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1-703-823-2139

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

Issue #69  
March 1983  
GMing in Great Britain

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Subs: 10 for \$3.50  
Europe: 8/£2 or 10/\$4  
Circulation: 118

The theme of this issue is somewhat unique. Its the first time I've deliberately limited myself to reprinting material just from one country. I've tried to have some emphasis here on aspects of GMing where their practice differs from ours. For those interested further in the topic of GMing, back issues #4/5 (85¢), #18 (30¢), #30 (35¢), #32 (35¢), #38 (35¢), #39 (35¢), #54 (35¢), all deal mostly or exclusively with GMing issues, either in general or one specific area of it. I strongly recommend these issues to those considering GMing or who have only been at it a short time, because there is a great deal you can learn simply by being exposed to a lot of different views.

More details are now available on MaryCon. The Diplomacy tournament will have 2 rounds, beginning on the mornings of June 4 and June 5. Since this is not a general wargaming convention, there won't be a lot of competing activities. To register for just the tournament is \$4; but \$23 will cover registration, a dorm room for Sat night, Sat lunch and dinner, and Sunday breakfast --- a very reasonable price. Its at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg VA, and to register, write to Jeff Breidenstein P.O. Box 4791-College Station Fredericksburg VA 22402, and make checks payable to "MaryCon". There's a pretty good chance I'll be able to go.

Ever wonder what countries the "big boys" prefer to play? Rod Walker used country preference lists for the new Diplomacy World demo game, and all 7 players picked France! My reason was rather pedestrian - F is the only contry I've never played postally as an original player. Not only that, but 5 people also picked England as second, which is curious since neither country is one of the top two or three in terms of wins. Such unanimity of preference sure complicates country assignment!

## The Zine Column #61

Quest for meaningful headline continues

Two zines have folded recently. Allen Wells' Dot Happy #24 was the last, the remaining games to continue by flyer. He has found other activities, and appears to be leaving the hobby. And Eric Ozog has folded Diplomacy by Moonlight, apparently because it became too much work. DbM was a curious and at times controversial zine, and featured the best accounts of regional cons I've ever read. His zine will be very much missed by me, and I hope that Eric will sticking with the hobby after DipCon XVI.

Larry Peery Box 8416 San Diego CA 92102 is soliciting nominations for the Don Miller Memorial Award, to be given for significant contributions to the hobby. It is patterned closely after England's very successful "Les Pimley Award". You nominate yourself, including a few sentences about your contributions. A committee of Byrne, Lindsey, Kador and Davis will screen these, and select a list. There will then be hobby-wide balloting, with the winner getting a plaque. The deadline for nominations is May 1. This is a very constructive idea, and I beleive it will work out well (go to p



make the GM's job an easier one and so improve efficiency....

((The next issue had two more letters from Peter, complaining about shortened time for negotiation since the zine was mailed a week late, bitching about having to buy the whole zine in order to play ("....Is it essential for me to pay good money for pages of garbage which have no relevance to me..." ...a real diplomat, he), and the following:

Peter Sanham: I don't remember asking you to print my letter in the last issue of TotS. In fact, I resent your inclusion of it without my prior knowledge. If, as I suspect, it is the case that you cannot afford to reply individually to each letter you receive, then, again, you ought to have explained that. I realize, of course, that the subject of my inquiry and your reply might have been of interest to a number of people....but that does not excuse your action or negate the embarrassment and surprise I felt at suddenly encountering my name and my private letter used to fill a space in your publication.

Greg Hawes: I will always assume that any letter to me (apart from game-related correspondence) is available for publication, as do all other zine editors. The only exception to this is the letter bearing the motto "Do Not Print" or somesuch....I always print letters that I think will interest some of my readership, and yours seem to qualify....((I wonder if its that simple --- it depends on what you mean by the phrase, "game related correspondence." If a player writes his GM, "My new fleet Con will be used against Russia", itsclear cut, the GM must not publish such a comment. But other comments are more difficult to evaluate, and Sanham's may have been one of them. A procedural question can be very awkward for the writer if it sees print, e.g., "If I propose a draw, do I have to vote for it?" If a newcomer (and Peter was one at the time) asks a very simple adjudication question, printing the question could make him look incompetent. In my opinion, if a player asks a question on how the game is to be run (and especially here, where the HRs were far from clear), the GM should err on the side of caution and simply say, "A player asks...." That avoids any hard feelings that might result, and when it comes to GMing procedure, it hardly matters who raised the query))

(((The value of having precise HRs can be quite apparent if you have to deal with a technical question like: When does a draw vote actually take place? In Mad Policy #59 along with the S15 moves there was a call for a vote for a 4-way draw. In number #60, Walkerdine reported that the vote had passed, but he printed the F15 adjudications as well, which showed that Mick Bullock had been eliminated. He then reported the game's end as a three way draw, but asked the remaining three players to ratify that this was acceptable to them. #61, Oct 1976, then had the following from the GM:

The game really has finished now with the 3 remaining players all accepting the 3-way draw, it only remains to decide just what the final result was!

The difficulty is that Mick Bullock, not surprisingly, has objected to a 3-way draw and insists that the result should be a 4-way draw instead as that is what all 4 players voted for. He points out that the vote was called for with the Spring adjudication, and the result should therefore be taken as happening in the summer and not after the fall season. Needless to say I disagree, I don't see that a vote can be assumed to occur before or after one particular season - if anything, it occurs along with it and the way it is actually interpreted depends on circumstances.

However, in my usual manner of trying to please everybody at one's what I intend to do is write up the game in The Finishing Touch ... in the normal way<sup>^</sup> but instead of giving the result along with the game report I will state what happened about voting a and when the vote was called and then leave it entirely up to the reader to decide for himself whether he considers it a 3- or 4- way draw. In other words, I'm passing the buck! ((A very similar type of situation is described in DD #32, where two players voted for a draw in the same season that one of them won the game. This can be a very touchy problem, since it deal's with the most sensitive time in the game's history: its conclusion. GM's who do not have a HR to cover the situation should state how they will handle things in those rare instances where the problem could come up; failure to do so could cause very hard feelings.))

((Our next discussion begin's in Bullock's 1901 and all that #66 (July 1976) with the announcement that Glyn Palmer would be sending in orders for Pete Swanson until Pete returns from the USA in two months. In 75BD, Glyn was Germany, Swanson was England, Edi Birsan was Austria, and Dave Tant, France. Next, from #67:))

Edi Birsan: ...If I had read the same thing in a U.S. zine I guess I would resign. The use of this technique of sending in orders for 2 countries has long been a No-No since the great Eric Blake ploy of John Boardman in 64C ((that was very different, as no one knew about it, and the ploy ran the entire game))....

While it is possible to get around this by virtue of the carte blanche approach of sending a blank signed sheet to the ally who in turn fills it in and mails it separately, the most important deterrent is that it is illegal and tho easy to get around the very fact that you are not supposed to be doing it can and does stop most people from doing it ... in the US, that is.

This being a UK game, I'm totally unsure of the morals of the game. Since there is a great difference in the playing style and approach to the game in the UK, I'm at a loss on how to advise you. But let me pose this question to you: if you are to allow the west to send in orders for each other will you allow the east to have a vote and choose a single commander and thus the game can then be played out as a tactical exercise of east versus west. If you will allow it do you feel the game should be rated as a regular game? Surely as a one on one exercise the game can be ended in a short time as moves can proceed on a week deadline with ease of adjudication.

If you would allow it, please put up for a vote the point of appointing myself as the Allied Eastern Commander.

Mick Bullock: OK, OK, I'm on your side! I don't like the idea of one player sending 2 sets of orders any more than you. But looked at from a ruling point of view I don't think its quite so easy just to declare it "illegal" and leave it at that. The comparison with Blake is not an exact one.....We're talking about 2 players in a game who mutually agree that it would be easier and cheaper if only one of them sends in orders with the other's blessing. Quite a bit different. Having said that, I'll repeat that its a practice that I don't particularly like; but if pressed on the point, I'd have difficulty in explaining why. I don't think its illegal and I'd like to see a U.S. GM's HRs that explain why it is. I suspect that few exist. I do think its unethical, and as such, I'm prepared to make a ruling which will make it a more difficult practice. As for Joint orders, they're generally accepted as part of a zine's HRs -- most will allow 1 sheet of paper bearing two signatures and orders for 2 countries on it. Thats exactly what we are arguing about (Except that in the case of proxy orders permission is usually given in a separate note rather than in the form of joint orders. But the end product is the same.) As for their existance here, I've come across mention of proxy orders in 3 mags in the last couple of weeks alone .....

David Tant: So we have to give reasons against this.....

- 1) and most important - I don't like it.
- 2) If you allow it, knowing its going on, how can you stop anyone from doing it in SO1? (((Can't as it stands. Care to ask other GMs how they get round the situation? Bet they're in the same boat --- Bullock)))
- 3) To allow something to be done, simply because the people concerned have been honest about it, and say you are doing so because they could have kept it secret, seems rather confused logic to me (Quite apart from being a confused sentence.) In other words, why must we invent a foolproof system to stop it happening again. Most players are honest. Just say you don't allow it and will blacklist anyone whp tries.
- 4) Its your zine, your game, and your HRs. Stop pretending to be democratic and make a decision. The worst you can do is upset Davison ((the Turkish player)).

Mick Bullock: Democracy puke! Wash your mouth out with soap! But there are times when I genuinely believe that I have not got a full understanding of a situation; at such times I welcome the words of wisdom of others. Having asked for other people's opinions (not votes!) I remain convinced that the practice is not illegal....but it is

undesirable on an emotive and ethical basis. Therefore, to rule against the use of proxy (and thus joint) orders leaves me open to accusations of introducing rulings against acts not covered in the Rulebook ... doesn't it? So be it. ((He then promulgated a rule against proxy and joint orders as a HR, even covering orders prepared by one player but signed by another. The sole penalty was rejection of the orders: "transgression of any of the above rulings will not warrant any further punishment except that such orders will be rejected ('cos I don't really fink you've done anything wrong, see!)." All proxy arrangements were then cancelled (for situations where the proxy player was in the same game). The next issue, tho, brought forth the pro-proxy voices. Nicky Palmer and Richard Nash considered it to be a legitimate diplomatic accomplishment, the result of good diplomacy. Then came....))

John Piggott: Certainly, to choose a proxy player from within the same game is wrong, but the arguments about joint orders are red herrings. Consider: when 2 players submit joint orders, either openly on one piece of paper in the same envelope, or in different envelopes from different mailing points, its always possible for one player to stab the other -- usually by unilaterally changing his orders in a second set sent later. One's objection to the Swanson/Palmer situation is that there is no way a stab can happen; Swanson, I believe, isn't seeing 1901aat while he's in America, and of course a gentleman like Glyn would never betray a position of trust. So the 5 independent countries in the game have 14 (now 13) units ranged against an unbreakable cartel of 19 and growing. The only thing they can hope to do is set up a stalemate line until Swanson returns.

I'm disappointed to see you banning joint orders altogether; they create the sort of problem I like to see other GMs having.....

Mick Bullock: I still don't think you've satisfactorily defined the difference between joint orders and signing a separate piece of paper which says, "permission for so-and-so to order my units"....Swanson could, of course, be planning a most devious stab on GP and Palmer could stab Pete whenever he wants. More authoritative views are required to make me renege. ((As it turned out, the game was suspended until his return. In #78, Richard Sharp suddenly popped up with his own views))

Richard Sharp: If you accept the argument, as I do, that a postal game should be as faithful an imitation of the ftf version as circumstances allow, there is no case for banning these short term proxy deals. The idea is a simple and convenient way of ensuring that two players temporarily acting in harmony don't get their wires crossed due to the communications problems in the postal game. Its particularly valuable in short-deadline zines like 1901aat... It is perfectly ethical provided always that the player handing over control reserves the right to order them himself. There is no question of the arrangement offering protection against a stab: in my experience, indeed, one is more likely to be stabbed under such circumstances.

I gather that even my frequently adopted practice of sending an unreliable ally a set of orders for him to sign and send in is illegal ... What is the point in spoiling the fun like this? I frequently stab said unreliable ally by forgetting to order a retreat, for instance. I can see no conceivable advantage to anyone in your ruling...

May I suggest a simple compromise? You allow such short term proxies, but make a ruling that permission to order someone else's unit(s) must be renewed each season. This guarantees you against situations where, say, a player drops out of the hobby continues to "play" in one game by courtesy of his proxy....

Mick Bullock: I still do think that proxy ordering borders on the illegal and should be discouraged. The rulebook, designed primarily of ftf play, quite clearly states that "each player" writes and reads his own orders - nowhere does it suggest that it is permissible for one player to submit orders for two countries. Your compromise would be acceptable to me only if it carries the rider that the source of proxy orders was revealed to all players each time they had been used... ((indeed, that can be a crucial distinction, and it presents the GM who does not like proxy orders with a severe dilemma. If he insists that the proxy be public, he is sanctioning the process, but at least all the players know what is going on. By banning the proxy, he can discourage

proxies by those players who will do what the GM says, but this will not actually prevent a private proxy. Moreover, no sharp line can honestly be drawn between ordering one country and two. Suppose I tell my puppet, who has agreed to do what I say, which moves to make, and he does them. Am I not ordering 2 countries? Suppose that, being a lazy sod, he takes my letter, and cuts out the words following my, "And here's what I want you to do" (i.e. cuts the orders out of the letter) and tapes them onto a separate sheet, and signs it? Is that a proxy? Suppose he crosses out everything else in the letter, except the orders I have asked him to do, and then signs the sheet? Suppose I wrote the letter, telling him what I want done, with reasons, etc, then, after the signature, I write them out for him, asking him to clip off the bottom of the page and mail those in to the GM after signing them (I did this in 1976IF)? How does that differ from him signing a blank sheet and sending that to me, and I fill in the orders (which could be mailed by either him or me) --- which is the classic form of the private proxy? I don't see that any sharp line can be drawn anywhere along this continuum)

To what degree should a GM get involved in the diplomacy of a game? One GM's view comes from Graham Jeffery, writing in his Der Krieg #2, July 1972:

Mr. A. NON (I won't give his real name for, as you'll soon see, obvious reasons.) wondered if it would be possible to send anonymous notes via me! You can, of course, send them from anywhere, but postmarks might give them away. So yes, I will pass on any messages I receive, immediately if some provision is made for postage (like asking it be docked from credit). If no postage is provided I'll wait and send it with the earliest issue of DK. ((This can be viewed as a fine service or a foolish risk))  
+++++  
((One of the major differences between how postal games are run here and in UK is that the no-standby system is the norm in the UK. But in such a game, should the original player be allowed to later return? We begin with Chris Tringham in his Megomania #23))

...I have just been chucked out of a game in Filibuster because I failed to send in any orders in 1902. The fact that I had paid my game-fee and wanted to continue had no bearing on the matter - according to the rules, I was placed in "anarchy" and no more orders will be accepted from me. I don't blame Adrien, of course, as he is merely following tradition in his HRs, and I was well aware of them when I signed up. However, I do think that the rules need examining carefully. I can see the logic in throwing players out if they are to be replaced by standbys - I don't agree with it, but at least it is reasonably logical - but if not, as is the case with most UK zines now, then why get rid of the only player you've got?

The only justification that seem reasonably logical is that it may dissuade people from NMRing. Basically, the same argument that is advanced in favor of the deposit system, in fact. However, this assumes that the NMR is almost the result of a conscious decision, whereas in practice it is caused by forgetfulness or bad organization. It also ignores the likely damage to a players position resulting from an NMR... but anarchy introduces a further punishment, and often unblances the game, quite often conclusively. Its far more of a random factor than the use of standbys, and since few GM's now use them, why are we stuck with anarchy?

If it really did stop people from NMRing or dropping out of games, then fair enuf, but I can find no evidence to support that proposition. Players fail to send orders for one of 3 basic reasons: forgetfulness, temporary problems/loss of interest, or permanent loss of interest. Taking the last case first, the only advantage of anarchy is that it enables the GM to appropriate the players credit and thus ensure that he never has a chance of retaining interest in the game. In practice, however, most anarchy results from a transitory problem which makes it impossible, or very difficult, to send in any orders. There are a great many examples of this, and it isn't hard to imagine circumstances under which Diplomacy would become a very low priority indeed for a few months...Should they not have a chance to pick up the pieces and submit orders again?

Most NMRs are the result of nothing more than forgetfulness and bad organization ((he cites himself as an example))...I suspect that many other people do the same ....since this happens at the moment, anarchy can hardly be said to be effective.

There is, of course, a very simple way of ensuring that one's country isn't put into anarchy - standing orders. If a GM won't accept standing orders, it would be necessary to make 20 or so copies of each.....((Response began in #24, March 1980))

Jonathan Palfrey: I support you both in the use of standing orders and in not chucking out players whose miss consecutive moves (they may still be "blacklisted" from other games of course)....In practice, someone who misses moves repeatedly is a nuisance and a source of uncertainty, but in principle he should have the right to do nothing if he wants to, and probably the game is less unbalanced if he's allowed to continue.

Peter Birks: Your point about anarchy misses one fundamental aspect, that if a country never goes into anarchy, some people may be wasting money sending letters, and have to allow for what is, in most sense of the word, a "random" chance of units moving which they have every right to think are dead. I am loath to quote the realism argument, but I will here, because I wouldn't want it quoted back to me as a reason for not having anarchy. In real life, if a country were dead for a while, some warning would be received if the country were coming back into action. In Dippy, if anarchy were abolished, a unit which had stood for 5 years (and would therefore be deemed by any sensible player unlikely to move again) could pop back to life and fuck up a player's whole strategy. I would therefore support anarchy ... simply to be fair to the other, regularly active players, who would no longer have to waste 10 pence per turn writing to the dongo who can't even be bothered to send in orders ((Aha - I missed a line: Pete supports anarchy after 2 successive NMRs. He then advocates ... requiring a player in civil disorder to give one turn's advance warning before re-submitting orders - Tringham))

Bob Brown: ... I agree with you ... Despite my HRs, I have several times allowed people to continue after 2 consecutive NMRs when they have a wish to continue, but in my experience the majority of dropouts go for good. I would like to think that many players encountering a temporary loss of interest would sign over their units to someone else for a while.((Final comments then appeared in #25))

John Lee: Your rule on civil disorder drives me up a wall. This is mainly because of my experience in Down Alien Skies, where units I thought were dead suddenly sprang from the grave to turn a winning position into a joke ... its brought me to loath unpredictability ... By abolishing anarchy, you remove one of the prime motivating forces for players to send in orders, particularly when they are in a bad position. It is on this ground that I would really disagree with your rule.

Ken Bain: I support your views on Anarchy ... The reliable inactivity of units in anarchy results in wins for one country, as forces can be diverted to meet a challenge from still active players. Under our HRs, the way is left open for diplomatic approaches to the inactive player, so that even if a player continues to fail to submit orders, his units must still be allowed for. ((The GM then responded:))

Chris Tringham: I'm afraid I have no sympathy for you, John, as your "winning position" must have arisen because that player dropped out - the abolition of anarchy should reduce that advantage in the first place. I can't see why that is wrong, assuming that one wishes to reduce the luck element.

((I hate NMRs. They introduce a chaotic, random factor into a game which has no dice. They usually help some players a lot, some not at all, and often harm some of the active players. I think that the GM should try to reduce the number of NMRs, not increase them. That's why I prefer games which use standbys --- a no standby policy ensures a steady stream of NMRs from the position once the original player leaves, year after year until the country is eliminated. But if a GM is determined not to use standbys, the policy of permanent anarchy (not letting the original player return after two or more consecutive NMRs) strikes me as stupid because again, it produces a steady stream of NMRs. These are entirely avoidable --- the original player stands ready to submit orders, but the GM would prefer the NMRs. Moreover, I consider such a policy directly contrary to the Rulebook, which clearly states, "A player who temporarily fails to submit orders may, of course resume play if he returns to the game and still has some units

left." If the original player stands ready to resume the submission of orders, then his previous failure is obviously temporary, regardless of how long the hiatus lasted. This reasoning would also fault the practice of some North American GMs of replacing players who have a total of 3 or 4 NMRs, but not 2 in a row. If a player misses, but submits for the next season, his drop was again, clearly temporary, and such a practice in my opinion, violates the Rulebook. Of course, with two consecutive misses, a new player can be brought in, and if the original player wants back in, well, he's no longer the player for the country. I suppose I could live with a plan whereby the GM warns the other players that a position is being reactivated, but I don't like that either. It would cause either a delay-in-game, or another season of NMR, both of which are bad. Besides, if a players wants to play possum, and then try to catch the other players by surprise, then I think he should be able to do this without the GM blowing the whistle))

Player "Intent" and the art of GMing

by Mark L Berch

I made some comments on this last issue, but perhaps some specifics are in order. For those who came in late, the discussion began in VOD and later moved to Anduin. The question arises as to whether, in dealing with badly written orders, the GM should take into consideration a player's "intent". As an Ombudsman, I had ruled in a case where a GM had voided the orders of a player who had ordered a piece to both Hold and Support. I affirmed the GM, saying that altho it was clear he intended the piece to support, he had in fact double ordered the unit, and the player's intent could not be a factor. Ed Wrobel, writing in Anduin #19/20 disagreed, saying "there is no such thing as communication without a judgement as to intent." Kane (the pubber of Anduin) agreed, and added that it's "...an interesting question tho as to how far a given GM will go into intent. I really don't know. I guess I'll find out as the situations arise." To me this is an extremely risky attitude for a GM to take. But lets deal with some specifics, to see how far you as a "GM will go into intent." Got yourself into a GMing mode? OK, consider the following simple situations:

1. Austria: Build Fleet
2. A Bel-Hel
3. France, Spring 1901: F - Mid
4. Italy, Spring 1901: A Tri-Ven
5. Italy, Fall 1901: A Apu-Tun, (F Ion Unordered)
6. A Ser-A

And now for variety, lets try a not-so-simple situation:

7. England Fall 1901: A Edi-Nwy, F Nth S A Edi-Nwy, F Nwg S A Edi-Nwy  
(the complication here is that the intention to convoy is clear, but the path is not).

Write out your list of rulings, yes or no to each order for the seven questions. I think we can all agree that the player's intent in each case is quite clear, altho, as with all errors, the error could be deliberate. Fine, what did you write down? If your answers were all yes or all no, you are in reasonably good shape, at least for the time being, but if your answers are mixed, you could be headed for trouble. You have been willing to go with the player's "intent" in some circumstances but not in others, and for that crime you can expect to catch hell from your players. No matter where you draw the line, or, as Kane put it, no matter how far you'll "go into intent", the line will seem to some or all of your players to be arbitrary. It won't matter what sort of rationale you present, it will come across for what it really is: Sometimes you take a player's intent into account, and sometimes you do not, and players will put the worst possible interpretation on your motives, let me assure you, viz, you are playing favorites. And if you are 100% sure of a player's intent in one case, and 99% sure in another again you will be faced by the task of drawing an ephemeral line. Take case #7. England surely wants the army in Nwy, but did he intend the convoy by F Nth, F Nwg or both? With No Russian A StP, it doesn't matter which of those choices it was. But add A StP-Nwy. Here, it doesn't matter whether the convoy is F Nth or F Nwg, so long as it is not both --- a support is needed. Well, only an idiot would order both convoys (let alone write them both wrong!), but then again, it is legal to convoy with both of them,



so maybe you aren't 100% sure, just 99<sup>1/2</sup>%. Now add A Stp<sup>Nth</sup>nwy plus F Den-Nth. Here, the support must come from F Nwg and F Nth do the convoy. And finally, suppose its F Den-Nth plus F Eng S Ger F Den-Nth. Now the<sup>Nth</sup> convoy will go only with the intended orders F Nth C A Edi-Nwy, F Nwg S F Nth. My point here is that if you said "yes" to the original question 7, surely one of these circumstances will force you to say "no". But the written moves --- the player's intent---was the same in all cases. Are you willing to make judgements about a player's intent by looking at the moves of other players? How can you do this? These are separate players! Yet, if your answers differ in the differing circumstances for #7, then you have let other players determine your willingness to determine England's intent. Judging player's intent is a morass, and the very first time you do it, other player's will object. They will wonder whether you will patch up their orders too. Perhaps they will not need be careful in the future, after all, the GM stands ready to correct their "obvious errors"

Don't get the idea that I'd bar any flawed order. Far from it: In many circumstances I'd be very lenient. Take, for example, the reverse of #5, i.e. the player writes F Ion C A Apu-Tun, but leaves no order for A Apu. There I would permit the convoy. The player has stated his intent to do A Apu-Tun, you don't have to assume it. He stated that intent by actually writing "A Apu-Tun". True, he imbedded that phrase inside the order for F Ion, but he did say it explicitly, so there's no need to assume his intent. My rule of thumb is this: Has the player complied with the absolute minimum required by the rulebook? In #1 above, he did not. The Rulebook says you must give the province in which you are building. If F Nth is dislodged in one season, no retreat order is given, and the next season, he orders F Eng-Mid, I'd disallow it. The rulebook says you must write the retreat order. But if a player wrote F Bul-Con, or F Wes-Spa, I'd allow them both: The Rulebook names certain circumstances where you must give a coast, and this isn't one of them. Admittedly, there are a few areas which the Rulebook does not cover or is badly worded. But these aside, my advice to GMs is always this: keep it simple. Don't add extra requirements that aren't in the rulebook, and don't take on extra duties like determining a player's intent. The Rulebook does not sanction that, and neither should you. If GM's took that attitude, and if players accepted the fact that the GM isn't there to determine his intent, we ombudsmen would have a lot less to do, and there would be less hard feeling .

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((The question of when to delay a game has come up several times. We start with Pete Birks, in his Greatest Hits #73, June 1980.))

Steve Jones: I am going on holiday to Australia for 3 weeks starting on July 9th... so could I ask for an extension to the deadline for 1980BF from that August deadline to the next one?

Pete Birks: Basically, no. As it happens, I think with the 4 week deadlines now usually in operation, you'll be able to get your orders in. I've said before that I do not consider holidays to be a valid reason for a request for deadline extension, otherwise you might as well shut up zine editing just as Frenchmen shut up Paris ((so many Parisians leave town in August that many establishments, especially restaurants, simply close for the month)). There will probably be at least one person on holiday in each game between each deadline between June and September. To grant them for one person and not for another would be unfair. The alternatives are (a) provisional orders, (b) change of address notification. ((For a similar type of situation, here is Richard Hucknall in Fall of Eagles #21, August 1978))

There has been a fair amount of criticism regarding the holding over of 78BJ last issue. This was at the request of Neil Mizzeymead who was involved with "A" levels ((an important series of college exams)). In retrospect, I think I made the wrong decision, so in future, games will not be held over without a very good reason and exams and holidays I do not ((now)) consider to be good reasons.

The situation is worsened by a letter I received from Nicholas Barker just before the deadline. He writes, "Do you think I could ask you to hold over 77EPand 77GX for another month? You see I returned from holiday a few days ago and found several

letters waiting for me which I have had no time to reply to." Well this happens to virtually all players and the timing of these letters is often deliberate. To take matters to the extreme, I could end up closing FOE down from May to October! What annoys me more than anything else is that Nicholas assumes that his request will be accepted as a matter of course. Nowhere was there any mention of orders that I could use if I didn't agree to hold the games over. So, sorry Nicholas, but you've got a couple of NMRs. Before anyone accuses me of giving preferential treatment to Neil Mizzeymean last issue, I would point out that Neil made sure he knew of my decision and would have been able to submit orders if I had not entertained his request. ((Back now to Greatest Hits #75 for a more difficult situation. Pete Birks again:))

A little explanation here. There was a misadjudication in FO3, whereby I put the English unit in Picardy rather than in Belgium. I sent out a readjudication to all players correcting this...But on deadline day I received a letter from Germany saying, "The problem is that GH #74 has only just been forwarded to me and unfortunately there is an error in 79GZ...." He goes on to point out the error, and the result of the correction. He then continues..."I have assumed we are now on a double deadline ((i.e. delay of game)) the exact same thing happened in FO1 and we went on a double deadline then - and so I haven't sent in any orders -I hope that's alright!"

Unfortunately it most decidedly isn't. The HRs state on page 1, rule (3) that the players should send in 2 sets of orders, one assuming that the error will be corrected, the other assuming that the adjudication was correct as given. I see no choice therefore but to NMR Germany. The reason for the double deadline after FO1 was that the error was not pointed out to me in time, and so the situation is not exactly the same. Sympathies to Malcolm ((G)), but he really has only himself to blame.....((In #76, the discussion continued))

Malcolm Whytock: Thanks for the NMR .... What made it worse was that you knew what my position was in that I was 300 miles, or whatever, from home and you cannot have expected me to have the HRs with me or be able to read them from that distance.

You say I was wrong in claiming that the situation was the same as in FO1 because the error was not pointed out to you in time. If this was the case, then my memory must be failing me because I clearly remember receiving the readjudication well before sending in my orders. ...The game was held over ... because they hadn't written at all! Thus, I had a lot more right to a Double Deadline than they did. I'm no lawyer (I'm no anything) but I did watch The Paper Chase (and good it was too) and would this alone not prove that you were wrong in your decision (Precedence or something)? All this is assuming that I'd even received the ((re)) adjudication anyway which you must have known I hadn't. Here's me thinking I'd be a good little boy and tell Pete about the error and also thinking there'll have to be a double deadline ... as there were about 6 things wrong and these will all have to be sorted out and everyone will have to be notified about them. Then I find I've got my first NMR in about 100 adjudications.

The game is completely and utterly ruined for me. Not just because of the massive and irreplaceable loss of position but because, no matter what the eventual result I will shudder when I hear anything connected with 79GZ (I suppose that includes you but I'm told that I'll shudder when I see you anyway!)

Am I your best friend now? I presume not when I think of the ease with which you could have held this game over....

Michael Yeo((F)) .... I then turned back to FO1 where he says the same thing happened, but you claim you weren't told of the mistake in time. GH #70 seems to differ on this point: "...Someone asked for a holdover (players were notified) and since I am three sets of orders short .... I can only assume that they think it will be granted." So it would look as tho the reason for the holdover was the number of people who hadn't submitted their orders rather than anything else....There was another error in FO1... this was never to my knowledge officially readjudicated (tho we all correctly assumed that it had been) and so it is this mistake which makes it a different situation (2 errors in 1901 is different after all!) I would agree with you that Malcolm has only himself to blame....

Pete Birks: Knowing that Malcolm was 300 miles from home and unlikely to have a copy

of the House Rules with him was, regretfully not a matter I could consider. Secondly, the fact that Malcolm was at an address which made it likely that he would not receive the readjudication in time was also irrelevant - if Malcolm chooses to be at ((such)) an address .... that is hardly my fault. He could quite easily have informed me of his address before that deadline. He failed to do so. Thirdly, the ease with which I could have held over the game is something which I no longer consider - taking the line of least resistance is the habit of most GMs and probably causes more trouble than anything else...I think that I slightly did this with the FO1 adjudication (because I had not yet printed the HRs) on the grounds that I would cause a furor if I ran the game with 3 orders short...I also claim you can't expect to be able to tie the GMs like precedent restricts some judges....If he made a mistake 9 seasons ago, that does not mean he is tied to making the same mistake again, and the player has no right to assume that he will do so. Having said all that I must reemphasize that the situations weren't identical. ((He then mentions the unavailability of HRs then)). The readjudication for FO1, which was substantial was between 3-week deadlines(another difference)... Thirdly, the misadjudication this time could be perceived and corrected by all players....this was not the case with the FO1 misadjudication. Fourthly, as Mike Yeo pointed out, there was an error which was not readjudicated(and which I forgot to mention in the holdover but did confirm in fone calls) until very shortly before the SO2 deadline. I am not doing this to justify my actions in SO4, simply to point out why my actions in FO1 and SO4 were different...I hope that people do not imagine, when a decision is made which affects them seriously and which easily could have been avoided with a holdover, that I am being deliberately malicious. I am not. I had a long think...I decided that (1) my HRs were specifically clear on this point, so that to hold over would result in me breaking the HRs (2) Malcolm had only himself to blame for not being familiar with the HRs, that even if he had not received the HR, he should have sent in a conditional set of orders, and that his failure to do this was a result ... of a lack of common sense and common courtesy to myself and to other players in the game...((Birks decision was mandated by his HRs, and not illogical or unfair, and was thus in that sense correct. The in-case-of-error-send-in-two-sets-of-orders procedure is common and sensible, but GMs, I think, sometimes overlook the problems that this can cause. Consider the following printed adjudication: Russia: F Nwg-NAT; France: F Mid-NAT; Italy: A Naf H. From the Russian perspective, something is wrong, but what? The GM either 1) forgot to underline the Russian order, or 2) typed a "t" for an "f" in the French orders. Of course he can send two sets of orders, but he may be unable to write a single letter. He doesn't know whether France is enemy (i.e. case 1)) or friend (case 2)), and that could affect his relations not only with France, but with all his neighbors. Even if he acts promptly(unlike Malcolm), half his effective diplomacy period may be gone before he learns the truth from the GM, or even more. Moreover, France does not have this problem --- he knows what he did --- so that R is at a relative disadvantage. I created this case deliberately where both possibilities are equally likely. In most cases, one alternative is more likely than another, but even then, can a player really be sure? In short, I think GMs should be a little more generous than they actually are in granting delays as a result of a GMing error, and not pretend that the two-sets-of-orders procedure will cover any situation where clearly an error has been made))

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((continued from page 1)) Lets see what I can squeeze in here...Give Me A Weapon

has been faked, a very good parody of the zine I might add, this one is done by Kieth Sherwood, and has a good feel for the zine itself....another old-timer seems to be returning, as Mark Weidmark's name appears in a new postal game --- Mark published several Canadian zines in the early 70's....the recent Xenogogic had the results of a poll in which zines were rated in a variety of categories, a very ambitious under taking. DD's best showing (tied for third) was in the exact category which I would have wanted to have done best: "Useful Material". The issue also had an interesting "Round Table" discussion on the need, or lack thereof, for a Code of Ethics, a topic which has interested John Caruso as well these days (John is focusing on the more narrow topic of GMing ethic Wylie Wilson suggests that we may find the book "Getting to Yes (Negotiating Agreement without Giving in)" by Fisher and Ury (Houghton Mifflin 2 Park St Boston) to be useful.

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A Reminder: I add one free issue to your sub for every new subber you bring in. All he need do is mention your name (or zine) when he writes me initially with his check. I can do this because it saves me the cost of sending out a sample issue

If the number (69) appears by your name your sub has just expired, and its time to renew.

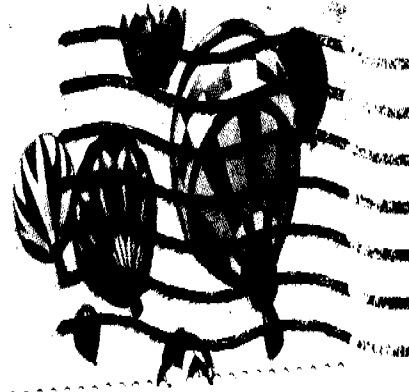
From The Washington Post:

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### **Paperwork Reduction, Government-Style**

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Ronald Reagan issued a half-page memo ordering agencies to cut back "superfluous" publications. Then the Office of Management and Budget issued a 10-page "bulletin" explaining that order. Now OMB has issued a 20-page "model control plan," complete with eight attachments and a new form, implementing the bulletin.



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