

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST 7-8

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Villifications & Tirades Issue

With this special issue on Villifications and Tirades, your editor strides briskly into the quicksand. The hobby has always attracted people with large egos, sharp pens, aggressive and touchy personalities. The structure of Postal Diplomacy itself, with stabs, and dropouts and most importantly, greatly differing standards on what is proper behavior lends itself to disputes that the large egos will not just let be, and the sharp pens exacerbate. These feuds, I hasten to remind our newcomers, have long been considered an entirely proper and entertaining aspect of the hobby, and were sometimes carried out by persons who were otherwise close personal friends and game-allies.

While many of the items herein concern matters long dead, two are of some sensitivity, or at least potentially so. The first is my own article, the only non-reprinted material in this issue. It concerns my relations with the editor of Ruritania, and I urge any of the publishers who are considering advertising openings to take it into consideration. The other is a vitriolic exchange of letters centering around Gary Behnen. Altho this dispute is close to three years old by now, several of the principles are still active in postal Diplomacy and indeed two of them started in the current Hoosier Archives demo game. In this regard I want to make a correction. Schlickbernd's address (6194 East 6th St., Long Beach Calif 90803) was not given there, as is my custom when an editor is no longer publishing. However, I see that he is now publishing a subzine to Claw & Fang, and plans to open a section of postal "Machiavelli", a dippy-like game available from Battleline.

Although I attempted to get some balance into this issue, I did not really succeed. Many of the disputes are quite long, and I did not want to shorten them substantially. This length is partially due to the fact that villifiers are often rather prolix, and partially because they often engender numerous responses. I have included with pleasure Mr Margar's excerpt, as he shows a rather atypical response to criticism, actually admitting errors. I am especially anxious for reader reaction to this issue. It is the first one to have absolutely nothing in the play-of-the-game category. Altho the issue is a fatso 21½ pages (the two-oz limit for the weight paper used by my printer) I still have plenty of material left over on this subject. If it proves popular, this type of issue can become an annual affair. Would you like that??

On the last issue, I must apologize for the printing. At the last minute, my printer took ill, and my choice was to delay it 3 weeks until I came back from England, or get it done via Xerox. I chose the latter. Also: I have had a good response to my request for opinions from GMs on the rules conflict set out on page 5 (Don Horton has even added a HR to cover the situation), and pubbers have come down on both sides of the question. The next issue will contain an article quoting opinions, so if you have some, get them in soon. Finally, I'd like to thank the editors of Runestone, The Diplomacy Journal, LILAF, Brutus Bullitin, and The Mixumaxu Gazette for their kind words on my behalf.

A LOOK AT AN UNPRINCIPLED GM: TONY WATSON  
by Mark L Berch

The only unprincipled GM it has ever been my misfortune to run across has been Tony Watson, the GM and editor of Ruritania. I base this conclusion on three game disputes with him, and one preliminary incident. In addition, he exhibits a carelessness in GMing which, in my opinion, borders on contempt for the interests of the players.

My sub to Ruritania began with #29, which printed the Spring 03 moves for game 1975IJ, including three NMR's. Attached was a copy of Kolwynia #4 with a correction on the game: All three NMR's had been caused by misplaced orders, and the corrected game was published. In #30, a game delay occurred because of a GMing error. In addition, I was asked to stand by for Russia in that game. In addition, a note was written on the zine, stating that my sub account was zero because my check never arrived, and that I'd better send some money.

I wrote back a letter, including a Xerox of my cancelled check. I also had a series of questions about the 1975IJ game. There were two apparent errors in the spring moves and the error correction in #30 referred to a non-existent fleet. As I did not have the winter 02 positions, I could not be sure what the correct version of these inconsistencies was. In addition, I had several other questions about the history of the game. The board was three units short -- was this missed builds, unsized neutrals or unprinted units? The ownership of several S.C.'s was unclear, and I did not want to pounce on something in a fall move which I already owned. I also included a few other items, such as a request for addresses, a request to purchase back issues (to clear up 1975IJ), and a note that contrary to what appeared in #30, an Austrian army in Ser could not be dislodged by a T-R attack in 1901.

Tony's reply was prompt and abrupt. He sent me back a check and cancelled my sub. I was stunned, really stunned. I searched the letter I had written him --- the only thing I could see was that maybe I had asked too many questions. I don't like to have such things unresolved, so I phoned him up to get the reason. He told me that the reason was that he didn't like my "sarcastic" remark about being trusting and generous. I'll read it to you:

"1. On the front of the issue, you state that my cheque never arrived, that I have no deposit and that my account is zero (You are very generous and trusting activating a subscription with no \$ in Hand). Enclosed you will find....."

You can decide for yourself if that's sarcastic. It was not intended as such and I assure you that around here your sub to DIPLOMACY DIGEST begins when I receive your \$, not before. Anyhow, that got straightened out, and I asked him about the other material in the letter about the game. He said he'd send me the addresses (which he did) but that he "Can't be bothered" with the rest of the questions. Imagine, I'm calling him Virginia to Nevada to get info on a game in which I've been asked to standby, and he can't be bothered. At any rate, #31 noted that he had standby orders from me but announced another game delay, because among other things -- you guessed it -- he had "misplaced" one set of orders.

I mention this preliminary incident not because I was in some way harmed (except for the phone bill, which was my doing), but because it foreshadows much of what comes later: Lost items, a general disinterest in the needs of the players, sloppy GMing and a hair trigger temper. Alas, I'd have been better off if I'd stayed out.

The first game dispute began with the publication of Ruritania #34 and the Spring 04 moves in 1975IJ. There was a big gap in the printed orders and my Russian A Ank-Con was missing. I wrote him immediately, and he writes back that it is my fault. What had happened was that in #33, after the builds, he had written a "has" list for each country. He had omitted A Ank, A Bul of mine, and A Pie of the French. For some reason, he selected only A Ank and disbanded it. I had not pointed out the error (in #33) before the publication of #34 and hence was too late.

me

This I vigorously protested. His House Rule required <sup>me</sup> only to report an error in an "adjudication". The has list could not possibly be considered an adjudication, as it

was merely a summary of the board situation. Furthermore, even if I had been required to do something, all his HR required was that I bring the error to the "attention" of the GM. It seemed to me that by ordering the unit to move that I was certainly bringing it to his attention. The fact that this procedure had worked was evidenced by the fact that 1) The move for A Bul was printed and 2) the move for A Ank was noticed and typed, even tho he later removed it. Finally, I do not see how the game could be helped by disbanding a unit that anyone who saw the fall moves would know existed. I also wrote to the Ombudsman for advice. While the HR's for Ruritania make it clear that the GM's decision is final, if the ombudsman felt that I was wrong on this, I wanted to drop the matter as soon as possible. He wrote back that there was no need for me to specifically point out the error, as it could not be considered an adjudication. Tony was unpersuaded and decided to put this to a player vote (something which he did not have to do). But he remained very touchy about this, as evidenced by the following from a letter to me (4-18-77) in which he complained about my writing to the ombudsman: "If I find that this going to a hassle [that's how he put it] I'm just going to go the easy way and forget the vote and play things as they are. I have more things to do than screw with these Diplomacy games." I agreed to the vote, and said that once the vote was put, I would send to the players a Xerox of my letter to Tony saying why I felt he was mistaken, my letter to the Ombudsman and his reply. This Tony agreed to, but he found a way to foil that. He set an extremely short deadline for the vote, 10 days after the postmark date on the zine. But it turned out badly, because of One other thing. All players were also required to resubmit their Fall orders, even if they were unchanged. The English player, who'd been having trouble with his mail due to a military-type address, received the zine the day after the shortened due date. He wrote back to Tony asking that his orders that he had sent in previously be used. After all, he was only a three center England, hardly to be affected by events in Turkey. And setting a move deadline of 10 days from the mailing date seems hardly fair. Nor was it necessary, as Tony had moves for him. Tony refused, and NMRed him, and the player, the last original player of the game, quit in disgust in 1904. The next to the last original player had resigned because of disgust with all the game delays. As there was no vote from the English player, A Ank was left disbanded. Further, even if I had won the vote (which Tony wrote me that he hoped I would) Tony stated that he still would not allow the move A Ank-Con.

The second dispute erupted in #37, which had the Fall 1901 moves in 1977FH, in which I was the German player. I was listed as having NMRed. The following appeared:

"As for Mr. Berch I can offer only the following. I seem to remember some orders typed along the margins of a personal note to me. I'm not sure if they were for this game or IJ. In any case, The personal letter went in a different pile and after noting was discarded. This is why I ask that all orders be submitted on separate sheets from other material."

My moves for 1975IJ were in fact printed. He also asked for a standby for Germany. In point of fact, I had written a personal letter, but the orders were typed at the end, clearly labeled by game, in their own paragraph, etc, followed by my signature and date. Tony Watson had come up with a rule, applied it retroactively and forced me to NMR. I say this because of the following:

1. There is no such rule in the HR's of Ruritania. None. There is a rule requiring that separate games be on separate sheets, and I've always followed that to the letter.
2. He has never mentioned such a requirement in Ruritania. Indeed, he even strongly implied that there is none. In #24 he has an entire article, running 14 lines, entitled "How to Submit Orders". No mention of this requirement is given.
3. I have put orders on the same sheet as personal letters in the past, and Tony never mentioned it, or objected to this. My Fall 04 Orders in 1975IJ included a good sized letter.
4. He implies that the policy is a new one by using the present tense "I ask", not "I asked". A small point but consistent with the above.

I wrote Tony back, sending 1) My orders for 1975IJ 2) My resignation from 1977FH 3) a letter explaining why I was resigning -- all on separate sheets, of course. I made the above points. I wondered why all the other games that had lost orders had game delays. I

had no interest in a long dispute, nor did I see any way of rectifying Tony's error, as the Fall 01 moves were already printed. I said that if he wanted to run 1977FH that way, fine, but it would be done without me. I also told him that I was notifying the other players of my resignation, and also the appointed standby, so that they could begin negotiations as soon as possible.

I want to dispose of one possible argument that might be raised in Tony's behalf. Perhaps he has a policy of just wanting to avoid delays at any cost, and he couldn't afford a phone call to me to get the orders. At that time I had received nine issues, with about 4 or 5 games in each, and there had been seven games delays already, including for reasons such as an insufficient number of orders received. Indeed, in that very issue 1976 BK had been delayed because -- try not to be surprised -- the Italian orders were accidentally thrown away.

I thought that that would be the end of it, but Tony precipitated a third dispute immediately. I received a postcard from him (8-8-77). In it he placed the blame squarely on me. This surprised me, as in the 1975IJ dispute he admitted that he had erred and had apologized. But then came the kicker. My position in 1975IJ was at stake. Tony demanded that in order to stay in 1975IJ I would have to 1) submit orders for 1977FH AND ALSO 2) submit an apology. If I did not agree to both, he would remove me from 1975IJ. This presented a real dilemma. My Russia had grown rapidly and I had a near certain win. I had not resigned from that game because of this, and also because I could see no reason to affect even more people by a dispute that had absolutely nothing to do with them or their game. One game was already marred; why make it two? Further, he didn't specify what I was to apologize for -- for resigning? The letter? For putting the moves on the same sheet as a personal letter? Not only that, but I could see no way of jumping back into a game after I had told the others that I was out. They might very well have made their builds on the basis on promises made by the new German player. They had every right to rely on what I had said. Clearly another phone call was in order.

Tony was initially hostile and I had to persuade him to even speak to me. But quickly we got to the point: Why did I have to resign from 1975IJ? Because, Tony said, I have a rule that if you resign from one game, you must resign from them all. No, he admitted, it wasn't in the HR's. No, he never had mentioned it in the zine (Does this begin to sound familiar?) But it was his rule, period. At one point, he let slip a most revealing point. He said -- and this is pretty close to his exact words -- "I had to kiss your ass on that other thing and I'll be damned if I'm going to do it again". We went 'round and 'round. I asked him about the apology, thinking perhaps I could get by with just that, altho it really bugged me that I'd have to apologize in order to stay in a postal diplomacy game. But I couldn't get anything specific out of him, other than my "attitude". My attitude toward what, I pressed. "You know what I'm talking about" he said. But I got nowhere. I said that he had no right to hold me to rules that I was not informed of. He said he's the GM and can run things anyway he wants. I think you can get the picture.

So it was with a feeling of impending doom that I opening #38, a mere 5 weeks late. Sure enuf, I had been removed from 1975IJ. But the incredible sloppiness of Watson's style continued. In 1975IJ -- I know this is getting repetitive -- the Italian orders were lost. In 1977FH he didn't have the decency to state that I had resigned. He just printed the new player's name, making it appear that I had dropped out, which I absolutely do not do. I'll have to inform the BNC so that this matter is corrected. One other thing. In #37, in 1975IJ he announced that "we played 1904 twice", and so it was not 1905 but 1906. This was in error and I told him so (W 03-#33; Sp 04-#34; Fall 04 never appeared in a Ruritania, W04-#36; Sp 05-37) but that means nothing to him; #38 labeled the season as calling for Fall 06 orders, and just for good measure, in #39 he called for Winter 07 and Spring 08 orders. More work for the BNC.

There's one point that I want to emphasize very strongly here. I ran afoul of three of Watson's rules: That the winter "has" lists count as adjudications, that moves must be on separate sheets from personal letters, and that if you resign from one game, then you must resign from them all. All of these rules are clearly within the ambit of the GM's authority.

((One of the most intensely villified personalities in all of Diplomacy history is Charles Reinsel, the target of the following. This did not appear in a zine per se, but as a special publication. It consisted of Conrad's letter, followed by a copy of Reinsel's letter. While this order is understandable, it makes a lot more sense to start with what came first, viz, Reinsel's letter, the date for which is unclear, and the source of which is unstated, but is presumed to be Big Brother, Reinsel's zine.)))

The Second Answer to the Paranoid of 1530½ Dale Street

We of BB 13, 14, 15, and 16 ((Reinsel does not use Boardman numbers)) are now being subjected to the pink toilet paper issues of the sick rantings and ravings and frothings of the mouth of the head 'Liar' of Costaliar! ((Von Metzke's zine was named Costaguana))

Conrad had a duplicator - I do not. Conrad can type with all of his fingers - I use one and it gets mighty tired. ((I use two. cvm)) Conrad works in the P.O. ((Old name for the US Postal service)) so he can mail out his stuff a lot faster and easier. Conrad will use hours of his time, thousands of words, hundreds of stamps and reams of paper to say BIG BROTHER IS NO GOOD! Well I don't publish magazines for queers. I don't have a queer come into my house. I don't even shake hands with one!

In Costaguana Vol six number 11 (24 March 73) Circulation 111; Page three Luxor, Conrad states, is "a Diplomacy zine geared to the homophile community" Conrad also states "Both Rod ((Walker)) and I know the real identity of Luxor's perpetrator." Conrad also says, "Aunt Clio is the pseudonymous editor of Luxor." Conrad later states, "For my (von Metzke's) part, I will have no part of people who try to ascribe authorship of Luxor to any individual in print. I RUN THE THING OFF, AND TO THAT EXTENT YOU CAN LINK MY NAME."

In Costaguana Vol six Number twelve...circulation 115...(14 April 1973) at the bottom of the front page Conrad states: I quote, "Personal Life: Aren't you creepies getting sick of my personal problems? I certainly am. However, I think they're settled for good now; I just filed formal divorce papers."

In Rename #7 Circulation 30 (21 April 1973), published by Grendel Press, Box 8342 San Diego Calif 92102 pg 5 Conrad states: "Its about time I mentioned a new reg. zine called LUXOR...Luxor is just a bit exotic...It is specifically directed toward the homophile community within our ranks...(Conrad continues)a sample can be obtained from me for free. You need not be gay but ought to be sympatico" End of Quotes. These are not smears. These are facts. These were all direct quotes from Conrad's zines he runs off and mails. Can't you understand that anyone who has anything to do with this is not going to play in our zine!

Hal Naus wrote me a letter dated 23 April. He is very angry at Conrad's accusal of cheating. This is the first he has heard of it. Well Conrad is a nice person ((Sic?)) I NEVER TOLD HIM IN FRONT OF CONRAD OR ANYONE ELSE THAT HE WAS A CHEAT. HAL KNOWS THIS. I KNOW THIS. Yet CONRAD twice puts this in print and mails it out. (12 April and 25 April.) HAL should floor Conrad on the spot for such a LIE. Please no one should believe this. I DONT.

On pg. 4 of the 25th Apr. shitpaper - Conrad states that prior to 12 April he had not know of my change of address until he received moves from me. Funny that BB #345 which he received in 3 or 4 days at the latest was sent out 6 April. and has said address at top!

Pg. 5. Rod never told me that Rod had refused to sell his English Diplomacy set. Conrad has in fact twice changed his moves in San Diego after reading Heuer's postcard. I informed Heuer of this. One time Heuer said at the bottom of card that was forwarded, Conrad its alright if you read this. Conrad did, changed his moves and stabbed Heuer! Oh, this is real ethics. This was one of the reasons I got so mad at Conrad!

RE: Costaliar #6 again, pg 15 Quote: "I know it violates my houserules and my policy, as stated last issue. I couldn't care less." This is the same man that has admitted in print different time that he accepted moves after deadlines have passed. So he can't spout "house rules" or ethics to anyone.

On Page 6 of his latest; he says that he never effected my entry into a game without my knowledge. I still have the phone game letter by James Kolvek he put me into a game as France. He was Austria, Naus was Italy. etc. PROOF: He asked me and I payed him \$3.00 for ARRAKIS 1972-EM he said he sent my name in for. Also ANSCHLUSS 1973I I still have #9 Dec 7, 1972 pg. 9 "Not only that but a 7th player has been dragged up for(our)game" & pg 10" #7. Charles Reinsel, (San Diego add. I didn't know Joe and only Conrad gave it to him.) "\$-I'd like to receive game fees from those whose names are marked with a \$" joa and more (((sic?))) a handwritten message bottom left of address, "C. von Metzke indicates you'd like to play DIPLOMACY - right?- (signed) Joe ((( Anstiock, editor of ANSCHLUSS)))" You see Conrad I can prove most of my statements!

Do you Conrad think I would call you a liar if I couldn't prove it somehow? Not me. Edi sent me (Birsan) postcard PH 24 April. No moves. This is his third miss. He's out of the game. Had he sent moves I would have accepted his resignation. Rule #14 applies here. I repeat! I f you eat shit JOIN Conrad. If not, stay with us. AND WE LIKE GIRLS! ALSO TRUTH!

((Reprinted verbatim by C. von Metzke, except format slightly condensed. Text, however, is unexpurgated)) ((( What follows is Conrad's rejoinder)))

TO: All players in the BIG BROTHER Diplomacy games.

Gentlemen,

You will recall having heard from me before. I return for what I expect will be the last time, and again respectfully request a few minutes of your attention to a matter of great importance to our hobby. (One of the reasons that this will be my last intrusion is that I can only get away with that lead-on so many times!) You will kindly excuse the paper; I am temporarily out of pink. However, I suspect that cowardice will serve quite as well as socialism.....

My defence will, this time, be far shorter, mercifully enough. I intend to deal with the homosexuality issue last; for the rest, let me say as follows (((Slow getting started, isn't he? Notice how he uses as different a style from Charles as possible))):

1. The subject of Harold Naus being a cheater is a difficult one to consider. Charles is right; Hal is upset. As with most people, he prefers to be called a cheat to his face. Charles Reinsel is emphatically not guilty of calling Hal a cheat to Hal's face; he did so to me, behind Hal's back. If you will read Charles' paragraph with rapt attention to devious semantics, you will note that this is not denied. (Dare I suggest it is tacitly admitted?) Charles is also correct that Harold is upset for other reasons. His upset, in fact, has been translated into a resignation from BB13 in protest of my expulsion.

And Harold is upset on one other level; he does not much like being dragged into the middle of an issue that is basically not relevant. On this I am the guilty party, and I am particularly at fault for mentioning Charles' accusations of cheating without also noting that such accusations are themselves false. Harold is as honest a person as I care to know; his resignation bore no relationship to the issue of cheating ( and was communicated to me long before said issue arose), and thus the latter has no place in this discussion. My solemn apologies to Hal and to the rest of you; I shall not discuss this matter again.

2. Charles asks why I claim not to have known of his Florida address until 12 April, when in fact I was notified on the 6th, said notice to have arrived "in 3 or 4 days at the latest." Credit our glorious USPS for another coup d'etat; the said notice of the 6th arrived here on the 12th, as I previously stated; as a matter of fact, it was in the same envelope with the moves mentioned by Charles.

3. Rod Walker didn't tell Charles that Rod wouldn't sell his British Diplomacy set to Charles. (How's that for rhetoric?) Rod told me, and I told Charles - about eleven seconds later, since Charlie was leaning over my shoulder while I talked on the phone.

4. "Conrad has in fact twice changed his moves in San Diego after reading Heuer's postcard." I deny the charge. If I am not mistaken, Charles saves all moves submitted in a game until the conclusion of said game. Therefore I suggest he prove his charges, with his customary facts and figures and suchlike. Until such proof is submitted -- and remember, I am denying the charge in the first place, so I don't anticipate losing the round -- I call Charles Reinsel down as a liar.

If I am mistaken, and Charles does not save all moves, then I have propounded a specious argument. At which point we revert to the brick wall syndrome, where Charlie calls me names and I reply in kind. As Mike Lind pointed out in a recent letter to me, many of these matters resolve down precisely to that level, devoid of documentary proof. It is therefore most unfortunate that charges unsupported by evidence should be bandied about in the first place. May I commend to your attention the recollection of who is bandying and who is defending? ((( Ah, since you raised the point, Conrad, you too are a bandier, having decided to "call down" Reinsel as a liar in the previous paragraph without even stating that you had evidence, much less proffering it.))).

5. There is next a mention of a statement of mine admitting a violation of my house rules. This is a specific case involving a game unrelated to the current matter, in which Reinsel is not involved. In the interests of Space, I will be happy to discuss the issue with any interested party, individually. As for accepting late moves, I have done, up until 1969. I still do in cases of postal failure or demonstratable emergency. As it happens, this does not violate my houserules in the slightest.

6. The rest of this letter - with the return to the homophile question to come - can be dealt with quickly. To quote Mr. Reinsel, "You see, Conrad, I can prove (sic) most of my statements".

Oh? You have proved, for example that I stuck you in games without your consent? No, no, Charlie, what you've proved is that I stuck you in games without the Gamesmatters' knowledge of your consent. There is something of a difference, you know. I repeat my contention; any game in which you were inserted as a player by me was joined with your consent, as per your blank-cheque request that I find you a bunch of games to join. (((What an odd request! Can people be so busy that they delegate the task of having themselves entered into games to other people?))) (By the way, you left out Circle Trigon and En Passant - the recently completed one.) And as to who paid fees to whom, Joseph Antosiak's (((Boy, I sure mangled that earlier))) address is.....Ask him who paid how many fees for whom. John Leeder can be written at...and the same question may be asked of him. If their memories fail, 10¢ pays for a Xerox of my cancelled cheques (Antosiak only; Money to Leeder due to international exchange problems, was cash). The payment to Leeder was repaid to Charles to me as per his prior agreement. Payment to Antosiak was not repaid, nor was it to have been. What particularly intrigues me about this whole drift of subject is that all of my 'illegal game placements' occurred prior to the beginning of 1973, and the first protest, either public or private was in April. That's quite a hiatus for such a massive subject. It is also worth noting that the two games you accidentally left out of your tabulation, Mr. R, are those in which you're doing (or had done) tolerably well; the games you list are the ones you're losing. That may not prove much, but if any reader is contemplating a psychology thesis, it could be a rewarding topic.

Well, I promised to keep this shorter than last time, and I may well land up lying to you again. But the matter of real seriousness is now before us: Although he doesn't exactly say it, Charles gives pretty strong implication that I'm a homosexual and that this has something to do with Diplomacy. (I think it has far more to do with ignorant bigotry, but that's not german either.)

I ask you to consider the following point as objectively as you can: Though Charles does not say "Conrad is a queer", in reading his paragraphs, don't you think the implications are pretty decisive? That is, given that his facts are true, isn't my homosexuality the logical conclusion?

Knowing full well your answer, I proceed.

Luxor. Yep, its a Dippy 'zine for homosexuals. (If interested, the address is...The game is free.) Yep, I publish it. Nope, I don't edit it. Every advertisement for the thing has made this distinction clear; I print it because I have a ditto machine and the editor doesn't.

My own preferences in sex. Yep, I'm "sympatico". (Ask a gay what that means sometime. "One who is not himself gay, but has no qualms about maintaining friendships with those who are.") Charles is kind enough to print that quotation from my publication; however, he conveniently neglects to include the very next line in the same ad: "However, I am very happily hetero, thank you."

My recent divorce. Does that indicate homosexuality? If so, Mr. Reinsel, how about coming to California and having an affair, since you were divorced last December. (((Hm. I thought you just said you were happily hetero))).

And now, another question for the reader. If out-of-context quotations, deliberate twistings of statements, omission of tempering information, vapid irrelevancies, and an overall tenor of vicious bigotry do not constitute a smear, then please define a smear for me.

Time for a summary, and I'll be gone. I submit that Charles Reinsel has engaged in the most slanderous campaign of villification and vituperation in the history of Postal Diplomacy. I submit that he has done so with innuendo, misquotations, irrelevancy, obvious malice and gross impropriety. I submit that we have yet to see a single solid fact; and if the same charge can be leveled at me, I rejoin by noting that in the American system of jurisprudence - in this nation which Mr. Reinsel so vehemently claims to support - it is the accuser upon whom falls the burden of proof; if I am to be called a liar, a cheat, an un-American, a queer - let the accuser show us the proof that he spouts instead of additional innuendos and falsely-constructed inferences that have to now been delivered, or let him stand to account for perjury (((While Conrad's burden-of-proof argument is certainly in accord with common sense, his reliance on the legal system is a gross oversimplification. It is only in criminal charges, not in civil charges, that the burden of proof lies squarely with the accuser. Indeed, the closest thing to a criminal charge in this might well be Conrad's use of the word "perjury", which is a purely criminal term))).

I submit that Charles Reinsel is a blight on this hobby; that his influence is a gross deterrent to any novices or neophytes that may be subjected to it; that his manner and mode have the potential to damage the commercial spread of this game to new hobbyists.

I submit that to remain as a player in a game under the banner of Charles Reinsel is to condone his actions by default (((This strikes me as a gross non-sequitur))). This statement above all bears the most careful thought, because it could very well happen to someone else. (In BB 16, the specific threat has been made to expell anyone from the game who distributes game data to others, except as approved by Reinsel. Two players are already doing this, and have been since the game began; they do so by passing on their copies of the moves - which, I submit, are their property - to other parties, one of whom is I. The threat might be translated "Pay me eight dollars, but don't dispose of your own property as you see fit, or I will keep the money and boot you out." If this appears far-fetched, you haven't read Mr. Reinsel's threat.) It is thus my view that arbitrary misapplication of the Gamemaster's gavel must be met by rapid and overwhelming counter-response; such misuse of position against one is an implicit misuse and a slur against all.

I cannot commend to you strongly enough the fullest and most in-depth analysis of my points.

We have carried this to the ultimate limit of sane endurance, and I beg forgiveness for my excesses. Because I believe this issue to be of paramount significance, I have intruded. My gratitude for your consideration.

Correspondence, particularly with those who disagree with me on any level, is eagerly sought. Public anonymity guaranteed.

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Here are two different styles of zine-criticism. The first comes from Ethil the Frog #34, page 7, presumably written by the editor, John Piggot. The second is from "The Orphan" #17 1/12/74 (Oops, EtF date is 9/16/73): 1. The Bolshevik Star, with no shadow of Doubt (Oops #2 TO editor is JH Fleming)

Is quite the worst zine that has ever come out

Its editor rants

And curses and pants

If he annoys you, just give him a clout

2. I have nothing personal against Mr Marsland, the publisher of Mars Vigila, but I must say that his zine is an absolute piece of shit.



(((This dispute begins in Poictesme #18 (7-24-75) edited by Bruce Schlickbernd)))

To Gary Belman:

I understand that you have accused me directly of writing to warn you of the evil character of a player who is in one of your games and in 1975CI with me. Also that you are now making across-game threats in my name, suggesting I arranged this deal with you.

Please send me a photostat of the letter you purport to have immediately. If it exists, I did not write it.

I know only a couple of Canadian players in this zine, excellent characters and players both, and would never purport to judge or know the reputation of the player in question here. Nor do I engage in cross-game deals or smearing of other players. Those who have been my mentors in my year of play have taught me both tactics and a certain code of ethics which are informal, but which I find most good players tend to abide by. Diplomacy is the best game I know played for fun, but I see no reason or necessity for trying to engender personal animosities and hatred. Nor do I appreciate the attempt to make me into a dirty bastard capable of anything, as you apparently are if you have not been fooled.

So send the photostat immediately if you indeed have a letter signed "Patrick Efron". If not, stay the fuck out of my games. I should like to know your reasons for misrepresenting me in this way, and an apology. I refuse to engage in similiar tactics against you. My address is: 322 Clinton, Grand Haven, Michigan 49417.

I should like to note for the benefit of other players who may have been aware of this situation that I find John Weswig to be a good opponent, not a tyrant, paranoid, mad stabber or liar all of which he has been called in my name, and I am glad that such a nasty approach to the game, designed to make us into bitter personal enemies has been discovered.

If you have the letter, send it. If not, perhaps you and your cohort (whose identity is clear to me) would like to come out of the wordwork for a public discussion of across the game play and its legitimacy or illegitimacy?

Yours,

Pat Efron

((( Here and in the rest of the exchanges, the double parenthesis are Bruce Schlickbernd)))

((First, let me note that I have not seen any proof one way or the other, however, judging by a press release John Weswig has submitted, and the possible aspersions cast upon my name just recently, there is definately something afoot. Without pointing an accusing finger at anybody, let me say a few words on the subject.

((When writing my house rules, I wasn't quite sure what to do with people who indulged in cross game alliances. Throwing them out is pretty radical to say the least, and is something I probably wouldn't do. When I said in my house rules that players may deceive each other to their hearts content, I was assuming that the players would employ some form of discretion. Thus, saying that a player offered you an alliance to a third party when he didn't is part of the game. Even faking a letter to verify such a lie is okay (Ped Bear did this in a game in En Passant). However, there is a point where negotiations can go beyond the termination of a "game". Specifically, when a player tries to start a personal feud between two other players by lying about correspondence in such a way that the hatred goes to a personal level rather than in context of Diplomacy as a game. You don't just go around saying that "Joe Stab called you a god damn s.c.b., let's ally against him". This is a game.

((Now, going on to cross-game dealings. When playing in a Diplomacy game, one should keep his correspondence in attempts to gain alliances and the like restricted to that game only, e.g. two players are in two games together, one says to the other that "if you'll help me in this game, I'll help you in the other." That is not fair to the other players since you are bringing something into the game they can't have a chance to deal with. Allying with one fellow in several games is fine if you do it out of trust or convenience, but trying to gain an advantage out of it in another game isn't right. Nor are cross-game threats, where you say, "I'll attack you in this one if you don't stop attacking me in the other."

((Finally, I may note that the cross-game player is ultimately slitting his own throat inasmuch as most players are firmly opposed to such tactics, and if the word gets out that you deal in such things, you deserve what you get.

((Let me clarify that by printing Pat's letter I do not in any way present that as a condemnation of Gary on my part, nor as an accusation of him of any of the above. If some one is actually indulging in cross game bad mouthing, threats, extortions, or alliances, I hope that it is simply out of ignorance of the unfair nature of such, and hopefully apologies will be tendered to the agrieved parties.))

MY MAILBOX OVERFLOWETH

GARY BEHNEN: "Recently in issue #18 of Poictesme, I was libelously assaulted by Mrs. Efron. Originally I planned to ignore such total absurdities, but on second thought, silence in this instance could possibly be construed by some to mean that the allegations made were true.

"I shall not lower myself to indulge in a feud with a gutter-mouthed, gutter-minded individual. I have better uses for my time.

"I have no need to prove my reputation, as any player I have ever played with knows these accusations are merely a libelous assault, attempting to smear my name and reputation in the Diplomacy hobby. For those of you that have yet to play in a game with me, I only ask that when we meet, this shall not prejudice you too much. Such detestable tactics, even though totally false, always leaves an adverse impression. I ask only that you let my actions and play and not the foul-mouthed, hysterical words of others, influence your opinions of me.

"I hope no innocent parties have been affected in any way by this petty attempt. Since when has any publication doubled as the post office? If Patricia Efron truly lived by her self-styled ethics, she would have sent the letter directly to me. She has obviously engaged in threats, bad-mouthing, use of profane language, smears, and her own brand of deception of the Gamesmaster and players."

((This is the official letter Gary sent me in response to Pat Efron's letter (which was actually press, but we'll get to that later). He also sent another letter to me, which he specifically denied me permission to reprint. Whereas any letter sent to me by law becomes my personal property, and I can do with it what I will, I would normally honor such a request. However, due to the situation, the claims that Gary makes, and veiled threats that if I don't do exactly as he says, he'll make trouble, I found myself coming to the reluctant conclusion that the only way to set things right and defend myself (Gary's "adverse impressions" apply to everyone, not just him) properly is to do so publically. I only do this after great deliberation, and I offer my sincere apologies to Gary for disregarding his request (order) not to even mention the following letter. My comments will follow, and I would advise you not to take anything that Gary says at face value.))

Dear Mr. Schlickbernd,

Enclosed please find a response to the letter from Patricia Efron. I request that this response to her letter be printed in issue #19, even if it would mean deleting some press. If you chose to refuse to print this, I shall find someone that will. I also will tell that person why I was forced to come to them.

When reading issue #18 of Poictesme, I was abhorred to find the Patricia Efron to Gary Behnen letter, for many reasons.

1. I had not been notified that I was being assaulted. I feel it would have been only fair to have received a letter from you stating that she has made such an assault. In that letter you should have asked if it was a lie, will you ignore it, or would you like to disprove it. What happened though was that I was NEVER notified. I only see two possible explanations: You either felt you had the authority to do what you pleased, or you knew to act in an orderly fashion would disallow the printing of such a libelous assault, and consequently, you would again be thwarted in your attempts to discredit me.
2. That you allowed this attack to be conducted without any proof, fabricated or otherwise.
3. That you didn't even attempt to edit the profane language. Who would want to show this trash to someone interested in the hobby?
4. That you placed the letter and your comments such that it appeared that I was guilty of the allegations. i.e. Between Mr. Buchanan's letter about Mr. Beshara and your explanation on cross game threats.
5. That you stated this wasn't a condemnation only at the very end. If it was to appear only once, it should have appeared immediately after the letter and not at the insignificant spot in which it was thrown. I feel you acted very unwisely, as this whole incident sheds an even worse light on you and your publication.

I vehemently suggest that in issue #19 of Poictesme, you openly admit:

1. That you were wrong in permitting Poictesme to be used as a vehicle for personal assaults.

(Behnen's letter, cont.) 2. That you were unwise for printing such an assault without proof.

3. That you hope that any innocent parties involved have not suffered any adverse consequences from this personal assault.

4. (if you are mature enough) I apologize to Gary Behnen, and these assaults are to my knowledge, false. ((First person usage is Gary's, not mine))

I ask that you only do what should justly be done. I also request that after my response, you shall refrain from permitting Poictesme to be used as a vehicle for personal assault.

So you can understand the situation clearly, I shall inform you of the events leading up to this assault, and why the assault was conducted.

Mr. John Weswig and I were in 1974GS. When he entered ((as a standby player)), we made an agreement, and in less than 2 seasons, he broke it. That was only the start. By this time, I was in two other games with him. I worked diligently to form new agreements. In 1974GS, we agreed upon a plan, whereby he left Holland. Again, he broke it. Meanwhile, my other games suffered because he hinged all our games and alliances together. So, after coming under assault in three separate games, I wrote and told him that for us to come to terms would require that he acted in one certain way in 1974GS. In that communication, I only mentioned the other games. (Because he does cross games, he interpreted this as a cross game threat, which it was not). At this same time he sent correspondence, and the letters crossed in the mail. In his letter, he stated he had personal problems and he gave his consent to plans that would throw two of our three games in my favor. To this I sent a very positive reply and apologized for my previous harsh stand. (If ever asked, he'll probably deny that letter ever arriving). After that his personal problems cleared up. But he was stuck with strong commitments to me, and it was against his nature to go through with them. He needed a way out, so he took my letter of June 22, 1975 and stated that it contained a cross-game threat. ((Excuse me for interrupting. You omit several dates from when the letters arrived; did your apology and his claim of you making cross-game threats cross in the mail?)). He went on to become hysterical and began making absurd rationalizations. In that letter he stated, "...aid in your elimination from any game you ever enter." he had saved his situation by taking my letter and reading things into it. He could "justly" now claim it as a cross game threat, and that's why he didn't stick to his agreements. Well, I then sent a letter back and exposed his whole ploy to him. This scared him because he knew his ploy was uncovered. He feared that I would be as low down as to publically try and smear him with the evidence in hand ((none of which, I should note, Gary offers me)). So, he must discredit me first. He then embarked on a campaign to eliminate me from any game I ever enter. He first riled Mrs. Efron up by using words and twisting sentences of my letter around to accuse me of conducting cross game threats in her name. He then prompted her to attack me, so no suspicion would be cast upon his name. It's obvious she has no cold hard facts as subconsciously admits in her opening sentence, "I understand..." It's obvious that Mr. Weswig tried to have me painted as a villain and himself the good guy as she later absurdly remarks, "...not a tyrant, paranoid, mad stabber, and liar..." Anyone that has had the experience of following Mr. Weswig knows that he is a paranoid, a mad stabber, obviously a liar, and probably a tyrant although he hasn't had that opportunity. So, this worked out very well for him. If I did attack him now, he'd be able to call on my "demonic" and his "angelic" reputation as he printed in issue #19 of Poictesme. Thereby ridding himself of any blame.

Well, I could go into greater detail, but the main points have been covered. This allows you a taste of what is afoot.

With that in mind, I hope you now understand I'm not a crybaby. I don't want to assault Mr. Weswig as I feel that such tactics are detestable. This is a game, and I try to win, but I refuse to indulge in such activities.

If you do get some fabricated truth, I ask that you request the original letter so you can judge for yourself. Also, any comments that might be added, please ignore them, as this is HIS interpretation, and what he wants you to believe. ((Again, excuse me for interrupting, but this can't wait until the end. Gary asks me to accept what he said without any "original" letters. He then requests a double-standard: the preceding was Gary's interpretation, and is what he wants me to believe. I am not saying he is deliberately misrepresenting anything, but he is being hypocritical as to accepting evidence)).

(Behnen's letter Cont.)

I hope this enlightens you on what has occurred, so that in the future you better understand what I'm up against and why.

Enclosed you should also find a photocopy of a letter from Mark Zimmerman to Gary Behnen. I send it in its entirety so you couldn't possibly construe this as false. I bring special attention to the bottom of the second page.

((The salient portion reads, "Eric (Verheiden) mentioned, by the way, that "Pat" is short for Patricia, Ron Efron's wife...maybe it's some small secret, since in her letter she makes references to "Patrick Efron" and half leaves the impression that's who she is."))

I'm very glad to see women interested and playing in the hobby. I have found it enjoyable to play with them, and I'm allied with one in one of my games. But, male or female, I don't condone breaking of the house rules. Patricia Efron has been deceiving you. It's not that I have anything against women, but there is a principle at stake, and that's the breaking of one of your house rules.

Your house rules clearly state that deception of the GM in any form is not permissible and results in ejection from the game. Mrs. Efron has obviously deceived you by leading you to the conclusion she is a male.

If you already know, then both you and Mrs. Efron are guilty of deceiving the players. If this is the case, you should have stated that "Pat Efron" is playing under false pretense.

Whatever, she should be ejected from the game, and her little ploy uncovered. I'm confident this shall be the case ((it isn't)), unless you are bias and arbitrary in your rulings ((I'm not)). I have presented proof, and the facts speak for themselves. Still, if you don't believe it, call Mrs. Efron and ask her. Just tell her it was brought to your attention, as there is no need to tell her who. But the money would only be wasted as she is obviously guilty.

If you don't make it clear to all subscribers of your 'zine, I shall. This gives them a definite disadvantage when playing with her. When dealing with a female, you don't correspond in the same manner as with a male. If you refuse to inform the subscribers, I see it only fair that I inform them, and tell them that you refused to.

As for your chronic antipathy towards me. You've held something against me for a long time ((This is news to me)). Thus, when she attacked me, you seized upon the opportunity to discredit me without investigation. You hoped this would divert attention from the aspersions cast upon you, to the personal feud between Mrs. Efron and myself. If this is the case, I'm sorry to see a GM and publisher go so low to try and clear their name.

You have been down on me ever since I questioned your "neutral" orders ((Refers to the Spring 1901 orders made for Italy in 1975I that were made according to my House Rule #10)). You felt that this was an attack on your "authority". After you sent your rather snobbish explanation to me, there were no problems. I then sent a suggestion on how to clarify that house rule. Well, you did just that, but you never acknowledged the fact that I gave you the idea or that the rule was ever questioned. Instead, you took full credit. Even though you took something away from me, you were still enraged I ever questioned you, and you were bent on revenge.

Then, I warned you of the aspersions cast upon you. At first, they were hard to believe, but now, they may possibly be true. Why else would you become so shook and create a new ruling about locality? ((?)) I was also surprised to see you more or less condemn yourself, i.e. "...are rather one way." ((Full quote: "A player in one of the games herein expressed the fact that I "discuss" these games with some of the players. You need not worry, the only "discussions" I have are rather one-way: they tell me what they are doing or planning on, and I say nothing." Please note that the word "discussion" is in quotes; I do not discuss the games <sup>with</sup> anyone, though they might tell me what they are up to. Both local and players as far away as Canada do this)) How can you have one-way discussions' ((Gary omits the quotation marks around discussion, he obviously missed the whole point)) Also, how can you sit like a stoneface when they expose their plans? I doubt that you are a dummy, some facial expression must be shown. I feel you are wrong to even converse with a friend about a game in which one of you is the GM and the other a player. No wonder the person felt cheated.

In a card to me you state that Bruce Killian and Chuck Davis emphatically replied "no" when you questioned them if your discussions ever led them to any conclusions about the game. How dumb do you have to be to admit that you received information from the

(Behnen's letter cont.)

GM pertaining to the game that no one lese received? It wouldn't only ruin their reputations, it would destroy your publication, and could possibly cause your freindship to cease.

I tried to be fair and warn you of the suspicion that was lurking outside. But, if I'm going to be handed libelous assaults, personal threats, and abuse, I shall refrain from trying to warn and/or help you in the future.

You stated that you only adjudicate the games, not play in them. Correct me if I am wrong, but I've always played under the assumption that press was a very real part of the game ((an assumption I don't subscribe to)). So, your little comments after someone's press does change the events, thereby changing the game.

Press normally uses 50%-75% of a publication, especially yours. The players work hard to create press releases and they don't expect or appreciate their efforts being torn apart and ridiculed by the GM and/or publisher. You should be much more considerate for if everyone stopped writing press, Poictesme would end up on the same level as a carbon copy print-out.

Obviously you edit press at your whim. It should be stated that you will edit for all or none. You should not touch up a select few.

In conclusion, I suggest you stick to adjudicating the games and staying completely out of them. If you want to write press, enter a game, but please don't take pot shots at us, because it does change the games, and the one you attack is by no way favored.

You can run your 'zine in any fashion that appeals to you. You have basically two choices, though. You can run it to be used as a vehicle for personal assaults on "enemies" and to help friends unjustly, or you can shy away from those ego trips and publish a respectable zine, in which games are run in a totally unbiased way, with rulings that aren't arbitrary, but absolutely just.

In the past I've supported Poictesme. I've recommended it to friends and a few have subscribed. But, the recent quality of your publication leaves something to be desired. I sincerely believe you will straighten things out, and when you do, I'll start drumming up support for your 'zine again. But until that time, I shall only be a subscriber. So, enclosed please find \$2.00 for ten issues of Poictesme. I should now receive issues 19-29 of Poictesme, inclusive.

I DO NOT give you my permission to print this letter in part or in its entirety. I also don't permit any references to be made to this letter. Nor do I permit the contents herein to be used in any assaults or investigations you may conduct, without my permission.

If you do refer to this letter in any fashion in spite of my warnings not to, you may suffer severe consequences.

I hope your antipathy towards me can be cast aside. I'd like to be able to lay foundations for a friendly relationship. I don't want your enmity, nor do I believe you want mine. But, if you do indulge in attempts to smear my name, I shall defend myself. In my defense, I shall use any weapon available to me, as long as it's valid and proven, for I neither condone or encourage libelous assaults.

Sincerely,  
Gary Behnen

((I must point out that Pat Efron's letter was technically press: I only presented it in the letter section so as to temper it with my comments. From that standpoint, I really don't have to notify anybody inasmuch as people are always attacking each other in the press. But more to the point in answering point one in your letter, you should realize that since I do not actually prohibit cross-game alliances and threats (though perhaps I should), Pat's letter did not directly concern me. That dispute, then, is between you and Pat, and since I enter into it only obliquely, there is no justification in claiming that I must notify you. If Pat had claimed that you had sent orders to me in her name, that would have been different, and I would have conducted an investigation before I presented the charges (r allowed them to be presented)publically. Your comments that I was trying to discredit you are patently ridiculous: I did not write the letter in question? Did I attack you in any way with my comments that followed Pat's? No, of course not, if anything, I defended you. Further, I carefully pointed out that by printing Pat's letter, I in no way presented it as either the truth or an echo of my own opinion. On point 2, again, the dispute was between you and Pat, and I contemplate no action on the matter. On point 3,

since when do I ever edit "profane" language? Your language would have to be pretty repulsive before I edit it. Point 4 is without basis. Pat's letter was placed after Walt's simply by chance, and my comments followed her letter because most readers wouldn't know what I was talking about if I placed them before the letter. I doubt if anyone assumed guilt by association besides yourself. Point 5: so? You are simply being picky. The point was that I did point out that I was not condemning you, nor was it placed so as to be insignificant.

((I do not believe I was wrong in allowing Pat's press, therefore, point one of your second set is immaterial. Point 2 is answered above. I stated last issue that I hoped that the matter could be settled among the players involved with a minimum of hurt feelings. My whole comment was basically a plea to the players to resolve the matter intelligently. I can see where nobody, including you, even bothered to try. Anyway, point three has been answered sometime ago. Point 4: I have not acted wrongly, and thus no apology will be forthcoming.

((If John Weswig did break his agreements (I have no idea one way or the other, and you offer no evidence) that is part of the game. Certainly in your article printed in Claw & Fang and Centurion you even encourage this. In any case, it is immaterial to the discussion. If you did write to John and say that you would attack him in your other games if he did not cooperate in 1974GS, that could be validly construed as a cross-game threat, whether you meant for it to be or not. On the other hand, if you said that judging by 1974GS that John was untrustworthy and not worth the risk in other games, your case becomes stronger. I can't say because I haven't seen the letter. And if you did not intend to make cross-game threats, that doesn't mean by accident you might have made it appear so. Things are rarely black and white; did either you or John pause to think that you both might be wrong? Much of what you write after that point is unsupportable surmises and I cannot accept them as presented. He was probably just as sincere as you, but being sincere does not necessarily make one right.

((How can you ask me to print your comments on Pat's letter without offering proof one way or the other, and ask me in the same breath to deny this to others? Gary, you must look at the argument from other's viewpoints, too. I don't think you intended to be hypocritical, but that is effectively what you have done.

((Pat Efron is, indeed, Patti Efron. I was invited into a game in Paroxysm, and the French player was listed as Patrick Efron, and at the same time, this Patrick Efron asked if he could enter a game in Poictesme. I replied in the affirmative. Upon receiving the house rules, Pat immediately informed me that it was Patricia, not Patrick. You have not read the rule completely, Gary, for HR #2 regarding players goes on to state that players may play under pseudonyms with the GM's permission. Normally, I would have informed players that her name was Patti, and she told me to go ahead and tell the players if it would cause trouble if I didn't. However, Harry Drews had allowed it, and it would have blown her cover for that game, so I allowed her to continue under the name "Pat" without specifying that it was really Patti. Inasmuch as it was simply a permutation of the same name, it was hardly a sin. And the rule does state, "A player must play under his own name..." though don't try and use that, women, I will nail you. Anyway, since the alias was used with my permission in accordance with my house rules, I was not deceived by Patti and she remains in the game. Moreover, I should note that your "proof" that Patti was insufficient for me to have acted on that alone. Zimmerman did not say whether the addresses of Patrick and Patricia Efron matched, nor did he know for sure himself—I know, I was there when Eric mentioned her name as Patti. You have jumped to conclusions that are not supportable by the evidence you have. I am not required to tell anyone that a particular player is playing under an alias, and I do not agree that I should have stated such. Besides, did you call Mrs. Efron and be sure? Finally on the subject of Ms. Efron, you handed me an ultimatum in your letter to kick her out, but not allowing me to say a thing about your letter if you happened to be wrong. This was one of the prime reasons I am printing your letter: you gave me no alternative if I am to defend myself against any expose you decide to tell the players, never once considering that you might be wrong.

((Your statement that when dealing with females, you don't correspond in the same manner as you do with males, is precisely one of the reasons why Patti asked to play under the name Patrick. She wanted to be accepted (or not accepted as the case may be) for herself, not her gender. You have informed everyone, now, that it is Patti, not Patrick. I trust you are pleased with yourself. And Pat, your cover was blown in 1975R by someone other than me, which is why I went ahead and discussed this.



((We now come to the main reason why I am reprinting your letter. Whatever antipathy I felt towards you was wholly in your mind. What do you offer to justify your claim that I seized upon to further this imagined grudge? You are totally lacking in any form of intelligent rational on this matter. You are behaving akin to Captain Queeg. For the benefit of the readers, allow me to give some background. In 1975CI, the Italian player missed his Spring 1901 orders for a country that defaults in either Spring or Fall 1901. This was taken directly from the Grendel Press house rules (Conrad von Metzke), who was, when he put his mind to it, one of the best GMs around. Rod Walker also employs this rule, but only for Spring 1901. I had my brother make up several sets of possible orders, with the restrictions that Venice must be covered, that the second army be in a position to support Venice if necessary, that he not violate any foreign territory, and that the fleet in Naples could move to Tunis in the fall. One was picked at random, which read F Nap-Ion, A Rom-Apu, A Ven H. This was construed by Gary as an anti-Italian opening. Apparently he had been reading too many Lepanto articles as I can quite guarantee anyone that asks that it is very easy to attack Austria from that position, or France for that matter. Anyway, Gary howled, apparently unaware that this set-up was in no way exclusive to attacking Turkey alone, and thus it met my requirement of being neutral. I carefully explained all this to Gary trying my hardest not to be insulting or curt; I was hardly snobbish, though after Gary's rather offensive letter, I would have been justified if I had done so. That would have solved nothing, however, and I figured that a soft answer would mollify him best. Gary did suggest that I clarify (well, demanded, but let's not go into that) my procedure for obtaining the neutral moves, and whereas I thought it a waste of time (what difference does it make how I get them as long as they fit the bill of being neutral?) out of courtesy to Gary, I did so. The actual technique was my own, so I didn't even suspect that Gary's ego demanded that he be given credit for the clarification. He certainly didn't tell me. And as to the point of my not mentioning that the ruling was ever questioned, well, if I had acknowledged that, I would have reprinted Gary's letter, and I figured I was doing him a favor by not printing. If you insist, Gary, I will print it. I immediately forgot about the matter since Gary seemed to be happy, and didn't voice any more protests. Judging by this recent letter, I would say that it was Gary who was harboring the grudge against me, not the other way around. Why Gary claims that I was enraged or bent on revenge is beyond me, all I can assume is that he is overly-sensitive or slightly paranoid. After all, I'm not the one who made a big production number over it.

((The "aspersions" Gary mentions are in regards to an episode where one player was intimating that I was favoring local players. There was no basis for the claim, and it was entirely a ploy to get the players to ally against Long Beach players. Gary sent me a letter, not of warning me about these plots, but accusing me of them. I was warned that someone was bad-mouthing me by another player. Aside from it being a goddam lie that I was helping anyone, it brought something into the game that was unfair to both the local players and myself. How could Bruce Killian or Chuck Davis defend themselves against this kind of attack. I was not going to stand for it, be the attack be aimed at Killian, Weswig, Bohnen, or Beshara. Thus I made it quite clear that anybody indulging in this pasttime (which comes under the heading of deceiving the other players concerning GM rulings) would be thrown out for good. I gave this person the benefit of the doubt that he didn't know better, but if anyone tries it again, they will be sorry they ever heard of Diplomacy. I do not "discuss" the games with Bruce or Chuck in any way, shape, or form. Almost every GM has local players in his games, they all seem to be able to cope with it, what makes you think I can't? I do very well at both poker and FTF Diplomacy, games that require that you give nothing away by facial expression. And as an example: Bruce Killian was pondering whether he should trust Turkey in 1975I and leave Serbia and Greece open or not. He did this right in front of me, since he uses my Diplomacy Board to prepare his moves. I knew that Turkey was moving to Ser and Gre, and yet he didn't defend them even though I was sitting right there in front of him. I should point out that the Turk made it successfully to Ser and Gre, and that Turkish player was you, Gary. How you have the gall to throw this in my face when you are proof otherwise, I'll never know. And further, I made none of those "libelous assaults, personal threats, and abuse" to you, and why you blame me for them is a mystery. Can you say the same about making "libelous assaults, personal threats, and abuse" towards me?

((You are wrong regarding the press (well, you asked me to correct you). My comments

only appear when someone has handed me a straight line ("He (Pope Zanias) went on to comment that he was happy to have married the Feuhrer," I mean, when you are going to hand me that on a silver platter, I'm going to take it), when someone writes something so garbled that it doesn't make sense (As in the last sentence in your Ankara release last issue), or when someone puts his foot in his mouth. I was hardly out to get you when I made comments following your press. Besides, I have made more snide remarks about John Baker's press than anyone's, so you hardly have the corner on the market. "My little comments" may effect the press, but hardly the game.

((There are very few people who write as much press as I do, and I know just as well as anyone what kind of effort goes into writing a press release. However, I am one of the very few publisher's that allow open press, and much of the rotten stuff gets printed that the space could otherwise be devoted to something of more interest or humor. Thus, poorly written press may be put down by me just so I can keep my sanity. I am trapped into having to type it and it can get quite tedious for someone who types as poorly as I do, even if the press is excellent. I appreciate the effort, but many times very little effort has been put into press, and many times commendable effort goes into a very poor product. I'm simply trying to give you a hint that you may have blown it. However, I allow it so that people who want to write press can get some practice. If I edited press for content, and rewrote that which was poorly written such as Rod Walker does, then my comments would undoubtedly disappear. However, as long as I keep an open press policy, I reserve the right to comment on anything submitted to Poictesme for printing. Again, you are being overly-sensitive: I have corrected your poor grammar or spelling many times in your press; you simply do not notice when I help you. And on Margaret Gemignani's press, I have to correct it just so that it is coherent. This is why I ridiculed the "Comte d'Aimer's" press claiming that Margaret wasn't french because her french was so poor. Utter waste of everyone's time. Peggy has enough trouble with English—attacking her on her french is superfluous.

((I don't know where you got your figures regarding the amount of space press takes in the average Dippozine since it is my experience that your percentages are quite high. And if everyone stopped writing press for Poictesme, I would have more room to write myself, so Poictesme would hardly become a mere carbon copy zine. If I didn't put out more press on my own in three weeks than is submitted by all the players in Poictesme put together, I could make Poictesme run 20 or more pages every issue. However, I like the press on the whole, and I appreciate the effort, even if it misses the mark sometimes. I never "touch up" anyone's press except to correct blatant errors in syntax, spelling, and punctuation, etc. I never condense it, or print part of a press release. I hate Reader's Digest. If anything is ever left out of someone's press, it is simply an error on my part in transcribing it, and I should note that I am a very poor typist.

((GM participation in press wars is well established in the hobby, and such prominent GM as John Boardman and Rod Walker have indulged in such. The precedent is there. Do you want me to charge all those people who are "playing" as minor countries in 1974GS gamefees?

((Your threat of "severe consequences" is somewhat disturbing. To have dealt with some of the points you brought up in your letter, I was going to have to refer to it, so as long as I'm going to be damned for that, I might as well print the whole thing. How you can say you don't like threats and then threaten me seems rather bizarre. You certainly don't make a good case for yourself. And if you do carry out your threat, I assure you that you are the one who is going to be worse off. I hope that you would act more maturely, but on the basis of previous letters where you heap vituperations on me rather than discuss the problem rationally, I don't know.

((I am deeply saddened and disappointed that you would write a letter like that. I am not mad about it since I tentatively credit to your inexperience, ignorance of both the hobby and people, and plain poor judgement. You accredit motives to me that you cannot establish by any logical arguments, why? You had best learn now that you should not decide what people think for them, and you are lucky that I am trying to solve the problems rather than replying in kind.

((So, we finally come back to the start of this. You say you are against cross-game threats. So does John. So does Patti. So do I. When the whole thing came up, I was rather surprised that you were being accused of such. My thoughts on the matter were either whoever had made the threat had done so unconsciously, unintentionally, not aware that it was bad form to do so, or that it was a simple misunderstanding. I cannot solve



solve the problem for you, all I can do is urge you to discuss it amongst yourselves rationally and intelligently. John is not an ogre, and will talk about it if you try. I know that from experience. From my own viewpoint, I thought from the start that it was a colossal misunderstanding. But since this does not involve the rules, I can do nothing about it except offer advice, and hope that you show some measure of maturity and solve the question yourselves.

((And as to Gary's remarks concerning me, they are entirely without foundation. Why he makes my decisions for me is a question I can't answer. I did not feel antipathy towards during, or after any of the incidents he named. It is unfortunate that he should feel this way. Again, I apologize for reprinting your letter, but if I am to function properly as a GM, then I must meet your charges head-on and prove them to be false.

((Comments are invited.))

\* \* \* \* \*

((Well! With all that fire and brimstone, you can imagine that #20 had plenty on this, some of which I'll summarize and some of which will be quoted. In an article entitled "THERE IS NO TRUTH TO THE RUMOR THAT JIM DIEHL IS REALLY GOEBBELS----I THINK" (this is a reference to Diehl's well known Nazi tendencies, at least in print) he commented on Diehl's "open letter". Three people, he noticed, wrote him in agreement with Jim, and all lived in Bloomington (as did Jim and Gary). Gary Behnen is characterized as a "hot-blooded beginner with the 'pliable' mind", and Jim is accused of inconsistency in asking Bruce when a new game would open and yet writing another that he'd never play again under Bruce's H.R.s. He concluded "The frothing and foamings of Diehl are ludicrous, offensive, and more than just a little bit sick"

((Patti Efron checked in with a rebuttal, finding Gary's statement on corresponding with females as "a perfect example of why I've played as "Patrick" in the past", and defended her use of profanity, to which Bruce responded, in part.....))

((Patti only hurt her own credibility by using profanity in her original statement in Poictesme #18. There were a few people who said if her original statement was press, why didn't I print it with the press. Well, like I said, it was technically press since she submitted it with her other press. The way it was presented, though, it could have been taken either way. I printed it in the letter column because I felt having my comments there more appropriate than in the press section. And if I had put it into the press section, I would not have printed any comments, and despite Gary's complaints otherwise, my comments were designed to restore some sanity to the situation. And I clarified in more than one point that by printing Patti's statement that I in no way presented it as my opinion. Further, I have an open press policy—as long as the press is about anything but someone's breaking a house rule, I'll put it in if I have the time and space. As I have already pointed out, cross-game folderol is not against my house rules, and so there was no need to edit it. I will not print letters such as hers in the future only if I either repeal the open press HR or make cross-game threats/alliances verboten.

((After picking up some complementary remarks from Scott Rosenberg and Harry Drews, he ran into some criticism from John Baker, who later became the IDA/NA ombudsman))

JOHN BAKER: "I must say that I disapprove of your reprinting of Gary Behnen's letter. This is reminiscent of the recent hobby-wide debate over the rights of publishers to reprint zines. While Gary's letter may (or may not be—I'm not familiar with that aspect of the law) be legally yours, you had no moral right to reprint it. A matter would have to be serious indeed before reprinting such a letter, especially one of such personal nature, would be necessary.

"Of course, much of what he says is incorrect. For example, I find it hardly likely that you have been "down" on Behnen. On the other hand, he might have something now that you've printed his letter. I don't know what I would do if you reprinted something I specifically asked you not to print, or even to mention, but I wouldn't like it. I would probably react rather mildly, cancelling my subscription to Poictesme, resigning from my games in Poictesme, and resigning from any games which I found you to be in with me. I warn you that Gary may not react mildly. ((He says in print about "severe consequences and you warn about not reacting mildly...?))

"I suppose that you, along with your readers, have received a letter from Jim Diehl (hmm, he lives in the same town as Gary Behnen--think that means anything?) concerning Pat Efron's letter in #16. I find it supprising that Jim (Gary?) ((No, it's Jim)) has gone to the expense of sending this to all Poictesme's readers simply to avoid editorial comment. This seems to be merely a rephrasing of parts of Gary's letters, trying to make it as obnoxious as possible with a semblance ("Semblance: an outward show, imitative of the real thing") of wit. I find the editorial comments merely allow readers to choose between two sides (when two sides are indeed represented), and any reader with a reasonable amount of intelligence (as most Dippy players have, for all that letters like this give me doubt) can easily do so.

"In particular, I dislike the condemnation of John Weswig as "a well-known postal 'Diplomacy' villian." I suppose that Jim means that John rarely lives up to his agreements. Now, I am currently in a game with John (and in Poictesme), and I have not yet found that to be true, but that is not the point. The point is, first, that sTab is the name of the game, and second, that his behaviour in a game should have no effect on what you call him. True it is, that it is fast becoming a cliché, but, though it be the foremost of all games in the world, it is but a game."

((John provides the answer to why I printed Gary's letter for himself. "A matter would have to be serious indeed before reprinting such a letter..." I do not go around reprinting people's letters that they don't want printed unless the matter is extraordinary. When someone basically threatens to make trouble if I don't throw a particular player out and then doesn't even allow me to say the letter even exists, well, that is about as serious as you are going to find. I hardly call that personal. Gary was correct in pointing out the possibility of a player deceiving the GM, but not in the way he did. First, he did not even establish for himself beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was indeed Patti and not Patrick. He presumed, and throwing a player out is a serious matter, and I simply will not accept third hand hearsay. Yes, parts of the letter were personal, and it may be argued that they should have been left out, but they helped establish how wild Gary was acting, and I didn't want to be accused of "conveniently" leaving anything out. I always could

left out the part about Gary not wanting his letter printed and made him out to be a fool by such an action --- I I was out to get Gary, why did I print that part? Besides, Gary was the one who did the threatening; if anything, it's Gary who is "down" on me. Just because I think what he has said is foolish doesn't mean I hate him, for God's sake.

((John, if you sent me a letter accusing a player of breaking my house rules, not providing any evidence, threatening to make trouble if I didn't throw the person in question out, and in general going on a tirade, I'm afraid I might print the letter anyway even knowing you might resign. Besides, Gary is doing the proper thing in staying in and seeing this through (((Game was 1974GS))) ))

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((Sometimes, a GM can get into a squabble by adding some comments to a game-close that don't sit well with one of the players. This comes from " " by James Massar, #37, 3/30/74. Its pronounced"quotes". The comments in response are by the editor.))

ROY MATHESON. "I must take exception to your analysis of 1972Z, which was published in the most recent issue of your publication."

"I dislike being called either bumbling or inept, however justified it may have been in light of the circumstances in the game in question. As you pointed out, you have the benefit of "20-20 hindsight" and I can see neither justification nor worth in your comments. It is an easy thing to criticize in an instance such as this --I could point out that several mis-seed moves and "bumbling" play led to defeat in this and other similar games which I might have followed and I am certainly not an expert on the game of Diplomacy

"Certain factors were lacking in your analysis. I was a total novice, and, in the early stages had little idea of what really went on (this would explain the amazing fact that France did not capture Spain until 1904 -- two game years). You knew this as a fact and yet you failed to mention it. As "bumbling" as I may have been, I was certainly not dangerous to Steve; I knew my limitations, as did he, and had no illusions of granduer.

"Finally, and rather separate from this, I fail to see where this type of commentary is either encouraging or instructive to the novice. Perhaps you can enlighten me."

((This next letter is by Dave Tant, and is reprinted from Ethil The Frog (second cycle) #11, 13 Nov 1977. The reply is from the editor, John Piggott. Subs are available from C.F. Von Metzke, at 11/\$5 for surface mail))

I can see nothing wrong with your campaigns against the Leviathan ((a British zine)) crowd, or anyone else for that matter. If they don't like it, they can always launch a counter campaign.

Indeed, the following may be of interest to you, as it concerns your other betenoire, Cormorant. I was originally inveigled into subbing to Albatross to make the 7th player in their first game. This proceeded rather slowly, mainly due to GMing errors by Paul Humphreys, and issue 11 contained the moves for Spring 1905, again with mistakes.

In issue 12, printed now by Ian Lee (who calls himself variously 'Kaiser' or 'Strutter!') Paul Cook (England) resigned in disgust, Steve Howe (Turkey), Richard Lonsdale (Italy), Jeremy Jones (France) and myself (Russia) all pointed out the mistakes. I also wrote to say I proposed chucking the game in, and received a reply from Ian Lee asking me to give him a chance to show that the game could be run properly.

For Cormorant 1 (Albatross 13) I sent in orders for all my units to stand, and said I would give Ian a chance. That issue, however, printed: "This game is now scrapped, with Italy as the declared winners (sic). I had no moves from Jeremy Jones and Steve Howe, and Dave Tant sent

some but they were all units stand. So Richard Lonsdale wins, Paul Cook is blacklisted, Dave Tant is in lieu as a special case but Jeremy and Steve must step into D game or lose their deposits as well."

Jeremy and Steve did not start in D game and have, I imagine, stopped subbing. That was the first NMR for either of them in the game - and it's strange that Ian should not have orders on file for them if they pointed out the Spring '05 mistakes. Anyway, I wrote to protest, saying that it should at least be a four-way or two-way draw if he insisted on closing it down, and that I was bringing the circumstances to Mick Bullock's notice so that it shouldn't go into his records.

My reward was a very long reply which attacked me, the NGC and Mick, and saying (and now we come to the real point!) that he had never sought Boardman numbers, did not intend to do so in the future, and did not want his games going into any statistics. They were his games and no-one else was to interfere. I told him I felt he should make this stand known to his subbers, but this he has failed to do. (I wonder if the potential winners of his other games realize that their GM does not want the results included in the ratings!)

I see you have been attacked in one or two quarters for suggesting that games be removed from one zine and allotted elsewhere. It seems to me that (if all the players in the game agree) there is nothing the GM can do about it if they all start sending their orders somewhere else. They are obviously unlikely to get their deposits back, but perhaps the new GM will accept a lower game-fee. Indeed, would you be willing to accept Albatross Actaeon if the other surviving players were willing? And for how much?

((Many people would say that anyone signing up for a game in Albatross/Crummy deserves everything he gets, but I think even those who knew about Paul Humphreys already would have had difficulty predicting the results of his all-too-brief (and much-too-long) publishing career. It's a

depressing thought, but the first issue of Albatross was undoubtedly the best; it's gone steadily downhill since then, if only because it's been getting longer, and the advent of Ian Lee as editor was a hiccup hardly perceptible amid the general decline.

((Lee's attitude seems to be one of 'sod the players, they don't matter'; certainly no reputable GM would declare a game over in such a summary fashion. Did he even consult Richard Lonsdale, the player who was 'awarded' the 'win'? It seems not, for a subsequent issue of Cormorant features a letter from him, protesting that as he didn't deserve the win he'd rather not have it! (Apparently Lee has now changed his mind, and is calling Actaeon a four-way draw. It seems he has still not consulted the players). It is also very unusual for a player to be blacklisted by the GM because he sent orders for his units that were not to the GM's liking - I presume the words "Dave Tant is in lieu as a special case" means he is blacklisted, for it is not at all clear. Bad GMing goes with bad English, it seems.

((Lee is powerless to prevent his games going into the records, in fact; Mick Bullock assigns Boardman numbers without being asked, and ratingsmasters include what games they like when calculating the ratings - at the moment, all British ratingsmasters rely on Mick to supply them with results. Players who don't want their game results going into ratings will presumably ignore such lists when they appear, but the GM has no jurisdiction whatever in this matter. (It's clear why the Crummy crowd don't like ratings, of course - a glance at the player records in New Statsman reveals straight zilches for Humphreys and Lee in the wins column!))

((As Ian Lee seems incapable of running his games properly, I would be quite willing to take Actaeon over and complete it if all the players agree. No game fee, of course, though I'd expect the players to maintain subscriptions to Ethil. Mind you, I doubt very much whether you will get unanimity!))

((If you had wanted me to take into consideration the fact that you were a novice, you had your chance when I asked for comments on the game. I don't believe I ever got any from you. While I was going over the game I looked only at the positions of the units on my maps -- for all I knew or cared then France might have been played by Edi Birsan ((A very experienced and successful player. In point of fact, most GMs will not allow a person to play under an alias without the GM being notified, and some not even then))).

((I am very sorry if I offended you in calling the French play bungling, though I cannot find where you allege I call it inept.

((The purpose of that commentary was three-fold--1st, to provide a rough outline of the game from the GMs point of view from beginning to end, for my personal satisfaction (they are "my" games) and to give others a point of view outside the game itself, 2nd, to chronicle the game for those who might be interested in it but have not had a chance to follow it -- the purpose of all the comments, not just my own, and 3rd, to point out the various errors made by people (in my estimation) where they blew their chances of winning or maximizing their performance, so that others might learn a lesson from them (the stalemate positions of StP and Por, the effect of not being decisive in seizing upon weaknesses, etc). I am sure that these errors are instructive to novices, as they provide "real life" situations which articles on tactics rarely do (and who likes to read tactics articles that much anyway?).

((You were "dangerous" to Steve in that you might miss a crucial move on some future occasion as you had before, or not see a critical position, etc -- not that you were going to attack him! Allies who do these things are dangerous, believe me, I know!))

((Finally, I thank you very much for your comments. Obviously, this was my first commentary that I had ever written and you have taught me some lessons which won't be forgotten. I realized I might be offending some people when I wrote it, though, as I said, I didn't take into account everything about anyone being a novice player. Usually, if I play a game in which I am fairly good at (chess, tennis...) I'll be the first to agree with someone who points out a stupid mistake of mine, and perhaps this tendency of mine led me too much astray. Sigh))

((The following comes from from Tetracusp #17, 10/29/76 and is written by its editor, Richard Kovalcik, Jr, Rm 205, Bexley Hall, 50 Mass Ave. Cambridge, Mass 02139. As of this moment, Tetracusp has not been published in several months)).

### GREG WARDEN IS A THIEF

Yes, that's right. I said Greg Warden is a thief. A while back I was in a Diplomacy game in En Passant, 1975CA. Greg Warden removed me from this game for no reason at all, didn't tell me anything, and kept the deposit I paid him to enter the game. The facts are as follow:

- (1) On January 22nd, 1976 I received En Passant, # 71 from Greg Warden. This is the last issue of En Passant which I ever received.
- (2) On February 9th, 1976 I talked with Greg Warden over the phone for about 3 minutes to give him my orders for 1975CA. To the best of my knowledge this is the last time I heard from Greg Warden.
- (3) On May 22nd, 1976 I sent Greg Warden a short note asking him what was going on. I never received a reply.
- (4) On June 16th, 1976 I sent him another note by Certified Mail asking what was going on. At this time I thought that he had dropped out of the hobby. Based on this I offered to help Greg Warden in anyway I would as Games Compensation Officer of THE DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION.
- (5) Over the July 4th weekend I determined by talking to other Diplomacy players in New York City that Greg Warden was still publishing.
- (6) I then proceeded to obtain xeroxes of the pages of En Passant since # 71 which concerned 1975CA.
- (7) After receiving thses xeroxes it became apparent to me that Greg Warden probally arbitrarily dropped me from 1975CA and stole my deposit.
- (8) On August 15th, 1976 I sent Greg Warden another letter by Certified Mail which read as follows:

Dear Greg,

I have recently learned that you have been publishing since February when I last heard from you. I would like to know why I have not heard from you since then and why I was apparently dropped from 1975CA in which I played Turkey.

I hope that this matter can be satisfactorily worked out as I feel that being arbitrarily dropped from a game by its gamesmaster is a very serious matter. Your prompt reply would be greatly appreciated.

/signed/ Richard Kovalcik, Jr.

- (9) Since that time I have not heard from him. At this point I feel that my only course of action is to expose the facts to the Diplomacy hobby at large to see if I can get Greg Warden to say something about this matter which he has failed to do up to now. A copy of this issue will be sent to Greg Warden by certified mail. I hope that he will have the decency to answer me. Until this matter is cleared up I urge everyone to be very careful in dealing with Greg Warden as I feel that he may decide to rip you off. Why he did this to me I have no idea. If you'd like proof that what I say happened really happened please send me an SAE with 24¢ postage on it and I'll send you xeroxes of my three letters to him and the two return receipts for the last two letters.

In fact, the last one is that not uncommon, and I have seen others ask their players not to put orders on the same sheet as personal letters. And I suppose that there may be someone who shares Tony's views on the Winter "has" list (Altho this could provide an interesting problem. Suppose that an entire country's units were omitted, and the player didn't mention this, relying instead on the Fall positions. Would his entire country vanish? Suppose the GM didn't bother, listing only the Winter builds and removals. Would the game end right there?). Had these three rules been in the HR's for a zine I was considering playing in, that certainly would not dissuade from playing. What Tony has done that is unfair and unprincipled is to hold a player to a rule that he has no way of knowing about, and to penalize him and the game for breaking it. Indeed, in the second dispute I had every reason to think that there was nothing wrong with the practice. I say "and the game" because its not just me. When Tony NMR's me in 1901 the entire game suffers.

What is most galling of all is that Tony sees nothing wrong with this holding of a person to a rule that he does not know of, and said so on the phone. Or in issue #38 he just states that I've been removed. He doesn't add "because I have a rule that if you resign from one game you must resign from them all". This hobby doesn't need secret rules. If a player is in many games and suddenly finds that he can't handle that many, he may decide to resign from some, but not all. That is not uncommon. But you can't do that in Ruritania, and you aren't even told of that fact.

I might add that these are not the only problems with the games in Ruritania. Adjudication errors are rampant, and along with lost moves were the major causes for game delays. Even his error corrections were frequently mistaken, or missed errors. Illegible repro has consistantly been a problem. Altho #39 was pretty decent, the problem recurred in #40. Plus the games have been afflicted with a staggering dropout rate. While this is not necessarily the GM's fault, I believe that in Ruritania's case he is greatly responsible. Game 1976 ED was just plain abandoned in 1902. I could go on, but its depressing.

That should be enough. Tony Watson will receive a copy of this issue and will have the right of reply if he so desires. Also, as a majority of the players in 1975IJ and 1977FH are subbers here, they, and anyone else for that matter, may send in their comments if they want. I must have this material by March 21, 1978 if you want it printed.

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One of the most intensely villified DipPersonalities was Gordon Anderson, and I had no trouble finding material in this vein. What follows is from The Pocket Armenian #27, 2-21-76, and was presumably written by its editor, Scott Rosenberg. It shares some things in common with other villifications, in that it quotes another person, and takes pot-shots at others. It is entitled "THE GORDON ANDERSON MATTER ONCE AGAIN".

Gordon Anderson, the well-known hobby personage, now sufficiently notorious to be called a menace, is launching one of his sporadic crusades again. He claims that the 1975 IDA Elections were rigged against him--when in fact there was a deliberate effort made to help him by accepting his nomination late; that he gave Allan Calhamer the prize money for the DipCon and he, Anderson, is not responsible for it any more--when Calhamer denies this, and stated at the start of the tourney that he was in no way connected with the financial end of the affair; that I am not qualified to be IDA Editor--when if he had checked the recently passed Amendment to the Constitution he would note that, under these circumstances, I AM eligible; that Viking Systems did not give Mike Rocamora a bounced check for his 1974 DipCon winnings--when either VS or Anderson did indeed; that Edi Bircan refuses to provide him with copies of Council Courier--when in fact Anderson has not renewed his supply of stamped self-addressed envelopes that he must have to get it; and so forth.

In short, Gordon Anderson is a liar. I would not make such an accusation without being pretty certain of the ground I stand on. But no matter how hard I try to sympathize with him and try to look at things from his point of view, I can reach no other conclusion.

Anderson's recent outburst is nothing new; Rod Walker recently wrote the following in EREHWON, before Anderson's recent rumblings.

"Although our hobby is composed primarily of independent players and publishers (we can ignore Besh's little squad of flunkies), cooperation is the name of the game if we are to accomplish anything worthwhile. That is why I have been so down on Besh; he requires subservience and unquestioning accolades, absolutely contrarily to the spirit, traditions, and best interest of the hobby.

"But Besh is not the only fly in the ointment. Gordon Anderson, is, if anything, even worse. Over the past year, he has:

"1. Attempted to silence critics by threatening bogus lawsuits.

"2. Attempted to make himself Editor of the IDA illegally using threats and lies to undermine the vote of 75% of the membership.

"3. Attempted (with partial success, alas) to create a personal and private power empire within the IDA without standing election (which he knew he could not win) by bullying himself into several appointive positions.

"4. Defaulted on any number of obligations, financial and otherwise, in connection with Dipcons VII and VIII.

"5. Spread lies and false accusations against many prominent and hard-working hobby members--especially Edi Birsan and John Boyer.

"6. Falsely claimed he had trademarked a hobby institution, "DipCon" (or was about to trademark it), in an attempt to foil legitimate and widely supported plans to begin moving the Cons around to other locations.

"Fred Davis, whose common sense and perception are uncanny in matters of determining who in the hobby are basically bad news, has cancelled his trade agreement with Anderson because of his ugly behavior within the hobby. I have now followed suit. It seems to me that Anderson has been given more than sufficient opportunity to cease his orgy of self-seeking, anti-social, hatemongering behavior. There is no cause to encourage him further. I urge all publishers to cease trading with EL CONQUISTADOR. This protest may evoke a response in which he will begin contributing more positively to the hobby. If so, well and good; if not, --well, what reason is there to continue to give any sort of support to someone who combines all the worst features of John Beshara and Charlie Reinsel? Why feed the hand that bites you?"

Rod is right; and Anderson has simply further convinced me of his extreme odity.

Anderson's case will probably be reviewed by the IDA Judicial committee, where Anderson himself has said he wants his case tried. I think it will be interesting to note how soon he will forget the fact that he brought the case there, if the JudComm renders a decision unfavorable to him.

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