

And now, for your reading pleasure and Sponsored by The Software Shoppe, we have another cheap thriller by Eric Ozog:



### Doctor Grob and the Mushroom People

The Mushroom People are a dark skinned semi-humanoid primitive/tribalistic race who have lived in The South for hundreds of our years. These characteristics would be nothing unusual if it were not for their scant eight inch height. They shelter and do their daily business in a series of interconnected underground caves among the honeysuckle roots, thus this group of beings have remained relatively undetected...until they were discovered by my roaming imagination for this DBM exclusive. This race does have its own bizarre language, but for all practical purposes (such as sanity of the author) we will stick to the English generic terms except for the following:

Klausch, which is the equivalent to Mushroom; Klauschan = Mushroom People, etc.

The Mushroom People's homes are located just south of the U.S. Government's Clinch River Breeder Reactor Project. This country must, of course, become energy independent. What better way to do it by designing a system which creates more fuel than it uses? But at whose expense? At the expense of the Mushroom People, that's who!

### Ninth Moon of the Thirty-first Short Summer

"Time runs by. The Festival...we are late, master," Xioto said.

"Frikken candles," Doctor Grob crabbed. "Of all the dumb traditions we have to keep, this one is the dumbest! If I had my way I'd snap my fingers and wham! The Hollow would be wired up for good." The good doctor rushed into the control room and blew out the last lit pillar of wax then whirled around, his blue/black robe flapping about. Catching his breath and leaping to the door in a single bound, he seized his cane from the coat rack and entered the dark sloping passageway to the surface. Upon activation, the cane began to glow in a soft but distinct rose color. Xioto took a fancy to it immediately, once he caught up.

"Ooooh, that's a neat staff, Master. Is it old?"

"Yeah...well, it is. Very old. As old or older than me, and that's old. And don't be a dick and ask how old is me."

After a few minutes of brisk walk, they reached above ground. The late summer air was unseasonably cold. Xioto brushed the grass back to cover the tunnel entrance and Doctor Grob switched off his cane, for now he could see by the light of the full moon.

They continued on their branch path which merged into the little used East/West Path, the main thoroughfare. Most travel was usually done underground, but Doctor Grob broke with the norm to save time. East/West was direct while trekking below the surface meant getting delayed time and time again from twists and turns and detours through every nickle-dime hideaway apartment or the local grandma's green grocery. Crap, all the more reason to dump The Hollow and move to West Colony with its fancy tunnel grid network; much more logical and mathematical, which of course was to Doctor Grob's liking. Hopefully that would be soon, he thought.

"Xioto!" yelled Doctor Grob to his newly adopted aide who had wandered far ahead, leaving the path on the wrong side of the creek to chase a butterfly. "Don't walk over there, ass, or you'll end up dead meat in one of Belgrano's fox traps!"

Xioto stood still and watched as Doctor Grob gained ground and studied his face. The youngster looked as if he'd burst into tears any moment. Doctor Grob silently predicted he'd do just that in a few seconds. He did. The good doctor groaned and wondered how he could possibly be patient with this orphaned, innocent, naive, infantile, boy-wonder.

Fireflies danced around them as they left the outskirts of the underground village, passing the entrances to the cannery and Capitol Hole, where brown-nosers roamed and the bureaucrats played. Doctor Grob could see the activity of the Klausch Festival through the underbrush, just

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Bob Arnett

as he had hundreds of times in the past. But enough shakeups would occur tonight to disrupt the traditional happenings of the Klauschans' self-styled Thanksgiving. The first shakeup would occur right now.

A group of young Klauschans reach their adulthood every fourth season, and join hands in their pagan ritual dance around the tallest mushroom of the field while one or two others sit on top and play an ancient theme on an improvised version of a poison pipe. Then all the unmarried youths of the group are inducted into the military service, to guard the fields and civilians. Any 'weaklings' who at the proper age do not show the strengths of the others are killed off in the belief of 'survival of the fittest'.

First Klausch (equivalent to president) Bren Sallek and General Belgrano, the supreme military commander, sat on the reviewing stand with their many assistants hovering about. Belgrano, an arm chair general well past his prime, began to speak:

"You of age be honored to serve Klausch and Klauschans. This weak one," he said, pointing to a short, skinny youngster tied to a stake, "shall be burned, his ashes cast into the fields for the benefit of..."

"SHUT UP!" Doctor Grob screamed, rushing through the crowd of sweaty Klauschans with little Xioto in tow, his cane switched on again to attract attention. The crowd oohed and ahhed in curiosity as it began to glow. The good doctor wondered how long the batteries would last.

"It's that weird Doctor Grob again," said one female Klausch.

"He's not one of us," muttered Jeb Til, a harvester.

"Legend says he came from the sky..." said someone else.

"And he'll return there once again," added his companion.

Doctor Grob ignored their chit-chat as he reached the lad tied to the stake, tossing a demand to the reviewing stand, "You're not going to kill 'im!"

The crowd reacted with stunned silence.

The good doctor quietly asked the prisoner, "What's your name, boy?"

The youngster looked scared but mildly relieved. "Kresken, sir."

"All right Kresken. How do you feel about being burnt to a crisp on the old dickbrains' pillar of justice?"

"Dickbrain, sir? I don't..."

"You're not happy about it, I can tell. Xioto! Cut his bonds."

The general objected, shouting down from the reviewing stand, "Grob, this is treason! The weak must die so not to hinder the strong. He can't even throw a spear!"

"And you're an asshole! Your problem is you've not had a sacrifice in 180 seasons. I see no reason to start it again, especially since we're all moving and need everyone we can spare!"

The general made a motion to call the guards, but the president told him no, "Now now now, don't cause a fuss, this isn't a Junker honor court." To the doctor he said, "We've known each other for a long time. You've been Uncle Sugar Able coming to the rescue before, and it took me a long time before you finally got through to me on the principles of electricity. Usually you know what you're talking about- I've based decisions on your judgements, the Klauschans get to live with the consequences. I don't want to step on too many traditional toes at once, so you explain yourself further."

"What's to explain? This boy's heart beats a lot slower than most. Being a mathematician, I estimate he's from, oh... twelve to fifteen seasons behind the normal adolescent. Big deal. So he lives longer in the long run than you or me."

"Why?" Inquired the president.

Now the crowd was becoming impatient. So was Doctor Grob. He started ranting and raving and waving his cane around, creating quite a scene. "Why? I don't know why! Maybe he had a lousy childhood or he's got a bad astrological chart or he's been pud whacking too much, too little, too much, I don't know why! Don't kick his ass just because he's a runt, make him a scout or have 'im work the harvest during the day so he gets strong!"

Bren Sallek, being a wise president as well as wanting to get to the more important order of business before the usually docile Klauschans became a lynch mob, finally gave in. "Alright, alright, I hereby decree that this young kid be placed under your wing. It's your karma."

As the president began his official speech of the evening, Doctor Grob, Xioto and Kresken departed the festival and disappeared into the tall grass. The good doctor needed rest, it was late. He didn't need to hang around and hear the speech because he knew what was in it. He also knew how the Klauschans would react to it, they'd go along as usual if it meant their survival.

"Will I really become a big strong guard, Sir?" Kresken asked Doctor Grob.

"Huh? Oh yeah, sure. You're a good little pud. You'll be a fine spear-chucker and poison-piper like the rest of 'em." Xioto only yawned.

#### The Complete Text of President Bren Sallek's Speech

"Congratulations, gents and gophers, we've hit REALITY TIME. The scene just got somewhat serious. A shorter growing season/less fruitful harvest because of an exploding Mexican mountain's smoke blocking out the sun we can all live through. But a major core rupture at the humans' atomic reactor is another story. Doctor Grob has detected the leak with his 'nuclear plant', which turns from green to purple with the presence of radioactivity. Radioactivity kills. It is bad air. It is bad for you, the Klausch and Klauschan, and is even bad for The General, if you can comprehend that. Grob says the humans have contained it so far, but a big meltdown could throw it all into a cocked hat.

"Now we've put up with mankind's insane blundering before. We recall when people first came to our domain to hunt, that was fine by us, none of our folk were discovered and/or wasted. We even put up with the bullshit of the humans' textile mill fouling the upper water when that came many moons later- a lot of mushrooms were ruined in that one, yup and so what, that's the humans' style- too bad and all that but so it goes, the environment is fair game.

"We even lived through the first leak sixteen seasons ago in '78 when a water cooling pipe burst. We were careful and sent scouts to relocate and founded West Colony. Turned out to be OK because the wind took the bad air east so we stayed put. But not now- you bet your sweet ass the plants will start wilting and your hair will fall out before long, since the volcano erupted and switched the air currents our way, or so I'm told. Grob is reliable and brainy, remember he pulled us through the bad harvests of '34/'35/'36 with his cannery. Thus I don't care where he comes from.

"So what's actually happening? The farce has turned ugly. Hold onto your hats, this could be the big one. We must make the move to West Colony now and abandon The Hollow. You can't try reasoning with the humans 'cause you'll either (1) end up in a zoo or laboratory, or (2) end up dead or worse. So don't get any ideas.

"West Colony is far away, but its locale is in a valley, shielded from any miscellaneous fallout short of a BIG WAR. The trip will be in stages, groups of twenty leaving each night, travelling by night. Can't attract too much attention and overburden West Colony all at once. Then again, if the reactor's plug cannot be pulled we may all have to make a run for it. Not that we'd make it, but it's worth a shot. But I don't want a panic on my hands either. I and The General will be the last to leave. The captains go down with the ship. The sheets now being passed out are on procedure and what to take along. Selection of groups of twenty to be purely at random, except for group leader. Remember that West Colony is far from complete, so there'll be plenty of work for one and all. Stay tuned for developments and keep liquid.

"Enjoy tonight's Klausch Festival!"

Two nights had past, the moon starting to wane. The first group of Klauschans departed on the hazardous journey to West Colony. At the rate of twenty per night, it would be a month before The Hollow was completely evacuated. Doctor Grob worried in his sleep there would not be enough time. At least Kresken now had as much time as the rest of us.

Kresken had left earlier in the evening to prepare his trip with the second group leaving the following night. Also, the president and general decided he was to be a scout for group two. Such a responsibility would prove his worth, and if successful, he'd gain respect. Doctor Grob was pleased with the decision, for he wouldn't have to 'babysit' an additional child, even if Kresken be much older. He considered Xioto trouble enough.

The control room at Doctor Grob's quarters was dimly lit from a single candle standing in the corner. A sweet scented natural carpet of vines and pine boughs lie on the dank floor. Tapestries of early Klauschan history hung on the earthen walls, the only ones to be found in The Hollow, made by the good doctor himself. Xioto stared at them for a time, then returned his gaze to the strange lights of the computer console. He did not fully understand their meaning, his master had little time these days to explain them. And once everyone was safely relocated in West Colony, the computer would not be needed any longer.

Doctor Grob had masterminded this temporary installation three of our years ago, in answer to the problem of a lack of guards for the fields who were sent to do the necessary work in West Colony. His 'Electronic Watch' (as the doctor called it) was a surveillance system consisting of infrared intensity and microwave motion detectors located in strategic areas in the field which report to the central processing unit in the doctor's control room. This software programmed computer would interpret the incoming signals and announce it by means of a light on the console. A detailed reading of the intruder's body temperature would be graphed on a chart recorder. Thus with a carefully prepared cross-indexed table which showed various degrees of heat intensity, Doctor Grob could tell exactly which species the intruder belonged to. Then it could be simply determined if the species was dangerous. If so, the military was notified. (Note: The microwave motion detectors were added shortly after an unfortunate incident occurred when a cold-blooded snake had escaped heat detection and proceeded to squeeze two harvesters to their deaths.)

One can imagine how The President was overwhelmed by this amazing, almost magical, technology. So was Xioto, but he had enough common sense to know something was not quite right when the computer console began to smoke. He woke his master immediately. Doctor Grob stumbled out of his sleep and into the control room to the computer in a near panic. He saw the flashing yellow 'Insufficient Data' light and hit the reset button; it did not respond! The chart recorder was going wild, its marker flew off the scale. The red 'Alarm' lights for the three detectors in zones North, Northeast and Northwest flashed for a moment, then went dead. Dizzy from the billowing smoke the good doctor gestured wildly to Xioto and yelled,

"Pull that switch over there or the system will crash!"

Xioto obeyed and the power went down. The console went dark.

"What are you doing here?" Doctor Grob asked Kresken, who had just popped in. The outcast-turned-scout made a face, observing the bedraggled doctor and his smoke stained computer. So it seemed he 'popped in' at the wrong time.

"I...I, forgot my spear, Sir."

"Get out of here and warn Belgrano there's something big at the North End!"

"But he'll be mean to me!"

"He won't or he'll have to reckon with me, dick! DO IT NOW. Or do you want to reckon with me?"

Kresken, considering The General lesser of the two evils, ran into the tunnel, soon to be followed by Doctor Grob-who paused to gather his wits. Upon reaching the surface, the doctor raced through the night towards the fields. He ran so fast he left Xioto far behind and his heart nearly burst. He would not miss whatever was going on out there for all the world. He was so excited he forgot his cane.

Light was emitting from a point just beyond the northernmost field, not from the power plant, as the doctor originally thought with dread. The humans must have still had the situation under control. But now his thoughts were of confusion and curiosity as he spied the saucer shaped object sitting silently amongst the mushrooms, the area surrounding it was charred. And it was radiating a familiar rose colored glow.

"What the hell is that?" Doctor Grob said to General Belgrano, who arrived on the scene with Kresken and a small detachment of troops. He had placed his command post on top a small outcrop of rock overlooking North End. The other guards were fanning out, concealing themselves in the foliage.

"I don't know," replied the general. "It's not of human manufacture, look how small it is!"

"It's not made by man, you're right on that. I know humans enough to know they'd..."

"It flew from over there and sheared off that tree. See those three smoking spots?" the general pointed, "Those are your motion/heat detectors, all burned up. That thing did it."

They studied the strange craft for a half hour when the side opened and two entities came out. Belgrano and Grob stared in amazement.

"They're our size, but they glow all over," whispered the general.

"They got legs but they float and don't walk!" Kresken yelled.

"And they'll come and get you if you don't shut up," scolded Doctor Grob, squeezing Kresken's neck.

"I can't see their faces," the general commented.

"That's because they don't have any. Crap."

"They're moving towards the atomic plant." General Belgrano signaled the guards across the field with a small flashlight, then beckoned to his personal guard to follow his lead. "If they are hostile, we shoot them. Kresken, you come with. I want you to witness this."

"Sir, shouldn't we tell the president?" Kresken protested.

"No need to wake him. I am in control."

Now it was Doctor Grob's turn to protest. "General, sometimes you make me want to throw up."

The general shrugged his shoulders and left with Kresken and the guards.

Doctor Grob was alone for a short while, then Xioto finally arrived, huffing and puffing. He was flustered, but physically intact.

"Master, I looked all over and over but couldn't find..." he stopped talking when his eyes fell on the alien craft.

"It's a flying saucer, a UFO," the good doctor explained. "I don't know about you, you being such a young pup, but let me tell you, I'm impressed. I thought I had all the knowledge. I thought I'd never say this, but boy am I humbled. You hear that strangers, I Grob am humbled!!"

"I want to get out of here!" Xioto cried out in fright.

"Get out of here? No way! Let's check these boys out! I want to know who's humbling me."

"They won't hurt us..."

"Are you kidding? We're sleaze next to them. No reason to hurt us. Come on, up you go," the good doctor lifted Xioto onto his shoulders and walked down the slope and through burnt mushrooms towards the spaceship.

Meanwhile, the general sensed trouble. The two glowing beings had floated over the barbed wire fence to the gray walls of the experimental nuclear facility. Once there, they busied themselves, one revealing a device which looked like the general's own pocket flashlight which cut a hole in the wall with a thin, intense beam of light. The general was

perplexed why his own light beam couldn't do something fancy as that. No matter. Those glowing intruders had to be stopped, the Klauschans needed no more idiots tampering with the atomic plant, screwing it up further, perhaps even blowing it up? With that thought in mind, Belgrano ordered the strangers fired upon.

None were prepared for the following surprise, even including The General (if you can comprehend that). All the poison darts bounced off their quarry's glowing rose aura! The aliens went about their work, totally ignoring the attack. Now the second alien was pumping some type of gas or fluid into the hole in the concrete wall from a small tank he carried. Once complete with their task, the strange twosome left on their way back to the ship. When they passed overhead, the general considered throwing a spear at them, then thought better of it.

Upon return to the spaceship, the Klauschan guard witnessed the aliens depart. The saucer threw off a burst of deep rose color as it left the earth, without sound, smell, or smoke. But the heat was terrific, it caused the witnesses to fall back and shield their faces.

But where was the good doctor?

Scouts were sent on searches- but no trace of Doctor Grob or his servant Xioto could be found. They were sure to become another Klauschan legend. Generations to come would be searching the heavens for their return.

An amazing discovery occurred the next day. Guards posted near the atomic reactor reported to the president that men entering and leaving the facility actually had smiles on their faces, not frowns like the week before. Further verification with Grob's 'Nuclear Plant' revealed that yes, the reactor was somehow repaired, the plant's leaves were again a healthy green color. The president promptly ordered the evacuation temporarily halted, so further studies could be made to accomplish it without haste, to avoid serious mishaps. And now a proper job could be done to get the harvest in.

Stay tuned for the next episode: Doctor Grob, Messiah of Outer Space, at a Diplomacy zine near you.

Author's note: The voice of Doctor Grob was inspired by Dan Stafford, President Bren Sallek's by Daniel Scott Palter, and last and least, General Belgrano's voice, by Alexander Haig.

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Diplomacy By Moonlight is published every two months by Eric Ozog, 1526 N Lawler Ave, Chicago, IL 60651. Phone me in the evenings at (312) 237-4650.

And yes dear folks, there has been another shakeup and purges at the editorial offices of DBM. The prime rate for this zine is now \$6.00/10 issues FOR EVERYONE. This includes all players, non-players, standbys, orphans and your Aunt Jane.

Old subscriptions will be honored until they run out. Samples are 60 cents each, single issues.

I might get up enough nerve to publish a double issue again someday, no matter how unlikely it may seem. If so, be warned, double issues cost double.

DBM games remain on monthly schedule, results to be printed in Eastfold Vale, a warehouse zine, published on alternate months. Only players and any persons relating to the games receive it. So if John Michalski's comments on The Bernie Goof-ball Game are printed, he receives and is charged for EV. See how that works? Isn't that neat? The cost for EV is 60 cents each, not the 30 cents which was originally announced. The reason for this is I expect the warehouse to have a larger inventory very soon.

Sub credit is given where credit is due. At the very least you will receive the issue in which your letter/article appeared in for free.

If anyone is confused out there regarding their subscription, do not fear, your sub is in good hands. My record keeping system is not elaborately detailed, but it is accurate. And I make no mistakes. Thus if there is a conflict, I will always be right. If you gain or lose an issue, there is always a reason why. If you have a complaint, let me know and we will try to work things out.

Standby List: Peter Ashley, Mike Barno, Randal Husk, Mark Luedi, Dick Martin, Larry McCloud, Bob Olsen, Mike Quirk and last but not least, Russ Rusnak. Tell me if you want on or off this list.

\* \* \* \* \*

## DBM Gamestart: Sleaze One

After much begging and pleading and settling for less, this game is filled. The players are as follows:

- AUSTRIA-- Mark Frueh, 214 Rust House, 115 North Orchard, Madison, Wisconsin 53715
- ENGLAND-- Daniel Scott Palter, P.O. Box 156, Cedarhurst, New York 11516
- FRANCE-- Derwood Bowen, 1520 Summit Street, Columbus, Ohio 43201
- GERMANY-- David Reynolds, 3462 Gunston Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22302
- ITALY-- Terrance Tallman, 16047 28th NE, Seattle, Washington 98155
- RUSSIA-- Michael Quirk, 3830 Chester Drive, Glenview, Illinois 60025
- TURKEY-- Bernard Tretick, 13412 Brackley Terrace, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

The Guest GM for this game is Daniel Stafford, 215 Delhi Apt D, Columbus, Ohio 43202. The Deadline for Spring 1901 is Sunday September 26th. Note that all orders and press are to be sent to Dan, and his deadlines fall on the last Sunday of the month. A copy of Sleaze 1 Houserules has been sent to each player. Results will be printed in DBM/EV. \$4.50 NMR fees are still required of Tallman, Reynolds and Tretick. This game ought to be a wild one, pitting the young innocents against the old toads. Have fun! Don Ditter, may we have a boardman number?

-----  
 OZOG II -- 1979 IX / Fall 1914: New French government fails to breath new life into Europe.  
 -----

ENGLAND [Stafford] f por-spa/sc

FRANCE [Lancaster] f tun-ion, f lyo S f spa/sc-mar, f spa/sc-mar, a bre-par, a kie-mun, a gre-ser

ITALY [Lischett] a ven H, a tus H, f rom H

RUSSIA [Oaklyn] f nwy-swe, f naf S f mid-wes, f mid-wes, f ion-tyl, f enc-mid, f bla-bul/ec, a bur-pic, a mar-bur, a mun-ruh, a pie-tus, a tyo H, a gal-boh, a rum-bul, a con-ank, a smy H NSU, a ank U H

TURKEY [Sherwood] f tri H

SUPPLY CENTERS

ENGLAND -1- por SPA (2) No home centers, will be 1 short

FRANCE -13- mar par bre mun ber kie hol vie bud ser gre spa tun (12) Build 6, room for 1, will be 5 short

ITALY -3- rom ven nap (3) Even

RUSSIA -15- stp mos war sev swe nwy den bel lon lvp edi (16) Build 1  
ank smy CON rum bul

TURKEY -1- tri con (1) Even, was 1 short

The DEADLINE for Winter 1914 AND Spring 1915 is Friday October 1st. Two proposals this time, take note: A concession to Turkey and a concession to Russia. Vote on these proposals with your next set of moves, NVR = YES.

Change of address: Stuart Lancaster, Hashinger Hall Room 630, 1632 Engel Road, Lawrence, KS 66045

Change of address: Keith Sherwood, P.O. Box 6457, La Jolla, CA 92037 (effective Sept 20th)

(From Greg Nelson) You misunderstood my message; I meant that my units are on HOLD each & every turn unless I indicate otherwise! (Call them advance orders if you wish). Also, please print the following press: (If it makes any difference) Anytime players start attacking other players and not countries in their press, the game is not worth playing. (Please note: this was the message I gave in my call. It was supposed to be a PRESS RELEASE THEN!)

[Eric here. Greg Nelson was told two weeks ago that as per the house rules, perpetual orders were not accepted. Nelson's subscription also had lapsed, I told him he would be replaced if the money did not come. So I replaced him.]

(Turkey) Gee, if proposals almost pass but Bernie forgets to vote, I might as well try for a concession to myself! NVR = YES, right?!

(Trieste) You mean as long as this game continues I get a break on the price of DbM? What a fool I am for trying to force it to finish. Bernie, let's talk about trading of supply centers indefinitely. Eric, OK by me (as if you need my consent) if you make DbM bi-monthly, if that is what it takes to keep your high quality output and keep its content bizarre, off the wall, and always surprising. Best, Keith.

[Thanks. I like the new schedule, but I still have to learn to spread the work over a couple weeks instead of the big week-end crash. And there are times when I just can't get the mind to make the pen move on the paper. But I'm working on it!]

(Warsaw) From the second rung of my multi-colored ladder, I began to see the hills and valleys of Europe and down into the sea itself. "What!" the Tsar exclaimed! "You mean Italy is not manned by a man, as we were told it would be?" The Tsar suckled his left forefinger. "Why, we expected Italy to be in Tunis and Trieste by now!" The Tsar twitched his pointed ears. "And surely France did us out of annihilating his new army in Marseilles!" The Tsar scratched his butt. "Oh well! We have no ally, it seems. Now, how to win here without any other survivors prior to the victory criteria being met --- 'tis a challenge. We thank you, GM, for proposing that challenge to us." With that note, the Tsar pushed his little finger into one of the punctures of his personal rainbow, plugging, once again, that proverbial dike.

[And you will be replaced also if you don't come up with the \$6.00]

(Mr. Nice Guy to Mr. Toady) We might even show you guys how it is done. In the meantime, you have to waste money on stamps and envelopes and not even have a chance for survival.

(Quote of the month, by Stuart Lancaster) If I do take the position over, I will probably want off of the standby list. This is because I do not want my schoolwork to get in the way of my Diplomacy.

[And this kid said in a letter to me he doesn't like Composition class. No small wonder...where's that damned Kador when you need him?]

-----  
 OZOG III -- 1981 IK National / Spring 1904: The Great Tactician Stafford is led into a trap.  
 -----

AUSTRIA [Reynolds] a ser S a rum, f alb-gre, a bud S a vie, a vie H D R tri,otb

ENGLAND [Ashley] a stp-mos, a swe H, f iri S f enc-mid, f enc-mid, f nse-enc, f nwy-nse

FRANCE [Duke] f mid-wes, a gas-spa, a bur-mar, a mar-pie D R A

GERMANY [Tallman] a pru-sil, a war-ukr, a gal-bud, a tyo S a boh-vie, a boh-vie, a bel-bur, f den H

ITALY [Palter] f lyo S a pie-mar, a pie-mar, f wes S f spa/sc-mid, f spa/sc-mid, f ion-adr

RUSSIA [Stafford] a sev-rum, a mos-war

TURKEY [Burgess] f bla S a con-bul, a con-bul, a gre S a bul-ser, a bul-ser, f aeg S a gre

DEADLINE for Fall 1904 is Friday October 1st. With much moaning and groaning by players voting no, the concession to the German failed.

(Germany to Russia) Showing me frostbit toes, offering me your daughters, cursing my name- pah. A good kraut can never be bought cheap.

(Germany to everybody) I didn't vote for the concession. I VOTE NO!

(Sevastopol) This turn we found out who the real toadies really are.

(Southwestern to NYC) Because of another gross error by the Blackhearted you did not have the bad fortune to read the Frog's glorious insulting account of his stab. It stated (and I quote) "Bite wind pasta chaser." The nerve! If he keeps this up he may manage to equal the Emperor's sorry record for lies. He has yet a long way to proceed however.

(Southwestern to duh Skeemer) Sorry...but you didn't want him to miss your insult did you? Why don't you get your act

together and quit lying to people, Steven? Look what happened to Reynolds after his dastardly lies became public knowledge! You have to have allies in this game...not just people who don't find it worthwhile to exterminate you right at the moment.

[Chicago--Ankara] Right. You tell him Burgess.

(Southwestern to Christopher's little town) Ruthless, eh? I may lose once in a while but I prefer to be sneaky like my "hero" Eric the Great. We will see who does better in the Long Run.

[Dear Ruthless] It sure has been ages since we were at each others' throats in the old Le Front days. Ah, what fun!

(Southwestern to the U.S. Army) Are you still around? How can you still play war games when the real thing stares you in the face? I wouldn't mind hearing from you.

(Southwestern to (last but not least since I don't even recognize Reynolds' existence any more) North Sealth West George) Congratulations! You have negotiated peace!! Unfortunately in Diplomacy peace is boring, what do we do now?

[This is Jim Burgess's new phone number: (214) 692-7074.]

OZOG IV -- 1981 IL Local / Fall 1905; Turks rise from the ashes with a vengeful glare.

SUMMER RETREATS

RUSSIA a rum R ukr, f nwg R cly

FALL MOVES

AUSTRIA [Shreve] f aeg S TUR f smy-con, a gre-ser, a rum H, a bud S a rum, a tyo-vie

ENGLAND [Rusnak] f nat-lvp, f edi S f nwg-nse, f nwg-nse

FRANCE [Quirk] f por-mid D R A, a par S f pic-bre, f pic-bre

GERMANY [Johnson] a mun-bur, a bel-pic, a hol-bel, a den H, f kie-hlg

ITALY [Kaplan] f bre H D R enc,gas,otb, f mid S a spa-por, a spa-por, f lyo-spa/sc, a ven-tyo, f ion S AUS a gre OTM

RUSSIA [Haehnel] f cly-edi, f ska S f nwy-nse, f nwy-nse, a swe-nwy, a ukr-sev, a sev-arm, f ank-con, f con-bla

TURKEY [Glass] a bul S f smy-con, f smy-con

SUPPLY CENTERS

|         |     |                                     |     |                           |
|---------|-----|-------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
| AUSTRIA | -5- | vie bud tri ser gre RUM             | (6) | Build 1                   |
| ENGLAND | -3- | edi lvp lon                         | (3) | Even                      |
| FRANCE  | -4- | par bel por spa BRE                 | (2) | Even, had 2 annihilations |
| GERMANY | -5- | ber kie mun den hol BEL             | (6) | Build 1                   |
| ITALY   | -6- | ven rom nap tun mar bre SPA POR     | (7) | Build 1                   |
| RUSSIA  | -9- | stp mos war sev swe nwy rum ank con | (7) | Remove 1, was 1 short     |
| TURKEY  | -2- | bul smy CON                         | (3) | Build 1                   |

The DEADLINE for Winter 1905 AND Spring 1906 is Friday October 1st. Don Glass's phone number is (618) 453-3835

(Rome-Paris) Sorry about the miswritten orders. I never did send in revised orders before leaving town. After you retake Brest, I am willing to try your plan again.

(Deerfield-South Suburbs) You leave me alone, and I'll let you have fun. All is forgiven. Next time, we must have a referee.

(Deerfield-Lawler) No one calls. No one writes. No press. This is a hell of a game you sucked me into. I would vote for a draw except I'm having so much fun, and I would have to pay more for your damned good zine.

[Lawler-Deerfield] Gee Mr. Kaplan, you don't sound too happy, maybe you should drop out too? Really though, with the new replacements I think we'll have some stability for a change. But I think I've exhausted my local standby pool. You guys had better see this one through. At least I'm confident Russ will hang in there until the bitter end.

Black Frog/East of Eden Orphan becomes OZOG V -- 1981 K Greed / Fall 1905

SUMMER RETREATS

ENGLAND NRR f swe R otb by GM

FALL MOVES

ENGLAND [Arnott] NMR f mid U H, f enc U H, f nse U H, f nwy U H

FRANCE [Beck] NMR a bur U H

GERMANY [Stafford] a par S a bre, a bre H, a swe H, f bal-den, f hlg S f bal-den, f hol-bel, f kie-hol, a sil-mun, a war-mos, a mos-sev

ITALY [Townsend] a por S f wes-spa/sc, f wes-spa/sc, f tyn-wes, f ion H, a tyo S a ven-tri, a ven-tri

RUSSIA [Luedi] a fin-stp, a vie-bud, a gal-bud

TURKEY [Carter] a tri S RUS a gal-bud, f alb S a tri, a ser S a sev-rum, a sev-rum, f gre H, f aeg H

SUPPLY CENTERS

|         |     |                         |     |                    |
|---------|-----|-------------------------|-----|--------------------|
| ENGLAND | -6- | lon lvp edi nwy swe stp | (4) | Even --was 2 short |
| FRANCE  | -1- | por                     | (0) | Out                |



|         |      |     |     |     |            |     |     |            |     |     |     |     |     |      |       |                 |
|---------|------|-----|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-----------------|
| GERMANY | -10- | ber | kie | mun | den        | hol | bel | par        | war | bre | mos | SWE | SEV | (12) | Build | 2               |
| ITALY   | -6-  | nap | rom | ven | tun        | mar | spa | POR        |     |     |     |     |     | (7)  | Build | 1               |
| RUSSIA  | -3-  | STP | bud | vie | <u>rum</u> |     |     |            |     |     |     |     |     | (3)  | Even  |                 |
| TURKEY  | -8-  | ank | con | smy | bul        | ser | gre | <u>sev</u> | tri | RUM |     |     |     | (8)  | Build | 2 --was 2 short |

The DEADLINE for Winter 1905 AND Spring 1906 is Friday October 1st. Take note that Mark Luedi's zip code is 49640, not 49460

The STANDBY for England is: Larry McCloud, 520 Geary, San Francisco, CA 94102.

(Vienna) The new Half-Tsar sends greetings to all European leaders with the wish that peace is a ~~pipe~~dream that will see its fulfillment in our time.

(Vienna-Eric) If Stafford is still feeling bad about having his game status' printed, maybe I should offer to submit mine; they're worse!

(Stafford to Tallman) See, Terry, this is how it's done. Fleets, man, fleets.

## The Origins/DipCon Review

- As is known, my Kansas City toadies Randy Ellis and Stuart Lancaster came to Chicago via rail, then drove with me to Columbus, staying Thursday night at Dan Stafford's. Dan was his usual joyful/happy self, but perhaps he was a trifle less verbally abusive- to me anyway, I can't put into words how Dan assaulted poor innocent Randy with his tongue. One positive point: Dan definitely looked much less sleazy this year with his new perm and contact lenses. Dan's friends, Tom Pritt, Derwood Bowen and one other who's name escapes me visited to play- you guessed it- Diplomacy, until late in the night. I of course was simply thrilled to play this game again, so I did my best to enhance the evening by screwing the other players. I threw my share of wrenches in the diplomatic processes and enjoyed blowing down gullible Tom Pritt's fragile house of cards. I may have been eliminated once again after begging and pleading, "Please kill me, oh kill me!"
- I had a dream well before the convention. In the first part, my spirit was marred on the long drive to Baltimore because of the poor air quality. It came true- all the way there and all the way back, through Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and part of Maryland the air was choked with pollution. It grieves me I cannot see the stars because of the cities' lights and smoke, it gives me a closed in feeling when my soul cannot see the infinite heavens. I don't understand you humans and the harm you do to your living place. The second part of the dream came true also, I was walking up a hill at night and saw lights in the windows of the dormitory apartments where we were to stay. The dorms were of the same type in dream-land as they were in reality. Most strange, and I explained so to my companions of the road and they thought it strange also.
- Southern Pennsylvania could be an elf's paradise, I'd retire there if only I could go back in time before the industrial age. We stopped for lunch at a turnpike Howard Johnson's. I thought the clam chowder was excellent, Randy did not, for he had bit into something foreign and wanted no more. So I finished his. Dan speculated the hard bit of foreign matter may have been a piece of clamshell. Randy spied some caffeine tablets at the candy counter and bought them in preparation for the weekend ahead. After Dan told of the evils of caffeine and why he couldn't live without it, he stated, "Take three of those and you become The Sleaze!" Driving through Maryland, I noticed how neat the trees and shrubs along the interstate were. I told my friends I thought the highway department probably trimmed them. The other three thought I was crazy until on the way back we saw the crews with their pruning shears! Randy thought it great to see tax dollars actually at work for a change.
- The meeting with D.S. Palter at the West End Games booth. D.S. scribbled down his orders to OZOG III and pushed them and a game of Kamakura into my hands for my review (I'll get to it soon, really I will, I haven't forgotten you). After some chit-chat with him on why Iran vs. Iraq = Red Star/White Star, John Boardman magically appeared behind me, scaring me out of my skin! I quickly exchanged good wishes with The Doktor once again (he remembered me!) and introduced him to my group. The Doktor acknowledged, "Okay, I'll say they're real (Ellis & Lancaster) if you say the Great Neck kids are real." So we made a deal. I told Dr. John about the publishers' seminar at 6:00 pm. He said he didn't know of it and said he would go. I do believe he went, so Gary, you know who to blame.
- The Diplomacy publishers' seminar on Friday eve, a much less stuffy and informal atmosphere than the Panel discussion on Saturday morn. Roy Henricks (Envoy), Al Pearson (Just Among Friends), John Daly (Dogs of War) and Gary Coughlan (Europa Express) all told their sob stories of the trials and tribulations of publishing...yawn...and at the end I decided to raise hell about whether or not a publisher should lose money on his zine, it caused a chain reaction of differing viewpoints which would overflow into Saturday's meeting. More on this later.
- Supper with John Daly. John's middle name should be 'Mr. Clean.' Dan Stafford told me later, "I saw John all by himself looking lost so I took him under my wing." John is a quiet guy, and what better way to spend a quiet evening by being with a group of quiet midwesterners. After returning to campus and leaving Randy behind at the apartment to wait for John's friend (who never materialized), Stuart, Dan, John and I walked over to the East Coast Clique's hideout to witness the presentation of the 'Nixon Award' to Kathy Byrne for nefarious deeds from Al Pearson. The huge marble and metal covered plastic trophy had a metal model pistol on top. Well, the pistol could have been plastic too, but at least it looked impressive. I shook hands and exchanged greetings with a number of people, including Don Sigwalt (who was hiding in the corner) and the good Doubting Thomas Swider. Our group left shortly afterwards to start a game. We walked to the open gaming area and found a couple D&D freaks who said they'd like to try. There were Diplomacy games going on in progress here and I shook my once-a-year handshake with Lee Kendter Senior, a required act for renewing our deep bond of friendship. When we arrived back at the house on the hill and set up the board, one of the D&Ders exclaimed with confidence, "Oh yeah, I know the strategy to this game. This is the game where you don't trust anyone and screw everyone, right?"
- The Saturday Panel discussion. I brought a cassette recorder with a sensitive microphone and recorded the whole thing. The recording turned out excellent, very clear. I transcribed what the panelists said, but it is too lengthy to include it here in its entirety. I'll give a short summary and my comments at the end below. If anyone wants the tape for the hobby archives or to burn, it's all yours.

Bruce Linsey--"The Diplomacy hobby's individuals are as particles (pebbles and rocks) in a great river. Most enter the river then eventually leave it. The average hobbyist is a little pebble who is washed out after a couple years. The big boulders are the hobbyists who stay for a decade or more, they are the 'pillars of the hobby'. You can cling to them or they can crush you. And John Boardman is the mountain on which the river of Diplomacy flows. And the hobbyist who takes on too much at once and disappears after a few months can be referred to as the slime of Diplomacy." [Linsey hits the nail on the head. He couldn't be more right.]

Ron Brown-- "The Canadian hobby is in a bind because a few years back Canada had 12 zines and dropped down to 4, with one



publishing every six months...[Passchendaele]. I have to have the smallest zine [Snafu] and I only run 12 games, the others are carrying 20-25 games. All game starts have been frozen, and it is fortunate we don't have a novice director because we cannot handle new people coming into the hobby now. No new zines seem to be on the horizon for Canada. Pressure must be taken off the existing publishers, because if there is another fold, we're in really bad trouble." [Steve Hutton will be starting a small newsletter and Andy Lischett placed Passchendaele's games, himself taking three of them. It is my belief Canadian players can play in Chicago-based zines on monthly deadlines, the mail service between Chicago and southeastern Canada is very good, all because a lot of NA mail is routed through here, our P.O. is the largest in the nation.]

Doug Beyerlein--"Postal Diplomacy will become electronic when home computers come into wider use. Then Diplomacy games can be played with 1 or 2 week deadlines. When the hobby began John Boardman ran two-week deadlines for years, I guess he's now gone to three or four week deadlines..." (Boardman cuts in at this point, explaining he used longer deadlines as of March of 1973, causing much laughter.) "So in the not-too-distant future we're going to be able to get around the U.S. Postal Service. No more lost moves, and just dial into a service like The Source for results. Rapid changes in the hobby will occur because of this and it will be more difficult for the people without these electronic measures. This could cause some fractioning of the hobby in the short term. But as computers become cheaper and more popular, this will be the way things will go." [I and Andy Lischett discussed this and we think home computers will not become that wide spread. They will be used though by the people who want fast games, and the traditional zine should not disappear.]

Mark Berch--"In my opinion the most important trend for the hobby, and gratifying to me is the proliferation of Dipi Master tee-shirts. It's an excellent idea and really, it's possibly more of a portent of the future than something like computers. The postal hobby has not done significant organizing to recruit new members. It is usually done in a passive sort of way, people buy the set and find the flyer, or try to suck their friends in. We have been considering placing ads in wargaming magazines to attract new members." [A good idea. Another way: the Chicago locals have been toying with the idea of putting notices up on bulletin boards on college campuses and hobby shops.]

Kathy Byrne--"The orphan service right now has gotten hit really hard. We have a lot of orphans coming in- we need help. We need publishers who are willing to take the games and finish them." [Kathy Byrne recently resigned from the orphan service because she tired of complaining directed at her. She felt she was doing a good job and such complaints were uncalled for, deciding she didn't have to take it anymore. I quite agree.]

Rod Walker--"What is needed is hobby stability in the sense of players being able to play without the worry of what will happen to their game if their GM falls out from under them. That is why an orphan service is needed to place orphaned games efficiently and quickly. But as long as we can provide these services, magazines with longer staying power, better recruiting methods and the computer business, we're going to see a growth of the number of people. It is my belief there are no more than 1000 people in the U.S. and Canadian hobby. The possibility exists that we might get up into the 2000-3000 range fairly rapidly if a lot of new people are brought in and they don't go out the other end of the pipeline because they got disgusted the GM died on them and the game's run in a poor fashion- so on and so forth." [Konrad Baumeister and I discussed this at Rauterberg's house and we agreed the hobby is saturated at the present moment and the hobby will never see Walker's prediction of massive growth. After Bruce described the hobby as a river you can see why.]

Other highlights of the Question/Answering period:

- A) When Rod Walker began speaking, someone muttered, "Who's this?" Such an insult to the Hobby King Pin.
- B) Rod said he bought the rights to the Leeder Poll to attract more readers to Diplomacy World. He also heaped lots of blame on John Leeder to make himself look good. At any rate, Rod came off as a very rational/smooth politician.
- C) Mark Berch said people who crab about him doing a large part of the writing for DW should do some writing themselves, and I agree. Rod said he wouldn't take "crap", but well written dip-related material was welcome, whether it be humor, fiction, etc. And Rod closed on that note, demanding, "Submit to me!" (Halls of laughter on this one.)
- D) Robert Sacks is a fun guy, he turns any organized meeting into a free-for-all with his endless ravings and paranoia. My favorite Sacks interruption was when he said when computer/electronic mail comes into big use in the hobby there would be many crooked sneaks prowling around the GM's computer banks to fabricate orders, steal mail, etc. He said, "Computer security! How is it done?" Computer wizards/pushers Doug Beyerlein and Richard Kovalcik heartily disagreed with Sacks, saying computers were fallsafe. I say, well Robert, the GM merely hires a robot to watch over the computer.
- E) Doug Beyerlein stated a publisher should not shell out any of his own money for his zine, his time spent on the product is already invaluable. Bob Arnett countered, saying, "But it's a hobby Doug. You spend your own money on a hobby." Doug said if the hobby was treated more like a business financially, we would all be better off, with less folds, etc. I quite agree with Doug. And John Daly suggested to me the publishers get together and form OPEC.
- F) Glen Taylor complained that he was made out to be a big bad guy because of his wife playing in a game he's GMing. He said the game can still be run in an honest fashion. Kathy Byrne said she'd be real tempted to look at the GM's received moves, if she was in Glen's wife's shoes. The best way to handle it, she said, would be not to allow such a practice at all. I agree. Glen agreed and said he'd be a good boy. All is well.

Back to the rest of the convention

8. After studying his Le Front photograph, I was certain that it was Bernie Oaklyn in the doorway. Yes, that was his handwritten name on the tag. I introduced myself, towering over him- then embarrassed by his extremely short height I fell to my knees in homage. After all, I am his Chief Lieutenant, Retired. We didn't talk much to each other, our relationship has become clouded from recent disagreements. I admit, it was awkward at first. But Bernie stayed close to Dan and I, we three knew that despite all the problems and counterproblems, there was an unbreakable bond between us. Bernie asked where to sign up to play and I showed him the way.

"Eric, they won't stop me from playing, my friend of the Maryland State Police says they can't, or they'll close this show down."

"They won't bother you Bernie, just sign up." He did. Bernie then shook hands with Rod Walker and Rod said very friendly like,

"Hi, Buddy." One thing about Rod, he's cool. And I renewed my oath to the King Pin that day by kissing his ring. Meanwhile, Mike Barno made some rude remark to Bernie and Bernie replied, "Watch it. I got my karate shows on. And me and my boys have been practicing." Mike frowned and promptly fell back. Bernie was telling this to assorted persons throughout the tournament. And as usual, Bernie was wiped out in both his games. Another light moment about this controversial figure occurred when I spied a table with assorted sample dip zines on them. The sign above read "Fake Diplomacy Zines" with an arrow pointing to a pile of zines on the left, "Real Diplomacy Zines" with an arrow pointing to the right, and in the very center, Bernie had written on the sign with a crooked arrow pointing downward in his blue pen, "Bernie Oaklyn's Zines".

9. The first game of the tournament had Chuck Kaplan and myself in it. Christ! The only two people from Chicago out of

160 players and we end up on the same board. Chuck and I know each other very well. Too well. Chuck asked me during the game, "Eric, why is it we can never ally? Is it because elves don't like Jews?" The game was a bitter struggle for all its participants, it lasted well into the night. I was Germany and this kid who smiled his bracey smile (a Great Necker I think, forgive me, I don't remember his name) was England. I pin-prick stabbed him several times. Agreements constantly shifted between E/F/G while Italy (Randy Ellis, who accompanied me from Chicago) toadied to Chuck's growing Turkey. We took a break for dinner, the three of us going over to Burgher King in Chuck's "shitbox" (as Chuck calls it) banged up white Datsun. I don't know how Chuck made it to Baltimore alive in that car, and Chuck likes to play 'chicken' with other drivers.

Upon our return to the board, I set up my English ally for another stab (a big one this time, 1 center) and showed my moves to Stafford, who wandered in after his game concluded. "Not again," he commented, then looked at the English player (who was grinning again), groaned a tired groan and added under his breath, "dimwit, Ozog's gonna rip your face off." The game ended in a five-way draw.

10. Towards the end of Round One I was approached by Honest Al Pearson and John Caruso, wanting to know if I would like to be elected on the DipCon committee that will oversee the 1983 DipCon. Being my normal enthusiastic self, I replied, "Me? I don't want the job."

"You see, I asked Coughlan and he won't run," said John.

"But he shouldn't run anyway, I don't trust men who smile too much," said Al, "and we want someone who's not part of the two hobby factions,"

"We need you, Eric," said John.

Well, as long as I was needed, I didn't attend the election that night, it was time for some rest. I heard that Gary nominated me, Kathy campaigned for me and Bruce voted for me. All that trouble to install a puppet in office, I was honored. And I heard I won! By one vote. I also heard Sacks was a nuisance. Picture him sticking a tree-branch in the spokes of a passing cyclist and you'll see what I mean. The immortal words written on a chalkboard by Scott Marley sum up Robert Sacks perfectly:

There is a young fellow named Sacks, Whose volume is turned up to "MAX"

He's easily found, From the people around

Who are stuffing their ears up with wax

He's head of the brand-new Committee, Which governs the other committee

To choose the committee, That rules the committee

Which picks the committee-committee

11. In the second round on Sunday I was France and allied with the immortal Kathy Byrne's Italy. And there were no stabs.

Let me tell you, after ill-fated GenCon and being hounded by this woman for a year, it was as if we were old friends. All was forgiven. Our truce turned into a lasting friendship. All hurts were healed...almost, yes, they are, I see no trace of scar tissue remaining. It was a pleasure working with Kathy in this game. Our playing philosophy is very similar, we discovered. The other celebrities in this game were Tom Mainardi (Germany) and Frauke Petersen (Russia). I grandly set up England by going neutral in 1901, getting three builds due to German/English mismanagement, with a fleet sitting on Spa/sc to make it look anti-Italian. Everything went on England in '02, boy was he furious! I stabbed Mainardi too early but we made up. When I stabbed him the second time he was extremely upset and threw all his centers to me, suiciding out against poor Frauke. I hear that is Tom's style, so all you postal players out there who are in games with Tom "Fast Fingers" Mainardi, all you must do is wound him enough in a double-cross, and he'll give you the game on a silver platter. I ended this game with 14 centers and Kathy had 9, I was given the win by concession vote.

12. Before the awards ceremony, I, Randy, Ken Halpern and another GreatNecker went game shopping at the exhibits display.

All the Great Neckers are a good group of kids, Kane, Lorber, Halpern and the rest. Even if they did get lost on the way to Kathy's house. Ken told me, "Eric, I can't believe it. Here I am, walking with you looking for games after all those nasty things I said..." Groping for words to give him my blessing, I replied,

"That's OK, that's all over, long gone, don't worry about it."

After all, we may all denounce each other one time or another in the mail, but all Diplomacy hobbyists are one big happy family when they are together in person. Look at Boardman and Walker, both in the same room without being mean to each other! Amazing. This hobby is heading for a lengthy golden afternoon.

Once at the awards ceremony, saw Konrad Baumeister received a plaque and a beautifully carved leather Diplomacy map (made by Dan Wilson) for his 1st place finish. Konrad is a good diplomatic thief who usually runs away with the store. For myself, I finished a respectable 4th and collected my plaque, saying, "I thank you and my toadies thank you." The other top 10 players were Russell Blau, 2nd place, 3rd- Dave Lowerman, 5th- John Kador, 6th- Jack Brawner, 7th- Ed Wrobel, 8th Doug Beyerlein, 9th- John Caruso and 10th- Bruce Linsey.

Soon it was time to say goodbye. It was nice seeing you again, Dick, Julie, Konrad, Mark L, Mark B and Brux. It was simply a pleasure meeting you Woody, Rod, Bernie, Greg Fritz and Fred Davis and all the countless others. Fred- I tried the crabcakes and they are fantastic! They appeal to the dormant Mensan in me.

13. Back at the apartment with Chuck, Randy, Stuart, Dan, Jack Brawner, Mike Barno and myself. The other six somehow conned me into a gunboat game, that sure took some negotiation! The game was generally a free-for-all, with my Italy attacking somebody's France with Barno sending German armies deep down into the boot, while Jack was snickering all the while. This game was a nightmare not worth remembering. Mike thought it was and considered gathering up all the orders strewn about and print them in Shogun's Sword, but immediately changed his mind when he discovered some orders stuck together with Pepsi from Domino's Pizza.

14. The drive back was smooth, no problems. In Pennsylvania I asked Dan if I was "flirting with the barrier" (coming too close to the center divider) and he looked nervous but said I was doing fine. This stretch of I-70/76 is where the blood pressure rises because the eastbound and westbound lanes are crowded together with no median strip. It can wear on the nerves after a while, with the heavy traffic compounding it, especially if one is a leftist and drives in the 'fast lane' like I do.

We ate lunch at the Johnson's on the westbound side, my clam chowder was sweet this time, I bet the chef put sugar in it, yeach! Randy was in a punchy mood, saying and doing silly things all the way home, I suppose he had an overdose of his caffeine candy. Stuart didn't complain and stayed quiet most of the time, except at two instances when he said my car "sucked" and then a day or two later said it was "comfortable". My car is a 1978 Mercury Cougar, we had a short celebration when it turned 50,000. It has a 351 V8 engine and it was getting an average of 18.5 MPG. The four of us split only \$118 in gas on a 1556 mile trip. Not bad at all.

After games of The Sleaze's Risk variant and Kingmaker on Tuesday morning in Columbus, we said our goodbyes to Dan and hit the road for Chicago. The following day (after a long, long sleep), after fighting downtown Chicago rush-hour traffic and deciding four blocks from the train station we'd better make a run for it, I got Randy and Stuart on their train to Kansas City in the nick of time, with only five minutes to spare. From the beginning of this Con until the very end, there wasn't a dull moment.



Daniel Stafford, 'The Sleaze'

DAN STAFFORD COMMENTS ON DIPCON

Uncle Eric,

Just writing to tie up a few loose ends.

Generally when I take long trips and spend big bucks I usually end up regretting the whole thing. But, in spite of all those road miles, the loss of sleep, the lack of pillows, the monotone of Ellis' voice, and assorted other irritations, one full week later-still, I feel that the trip to Origins was worth it. Well worth it, in fact. What a wonderful escape from the boredom of life here in Columbus it was! And to meet all those faces that were just names before! Truly a treat.

And to think that I thought the hobby was run by the Jews. Now they tell me it's the homosexuals! Who was it that started those "terrible" rumors about Walker and Coughlan! I can't really remember. I am neither Jew nor homosexual, but feel that the hobby is in pretty good hands.

We'll do it again someday.

--The Sleaze

[Funny, I cannot remember either who started those rumors. No matter, it's not important. At least I'm glad you stated to the world which side you're on, I'm sure a lot of people were confused.

And despite you being a pain in the ass when I played my Fairport Convention tape, and complaining about rules ambiguities in Roaring 20's and Borderlands, and all the soul-searching that was done on the hill late at night- it was worth it. And your spaghetti is plain tasting, my mom says add some garlic and tomato paste!]

TO THE EDITOR- THE NEWEST PILLAR OF THE HOBBY. SUBJECT- ORIGINS/DIPCON --by Chuck Kaplan

After a long drive from Chicago, I arrived in Baltimore on Thursday evening. A day and night of non-diplomacy gaming followed. As one diplomacy player who also enjoys other historical games, I am in total agreement with keeping DipCon tied to Origins.

On Saturday morning, I found myself in a meeting with many of the big names of the hobby. Most of the discussion centered on Diplomacy World and Rod Walker. That was unfortunate for it tended to confirm Walker's undisguised belief that the hobby centers on Diplomacy World and Rod Walker. It does not. I enjoy DW, but no one publication can represent the entire hobby. Therefore, I cannot accept the argument that the Leeder Poll is properly the property of DW to increase DW's circulation. The Leeder Poll supposedly represents the entire hobby, and should benefit the hobby equitably.

Another reason for my coming to DipCon was to grasp the workings of the Eastern cliques. I came away with the understanding that the reason Kathy Byrne dominates certain activities is that she is just more mature and socialable than the average hobby member. Now I cannot use any more of my Jane Byrne's daughter lines. Mr. Pillar of the Establishment- just don't become an unquestioning servile toady of this woman. The Chicago area franchise will not become subservient to any other area.

On the games themselves I will say little, bowing to the request of the most northerly M. Lew, who does not believe discussions of FTF games are entertaining. Since M. Lew's only FTF experiences have been solitaire, I can appreciate this viewpoint.

Before the first game, all players indicated their hometown. Good, I thought. I will meet people from all over. Wrong! Who is in my first game but the only other Chicago area participant, our Editor, Mr. PotH! Furthermore, Randy Ellis who rode with our beloved Editor is also in the game. The complexities of tournament organization escape me, but I would like an explanation for these matchings.

One final note on the games. The scoring system was ridiculous. Finishing second meant nothing. The only points awarded would be to winners and participants in draws. This scoring system, predictably, produced lots of multi-player draws, the most boring type of play, and unshifting alliances.

Mark Berch explained that his system is designed to award "true" victory, and not reward someone who took advantage of another's desire to be a strong second. Hogwash. If one can persuade another to settle for second, more power to this persuasive player. In any case, the system does not lead to a large proportion of interesting games and should be discarded in favor of a more balanced scoring system.

[The original intent of Berch placing emphasis on winning is sound, but I know why you are upset with it. Since I now have changed from Hanson's "Outcast of the hobby" to Kaplan's "Pillar of the hobby" in three easy lessons, I will push my own scoring system. Dan Stafford came up with a 'modified Berch system' which takes into account the amount of centers a player has at the end. Soon I will propose it to the DipCon committee, maybe it will pass. John Caruso had ideas for a scoring system also, I haven't looked at them in any great detail yet. Don't worry John, I will.]

Chuck, I realize and acknowledge your concern about the Chicago area losing its identity to the ECC. It won't happen! Kathy and I just ended the Cold War and tied our apron strings somewhat together, but that won't mean toadydom! I am too large a toad with many toadies under me as it is to be absorbed into ECC. I admit, Kathy's a big toad, but not omnipotent.]

From DAVE CARTER, 118 Horsham Ave, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada M2N 1Z9 (SLEEPLESS KNIGHTS)

Eric, Your question at Origins about Dip sub fees is a valid one but I have to go along with whoever it was who said that publishing a zine is a hobby and you usually do spend money on a hobby. Most GM/publishers play in a lot of games too so whatever they gain by increasing their prices would be lost in paying out to other publishers. Besides, any increase in price would have to be across-the-hobby because if only a few did it then their subbers would simply go elsewhere.

[If that happened in my case, so be it. My case was the rates for the Diplomacy hobby were far too low in relation to the rest of the PBM wargaming/fantasy hobby, and that people are taking it for granted! I do not think a publisher should sustain a loss in his zine, I said nothing about that very same publisher paying a second publisher for a gamestart, that is where the hobby-part of it being a hobby comes in. The part about zine financial operations should be treated as running a business, without sustaining loss.]

From TOM SWIDER, c/o Carlo Enterprises, 1183 Robinson Hill Road, Endwell, NY 13760 (EXPLETIVE DELETED)

To John Boardman Fanclub Hi Eric!

Although I didn't get a chance to talk to you much, it is always fun to meet another face in Dipdom. You ARE an elf! Stafford, on the other hand, was not the same guy I thought he'd turn out to be. Per chance, on round one of the Dip tourney, I got to meet yet another one of your toadies, Stuart Lancaster, who turned out to be a pretty good player. I really

shouldn't talk too much about the Dip tourney; round one, I lost out on a definite two way draw in fall 1901 due to a paranoid John Daly (I was Germany trying Operation Sea Lion), and round two sees Herr Spider slaughtered by the Eric Verheiden Californian clique; you know, the "Golden Oldies"? Argh!!!!

Not having anything else to do this Saturday night (no games), I dug out a bunch of old xyns, and was looking at the few DBM's I have, and not a single one is the same. How do you come up with a new theme each time, drugs? Probably. So far, I like the Eastfold Vale ish the best. I remember seeing your "Dream" piece when it first appeared in Tetracuspid many moons ago, and really enjoyed it; it was worth reprinting, in retrospect. How are you coming on the ones you said you were working on? It must be hard writing SF/Fantasy; about the only thing I can write is humor (Grapes of Wrath in particular), and game reviews.

By the way, what has the Toady Custodian been doing? The hobby has yet to hear a report, and frankly, will evict you of your custodianship should you fail to give a report soon!

Role-playing is seeming to fade away. Sadly, there aren't enough people around here that I enjoy playing FRP's with. A majority of the people that frp in Endwell/Binghampton are glassy-eyed college students from Long Island attending SUNY Binghampton (I made the mistake of enrolling there, too). My usual game fiends are too much into hex games (Squad Leader in particular) [YUK] and diplomatic games (at least they like those games), but they aren't into frp'ing. Frp'ing; an interesting term, sounds like 'popping' or 'tripping'....."Jane frp'ed with Jack"? [Ha!]

Well, gotta watch some TV now; Saturday Night's on, and I haven't seen it in ages. Mediocrely, Tom.

P.S. Have you found a date yet? Ha ha ha!

[I'm working on it, believe me! It seems Bill Becker's ladies form did not fill the bill, even though John Caruso xeroxed about a couple hundred of them and passed them out at DipCon. I think John forgot the itty bitty fact that most of the people in the room at the time were men. Oh well, a minor technicality...]

I occasionally go through back issues of zines, as well as DBM and wonder how I did it, keeping them different. My favorite issues were #33, 37 and 40. That #40 was a good one, wasn't it? Writing SF/Fantasy is difficult, it makes me wonder how authors like Herbert, Zelazny and Tolkien did it, with their hundreds of pages. They're the ones on drugs, didn't old man Tolkien smoke a pipe? At any rate, the short story in this issue was a spur-of-the moment deal, there's other stuff in the planning stages, I hope to have another one done in November.

I think FRP is a drag, the D&D end of it anyway. Some friends of mine were frp'ing and I got so bored I ran away to climb a tree when BIG wolves attacked the party, just to be an asshole.

And don't be rash and evict me from my toady custodianship, see the bottom of the page and you'll be satisfied.]

From MARK LUEDI, Route 1 Box 351-D, Honor, MI 49640

Dear Eric, Listen, I really enjoyed DBM 43. This is my second attempt at a letter too; the first one started out pretty dumb and went from there. Who cares if Russ lies in his game reports? This way I come off as being vicious and ruthless like a good right-winger. I do like Russ' writing style. He almost comes to life off the paper.

[Not anymore, Russ just told me over the phone he just ran out of steam. Oh! Don't forget Rusnakon VI on the 25th!]

There is one thing I'd like for you to notice Eric. That second pix, the after pix; I'm smiling; can you see that? I am smiling! Do you know why I'm smiling? Cause I know I'm going to get you back for what you did to me. Russ was kind enough while you were in Baltimore incidentally- to show me Scott Hanson's newest game. That got the ol' wheels spinning. Can you imagine what a sister of mine would be like? Think about it. You have ten seconds. And do watch the mailbox; we'd not want to offend any of your family unnecessarily. [You'd better not...you wouldn't dare!]

Here's an existential question. Am I an Ozog toady? Are you an Ozog toady? Are we all Ozog toadies? I really don't mind if I am an Ozog toady. Am I an Ozog toady? Afterall, Eric is a careful toadmaster (or is the proper term toadymaster?) Am I also a Rusnak toady? Is Rusnak an Ozog toady? Is Ozog a Rusnak toady? And what about Andy? Whose toady is he? (You're fairly privy as far as Andy is concerned; what in the world does he do for a living?) And, aren't there any frogs? I saw part of that movie last weekend when I was in Indy: ""FROGS"". I thought of you, because I can't tell frogs from toads. (Really I can, but I don't bother, why bother, why care, I really don't care, I gain no personal gratification in telling frogs from toads. Maybe you don't feel that way; perhaps, you could express your feelings concerning frogs and toads.) But, in this movie, they're dropping toads by the bucketful, like they're supposed to be supertoads or something, kind of like birdshit. And all these toads do are fall in heaps- some on their backs, etc; no special effects; no toads sucking on people's faces, or other neat things.

They mostly were cool. "Heey maaan, we cool. We don make trubl maaan, we cool." They just hung around looking intimidating. Once in a while they'd herd or flock or whatever toads do (they "con"). Well, the guy they were after in this movie was a real right-winger (Raymund Burr?) and they (with the help of snakes and birds) kill off all his people before getting him. (This movie is really poor. Fortunately, I was in the process of passing out at the time.) Anyways, here's Ozog with all his little toadies. And he's going to send his little army of toadies against all the right-wing bastions in the hobby, see? He's going to send all his loyal killer toadies and assault Rusnak, Highfield, Michalski, and any others that I don't know about, but he's got his list, sort of like when Joe McCarthey kept his lists. And I have to sit here and ponder whether or not I'm an Ozog toady? Hell no!! I was once an anarchist. I was once an anarchist. Has a nice ring to it. Little does he know! I can almost see myself blowing away all the closed doors, and all the closed minds behind them. Be a leftie and change the world. Just try and force the world to change. You'll be running home to mother. Sometime ago I realized a political "revolution" in this country wouldn't be worth it. It wouldn't accomplish anything; worthwhile, anyways. The right-wingers and left wingers can scream and rant all they want. Anybody who's got a closed mind or is apathetic won't hear 'em anyways. That's 60 or 80 percent of everybody in the U. S. of A. Or rather, most everybody does it 60 to 80 percent of the time. "I don't care." "I don't want to listen." People say it to themselves. No, this country doesn't need a political "revolution", it needs a social one. How? I dunno. Maybe I don't care enough, or don't know of anyone who'll listen. But in the meantime, the right wingers and the left wingers fight it out. (And after all, they're the ones with the closed minds.) We are about to attempt a crash landing. Heh-heh.

Once again, DBM 43 was a real achievement. Don't forget to count your toadies before you go to sleep.

[I like that! The Ozog Toady Army blowing away Rusnak, Highfield and Michalski! And you have inspired me to announce.....]

## The 1982 DBM Toad and Toady Poll—Vote!!!

Assign points in two categories as follows:

Deadline for all votes/articles

TOAD OF THE YEAR: 1st Choice- 3 points. 2nd Choice- 2 points. 3rd Choice- 1 point

Friday November 5th 1982

TOADY OF THE YEAR: 1st Choice- 3 points. 2nd Choice- 2 points. 3rd Choice- 1 point

There is one winner per category, the person with the most amount of points wins!

Also, if you feel creative, write an article on why your favorite toad and/or toady should become Toad and/or Toady of the Year. Sub credit will be given for these submissions. Prize for each winning category: 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO DBM!