

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

Issue #72
June 1983
Potpourri

Mark L Berch
492 Naylor Place
Alexandria VA 22304

Subs: 10 for \$4.00
Europe: 10/\$4.50 or 7/£2
Circulation: 112

Don't bother looking for the games; there aren't any. This is a zine for the reader; I print only articles. The reprints are the mainstay of the zine, including articles, editorials, letters, even press. The entire scope and range of the Diplomacy hobby is covered: Alliances, personalities, cheating and ethics, cross game alliances, droupouts, the play of specific countries, face to face, gamesmastering, hobby history, houserules, humor, losing, tournaments, diporganizations, puzzles, press, publishing, ratings, rules and rules changes, strategy, tactics, variants, negotiations, stabbing, stalemates, statistics, tirades --- whatever comes along. There are three types of issues. One is the theme issue just on one subject. These have included Italy, Austria, Villifications and tirades, hobby history, stalemates and others. Then there are potpourri issues, like this one you're reading. And there have been some special issues, with all original material. In addition to reprinting articles, there's also "The Zine Column", a regular feature which gives my commentary on what is occurring in other zines, sometimes in essay form, plus news and other bits and pieces. And finally, there's my personal column on page one, which I assure you is usually devoted to something other than telling my subbers what they already know. Aside from occasional accounts of my personal life, I stick pretty much just to the game and hobby of Diplomacy.

So that no one gets the wrong impression, I do NOT run postal games, ratings lists, collections of jokes or long lists of plugs. Letters are welcome, but should stick to topics discussed here, and the lettercol is not that extensive. There is little or no coverage of other wargames, sports, politics, science fiction, movies, etc. All issues are 11 or 12 pages (these are regular 8 x 11 pages, foto-reduced). The reprinted material here is drawn from the Berch Archives, the second largest organized archives in North America. The zine is now beginning its 7th year of publication.

Tom Ripper was recently reported as winning 1976NF in Fall 1921. This game, lasting nearly 7 years, was one of the longest in hobby history. Just one hitch, tho -- there never was a "1976NF" -- Boardman Numbers never got that high. The game began in Arrakis as 1976Nf, a variant game (with a Miller Number) because the identities of the players were kept secret --- negotiation was done via press. But in Spring 1910, the GM, Dave Head, accidentally revealed the names of two players, and to even things up, all names were then revealed. When the game was transferred to GM Nick Russon, the "f" inadvertently became "F", and the error was perpetuated by the next GM as well. So Lee, as they say in the beer commercial, "This One's For You!"

I hope to meet as many of my subbers as possible at Origins/DipCon XVI. If I'm not there, you'll know Mona was a little early!

((Over 90% of all postal games feature Austria opening with either A Bud-Ser, or A Bud-Rum. And the vast majority of all Italian players begin either with an attack on Austria, or an alliance with A against Turkey. From Hoosier Archives #89, Sept 1972 comes Len Lakofka with a different suggestion))

THE INTERIOR

In a "classic" game of Diplomacy, the Belgian Sector (all spaces adjacent to Bel) and the Balkan sector ... are the scenes of 2:1 battles in a struggle to reach middle game. Because of the intensity of this struggle, Scandinavia, the "Wasteland" (Pie, Tyo, Boh, Sil, Pru, and Lvn), and the Italian Boot are usually not the scene of intense battles until 1902 or 1903 --- at the earliest. Thus, Italy is faced with a single front campaign versus an eastern power or versus France... Italy may select the now-accepted standard A Ven H, A Rom-Apu, F Nap-Ion. This can convert to a "Lepanto" or a western drive on an anti-Austrian campaign.

All of this is prelude for a situation where Italy decides on a striking anti-G or anti-F policy! For example, A Ven-Tyo, A Rom-Tus, F Nap-Ion, or A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Tus F Nap-Tyr. When Austria knows this is happening, he can make a dynamic opening, in league with Turkey, versus Russia. Russia is told, by T, of his fear of a Lepanto ((This is an Italian opening with F Ion C A Apu-Tun in FO1; F Ion-Eas, F Nap-Ion in SO2; in preparation for a convoy to Smy or Syr in FO2)), or alternatively is told that he wishes to ally and would like to neutralize the Bla Sea. You hope that R will play F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Ukr, A War-Gal. Other Russian possibilities are F Sev-Bla, A Mos-Ukr, A War-Gal, or A War-Ukr, F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Sev. The alliance plays:
Austria: A Bud S A Vie-Gal, A Vie-Gal, F Tri-Alb
Turkey: F Ank-Bla, A Smy-Arm, A Con-Bul.

Now, if Russia has played as indicated, he is in War, Ukr and Rum, and he loses both Rum and Sev via: A Gal-Ukr, A Bul S Austria A Bud-Rum, F Bla-Sev, A Arm S F Bla-Sev. This bypasses Ser but destroys Russia as a consequence. Rum and Sev may not both fall if Russia has moved ((in Spring O1)) in other ways. Rum -- at least -- always goes to the alliance, and T picks up the Black Sea. Also, Austria is in Gal after FO1 -- a powerful place to be. ((Actually, if R decides that both Sev and Rum are clearly hopeless, he may dislodge A Gal with A War S A Ukr-Gal or vice versa. If this happens, tho, Austria could keep the piece on the front lines by retreating to Sil, and take his builds in Vie and Bud, tho such a plan postpones his attack on Italy because he cannot build now in Tri)). Building an A Tri, A Bud for Austria, and F Smy, F Con for Turkey allows for other play in 1902. Three fleets versus Italy's two! Note that Ser can remain open thru 1902 and A can build F Tri for an all-out blitz on Italy! With Russia on the skids he will be in a poor position to counter you in the south and/or aid Italy.

Postscript to the "Interior": The "Ruse" --- a French-Italian alliance?! Yes, how about this gem: SO1: A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Tus, F Nap-Tyh; A Mar-Spa, F Bre-Mid, A Par-Bur. Then, F O1: A Pie-Mar, F Tyh C A Tus-Tun, B F Nap; F Mid-Por, A Bur-Bel, A Spa-Mar, Build F Bre, F Mar. Now, Spring 1902, F Por-Mid, F Bre H, F Mar-Lyo, A Spa-Mar; A Tun-Naf, A Pie-Mar, F Nap-Tyh, F Tyh-Wes. And in Fall 1902: F Mid-Iri, F Bre-Eng, F Lyo-Spa(sc), A Spa-Gas, A Bel does something anti-E or anti-G; F Wes-Mid, F Tyh-Wes, A Naf gets readto for convoy to Wal ((or Lpl)), A Pie-Tyo! ((I'm not sure why Len added that somewhat whimsical postscript, but its true that something must be found for Italy to do while A/T are off clobbering Russia. One might ask why, if Austria wants Rum, he doesn't just grab for it in SO1. But A Vie-Gal, and A Bud-Rum might both be blocked, and then A Ukr S F Sev-Rum in FO1 means you cannot take Rum. Another advantage of his plan is that it allows you to see what Turkey is really going to do in FO1 before you commit yourself to taking Rum. If you've used this opening, and T hasn't kept his word, you've probably aggravated R less than a grab for Rum in SO1 would have. Checking thru my files, the best example of this opening I could find was 1969CD, where the opening caught R with A War-Gal, F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Ukr. FO1 saw Russia's A Ukr S F Rum-Sev fail when T varied the plan slightly with F Bla S A Arm-Sev (thus, Russia could have held Sev had he guessed to do F Rum-Bla, A Ukr-Sev --- to retain F Bla, T took a slight risk). With builds from Gre and Rum, A stabbed Turkey in FO2, taking Bul and Sev, and he (Bytwerk) went on to draw with Italy (Brenton Ver Ploeg) 17-17))

((Summertime is the seasons for Cons, and other forms of Face to Face play. Here's a few items on that general topic, with an emphasis on shorter material. Lets start with Robert Lipton, writing in The Mixumaxu Gazette #18, July 6, 1974))

WOULD YOU MIND REMOVING THAT DAGGER FROM MY BACK?

Altho this is a zine for postal Diplomacy, I'm sure that almost all of us, with the exception of some hermits up in the Yukon play over the board at least occasionally. While the tactics of such games are the same as postally, the negotiation periods lead to many possibilities for screwing your opponents more than usual. Below are a few of the methods that I have developed especially for over the board games.

DOUBLING YOUR MOVES: When you go to an over the board session, wear a shirt with a pocket in it. When you decide that you are ready to stab your ally, write out the set of moves you intend to use and place them in your shirt pocket. Then write out a set of moves very favorable to your ally. Go to him and urge him to move his units. Is he suspicious? Why, simply show him your moves! There are few actions so sure to gain the confidence of a nervous diplomat as showing him the moves you'll be making. Go with him to the GM, palming the orders as you go (don't worry, you don't have to be a magician). He will really be surprised when he sees what's been done. On several occasions my stabbed ally has grabbed the paper from the hands of the GM, and screamed imprecations at everyone.

MISWRITING YOUR ORDERS: We've all miswritten moves while playing over the board. I remember in my first game I ordered A Ber-Par, when I wanted A Bur-Par. Now, when you do not want an ally to grow, but do not want to lose his help, miswrite your moves and show them to him. Most allies look only to make sure that their partners do not attack them directly. That settled, they go back to their own problems. For instance, in one game recently, I was supposed to have an alliance with Ben Miller, who was playing E (I was Germany). To help him take StP, he wanted me to move A Den-Swe. I agreed, of course, and wrote "F Ska-Swe" and showed it to Ben. "That's wrong," he said. I did a double take, apologized, and changed the order to A Ska-Swe and again showed it to Ben. He nodded and went back to his own orders.

DISRUPTING NEGOTIATIONS: If you want to keep someone from negotiating, there are several ways of doing it. One can lock the player into a closet, or scream all of the time. These methods, however, are rather crude, and after a while people will catch on to them and begin to attack you. In any case, for these methods to be effective, you must spend your time. There are other methods. For example, you could give the guy a glass of chocolate milk spiked with Exlax or something. But the disadvantage is that while playing over the board you drink a great deal, and you want the guy to come out of the bathroom occasionally so you can go in. (tho beware that someone doesn't lock you in) The most powerful tool is the telephone. Get a friend to call up the place and ask for the person you want to be too busy to negotiate. You will have to think of some pretext, but if your friend is a girl and the player is a guy, she can probably keep him on the fone for quite a while.

There are, of course, many other methods that you can use. The strong tobacco method. The model ploy. But I won't tell you these ones. I want to keep some advantage. ((I've only had one case of a 100%-effective miswritten order. I wrote out a sensible move for my fleet at the top of the page, then the rest of my orders. My ally finally came by and gave me the expected pitch that I should convoy him. I argued, but then finally gave in. Gripping the sheet so that my thumb covered up the top order, I wrote the convoy for him to see. He watched me intently, and checked over my orders carefully. I turned them in immediately; the fleet was of course double ordered. I asked him after the game; he told me that at the time, he was sure it wasn't deliberate. The stab the following season, he admitted, did give him second thoughts about the double order, but by then it was too late --- and I don't think I could have pulled that stab off if he had been suspicious of the misorder. The cleverest try ever made on me was a guy who overlapped two sheets of paper, so that in "A Con-Bul", the "Bul" was on the second sheet, and "A Con" would appear unordered at the rightmost edge of the paper he actually turned in. It almost worked.))

((One final example of knavery comes from Diplomacy by Moonlight #43, July 1982, in an account of Rusnakon III. The writer was Chuck Kaplan, who took advantage of the fact that he was in two games at once, once of which, downstairs, he was Russia.....))

Speaking of the devious host ((Russ Rusnak)), In Fall 1901 Russ, as England had to guess whether I was to move A StP-Nwy or A StP-Fin. From downstairs, I heard a scream, "Kaplan, you bastard!" As I went down the stairs Russ appeared, and indicated to me that the moves had been read. I smiled, and asked whether we had bounced in Norway. Russ returned my smile and said the moves had not been read yet, and proceeded back to the table. I returned upstairs. Of course, Russ went into Nwy with unnecessary support, as I slipped into Finland.

DipCon VII was held in Chicago 9 years ago. Here is John Boyer's account of a problem which arose, from Impassable #39 Sept 2, 1974:

The Chicago DipCon pointed out some needed revisions for tournaments of Diplomacy. In the third round on the third board, for example, I was playing G allied with E (Birsan) in a war against France. Russia (Jeff Key) was allied with us and he was fighting A and T. France and Italy were the powers on the downhill. As I evaluated the game, we three had the edge on the other 4, since they were split 2-2.

Now comes the bad part. 5 of us decided to go to lunch together. The 5 included G, R, A(Beyerlein), T(Cockrell)((who later married Beyerlein)), and Italy(Massar). We all had a great time and ate an excellent lunch, but we were later than we decided ---we were 1 hour late in fact. This meant that F and E had to wait on us, not knowing if we planned to come back! Of course we were, but E engineered an end to the game in our absence, saying we forfeited by not showing up on time. Well, to make it short, this was disallowed and the game had to continue.

However, E was not too happy about having to wait, and so proposed ending the game with the projected results determined by the CallaMer scoring system in use for that tournament. I was against this, because the projected finish would place A/T/E as cowinners of the game with me as G very low. R would be out, and so would I and F. This was looking at it militarily. I don't mind the strict SC count, but the game cannot be ended as such! So, I rejected the English proposal. It turned out, that would not have been allowed either! ((Something Birsan might have known all along)) Well, my rejection paved the way for England going with France against me with Turkey and Austria allying against Russia and myself.

So, the problem here is what should be done about tournament games ruined by long lunch breaks? From my viewpoint I lost unfairly since even tho T and A ate with me and were just as guilty of delaying the game, they benefitted from having an angered E hit me when we were allied and had a chance to beat them. Of course, R also lost out in this change of allaince structure. The problem posed is not how to prevent a few from taking advantage of a common guilt (I though T and A the purest of mercenaries when they got E to jump on me when they and myself were equally guilty!), but how to prevent anything like it from influencing the game!

The answer appears to be to adopt strict time control and all practices developed for chess tournaments. This means that all games would have to be run by clock. I will push this hard for the next dippy convention. As a convention organizer I would have all games run on the same schedule to reduce the need for clocks. One clock and one official time would take care of all games in a tourney. If a game starts late, or the players want a longer break, they will have to wait until the proper time to begin. A time rate would be developed for specific seasons, e.g. 20 minutes for each Spring and Fall....So, any delayed game would not be delayed longer than a minimum time....((5 years later at DipCon XII, John was the Tournament Director, and the staff included Rod Walker, Fred Davis and me. We decided to post the "suggested" clock times on blackboards, so people would know where they should be. Boards that slipped significantly behind were prodded, and in one case, we set fixed times for several seasons to get them back on track. It was a successful compromise, and I used it at DipCon XV. On the other hand,

At DipCon XII, rigid deadlines were used, with a two-minute warning, and then the ringing of a giant triangle which was the last moment you could turn orders in. It also worked out quite well.))

((Our final item in this set is a letter from Alan Sharples to Peter Birks, printed in Greatest Hits #96, April 1982, concerning a British Con))

...Missing Toucon was a good move on your part. There was a definite lack of organization and the bar facilities, in particular, were abysmal. The bar was at the other end of campus, never seemed to be open, and the nearest pub ... was a 20 pence bus ride away. The weekend was only salvaged for me by an unbeaten run on the pool table and a good result in the Diplomacy tournament.

The tournament was a lash-up with only 42 players taking part. Due to the lack of players, each team was organized on the basis of 6 players each. One team ("the rejects") was comprised of individuals who had no team to play for but wanted a game. The representative teams were Birmingham, Warwick The final team ("The Wanderers") was comprised of those players dropped from the other teams when it became necessary to reduce them from 7 to 6 players. Liverpool won the team tournament with "the rejects" coming second. ((Judging from the many Con accounts I've read, boozing it up seem to be a much more important component of British Cons than those here. I've never heard of teams used (players acting on behalf not just of themselves, but the team) in a Con here, but it might work. Perhaps instead of geographical teams, one might have the "Doomies", "Kathy's Kommandos", and other teams based on zines.))



((From the "1974 Diplomacy Handbook" comes the following by Allan Calhamer, the inventor of the game of Diplomacy))

OBJECTIVES OTHER THAN WINNING

The long argument among the fans between what has been called the "Win Only" school and the "Strong Second" school, is really an argument over what the player's objectives should be in cases in which he has little or no hope of winning, or in which he is playing to win but wishes to keep a second objective in reserve. The "Win Only" school believes that the secondary objective should be to draw the game; the "Strong Second" believes in rating performances other than wins and draws.

To begin with, Diplomacy may appear to be a cruel game, because it produces only one winner to six losers. Compare chess or checkers, in which three games might produce 3 winners and 3 losers. This relative sparsity of victories among the contestants may have stimulated the undergrowth of secondary objectives.

Nevertheless, it is not wholly clear why the draw is not an adequate secondary objective, inasmuch as the game is probably a draw with best play from the overwhelming majority of positions actually encountered. One of the difficulties may be that the draw is reputed to be inconclusive, because it is so reckoned in chess or checkers. However, a draw in Diplomacy may be more conclusive than victories among an equivalent number of chess players. If seven players play Diplomacy, and three draw, those 3 have scored above the 4 others. If 6 players play in three chess games, and all the games are wins, those three have scored above only 3 others, rather than 4. Yet in the Diplomacy game, there is still the possibility of one player winning it all.

The draw, of course, is the only objective other than victory which is recognized by the Rulebook.

The assumption behind the 16 unit victory criterion is that, given 18 units to a disunited combination of only 16 units, the leader can in general eventually conquer the whole board. Thus, no country survives except his own. Critics have claimed that there are positions in which certain countries could survive by stalemate, or by regaining a combination of 17 or more units; consequently, the notion that a country gaining

18 units could sweep the board is not invariably correct. It is my opinion that this point is of negligible importance, because almost all of the games will not come out that way, and because the victory criterion must have some hard and fast definition, and because it takes a long time to acquire 18 units as it is. Indeed, I would prefer some standard such as 16 or 12 units, or the biggest power after the elapse of a predetermined amount of time (real or game); except for the fact that such low victory criteria are unusually subject to upset by threats to "throw" the game to one country or another.

Following the assumption that a power holding 18 units can sweep the board, it then appears that no power has survived the game unless he has achieved either a win or a draw. The reward for a draw, then, is the reward for survival in a dangerous world.

The notion that all players sharing in the draw share equally reflects in part the considerable and logical difference between survival and elimination; anyone who has survived into the draw might conceivably win if the game went on, but no one eliminated can do so.

Some people have objected that a player having 10 units is entitled to more credit than one having only one unit when a draw is agreed upon. One answer to this notion is that draws are agreed upon; consequently any player who objects to equal credit for the smaller powers can refuse to agree, for a few moves, while he proceeds to knock out the smaller powers, and more than one larger power can agree to so proceed before voting the draw. Now, if it is still impossible to get rid of those tiny powers, they must have something going for them within the game which is operating to ensure their survival: possibly a position in which it is very difficult to knock them out, or a friendly power holding them up, or a situation in which the would-be attackers cannot agree on which of them should get the territory; whatever the reason is, the tiny power has achieved survival within the game.

Giving equal credit to all those sharing in the draw also encourages the smallest power to fight for the draw, instead of giving up without a fight. If they give up without a fight, the larger powers may not get a draw either, since the leader may benefit from their collapse((and win)).

One of the bad features about scoring the draw equally for all participants is that some three or four players in a game might lose sight of the primary objective altogether, and play only to knock out the other players, after which they would probably have a draw, since none of them had maneuvered to weaken the others. In this way, players might achieve above average results, at least until other players got onto them. However, they would not be likely to achieve high results, such as the highest places in a tournament, or for that matter, even a single victory. Thus, if the value of the draw were increased, there might be incentive to play for the draw from the start, which is anti-competitive; whereas if the value of the draw were reduced, there might be less incentive to unite to stop the leader, which would also be an anticompertitive result.

Some players have regarded "second place", "third place", and so forth as suitable objectives other than victory, sometimes regarding them as better than a draw. Some have regarded only "strong Second", second place with, say, 10 units or more, as an appropriate object other than victory. Some have credited "survival" --- but by this term they have meant survival until another player achieved victory, not indefinite survival through win or draw.

Altho these objectives do not appear in the Rulebook, some ratings systems give credit for them, one GM gives small prizes for the first three places, and so forth. Any player once in the lead might as well offer his assistance toward the attainment of these objectives to the other players, since these objectives, unlike the draw, do not conflict with the leader's effort to win. Indeed, a player who himself does not credit any of these objectives might as well offer his help toward the attainment of them to all the other players from the outset, provided they help him toward a win.

Some players have argued that giving credit for "strong second" is realistic. This result is hard to determine, for when a player has won, he has presumably gained

control of Europe, something which one country has never done. The strong second, then, is the last or largest to fall to the conquerer. Whether this situation is a good one or not is hard to say. The Mongols used to give the worst treatment to those of their enemies that held out the longest.

In terms of achievement, it is easy to believe that a strong second with 10 units is preferable to being knocked out early, or to succumbing with the rest while holding just one unit. However, in the final battle to prevent the leader from winning, one would normally expect the second place player to be the leader of the opposition. Consequently, something must be detracted from his achievement because he must bear some of the responsibility for the failure in the final battle.....

A recent postal game arrived at a point at which the Supply Centers were divided among the remaining players 17-11-6. Here the player in second place could have secured second place by giving one of his centers to the leader, ending the game 18-10-6; but this player plays only for a win or a draw. The third place player was willing to entertain second place as an objective other than victory; however, there was no way he could achieve it, because if he attacked the second place player, the leader would win at once. Consequently, the two weaker players joined to fight for the 3-way draw, playing several exciting moves, and still holding out without gaining the agreement of the leader to a draw as this article is being written.

This final attempt to contain the leader is sometimes one of the most dramatic and exciting parts of the game. Cooperation must be created among players who have been fighting one another, and who have set their hearts on other objectives; they must admit that goal they have pursued all game long, which are now within their grasp, have just lost their value, and may even be destructive. Frequently, they are out of position for the new encounter, and are better positioned to fight each other. They must form a line together, exposing their territories to each other. This is not the cooperation of merely being assigned to the same team. This cooperation is hard won over difficulties. This is Verdun.

Sometimes allies in this position take potshots at one another, trying to gain as much as they can without collapsing the alliance; sometimes they lack aggressiveness because they suspect each other. Almost always they come around to the grand alliance too late. History has seen aplenty of these things!

The opportunities for this final high battle, this armageddon, this human drama, are, of course, dribbled away if a "strong second" player is within reach of second. He is the knocked-out bottom of the jug that might have contained the leader.

There was high drama in this phase of the game in 1973BI, in which this writer and two other players attempted to prevent a French victory. At a certain point, this writer decided the battle was hopeless, and resigned his position, supposing that the game would be conceded. However, a replacement player was appointed. France now delayed his victory for a couple of seasons, while negotiating with the beaten allies to establish one of them in "second place"; apparently this was diplomacy aimed at gaining friendship for some subsequent game. The allies, meanwhile, no longer able to win or draw, but still seeing second thru fourth places at stake in one or another of the rating lists, fell upon each other like Comanches.

((At DipCon XII, time constraints meant we could only play till 1907. The rules I set stipulated that if the game were not completed by then, a reduced victory criterion of 12 centers would be used. I felt, and still do, that to win a tournament game by 1907 is so difficult that most sensible players will reluctantly turn to other goals, viz, a short draw. Setting a win at 12 gives people a reasonable goal, and we did get wins. I would suggest this to anyone in a game with severe time-constraints.))

((By and large, I agree with the Calhamerian view of second place, and this is reflected in my scoring system. But I do think there are aspects of this he glosses over quickly. Consider the "draw". It may well be a poor term, denoting a failure to resolve, but it is his term --- he wrote the Rulebook. Perhaps "shared win" would be better, making a draw a type of win, thus making it clear that those who have neither shared in a win,

not won, really are losers. This brings us directly to the question of the size of a draw. If a draw is a shared win, then obviously, you want to share it with as few as possible, to increase your fraction of the win. But if the draw is just that, a conclusion, a stalemate, then does it matter how many are involved? If traffic has reached a gridlock, does it matter to you how many other cars share your fate? Curiously, the Rulebook is silent on this ---- it does not state that a 2 way draw is any "better" than a 6 way draw. And there are players to whom this doesn't matter --- if no one is going to win, then its a draw, lets be done with it, and start up another game. Why waste time playing out the draw when you could be winning the next game? This refers to the gruesome process of "shortening the draw." Is this a legitimate part of the game? Suppose a game is deadlocked at E=17, A=14, I=3. All players are win/draw only. A has enuf units to stalemate E, or crush I, but not both. Before he will agree to eliminate Italy, he insists that E pull back so far that A can do the dirty deed with no chance of an English win. Should E agree? Or is this as meaningless as deciding who is second and who is third and who is fourth?))

((Secondly, I think Calhamer overdoes the point about the winner being able to sweep the board. If the second player really is "strong", say 13+ centers, and he has all of the English or Turkish home centers, there's a pretty good chance that he really will have a stalemate line. Such a player has failed, in the sense that he allowed someone other than himself to win the game. But I think he can legitimately claim "survival", and I don't think that this is as infrequent as Calhamer would make appear))

~~~~~  
((Orphaned games, and what to do about faltering pubbers, present conflicts for the hobby. Here's an account from some time back in the British hobby. See how much of this sounds familiar. From Ethil the Frog, Vol 2, #9, Sept 1977, John Piggott:))

In July 1974, the future of games being run by Geoff Corker in Tales from the Black Forest looked grim. Corker had not produced an issue for 3 months, and many of the players were becoming restive. Richard Walkerdine, acting in what was to become a familiar role as orphan games rehouser, undertook (with general consent) to find new homes for Corker's games - after all, Corker was not answering letters, had dropped out of 20 or so Diplomacy games he was in, and to all intents and purposes was dead as far as the hobby was concerned. New GMs came forward - but, even as the final moves in the transfer process were carried out. Corker returned with another issue of TFTBF! His indignation was awe'ome to behold - after all, isn't it usual for a GM to take an 11 week break without telling anyone? How dare Walkerdine try to take his games away from him? That sort of thing'll earn him a squashed nose if he doesn't watch it!

Well, Walkerdine backed off in confusion, and a few weeks later, another issue of TFTBF hit the streets. Was all well at last?

No, it wasn't. The players as a bunch thought they'd get a better game with a new GM, and weren't all keen on staying with Corker. They NMRed in droves, sent in no press, and so on. Corker was left in no doubt what people thought of his behavior, and that was the last thing anybody in the postal Diplomacy hobby heard from him. The games were eventually rehoused after another considerable delay (Walkerdine is fond of his nose, and was understandably reluctant to take further action against "Iron Fists" Corker!) - I think some ended up in The Norns. Well, even the best intentions ocassionally produce poor results.

TFTBF is a textbook example of the way everyone can know a zine will fold, but the editor won't acknowledge the fact. Am I mistaken in thinking Leviathan seems likely to go the same way?

((Piggott had given this bit of history as background for his suggestion that the hobby should "do something" about the Leviathan situation. L #9 was 2 months late, and, at the time of his writing, it was 42 days after the deadline set in L #9, and still, no #10. He recognized that "Advocating that someone's zine be taken away from him is a serious matter." And yet, Piggott was wrong. Leviathan ran until Issue #25, I beleive, so it was no where near dead at that point. And that's the problem, you really can't be sure. Most zines are like, say, Jihad!; they don't recover. But a few do. You don't want to push the guy into the grave, but you also don't want the rotting corpse stinking up the hobby.))



((Not much has been written about Ombudsmen and their functioning in the hobby. The following is by John Leeder, Paroxysm #52, April 1977))

# THE CDO OMBUDSMAN

I've been asked to "start a discussion" ... on the role of the Ombudsman of the Canadian Diplomacy Organization. Rather than going into a big song and dance, I'm going to pose a bunch of questions, briefly outline my opinions, then throw the floor open to readers.

1. Should there be a CDO Ombudsman? I say yes. There are, unfortunately, a few incompetent and uncaring GMs around. There have been, in the past, a few GMs who have deliberately ripped off players. And there are plenty of inexperienced GMs who haven't thought put their role completely and tend to mishandle situations that come up. Without an Ombudsman, the only recourse a player has is to kick up a big stink, which tends to make matters worse for everyone rather than clearing up differences of opinion ((and has almost no chance of getting the player what he wants)). GMs, too, can have their reputation harmed by public controversies, even when they are not in the wrong. An experienced Ombudsman can work behind the scenes to smooth over difficulties before they do permanent harm to the reputations of the people involved.
2. Should the Ombudsman be elected or appointed? I think an elected Ombudsman, altho not necessarily more capable than an appointed one, would be more likely to have the confidence of the hobby in Canada. I am prepared to submit the position to election whenever the CDO feels the time is right.
3. What sort of things should the Ombudsman handle? Obviously, he should be ready to look at matters concerning GMing of games, enforcement of the rules and Houserules, and the operation of established hobby services. My time as IDA Ombudsman has convinced me that he should avoid like the plague "political" matters, i.e. disputes which boil down to one ego versus another. ((I think an Ombudsman can have a legitimate role in trying to resolve personal disputes, and I have performed this role myself. Obviously, this is a more difficult and time consuming task, and there's no assurance of success. Still, if the parties themselves cant resolve the matter (indeed, their efforts sometimes make matters worse), why not give someone else a go at it?))
4. How should he operate? Again, my IDA experiences have convinced me that he should work as informally as possible commensurate with fair dealing. There is a place for precision of language and clarity of process, but the overly legalistic concept of the office which the IDA held is a lot of wasted effort for the Ombudsman, and tends to inhibit people who would otherwise use his services. As much as possible, the Ombudsman should work quietly behind the scenes.
5. Should the Ombudsman have "teeth"? Yes, to a small extent. If the Ombudsman feels that one person is clearly in the wrong, and clearly refuses to correct the situation, the Ombudsman should be able to make a public statement of the facts and his recommendations. If someone refuses to cooperate with the Ombudsman in providing information on a case (example: a player makes a complaint about a GM; the GM says, "screw you, Ombudsman, I won't cooperate" or just declines to write) then the Ombudsman should be able to publicize the complaint and the fact that the party is not cooperating. If the Ombudsman has sufficient prestige of office and is trusted by the hobby, such an announcement would be the only punitive measure needed, as public opinion would be mustered against the offender. In no case should punitive measures be taken for a simple, one shot GM error. Only if a GM refuses to take reasonable measures to correct the error, or indicates that he will continue to follow an erroneous policy should the Ombudsman take action. ((I won't agree to be an Ombudsman until I've obtained the agreement of both parties. Otherwise, I'm simply acting as an advisor to one party or the other, which I've done. I've never been in a situation where both parties have agreed, then one reneged.))
6. Should there be a Judicial Committee? Here, my feelings are mixed. As IDA Ombudsman, I found the JudCom useful in advising me when I was unclear in my own mind, and I thought its discussions on basic hobby issues had the potential of being valuable to the

hobby as a whole. On the other hand, it was a lot of work, and individuals tended to try and use it for political purposes. I'd like to hear more input from hobby members. Should there be a JudCom? What should its job be? How should it be constituted?.... ((Such a committee would probably only work for an organizational Ombudsman. It should not, however, be a body to whom a loser can appeal. An Ombudsman is there to solve a problem, not to set the stage for the next set of people to tackle the same mess. As a source of advice, or as a forum for increasing the impact of an Ombudsman's pronouncements, it would be quite useful. DD #30, 35¢ deals exclusively with the 1975CM affair, a complex game dispute tackled by Leeder and his JudCom. Also, John Caruso, 160-02 43rd Ave Flushing NY 11358 has prepared an unscreened list of persons volunteering to be an ombudsman. This list has an excellently written preamble of some basic do's and don'ts, with very sound advice.))

---

## THE ZINE COLUMN #64

Kathy Byrne will indeed be the new Boardman Number Custodian. I hope that all GMs will give her their complete cooperation in providing information on gamestarts, etc. However, I urge my readers to exercise considerable caution when writing Kathy, particularly on a matter of some sensitivity. I base this on two or three recent incidents. The first began in the "Kathy's Korner" in the Feb Whitestonia, where Kathy implied something about me which was absolutely untrue. As was my custom (I've gone thru this several times before in W) I sent in a letter of complaint, which was printed in the April KK. Kathy also appended some additional comments of her own. A short time later, she wrote me, wondering what I thought of what she had written. In response, I wrote her back, explaining why I felt her comments only made matters worse, and how I was sure she knew that what she wrote wasn't true. I also said specifically that I did not want to complain about this again in W because it would just start the cycle all over again. This letter was thus labeled "Do Not Quote" --- I did not want to start the cycle again in W. This was just a private letter, with copies going to no one else, and written directly in response to what she had written me.

It appears, however, that I was set up. In the May "Kathy's Korner", Kathy said, "Mark recently referred to me "as a thorn among the flowers" do you think that's a polite way....." That phrase she quoted from me is a slightly garbled version of what I wrote in my DNQ letter. Even worse, the context was completely altered. The thorn I was referring to was not Kathy, but an aspect of Whitestonia. I'm not going to take the space to quote the whole thing here; if you want to see for yourself, send me an SASE, and I'll send you a Xerox of that part of the letter.

Also in the May KK was the following, "Berch is so mad at me, he has given up complaining!!!!!!" This was again taken directly from my DNQ letter, altho its not exactly accurate, since, in my opinion, "mad" isn't precisely the right word. There is a possible third incident, which I'm less sure of. In the May KK issue, Bruce Linsey complains that Kathy said earlier that he had written something which Bruce says he never wrote. Kathy then replies that it was taken from his "Off The Record" letter of March 19. Bruce has subsequently said that the letter contains nothing of the sort, but the point is, Kathy took something which she claims was in an OTR letter, and printed it in KK.

All this could have gone in the last DD, but I tried to find out what was going on by writing her; after all, it might have just been an oversight. She wrote me back in late May (don't believe this nonsense she says in Apalling Greed about her not writing me; she wrote me three times in May alone), but pretty much ignored my questions. Instead, ignoring the fact that my letter to her (the last one, asking her why she had printed from my DNQ letter) was labeled Off The Record, she ridiculed me in the June KK for even complaining about it. She also announced that she was following the Langley position, i.e. a request for confidentiality would not necessarily be honored. But she has gone much further than Langley, because he, unlike Kathy, hasn't applied his new policy retroactively to reveal letters written earlier. Kathy writes, "I've decided that I do not intend to worry about these assinine technicalities anymore - either trust me to use my common sense or don't write me!" Well, I trusted her and I was burned. Don't let

"

that happen to you.

While I'm on the subject of Whitestonia, I might as well include here a letter from someone who has asked that his name not be used:

You claim to be so logical, but I've caught you in a contradiction. In DD #67, you said that you'll permit anyone to sub to DD. Is this still your policy? ((Yes, always has been, always will be)) In Whitestonia(#70/71), Caruso refuses the sub check of Bruce ... Linsey. Caruso then says, "The reason I'm not accepting it is because I'm following Mark Berch's advice to me." Sooooo --- one policy for yourself, a different piece of advice for Caruso. Gotcha! ((I have never advised or even suggested that Caruso not accept a sub check from Bruce Linsey. In fact, I've never advised or suggested that any pubber bar anyone in the hobby from subbing to their zine. I have no idea why John printed such a thing . ))

The most original excuse for stabbing one's ally instead of going for the two way draw comes in Glenn Sherrill's victory statement in Appalling Greed #33 "...is my upcoming move to a remote area of SE Utah where there is no mail service. From my residence it will be 40 miles of rough dirt road and another 50 miles by highway to the post office." --- so he wanted to get the game over quickly.

John Boardman's Graustark was the first of the hobby's diplomacy zines, and its 20th anniversary issue, #474, was recently published. This is a phenomenal record in a hobby where only a small percentage even reach their fifth anniversary.... Irksome! #25 presents an intriguing suggestion for how to reap benefits from an intentional NMR ..... The Modern Patriot #12/13 broke the North American dipzine record with 131 pages, including contributions from Carl Russell, John Buck, Linda Wightman, Gary Coughlan, Don Sigwalt, John Michalski and others, a truly massive affair, but then I should talk about putting out volumes of material..... Voice of Doom #79 has a thoughtful article by Jim Meinel on some potential problems which can arise when a GM of a postal game agrees to accept orders over the telephone. Relatively new GMs might want to check this article out, as the best way to prevent a problem is to be aware of it in advance. The issue also has accounts of Diplomacy coups, particularly one in a telephone game by Porter Wightman, and a somewhat-hard-to-beleive one by Bob Osuch from a face to face game..... Europa Express #24 sports a fat letter column, with plenty of contributions from across the Atlantic. Gary has managed to snag a subber in Zambia, of all places; I don't think I'm going to be able to top that, tho I do have subbers in Japan, England, France, No. Ireland, Holland and Switzerland .... For those interested in variants, Arda #11 is available from Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Drive Encinitas CA 92024 for \$1. It has two complete British variants (including one based on the War of Roses), information on the Youngstown family of variants, and more ... for those of you new to the hobby, the best investment you could make is to send \$1 to Bruce Linsey 24A Quarry Drive Albany NY 12205 and ask for "Supernova" (not to be confused with the British zine of the same name) which is a 35 page comprehensive introduction to the game and particularly to the hobby and how it works and what you can get out of it .... John Caruso editorializes in Whitestonia #71/72 that deception of the GM is not to be tolerated, but that throwing out a player for doing this is "just as bad as the player's deception" Alas, John has no game openings at present, but those of you who don't mind a cheat staying in the game after he's been caught might want to give him a try if openings arise there. I myself would rather not play Diplomacy with cheats and thus would prefer the GM remove one if discovered, but then, you might have a different preference...

#### New Zines

The Two Faces of Tomorrow Mark Keller 9536 Shumway Dr Orangevale CA 95662(Computers & Diplomacy)  
Raging Main James Woodson NASC, Bldg 633; AI-32 NAS Pensacola FL 32508  
Bersaglieri Tom Mainardi 1403 Lawrence Rd Havertown PA 19083(Formerly a CoA subzine)  
Manifest Destiny Keith Sesler PO Box 158 Fraser, Michigan 48026 (10/\$3)  
Psychopath Mike Dean Rm 38B West Park Hall 319 Perth Road Dundee DD2INN Scotland(5/E3)  
Who Cares? Russ Rusnak 8002 S. Nagle Burbank Ill 60459(Uncensored letters and Black Ers)  
Triumvirat Daniel Glamot 74 rue du Rominet 5700 Samreville Belgium  
Supernova Gareth Cook 8, Ajax House Old Bethnal Green Road Bethnal Green, London, England

The reprints in #69 produced some response:

Mark Lew: In sending anonymous notes via the GM ((a service that Graham Jeffery offered to provide to those who didn't want thier postmark to give them away)), is the GM allowed to read them? If not, how about ((a player, imperiating the GM by stating in his anon note)) "Note to all players: There was an error in the SO1 game report. The German order A Mun-Bur should have read A Mun-Ber" in a sealed envelope to the French player. Or perhaps postpone the deadline to incite an NMR." ((Possible, but probably difficult to pull off, especially since players will be skeptical. Still, its an idea/risk-for-GM. I don't know of any US GM providing such a service outside of various "Blind" games))

Steve Knight: ....When is a proxy not a proxy? You're right, its difficult to draw a line between ordering one country and ordering two -- but I think that issue is a red herring for the real distinction at hand...I mean, yes, if your puppet follows your orders your are technically ordering 2 countries, but only after the fact --- your puppet is still fully capable of stabbing you, and you only succeed in ordering both because the puppet chooses not to stab on any given turn. If I understand correctly, tho, 75BD saw Swanson essentially saying, "Palmer's going to be me for a while." (I think it would be legitimate to interpret this as, "His signature will be mine) ((Right, this was the deadl)) The difference in my mind is that in the former case, your sucessful ordering of both your puppet's and your own countries requires turn-by-turn approval of your puppet --- he's gotta follow your orders each time --- while in the latter, this turn-by-turn potential for Swanson to stab by not following orders becomes virtually nil. This leads me to conclude that while the former is legitimate, the latter is not, regardless of the fact that you're technically ordering two countries in both cases.((But, Swanson could have reclaimed his right-to-order any time he wanted. The problem was that, with him travelling, it would be very difficult for him to do this, so Palmer has considerable confidence that the orders he dicatates for Swanson will be used. In the ordinary puppet, you have no such confidence. Still, for all Palmer knows, this story about Swanson could be a total lie, done to persuade Palmer that Palmer would have the proxy when he really didn't.))

OK, you're probably saying by now, "What about Carte Blanche?" If it's done on a turn-by-turn basis, I think it's legit --- the puppet still has to give that implied consent of sending you the signed blank sheet each turn, and could just as easily "stab" by not sending it back. The tricky case, then is if the puppet sends a whole stack of blank sheets. I intuitively want to say that this isn't legitamite, but can't because of the legitimacy of the turn-by-turn situation ((i.e. where he sends one signed blank sheet at a time)). So I'd draw the line right down the middle of this case, then, and say that it's legit, but just barely.

Mark Luedi: One matter I'd like to see addressed .... that being with how many NMRs should a GM delay a game --- i.e. extend it another month. I myself ran across that situation with a Youngestown game I took over from John Leeder with no standbys, possibly some confusion about the change in GMs, and only 3 of the 5 players being heard fro. I delayed. ((The best place for such a policy is in the much maligned House Rules That way, when your decision is made, it won't be perceived as being done just to screw a particular person. Many GMs, when starting up a orphaned game, will insist that all players be present, and I think thats a good idea. Otherwise, I don't think a game should be delayed just because of multimle NMRs. But any policy is fine, so long as its spelled out in the HRs)

.....  
In DD #71, I quoted from Irksome! #25, quoting Scott Hanson, the editor as saying, ".... I don't promise not to print anything that is marked "not for print"." Scott has asked me to point out that the full sentence was, "Irksome has no such policy; I don't promise not to print anything that is marked "not for print"."The failure to underscore was inadvertant. The "such policy" has no antecent earlier in the paragraph; I don't know if it refers to the policy of respecting confidentiality or not respecting such a request. Also, when I said, "Langley, Hanson, and Caruso will not automatically respect a DNQ/OTR label, I meant literally exactly that. You won't be guarenteed respect for the label (as you will with me), but none of them, methinks, are looking to stir up troublewith the policy.