

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

Issue #33  
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Personalities

Mark L. Berch  
492 Naylor Place  
Alexandria, Va 22304

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As you can see, this is a theme issue on personalities, covering the topic in general, and specific personalities. The centerpiece of the issue is a long essay by Larry Peery. While even in its abridged form it is somewhat wordy and occasionally unduly melodramatic, it builds well to an interesting, almost lyrical, conclusion.

And I've got a real treat coming up for you next issue. This will be a double, possibly (tho I hope not) a triple, issue. I have been working on this for about two years. It will be my biggest --- and most important --- hobby project. Nothing resembling this has ever appeared in the hobby. Sorry, no hints.....

Time for some DipCon information, which will be held within MichiCon XI. For info on the Convention itself, write P.O. Box 787 Troy, Mich 48099. In charge of all Diplomacy matters is Harley Jordan, 46065 Frederick St Northville Mich 48167. The site is Oakland U., a 40 mile limo ride from Detroit Airport. The tournament will be two rounds, both of which are on Sat, at 10 and 3 PM, with play starting about ½ hour afterwards, with games running till 1909. This is a very demanding scheduld, as there will be little time between the two rounds. There will also be a Diplomacy Seminar on Sunday morning at 10 AM. I will be in charge of this. There will be a strategy and tactics talk, given by me. Next, a talk on psychology/negotiations, which we may be able to get Alan Calhamer, the game's inventor, to give. Finally, there will be a panel discussion with audience questions, which may be MCed by Lee Kendter, Sr. In addition, there will be a variety of meetings on Saturday night.

Now, perhaps you are thinking that a seminar should go before the tournament, and that two rounds with so little separation can be very exhausting, and June 6-8 is awfully early and who will go to meetings so late Sat night, etc, etc. Well, I tried to get Harley to rearrange the scheduld, but I got absolutely nowhere. I will of course be there, and I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible there.

Rod Walker will be in charge of the tournament overall. Rod set up a committee to select a scoring system to be used, which is a very sensible approach. I modified my system and submitted it. And I'll probably be playing in the tourney. I usggest that you bring high-energy snack food (for me that means raisins) and a sandwich to tide you over. Anyhow, them are the plans.

Dick Martin 26 Orchard Way North, Rockville, MD 20854 has banded together with John Daly and Jack Brawner to form the U.S. Orphan Service, for puting together orphaned games and those GMs who would like pick some up. I am impressed by their initial efforts and I urge those of you who have such games that you would like to have rehoused to contact Dick Martin, including all details in your letter to him.

By contrast, I urge that you avoid the Orphan Games Director, Ray Heuer, for help in rehousing orphaned non-variant games. So far as I am aware, he did little or (turn to page 11, right under the ##### line)

((We start with Diman #1, with the editor, Brad Hessel, telling about his start in the hobby, and what appealed most to him 6-29-75))

...By 1967, when I bought my first Diplomacy set (\$7.50 in those days) there were already some twenty 'zines publishing more or less regularly. Three years later, when I got into my first (and last) game, it was in a new magazine, with the unlikely title of The Limbourg Gazette and Bimonthly Almanac (published, of course, from the quaint little country of the same name)....and at the time it was one of perhaps 40 'zines published in the continental US and Canada. These ran a rather impressive gamut, reflecting the rather impressive cross section of people who were drawn to publish or participate in Dippy zines..... there were Tolkien buffs enterprisingly rearranging the board so that they could play "Mordor versus the World"..... there were politically left wing publishers demanding --- alongside the demands for the S05 moves --- a quick end to the VietNam war.....then there were politically right wing publishers demanding an even quicker end to Vietnam (or was it only Vietnam's industrial age they wanted to end---I can't recall precisely).....It was about that time that I decided to someday publish a Diplomacy 'zine myself...actually, having had a zine I was in fold under me, and being a reasonably responsible person, I determined only to ensue on this venture when I had both the time and money to do it right. And coincidentally, this month I both graduated from college and got tired of waiting till I had the money. And here we are. But I digress.

One of the most endearing to me features of Postal Diplomacy was really not foreseeable in 1963, and actually has relatively little to do with the game per se. This is an institution known as the "press release". Basically, it developed that since the Gamesmaster was printing up and distributing the moves anyway, and since the post office allows about 10-12 pages for one ounce, that there was a lot of extra room to play around with, and so players began submitting propoganda to accompany their moves. ((Brad then goes on to describe the early press releases, giving numerous examples. This then sparked the following response from Walt Buchanan in #3, 8-10-75. The triple parens are Brad's comments))

It is a pleasure to welcome you back into the hobby and I found your narrations in Diman #1 fascinating. Evidently, I entered the hobby right after you got out. I apparently was the first to respond to the original GRI flyer way back in October of 1970...In fact, the first game I got into was as a replacement for France in 1969R(((the first game started in the Limbourg Gazette and Bi-Monthly Almanac)))and so it was really interesting to me to note that you had played in 1969BD (((the 6th and last game started in the Gazette, which folded shortly thereafter))). That game finally did finish, by the way, thru the efforts of Lee Childs (((Really?! That's news to me. When the Gazette folded in August of 1969, Larry Fong had generously taken in its orphaned games in his Berzerkeley Park (also with the help of Childs), but when he was forced to cease publication eight months later, I lost all contact with it, and have assumed all these years that 1969BD went into limbo...))) I checked the Archives and see that you dropped as Germany in S06, but I couldn't ascertain the exact date except to tell that it must have been shortly before I entered the hobby. So we compliment each other in a way.

I, like you, am nostalgic about the "good old days" of postal diplomacy, except unlike you, I had to experience most of it vacariously thru the Archives ((Boy --that sure sounds familiar---it describes me too!)). I count their end when Rod Walker first flopped out of the hobby, along with McCallum in the summer of 1972. Things have never been the same again altho Erehwon ((Walker's zine)) is back and getting better all the time. ((It folded after #99)).

.....Yes, postal diplomacy has grown quite a bit in the past five years, the main reason of course being the GRI flyer. From a population of around 250 in late 1970 when I entered, I figure there are about 1500 members of the worldwide hobby today. Out of that total, almost 1000 are in North America with most of the rest being in Britian.

Reinsel is still going by Carbon copy altho he has almost completely devorced



in my class, so when I became acquainted with Diplomacy while rowing at Yale during one summer, I thought I might work it into my class. However, I have only used it in the last two years with students who were interested. Just recently, I learned that you could play Diplomacy by mail, so I thought I would get involved. This year I hope to start postal Diplomacy among my past students. ((Ed began publishing Narsil about 1 year later, with nearly all his readers having N.Y. addresses, at least at first. The zine was an archivist nightmare, as he seldom put either issue numbers or dates. For most of its existence, it was carbon copy, and folded sometime in 1977, I believe))

Jon Southard: Age 14. I have been playing wargames since 1969 ((Age 10!)) I began playing Diplomacy in 1970. I am a relative beginner at postal Diplomacy, but like it better than face to face. Am a history bug, as well as being an S&T subscriber. Hobbies: Diplomacy, wargaming, and white water canoeing.

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((From The Pocket Armenian #26, Jan 10, 1976, by the Editor, Scott Rosenberg))

ROBERT SACKS, BUREAUCRAT

or, Why do You Think They're Called "Robert's Rules of Order"?

My first impression of Robert Sacks was a good one. He came to my notice when he wrote a letter to the (then) infant CARN DUM ((A NYC variant zine edited by Ray Heuer)) and complained about something Evan Jones had said in his Origins column. Well, what could be wrong with someone who disagrees with Evan?

Unfortunately, people who have followed Sacks' exploits for--I think--almost two years now have seen that there can indeed be something wrong.

Before I elaborate, let me assure you that this is an article to highlight some of Sacks' problems with things. There are obviously many things right with him -- to wit, he is a hard worker, he certainly does care about variants, and he usually has good ideas to contribute.

But Robert's good points are too often beclouded by his faults, chief among which is an amazing willingness and capacity to emit reams of material -- an attribute that astute observers will immediately recognize also belongs to Lew Pulsipher. But where Pulsipher's stuff is readable, tho usually very dull, Sacks' is eminently unreadable. Aside from his use of half-page paragraphs and twenty line sentences full of titles, acronyms, and useless accoutrements, Sacks seems to have an incredible tendency to shy away from discussing issues and ideas and instead discuss paper institutions, political fictions, protocol and procedure.

Some of this stems from Sacks' admitted infatuation with "imperial" protocol. "The Imperial Diplomacy Association" was the culmination of this trait, and amazingly pointless group so weighted down with procedure and title that whatever functional apparatus it contained was rendered useless. It wasn't even funny.

But we should look further. You may remember that Sacks complained, during the IDA/DVC transition period, that he had tried to run IDAVC as an IDA committee but that the rules just didn't work. Sacks is the only committee chairman to complain about such a thing. He is also one of the first to chime in that some particular detail of IDA Council procedure was not according to Robert's Rules, or whatever.

Robert doesn't understand that an organization has to have a proper mix of institutions and rules, and people. While others have gone in the opposite direction, building an organization too much around people, or one person, Sacks goes the other way --- so fouling his groups's human elements that, usually, little gets done. No small organization, composed of 150-200 people, with an executive group of 13, can operate under such a strict, unbendable set of rules. Even the U.S. Constitution, which governs 230 million people, and has executive groups of 100 and 450 people, has been subject to very wide interpretation. Unprecedented situations come up, and people, not rules and institutions, must, and only they can, properly react to them.

I realize I've become slightly emmeshed in political philosophy here. My main' intent is to persuade Roberts Sacks to alter his political methodology somewhat to make room for people. I don't intend this as any sort of "attack", and people who call this "feuding" are obviously just looking for ammunition. I think Robert Sacks' integrity and honesty are among the most impeccable in the hobby.

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((You might think that such a psychologically oriented game as Diplomacy would not attract mathematicians, right? Wrong. Consider this musing from Charles Wells, in Serendip #49, 8 Sept 1970. Triple parens are from the editor, Charles Mc Callum))

...I don't know of any other postal Diplomacy players who are professional mathematicians. (((Beshara says that Richard Miller is working on his PhD in math; and John Konig tells me that he plans to take a PhD in math, not in Economics as I had supposed.))) I know a remarkable number of professional mathematicians who play, or who have played, in-person diplomacy. It is a popular game at MIT, and at the University of Chicago, and Cambridge University, among others. There is a well known mathematician at King's College, Cambridge, who is so good that when they play, which is often, he is usually ganged up on right away. At least one mathematician that I know played Diplomacy with Alan Calhmer back in the early days at MIT when he developed it. At least the mathematician was at MIT, all I know about Calhmer what that he was in the vicinity.(((At Harvard, I think, sitting at the feet of Professor Fay, whose Ideas of the Origins of the Great War ((WW I)) the game is meant to exemplify. The game with the personal element and all that.))) It takes a special kind of personality to play postal, as opposed to in-person, Diplomacy, and I doubt that as many as 5% of the people who enjoy in-person diplomacy have that personality. Of the 8 or 10 people in or connected with the math department at CWRU wgo play or have played in-person Diplomacy, I have never been able to talk any of them into playing postally, except Steve Williard who dropped out of his only game after a few moves. However, I do think that the fact that I am the only professional mathematician active in postal Diplomacy is to some extent a coincidence. ((And now we have Bruce Linsey!)).

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((Coming up next is Larry Peery's classic essay on personalities, from Xenogogic V, #3.0, 18 Nov 1972. I had to do some editing, mostly to remove some of Larry's musings about his future plans, which generally did not materialize))

MEN AND SUPERMEN: TYPES OF DIPLOMACY PEOPLE

First Diplomacy

When I first became acquainted with postal Diplomacy in 1966, it was a small enough group that---within a year or two---I knew almost everyone of any importance in the hobby; and, equally important, they now knew me. We were often at odds with one another but we were a group and the common attitude was, "All for one and one for all." Now we have expanded so fast and so much that even someone as active as I knows only a minority of those poeple active in Diplomacy and, although more people know of me, they do not know me personally.

The Change

As the last issue discussed, we are currently passing through one of (in my opinion, "THE") most dramatic and traumatic phases of developement in the history of postal diplomacy. On one hand, we have literally hundreds of new players, new magazines appearing almost weekly, and new organizations and groups striving to bring order out of chaos. On the other hand, we have old players dropping out at alarming rates, old magazines are folding fast, and old institutions, like the Boardman Numbers in sad disarray. The changes are coming so fast that no one person can record, let alone evaluate, them.

Personal Reflections and Expectations

Personally, recent events have, I think, proven to me that I cannot at a cost, both emotional and physical, I will accept, deliver the type of postal Diplomacy game now being expected, nay, demanded, by players new to the hobby. In previous times, if

a zine folded, that was the breaks of the game; it certainly was no shock, it happened too often. If a deadline passed and months followed before a zine issue appeared, no one worried unduly. ((This is not the impression that I have gotten from reading zines of the late sixties)). If a game had three players from the same city, no one worried; they probably didn't like each other anyway. If all of postal diplomacy wanted to take off time and debate the merits of California vs Florida oranges ((there was such a debate)) or Canadian blackberries for months at a time; we did it, and had a good time in the process. Even in our most serious moments we maintained a comraderie that does not exist today. Diplomacy was, in those days, a hobby, not a way of life.

Today it is different. Players enter into games with the attitude that because they paid a \$5 gamefee they own a piece of the gamesmaster's body and soul. Perfection isn't an idealized goal, it is the "be all and end all" of postal Diplomacy. Players don't care about each other as human beings; only as stepping stones to higher ratings. In short, Diplomacy is no longer a hobby, a source of enjoyment and fun; it is a constant demand upon the individual participant for perfection; as a player, as a gamesmaster, as a publisher. The Diplomacy player as a man has become the Diplomacy player seeking to become superman. But, in the process, Diplomacy is no longer fun, just work, a profession for amateurs.

Diplomacy is no longer a group of people out to have a good time; it is a group of fanatics and lunatics out to prove to one and all that only they can be numero uno. "The greatest thing in the world is to find out that you're good at something...that you can do one thing better than any other man. It's worth anything it costs." I ask you, is it worth the cost?

((Larry then says he will wind down his gamesmastering)) However, deadlines be damned. We live in remarkable times in a remarkable world.

God created man; then he created Superman; then he created Diplomacy players. Lets start there. Note , I am avoiding the theological argument involved in why I put "god" as "he" in the lower case. Thats another article.

#### Ratings Systems

((He begins with some generalized criticisms of them, and continues))...Besides, we all know, realistically, that most Diplomacy players are, or ought to be, grouped in classes, not put in a hierarchical pecking order like a bunch of chickens...When you start using a class system (as some system do but they tend to base their classes on the above types of systems which likely only adds to the confusion) where you group players in groups according to their similar characteristics you are doing better.

If, as I believe, group classings are the only valid ratings/groupings of Diplomacy players, we ought to be able to class all Diplomacy players in such groups. I can do just that. However, my system has nothing to do with how many games a person has been in, how many he has won, tied, etc. It is based on performance quality and characteristics, not quantity.

To my mind, there are five such classes: Novice, Tactical, Strategic, Human Manipulation, and Hybrid (combination of tactical, strategic, and Human manipulation in the optimum proportions). In other words, and other articles, I have discussed these groups in detail ((He then summarizes these types, which is about what you'd expect them to be, concluding, about the Hybrid type, )) ...Very few players reach this level. This is Superman.

#### Gamesmasters:

The next level of participation, if we can use the term without connotations of superiority or inferiority (Hell, a good Diplomacy player is far superior to most gamesmasters; just compare their analyzes of the game's moves) is that of GM. Sorely under pressure to perform as Superman (read, "Professional!"), the GM exists in three classes altho here, again, individual variations and characteristics make classification divisions countless.

Bad. Bad GMs do exist and here I speak with personal expertise. But, not as of-

ten as some of you might think to read most zines. I know of only a handful of what I consider to be really bad gamesmasters. Modesty prevents me from naming them (besides, then I would have to include all sorts of people that I do not care for and then where would my facade of objectivity be?). The point here is that just because a gamesmaster does something you don't approve of doesn't make him bad. It may make him unpopular, or a bad diplomat, but it doesn't, per se, make him a gamesmaster who is bad. Good: Most gamesmasters, I feel, are good. In other words, they are reasonably accurate, reasonably honest ((huh?? There are such gradations in honesty?)), reasonably fair and reasonably reliable. That is all a player can expect and any player who expects otherwise is a fool. I use the term reasonably for obvious reasons. Every gamesmaster is human: they do make errors, they do bend their house rules to project a certain image for their game success or themselves ((??)), they do favor certain players, etc. ((?!)) This is a fact of life; no gamesmaster is perfect; all are human, all make errors. None are Supermen. Personally, I tend to feel that an error rate of about 33:1 (3%) is good, which average out to one error per game. This means, I believe, adjudication errors, not typographical errors ((I must point out that 1 error per game is a very demanding standard, which precious few GMs can attain))... Good gamesmasters bend their house rules to fit the realities and needs of the game; late orders may be accepted, unsigned orders may be accepted, wrongly dated orders may be accepted, etc. In my experience, for every error that the gamesmaster commits, the players, collectively commit ten! However, the players' errors you don't see and you are protected, the GMs, you do. Now, obviously, I am writing an apology to GMs. The reason is simple. Unless you the players wake up to the above realities and accept and expect them then, without question within two or three years most of the GM/publishers who have started into postal diplomacy will be gone. The ones who remain will be nervous wrecks. Indifferent: There may be a few gamesmasters who are indifferent to what they are doing. However, they don't last long. The work is too great and the rewards are too few. Rakeoffs aside, no publisher/GM is going to stay in business unless he has a strong commitment to complete what he has undertaken...

#### Publishers/Editors:

This level deals with everything that does not pertain to the mechanics of the adjudication of the game itself. In other words, the body of the magazine... measuring quality seems almost impossible because of the tastes (both of publishers and players) which vary so much as to be almost immeasurable. However, quantitative ones are possible and imply a certain type of qualitative measurement themselves. Minor: A minor publisher, I feel, puts only minimal effort into his product, usually a single or dual game zine with a circulation of less than 30. Major: A major zine carries more than one game, usually up to five ((these numbers are very much out of date)), and several different sets of players from different parts of the country. It usually has a marked "identity" which makes it unique from other zines. More often than not it has a circulation of 30-50 or so. Mogul: There are, I feel, only one or two people who qualify for this level. Rod Walker did, and has ceased publication. Don Miller may, but is cutting back on his efforts. Certainly I qualify. Len Lakofka does. These people are the pillars of the postal hobby (or maybe, its deepest pits!). They are the authorities, the sources of information for lesser publishers, the beginning and, less often the end of rumors. They set the trends and styles... In essence, and for better or worse, they make the wheels go round. Contributors: A special subgroup of publishers/editors are the contributors who publish no zines of their own, but who regularly appear as authors in other peoples magazines. They have their own by-lines and are eagerly sought after by publisher/editors who cannot provide their own material.

#### Organization Buffs

A whole new category has opened up with the establishment of several diplomacy organizations. Having covering themselves with glory as players, gamesmasters, and publishers, several Diplomacy figures, probably just to have something different to do, set up a variety organizations, and go into the organization establishment syndrome. ... A whole new pecking order has to be created out of the confusion. Members: They

join. Players, usually to have a source of information other than the zines they read. Publishers, to have a long list of organizations they belong to, to show their participation in the establishment, the antiestablishment, etc. They take and take and give only grudgingly. Their attitude is one of "What can I get?", instead of "What can I give?" They want a voice in running things, but won't make themselves heard when the time comes. They are eager to see projects started they think will benefit them, but they are less eager to do the work involved in bringing them to reality. ((If this strikes you as unduly cynical, recall that Peery was IDA's first president)). Workers. As Len Lakofka and I were discussing a few nights ago, Diplomacy is lucky to have many capable and interested workers who do want to take part in its activities. They do do things, if asked. They take on the thankless jobs. The problem is to find them, and keep them at it until the job is done. Officers and Power Mad Egomaniacs (The Peeri Disease!) These people are after power and recognition. They are motivated by a desire to prove that they are Supermen. Having proved themselves as players, as gamemasters, and as publishers (Think about it: The IDA, for instance, is run by, more or less: The most prolific publisher in postal Diplomacy, its best player, its best publisher, and its biggest mouth!). They drive themselves on: "Seeking to prove that the greatest thing you can do is to find out that you're better at something ...." The cost to them is high: Time, Omeny, Criticism, etc. All demand a peice of their soul in return for the title and power. True, they are motivated by noble goals as well. They really do seek to do good. They really do believe what they say about doing good for the hobby, etc. The cliches are endless, and all true. However, this is still the ultimate Diplomacy game. Here the potential Supermen compete for power. However, do not let your cynacism, as you watch them completely exhaust themselves in the competition for power and titles and honor disillusion you. Do not debunk them, for they are your leaders. In them, they represent the best, and the worst, in you. They are merely you, looking in a mirror....."you can do one thing better than any other man? But, they are not the Supermen either.

It is my firm belief that to search for power and authority in Diplomacy organizations is not the highest level we can attain to, as human beings and as Diplomacy players. There is one higher level we can reach for, tho perhaps not achieve. It is that level where Supermen are to be found in an ordered state of nature. The path is hard, the journey long, the costs great and the dangers along the way countless. But, from the top the view is better and the truth more readily seen.

### Superman

Superman is Diplomacy player, and gamemaster, and publisher, and organizational buff, but he is more. He is commentator, philosopher, idealistic helper. He is all of these and more.

After you have had your fill of games and gamesmastering, and publishing for the sake of publishing, and having covered yourself with glory and honor and power in the ratings systems, and having discovered, in the process, that no matter how much you are willing to give, there are always those wanting to take more and to criticize you in the process for your faults, you are, perhaps, really ready to step down from the thrones of men, from the high places, and place yourself on a higher level.

The Superman, simply, helps. Without thought of reward, or recognition. He sees the hobby as a mirror of life where if we cannot live together peacefully, then all the game numbers, rating systems, circulation figures, etc. mean nothing. He sees the hobby as a collection of people; all united in their common interest and desires and yet each an individual and devided in their competitive spirit. Each one brought into the the whole and yet each seeking to establish his own separate place. The Superman has a special job. To help each person in that group find that place, painlessly if possible, to which he belongs and to bring to him his position without hurting him, or others. His is the task of the peacemaker, of the teacher, of the sage, of the helper, of the Superman. He must be a part of each, in the whole and yet able to keep himself separate from it and from all. He no longer seeks the tangible rewards of the hobby, only those intangible ones that come to those who help others.



The Superman is he who, wanting to be first, puts all before him.

Where are the Supermen of Diplomacy?

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((There are rumors that Dolchstoss may come back to life again, but in themeantime, we will have to settle for this, entitled "Valete", from #33, August 1975, by Richard Sharp))

This will be the last issue of Dolchstoss Duncan Morris gets before he leaves for Rhodesia. Although Duncan will no doubt still feature in the postal scene, his absence from FTF meetings will be much regretted by anyone with a sick sense of humor and a weak sense of smell. The sight of that tall, athletic figure slouching drunkenly over public bars all over England, the vacant grin barely concealed by the absurd excuse for a moustache, the vast paws at the ends of the gorilla-like arms hurling darts three inches deep into the wrong part of the board, all these things serve as a reassuring reminder that Diplomacy really is a refuge for social cripples and paranoids, and nothing to do with shoving plastic armies around. No doubt this year's trip to Scot-DipCon will be less hilarious (if more fragrant) than last year's. On a more mundane level, Duncan's contribution to the postal games scene has been a major one, not just because of Frigate but because of his many outrageous off-board coups, one of which even succeeded ((this was written up in DD #4/5)). I wish Duncan good luck in the prosperous and fortunate country to which he so wisely departed (kick a few for me, Duncan); if he has any sense he'll never come back to this commie-infested rathole. Meanwhile, he will be narrowly missed by his friends, if he has any. Tho no doubt he will make more in lovely Rhodesia, with its relatively high white population.....  
((Duncan eventually became a pilot for the Rhodesian Air Force. He was apparently held in great affection by the British dippy establishment. I have seen games delayed solely because no moves were received from Duncan. The reasoning was that if it were humanly possible for Duncan to get his orders in, he would have done so, and since they hadn't come, it wasn't his fault.))

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((One publisher heaping praise on another is in the fine tradition of the hobby. Here is almost an example of that, from Alan Rowland's letter in Paroxysm #17 Oct 75))

I also want to praise someone whom most Paroxysm readers love and respect, Randolph Smyth. Randolph is an example of what man will evolve into in the future. He is the vanguard of the new order that shall someday rule the earth. From 1975ES I have gotten to know Randolph and I fell that someone should give him the praise which he so richly deserves. Randolph is a man of modesty. When I asked him to donate his centers to me he refused, saying that it would not be right for him to become famous like he mentioned in his article on losing. Randolph is amiable. He keeps sending us letters discussing peace and friendship. Randolph is thrifty when it comes to himself. He sends letters on half sheets of paper. He hasn't told me so, but I suspect he gives the money he saves to charity. Randolph believes in close personal contact with someone in Diplomacy. He doesn't zip off a typewritten letter but takes the time to handwrite his hate mail to me. He is also understanding. What if Pat Efrom should stab me or I should stab him? Randolph's sense of justice and fair play force him to offer his aid to each of us against the other. Randolph is a rugged individualist. He purposely misspells his last name to show that he believes in the principles upon which our great nation was founded (((("our" great nation? Since when did you become a Canadian, Alan??? Doug Ronson))) I have so little space and so much to say that I am reluctantly forced to stop. And so I end this too short tale by saying that Randolph Smyth, I tip my hat to you and hope that everyone else recognizes your many talents and virtues.

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((This little gem is from Dave Ledling, in his Glockorla #20 6-27-68))

It seems that last week at Buddy Tretick's we were going to play Diplomacy. The only trouble was that even a half hour after we were going to start, there were only six players. So it came to pass that Buddy's eldest son (he's about eight), ((probably James)) to play, of all countries, Austria. This prompted what must surely be one of the classic alliance requests of all Diplomacy history:

"Lets all ally against Austria,  
he has to go to bed at nine."

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((From Mick Bullock in his 1901 and all that #64, 5-28-76:))

Editorial. I suppose that should read Obituary, for the purpose behind this column is to pass on to the Diplomacy community the tragically sad news that one of my - our - oldest friends in the hobby, Les Pimly, has died at home in Blackburn.

Pete Carlton phoned me mid-last-week to tell me that the months of time Les had spent attending Sefton General Hospital, Liverpool, for observations, had failed to find any suitable treatment for whatever his illness was, and that he had died on Tues, of a burst blood vessal in his brain - a brain haemorrhage I suppose. Ye gods.

For the very new-comers to the hobby, Les was an old-timer in Diplomacy terms (30 in reality); he joined the hobby at about the same time as me, some four years ago. His publishing commitments - overcommitments as we all know - took in 3 magazines, Black Spot, Shelob's Lair, and The Ultimate Chaotic Act. All this and 50-odd games at one stage too. A legendary figure indeed!

As you read this, probably Wednesday, the funeral will, I believe, have taken place yesterday. Because of the time factor involved in letting people know about this tragedy, Jen and I sent flowers on behalf of the whole Diplomacy and postal games-playing hobby.

I suspect that some of you who knew Les closely, may want to express your personal sorrow and respect; rather than inundate Pat with hundreds of letters, I feel that the best way to do this would be to arrange a fund for those who want to contribute to it. If you still feel like writing personally then I can't stop you of course. So, if anyone wants to send coins or stamps, p.o.'s or cheques, then I'd be only too glad to act as a central receiving source, and after, say a month or so, to forward the total amount received to Pat. It would be easiest all round if cheques etc were made out to me (specify the intention, tho) - I have a feeling that you will trust me in this matter. Obviously, individual donations will be kept in complete confidence.

I don't think I can say much else; this thing has choked me up somewhat, as I'm sure it has you. I've considered making this a "dull" issue in respect, but I don't see what that would have acheived. I'm sure that no-one will read anything callous into it if I repeat the old cliché that Les would have wanted the show to go on.

I think it goes without saying that traders and publishers should stop sending their wares to no. 345. If anyone owes Les money then, again, I'd be glad to forward it. If anyone has any of Les's games on loan - something he did a lot of - then I gather that Pete Carlton is to arraigne a sale of Les's collection, thru AHIKS - I suggest you contact Pete. (Also if there may be anything of yours amounst those, I'm sure that Pete will be glad to put it on one side.)

((Continuing, with some editing, from #65, June 18, 1976))

The Les Pimley fund had now cleared £40 in private donations...Obviously my thanks also go to all of you who have contributed...the NGC will be making a block donation... John Piggott is also suggesting that the hobby, not just the NGC ((National games club)) insittute some sort of annual award...As I say, I received many messages of sympathy and regret: I think this from Pete Swanson is appropriate to publish:

"The tragic news of Les Pimley's death affected me more than most of your readers, I suppose. Certainly only a small proportion of them knew little more of him than his name, and it remains for us who have been in the hobby anumber of years to remember him for the rest.

It certainly wasn't hard for me to get to know Les - he was in my first game in Der Krieg in Feb 1973, and he and I formed the only true alliance on the board, which lasted virtually to game end. Up until his illness forced him to leave the hobby, he

never took it too seriously, an attitude which more of us should consider. As with most prominent figures, Les was made fun of, and his attitude toward our jests was magnificent. It is one of the joys of the hobby that one can strike up this strange affinity with someone you know in name only, or thru a few letters. Certainly there is no natural hostility when two dippynuts meet for the first time, but, because of a common interest, an immediate friendship. Even without the benefit of meetings, I have made some friends that I would like to keep for life. This is the secret of our hobby, not the games, or the zines, and I think Les was fully aware of this secret. Certainly I have met few people as jovial and genuine as Les Pimley.

There are many ways to remember Les - his zines, his games, the Pimley reports, the way he signed his letters: always, "Merry Easter, Les" , the Black Spots, etc. But we could do better by attempting to bring back the more convivial, gregarious type of hobby Les fostered, before we outgrow any feeling of " free and easy family" we have left!  
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(Continue from page 1)

nothing either to rehouse games or to advertise the existence of his services. If he had, there would have been no need for Martin & Co to step into the void. Recently a press release for OGP was put out, (which I hope will be ignored) which is a perfect example of what I mean. Ray didn't distribute it --- he didn't even sign it. I certainly cannot recommend a person who can't even be bothered to sign his own press release (it was put out and signed by Robert Sacks)

oo

The Zine Column #23

Everything and the Boardman Numbers: Back on Track

With the recent publication of Everything #44, which clears up a lot of "missing" games, the Boardman Numbers are very much getting back to normal. I have a good feeling about this; having had some contact with Lee on a number of topics, he's impressed me as a dependable, no-nonsense sort of guy, just what the job calls for. In that issue, Lee asks that those who have finished but unreported games to send him the full wrapup, not just the Boardman Number. He also notes that some have "expressed dissatisfaction" that overseas games are not being published in Everything (indeed, its been more than two years since such games have been in there). Balony! Very few people are interested in such data. Those who are can sub to New Statsman, and get the data there --- I see no point in publishing all that stuff twice. If you really must see it, but can't afford the very low rates, contact me and I will loan you mine.

For some reason, I've been getting quite a bit of mail about the BNs recently, with most of it indicating to me that there are, especially among newcomers, some rather serious misunderstandings about just how they work. This is not too surprising, since the last BNC to try to educate the hobby on the topic was Doug Beyerlein.

For a bit of history, the inventor and first curator was John Boardman. When BNC business threatened to take up too much room in Graustark, it was taken over in Sept '67 by Charles Wells, who brought them into more or less their present format before giving them to John Konig in march 1968, AND LATE IN 1969 they went to Rod Walker. When he dropped out, they went to Conrad von Metzke, who founded Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Diplomacy But had Better Sense Than To Ask (Conrad always was the hobby's best zine-namer). Then it went to Doug Beyerlein, Cal White, Dennis Agosta, Bernie Agosta, and from her to Lee. By tradition, BNs are given to all non-variant games, regardless of whether the players or GM want them, and whether or not they will be irregular. The designation of "irregular" is the prerogative of the BNC, and is normally done when the game's conclusion is reported in Everything. Usually attached is a sentence or two giving the reasons for this. Local games are also designated as such. Which games are rated is the decision of the ratingsmaster of the particular ratings system. Usually, the irregular and local games are excluded. However, he is still free to impose a higher standard if he likes, rate local games, etc. All that is out of the BNC's hands. And I suspect that Lee will probably continue in that tradition, tho that is of course up to him.

Mark L Borch  
492 Naylor Place  
Alexandria, Va 22304



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If the z Number 33 appears by your name, and you want to get the upcoming very special issue, your time to resub is NOW!!

The insert, assuming I've remembered to include it, is courtesy of John Masters.

Volkerwanderung has been faked again! This one was clearly labeled as such, and has a long article on -- what else --- famous fakes and hoaxes.

*Jerry -  
I didnt get the  
sheet from you for the  
Tournament game  
MLS*

Jerry Jones (??)  
1854 Hagar St  
Pasadena, Ca 91107