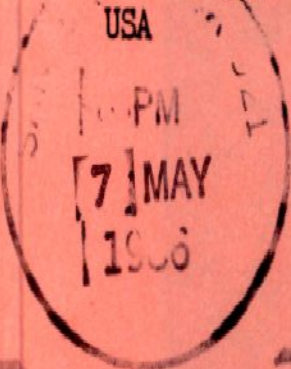
ST. PETERSBURG TO VIENNA: 84113 April 20, 1986



"Back issues of COSTAGUANA? I think they're in the one on the left...."

ABS.:

Conrad Friesner von Metzke
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USA



Looky, looky! See how much I spent on stamps?

GAMEFINDER

I have no mouth, and I must scream;
These games do such intrusions seem....

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| BEAR 36 | SUNI 33 |
| CASSOWARY 36 | TAPIR 38 |
| DIK DIK 27 | |
| EMU 27 | COLFAX 42 |
| MEERKAT 33 | JOHNSON 41 |
| NILGAI 34 | KING 39 |

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