

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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As you probably didn't notice, sub rates have gone up 5¢ per issue, the first rise since April 1983. Altho there are some rather large sub balances out there, I'm not going to recalculate anyone's last-issue figure. The rise is partly the increase in postage, and partly a jump in printing costs which took place last year. I imagine that the postal rate increase will be the subject of some barbed remarks by some pubbers. At the risk of taking an unpopular stance, I don't think this is an unreasonable development. This is the first increase in over 3 years, and its only gone up 10%. My printing costs have gone up a good deal more than 10% over the past 3 years, and I'm pretty sure that envelopes, tape, and staples have gone up more than that too. In fact, you have to go back to the 60s to find a longer period of stable postage rates. It took 5 years to go up from 5¢ to 6¢, which is a 20% increase. Given the general cost of things, 22¢ is not at all unreasonable, and a bargain compared to many countries. In short, I don't object to it.

What I do object to is the quality of the service, and specifically, its reliability. I was recently NMRred in a game when my orders took 8 days to arrive --- and the GM is local! I have in the last 6 weeks received 2 complaints from readers that back issue orders have not arrived after allowing more than a reasonable amount of time. One of these is a complete run, so we're not talking peanuts here. Also annoying are the more "routine" delays. Whys should local mail take 2 days to arrive? A letter from New York take 3 days, or one from the west coast take 5 days? I wish these were flukes, but they are not. And that is what I object to about the USP"S", not the 22¢.

Coming up this spring is "MaryCon 85' " (I don't know why the flyer has 85' rather than '85). As was the case last year, this will be in two parts. Vari-Marycon will be Friday, May 31. As I understand it, a variant game for this has not been selected; I hope the one they use will have been play-tested. Marycon proper is then the following Sat and Sunday, one round each day. It will be held at Mary Washington College in Fredricksburg, Va. I assume that the Martins will be running the Tournament, as they have in the past, which would be great, considering how well past tourneys have been run by them. There is also a social hour in the evening afterwards. The price for MaryCon, including meals, accomodations and the tourney (and the beer Sat night) is a very reasonable \$50; add \$35 for Vari-Marycon (price based on double occupancy). I've been to both earlier ones and hope to be at this one too. Those who have been in the past know how extremely well organized this weekend is. And if the past is any guide, there will be plenty of women on campus that weekend.....

((I joined the hobby in the Spring of 1976. The first big fold for me was Impassable, which was one of my three favorite zines. It was a zine I was to borrow from when I came to planning my own zine, and it's a zine I have reprinted from many times. I can still remember my shock when I read the following, in #74, January, 1977))

#### EDITORIAL

This is the particular type of editorial which no one likes to write, but it has to be written, if only to justify the rather abrupt and radical turn to the 5-year course of Impassable.

The point of the editorial is this: Impassable will cease to be a major postal diplomacy publication. That is, I will discontinue all subs and all trades except those demanded by subscribers and traders. Impassable will shrivel up and die as its remaining games conclude .... I do not want to be hindered by any such fixed agreements any longer than I have to as I quickly dismantle my dear, beloved Impassable .... My current intentions are to keep this issue short and emotional, and to do a nearly normal issue for the next, and come up with a final timetable for converting Impassable from a classy gamezine to another hasbeen. ((What follows are bookkeeping details regarding games))

Now, why did this happen? Why such an abrupt change to Impassable?

It has been since early 1971 that I entered this hobby of ours, so called the postal Diplomacy hobby. It was then a fascinating game to me (and still is on a face-to-face basis, and particularly with variants) and since I had no other time-consuming hobby I jumped in with all 4 feet and my hunchback. My very first issue was a trial one, unnumbered, but finally became known as #0. From there on Impassable became a gamezine and flourished for nearly 5 years (it will be around for at least a full 5 years since the games will continue ...). The publishing "empire" I developed grew and grew until at one point I was publishing Impassable (my main zine at all times) with over 100 readers, Lost Horizons ((which ran variants, and postal "Clue")) with close to 40 readers, publisher of Diplomacy Review ((this was the official zine of the International Diplomacy Organization, and at times was quite impressive in size)) (close to 135+), and of Aquarius, a labor of love, to about 25 readers.

This combined activity killed me for a while. The first zine to go was Aquarius which grew into a monster due to its unlimited press ((not just from the players)) and variant games centered around a single Diplomacy game (1973BU). That was followed by LH when I merged its remaining games into Impassable. As for DR, I was always able to get that out, but declined to run as editor of IDA.

Thus, cut back to Impassable I slowly recovered and gained my original "desire" to publish an outstanding dipzine. Impassable slowly improved (at least I think it did), circulation increased to over 150 at one point, the format was improved, and it became accepted as the number 2 printed publication in the hobby ((DW being #1)). For a while this worked as I enjoyed improving Impassable to its limits.

Unknown to me, I was getting tired of doing Impassable as long ago as last winter. So, this took me down the roads for changes in Impassable. Would I do a newszine? Would I run more games? Would I run games, but use guest GMS? I toyed with all these ideas, as you readers well know, but finally, during this early winter season, I stopped to think seriously about Impassable. The games were ending and I had to make a decision regarding starting more games or not to start a third round of games.....I decided not to and ... I decided to end Impassable rather than convert it into a newszine or genzine or whatyoumacallit.

The reasons? There were many reasons, in decreasing order of importance:

1. Tired of publishing a large-circulation gamezine every three weeks, or any sort of schedule for that matter.
2. Tired of the postal Diplomacy hobby in general. It hasn't improved much since I entered and appears to be heading nowhere.
3. Other interests are taking over, mainly a new hobby: Civil War.

Let me talk about the Civil War interest of mine. I am a member of the Harrisburg Civil War Roundtable -- an association of those interested in the study of the American Civil War. I also have an interest in a great range of Civil War Branches: Civil War music, photography, tactics and strategy (Generalship), communications, Civil war games, and Civil War History (reading). I do not collect antiques.

So, with this strong basic interest in the Civil War ... I naturally regained my former interest in board wargaming which had previously been eclipsed by Diplomacy. So, now I have a very strong interest in Civil War games ((some of which he then discusses, with suggestions for which battles would make good simulation games)) ... If I were to inherit money, say, \$1,000,000, I would not hesitate to start my own Civil War game company and publish an entire series of all major battles of the war! So, that proves how much I am interested in this Civil War of our heritage. ((He then discusses his future plans for Glory Road, his Civil War gaming zine. This includes an ambitious plan to run a "macro-game", covering the entire Civil War, which will be halted from time to time so that a "microgame" based on an individual battle can be fought out. The whole war would take 5 years or more))...It will be a great project and it will take time which I will not have for Impassable.

One had to go.  
((And sure enuf, #7> was the last regular-type issue. John had a few glories left ahead of him. He was to later win the DW Demo game 1977CL as Austria, a very interesting game, and in 1979, he ran the tournament at DipCon XII. I was fortunate enuf to be able to assist him at that, and I applied some of those lessons learned then at DipCon XV, three years later. Shortly after DipCon XII, John left the hobby for good, and I don't know what ever became of his grand plan for Glory Road.)



((Some of you, especially those new to the hobby, may wonder just how it is that zines were produced in the earlier days (and why, for that matter). After researching the matter in great detail, trying to find the most scientifically accurate description, I changed my mind and decided to run the following instead. Its by Conrad von Metzke, who ran a group of zines under the name of "Grendel Press", and appeared in his main zine, Costaguana, Vol 6, #15, June, 1973.))

#### A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO GRENDEL PRESS

Not long ago, the way to sell a product was to take out an ad somewhere that said, "Buy Glop, only 99¢", and the deadwood mentality of the public would make you a fortune. Now, however, sophistication has set in, and to sell Glop you have to (a) prove that it possesses a viable function, (b) manufacture it free from poisons and pollutants, (c) package it in an intellectually stimulating box, and (d) present it as contributing significantly to "the equality and world brotherhood of man." Either that, or spread the word that its a good high. It no longer matters if Willie Mays uses the stuff; what counts is if the whooping crane would be extinct if he used it.

Grendel Press beleives in Truth in Advertising. We support Full Disclosure. We endorse Fair Market Value. In all our active years we have never reneged on these principles, except as regards our magazines. In accord, therefore, with our obligation to the consumer, Grendel Press takes this opportunity to, as it were, drag you behind the scenes and set you at ease about the production of this, your favorite and most cherished Diplomacy Cartel.

#### I. In The Beginning

Many years ago, stretching high into antiquity, a young man of unimpeachable prowess and phenominal aptitude discovered a sheet of paper in a pumpkin. It was page 207-0 of Nostromo, a novel by the obscure Polish writer Joseph Conrad, vaguely remembered for his sea chanties and racial slurs. Upon this page were the words, "Costaguana" and "Grendel" (page 208 has misprinted from an edition of seewolf). In a revelatory flash,

an idea was born that would shake the foundations of civilization: The young man decided to take his document and start up a Diplomacy magazine. In doing so, he left behind in the pumpkin some small strips of microfilm; had he found them and removed them, who knows what might have ensued?.....

## II. Production

Grendel Press magazines are produced in the most modern facilities and with the finest mechanizal equipment money can buy. At the same time, extensive consideration is given to the elimination of unnecessary overhead and costly frills, thus ensuring top dollar value. For example, our reception suite is confined to the absolute practical minimum, consisting as it does in a small cubicle 4 x 4 by 16 inches. Certain problems have been found in making visitors feel properly at home, but it is felt that this is a minor matter when weighed against the astoundingly low monthly rental of \$1.20.

Similarly, the secretarial staff is selected for a combination of speed and effective action, thus enabling it to remain at a numerical minimum. As of know, the staff consists of one person, whose typewriting agility at a measurable rate of 47 words per minute can be extended if need be to a fantastic 120 w.p.m. for lengthy stretches - albeit regrettably producing certain minor side effects, i.e. slobbiness and utter unintelligibility. Our research staff is constantly at work to improve our service, as illustrated by their ongoing project to reduce the secretaries to zero. They have already advanced one superb solution which is being held in ready reserve, namely, abandonment of all games.

Our equipment is flawless. When we started 8 years ago on a shoestring, we operated with an ancient, creaky, senile old 1933 Underwood Standard typewriter, and the occasional use of someone else's ditto machine. Today we have reinvested capital and cornered special buys in the market to enable us to actually own half of a ditto machine which is quartered elsewhere, and we have changed from the ancient, creaky, senile old 1933 Underwood to a beautiful, high-performance, modern, top quality 1933 Underwood by the simple expedient of cleaning the keys with a toothbrush. (We also keep a 1947 Smith-Corona portable in service for emergencies. It is currently broken.)

The production area is a model of efficiency. By careful budgeting of space and coordination of time requirements, it has been possible to fit the entire creative work area into a single living-room-sized enclosure. Facilities available include: Three manila folders for holding materials submitted, one glue-bespattered dinette table; one metal frame chair; about 100 legal size envelopes, replenished as needed; and a phonograph and 1600 recordings for optimum working conditions. The entire area is tastefully and unobtrusively lighted by a single 75-watt bulb in a dusty table lamp positioned on the other side of the room.

## III. Procedural Operations

When adjudicating game results, the GM makes use of years of practical experience and an imaginative, open mind. First, he waits a week beyond the deadline; any orders which decay or yellow to illegibility in that time need not be considered, thus reducing the work-load. Whatever survives is then transcribed onto a Grendel One-Year Master Move Chart (TM reg.). (An exact facsimile of a typical Grendel One-Year Master Move Chart, TM, appears on the right) ((It did in his zine. However, my printer and I have a deal strictly limiting the amount of totally illegible material I'm allowed to submit to him, and if I were to reproduce it all, I'd go thru several year's allotment, which I'd rather not do)). Information gleaned therefrom is typed, frequently verbatim, into the magazine and is some time thereafter mailed out to many of the players.

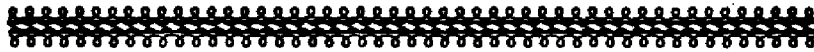
The Grendel Triple-Check Mailing List System, TM, ensures faultless mailing accuracy with a minimum of effort. Checkpoint One is the Master mailing list itself. This is kept stringently current, and no means are wasted to accomplish this end. In fact, it has recently become possible to remove deletions from this list before they take effect; and as for new additions, they are placed on the master list the very same instant they manage to work their way to the top of the incoming pile.

Prior to mailing each issue, the names on the list are counted. After that, the number of envelopes on hand is totalled; if insufficient envelopes are on hand, a feud is started, and the proper number of people are kicked out. Then all envelopes are addressed, using Grade A-1 U.S. Government pens stolen from the Post Office. With this task completed, Checkpoint 2 arrives: Counting the envelopes to see that there are still as many as there were when we started. If there are not, steps are taken to use up the surplus stamps by paying some bills.

Finally, envelopes are stuffed, sealed and mailed. Checkpoint 3 occurs at the mailbox itself, where we rigorously ascertain whether any envelopes have been erroneously dropped on the ground. If they have, the next step is to determine current wind conditions, to see if the dropped items have a chance to be blown to their destinations anyway.

#### IV. Conclusion

As you've seen, the goals at Grendel Press are Service, Efficiency, Quality, and Progress. And, as we have for eight years, we will continue to strive for the optimum in each of these target areas, at the expense of no more than two of the others. ((Some day I'll describe the physical conditions I work under here, but some extensive improvements will be needed to bring it even close to Conrad's. I'm sure you all spotted the crucial error in his procedural operations that was undoubtedly the cause of his fold a few years later: He forgot to put the return addresses on his envelopes. Placing these on the envelope, or for some people, the correct selection of whose return address stickers to use, is a critical aspect to getting the mailing out.))



((Next, let's have a look at a few specific zines which have been gone for a while. We start first with some comments made by John McCallum in Serendip #23, 7 Jan 1970))

## **BIG BROTHER**

Game 1968CK, whose ending is mentioned on page 2, is the last of the Big Brother games, and it seems appropriate to include a few words about that journal. Begun just under 4 years ago, in Feb 1966, it folded late last summer with its 100th issue. The two games remaining were then transferred to Postal Diplomacy, as we have seen, the last of those has now ended...

Throughout its life, Big Brother carried the Reinsel Ratings List, the first rating list of any sort to be proposed. Earlier editions of it had appeared in the letter columns of other journals ... but after the founding of his own zine, Reinsel published it himself. Many people have stated that it is the best Diplomacy Rating List so far proposed. Among those who have said so is Allan Calhmer, the game's founder. ((Oh, alright, I'll tell you. The winner got one point for every starting player, with only games with 5+ players counted. Survivors got one point, those expelled for any reasons got -1. This was the version as of April 1966, and it had no provision for draws because I don't think there had been any yet. (first was 1965L). This is a pretty crude system by today's standards. By August 1969, it had been refined. 7 points to the winner, 2 points to any other player with 10+ centers. Survivors got 1 point, with -1 to those eliminated, resigned, or dropped. Drawers got only 2 points if they had 10+ points, 1 otherwise. "Ties or drawn games are looked down upon."))

Not a favorite among those who get their kicks from reading and writing press releases, Big Brother has always been liked by those who are primarily game players. For instance, such a good judge of all things Diplomatic as John Koning played in 7 of BB's 12 games. And last summer when it first appeared that BB would soon fold I received two letters from players begging me to apply for another game in it: The writers of them had applied for new games, and they thought that additional applications would increase the chances of additional games being run. (I think that Reinsel must be one of the very few GMs who have had a full board of applicants without his having indicated that he planned a new game.) To one of these in particular I pointed out that

there were other well run zines, altho fewer in number than we would like to see. This carried no conviction at all; it was Big Brother he wanted to play in and no substitute would do.

The reasons for its popularity among players were its speed and accuracy. A year or two ago I regularly received quite a few letters from prospective players. Many of them asked for advice on games to enter. When they stressed the speed of play I had to say, over and over again, "There are only two zines which have a fast schedule and are completely regular, namely ... Graustark and ... Big Brother; it would almost have been worthwhile to have had a rubber stamp made. Page 2 of this issue will show what I meant. There are listed two games. As their numbers show ((68CI and 68CK)) they began almost simultaneously; they were ... among the last batch of 1968 games to be started. Now, just a year later, they have ended, again close to the same time ((in 1910 and 1909)) The rate of 14 days between issues was at one time standard thruout the Diplomacy world. As far as I know .. Graustark is the only magazine which now maintains it. BB squeezed in one extra move per year by shaving this time to 13 days between issues. BB's speed is well known; it was not so often noticed that it was also an extremely accurate magazine. All editors who publish at all extensively make an occasional error .... There are those who just slough off such errors, making no effort to correct them, we might call them the Bernie Kling School. Respectably edited zines, of course, correct errors. Often this can be done in the following issue, with no delay to the game. Sometimes the error is serious enough that a move will have to be delayed one season while the players are informed about the true situation. But however carefully errors are corrected, it is best if no error is made in the first place. BB stood very high in this regard; errors of transcription were very rare in it, fewer I think than in any other zine with a comparable amount of play.

Big Brother, of course, was at the opposite pole from a zine like International Enquirer. IE is a highly enjoyable zine. But the enjoyment of the readers would hardly be affected a particle if it carried no games at all. BB was exactly the reverse of this, it was primarily a playing field; any additional material being quite subordinated to the games..... Turn back to the Calahmer Rating List on page 2 of this issue. There are only three people with scores of more than 4 ((Smythe, Birsan, Prosnitz)). All 3 of them have played in BB; two of the three have gone out of their way, in letters about other matters, to tell me how much they valued Big Brother. ((Get the fundamentals right, and you will inspire quite a bit of loyalty. BB was later restarted, and led a shadowy existence in the mid to late 70s. For all I know, it may still be published; I believe he was running a game as late as 1980, but then again, his games never ran that long.))

((Next, something completely different. This is written by its editor, Len Lakofka, not an outsider, and appeared at what was about the half-way point in the zine's history))

## Les Liaisons Dangereuses

I discovered Diplomacy as the Lake Geneva Convention, where I was introduced to it by my friend Gary Gyax. I purchased the game at Krock's in Chicago at Christmas (they were constantly sold out before that time) and began to play the game. I fell upon postal play again thru Gary Gyax who was then playing 68BK in Verbal Chaos Limited. In that publication I found a list of game openings and began my own postal play in a zine called Half & Half with 1969AA ((A zine which lasted only a few issues)).

Once I began to play postally I decided that I wished to begin a game myself as a GM. I advertised for players in International Federation of Wargamers publications at a game fee of \$2 and on MAY 18, 1969 Liaisons Dangereuses was born. I got the name from a move I had just seen entitled Les Liaisons Dangereuses, a French subtitle flick adapted from the epistolary novel of the same name. Since this seemed like a perfect title for a Diplomacy magazine, and since the move was risqué, the die was cast!

Bill Hoyer and I were the coeditors/GMs of LD during 1969. Bill did the even

issues, I did the Odd ones.... Our first game, GMed by Bill, was 69AE, in which I played France, was GMed by Bill. Soon after, LD #2 and #3 began, one GMed by Bill, one by myself.

Starting in 1970, LD was a terrible ugly little piece of garbage, whose ~~chief~~ only claim to fame was a misspelled title ...and constant typos. At least, now I spell the title correctly; usually. Also in 1970, Chris Schleicher took over the magazine Atlantis from Rod Walker. He then became co-publisher of LD, GMing two games and running and/or typing LD for some 6 to 8 issues.

The first major change, for the better, occurred at the end of 1970, when I decided to open games for novice players only. I was in some 10-15 games myself, and I began to appreciate the problems of the player-GM relationship. Therefore, I attempted to begin production of a better magazine to give the new player a good introduction to the hobby. In mid-1971 I took the two novice games out of LD and put them in a new zine called Neophyte. I also opened a publication title under the name of CANARD PRESS to handle the purposes of multiple publications ((whatever that means)).

In 1972, when I began to work on Diplocon V, I added two major features: The Diplomacy Scene and Musings (a column by Larry Blandin). By the time of Diplocon ((as it was briefly called then)), LD was beginning its rebirth as a genzine. Features and news were being added on a regular basis.

The events that caused LD to finally graduate to an "amalgamation" (a Genzine plus a gamezine as opposed to being entirely one or the other) were the Ratings Systems Debates of 1972, and the demise of Rod Walker's Publishing Empire. I had toyed with my own rating system for some time, and I raised the problem to Rod at Diplocon V. Then, when he ceased to publish, and the Numenor system ceased, I decided to publish my own system --- which I have called the Rogues' Gallery. ((This gave 5 points per center held, plus 170 points given to the winner or divided equally among those who drew. Some penalties were given for elimination. That idea was later re-invented by McLendon and Sergeant when they formulated Dragon's Teeth, except that Len did rate standbys)) The vacuum left by Rod's demise is almost totally filled (with the exception of the Guide to Postal Diplomacy Literature) by Conrad von Metzke and other publishers.

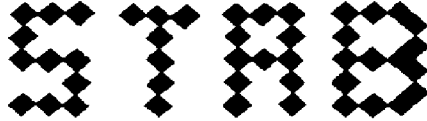
With LD #36, in Sept 1972, the final push to make LD into one of the top 10 postal zines was finished. Since Sept 1972, I initiated a survey syndicate whose title publication is "vox populi", I published the first and second RG readouts, and have begun the "Rogues' Gallery Magazine Poll!"

It is now the dawn of my 5th year of publication. In that year, I hope to do more material in PhotoOffset reproduction, with a much higher standard of layout and GMing.

In conclusion, I would like to offer my special thanks to Walt and Carol Buchanan, John Boyer, and Conrad von Metzke for their kind words and encouragement over the past year of growing pains in LD.

((I forgot to indicate that this appeared in issue #44, on his 4th anniversary, May 1973. The Zine lasted into the low 80s, but folded in 1977, and it was a somewhat messy fold, since Len was not too cooperative in turning over his game files to Bob Lipton, who was trying to rescue the games. Len's offset plans didn't last long, only #41-44. Toward the end, the zine became more D&D oriented. A few years back, Walt Buchanan told me that Len left, that the hobby never really appreciated the effort that he had put into it.)) because he felt

((It is most unusual for a North American non-custodial zine to actually change hands, and now-a-days, pretty much unheard of. Politesse is now being published by Ken Peel, with Ed Wobbel staying on as co-editor. In an earlier day, tho, this did happen on occasion ---- reference was made above to Chris taking over publication of Atlantis, tho that zine was still a fledgling. The writer is Conrad von Metzke, in STAB #95, Feb 10, 1973))



STAB, which you are reading, is a journal first published in 1966 by John Koning of Youngstown, Ohio. It combined, under John's management, his own zine MASSIF (begun in 1965), John Smyth's Trantor (begun 1964), and a bit later Ron Bounds' Orthanc (begun in 1965 or 1966, I can't recall). Mr. Koning added another journal, Ragnarok to his publishing empire.

In 1969, beset by time conflicts, Koning stuttered briefly and then abandoned all his games. Many months later, in Mid-1970, he suddenly reappeared with them for a very brief sojourn, and then folded again for good. In March 1971, Rod Walker, then Orphan Games Director, approached me about taking on Stab. I agreed, and officially took over in April. A team game ((three players versus three players)) had to be cancelled for lack of interest, but the 5 regular games were revived and have since been carried thru to completion, including one (1967A) that ended in a draw in 1926 (The Ragnarok games were picked up elsewhere; three of them are still continuing.)

As the Stab games shut down one by one, this zine got thinner and thinner, and I began to think about its future. At just about the time I felt I'd have to make a decision, but hadn't, Aniara, which Eric Just had been running on behalf of Jeff Key, wheezed to a screeching halt. I immediately took over its three games: one has since ended, the other two are still with us.

And so this has evolved now into an Orphan Warehouse. WE now have added one game from World News and War Report, and one game from Serendip, and we almost took on the Kadath game too, but changed our minds when the players objected to my gamesmanship. So from there on we keep up to 4 orphans on these pages, from any available source. ((For a zine to switch from a regular type zine to one just for orphans is very unusual, but it happened with Beyerlein's EFGIART as well. Conrad's plans were soon adjusted, as he was up to 5 games by #98, crept up to 6 by #105. In #110, he announced that the newest orphan, 1973IT, a game which had actually never started, would be the last, as he would be winding the zine down, which brought the zine to 7 games. But a gradual shut-down was not to be, and in #113, he announced that due to financial problems, all of Stab's games were themselves to be orphaned, except 73IT, and asked pubbers to step forward to adopt the games (which had themselves been orphaned earlier). This was March of 1974. I don't have copies of #114 and #115. #116, dated July 1, 1974, was published by Jeff Key, who announced that the zine was dedicated to John Koning, who had died that May. Jeff announced that his various and sundry zines would all become subzines to Stab. He also said that #115 hadn't been published yet, but would be published by Stan Wrobel and John Smythe, of all people. None of the Stab games appeared there. In #117 was a letter by Conrad von Metzke: "Nice sTab #116! And a great idea! Would you care for a copy of my #116 (I also have #117, as well as 69-115, if you like)? Oh well, so Walt ((Buchanan, the archivist)) goes bats; he needs work." Jeff Key responded: "Well, you see, it was like this. We called Walt, and asked him what the last issue of sTab was when it was published by you. He checked the archives and replied that the last issue you had sent him was #114. We promptly allocated #115 to the issue Stan and John were putting together and started our own series with #116...As you said Walt needs the work." ((What happened next, I do not know, for that is the last issue of Stab in my files.))

## A WHIRLWIND OF KNIVES

((OK, first a quick recap. Last issue carried the first part of Edi Brisian's victory statement for 1971BC, the first of the now famous "Hoosier Archives" Demo games. In our story so far, Edi (France) planned a massive EGR attack on E for S02. E saw the bad news in the W01 builds. He countered with an offer to give Nwy to R, with a S02 blitz of E, including F support for an English convoy to Holland. This was fine with Russia, but F nixed the idea, so R backed off, and E was then betrayed in S02. In a crucial fone call,



E (prosnitz) asked Edi who had vetoed the plan, and Edi lied and said: Russia. Somehow, E was persuaded, and decided to stonewall against Russia, thus allowing all his SCs to fall to France. In the south, Edi pressed for a blitz of Turkey. He told both I and A that if either attacked the other before T was dispatched, he would help the victim. Altho R was initially reluctant to join, T attacked R in SO1, making an enemy of him. By SO2 the attack was in full spring, as Italy (Walker) swung his fleets into Eas & Ion as part of a Lepanto Opening. And now, the conclusion.....from Hoosier Archives #184)

1903 saw the eastern world rip itself apart by three uncoordinated stabs going in a massive circle: G hitting R, R attacking A, and A moving on the Germans. I couldn't allow the Germans to be taken out by the Austrians, as it would have altered the eastern balance of power too much in favor of the Austrians, and any Austrian attack on G usually takes out Mun, which I wasn't about to let fall into any non-german hands unless they were French. I also didn't want anything to interfere with the mopping up of the Turks ((who were still at 4 SCs in W02)), so the Russian attack on Austria was a definite danger. Germany was forced to turn around and face the Austrians, and planned to move against them in the fall, and then in the following turns to shift back against the Russians. All this placed divisions within the Eastern powers, and prevented the formation of a "stop Birsan/France" movement which I'm sure Lakofka ((A)) wanted to lead in a terrible way. It also helped me decide what to do after the English were gone.

I was committed to backing the Germans if they had any chance of winning the game. This was a commitment out of reason more than anything else for had the Germans been in such a position, I would not have any position to attack them with a chance of success, thus forcing me to press an attack against the Russians in the North or the Italians in the south. The Austrian attack changed all that, once the Germans decided to move south one turn, and north ((against R)) the next. This meant that the Germans would be going nowhere fast, and that would isolate themselves from the two eastern powers who could have come to their aid: R and A. I therefore planned to set up G in FO4 for a quick blitz out of Bur and Nth. Barring any unforeseen miracles such as the Italians attacking me, or the Russians falling apart, G would be caught just as he pressed an attack on Russia.

Thru 1903 I moved to take over E in one shot during the fall and tried to negotiate with Russia over Germany. R didn't want to make it ((the attack on G, I assume)) in O4 as he bought the German line of moving on Austria, and he knew he would need their help with the Turks and the Austrians allying. I decided to risk the attack alone in FO4, as the Russians would be suckered into the fight by the German attack on R at the same time. At that time, I was agreed that the Germans would be divided in two, with Bel, Hol and Mun to France, and Berlin and Den going to R. I wanted Kie to go to whomever got there first (thus keeping the incentive to press the attack at all times), but R said no, and insisted on the Baltic center for his own. I agreed with reservations, knowing full well that if I got the chance, I would take Kiel, and keep going east, possibly timed with the Italians going East, against the Austrians.

In setting up the stab on Jeff ((G)), I planned to slip an army behind Mun using my favorite out-of-the-way approach thru Pie and Tyo. This would force the Italians out of Tyo, and allow me to place an army in Tyo where it could be used against Austria, if he kept up his alliance with Turkey.

The FO4 attack on Germany went off like a Champagne bottle: a sharp pop and a massive flow of irresistible force. I had offered to give Bel to G seeing that I had taken out all of E. This would make the unit in Hol move ((A Hol-Bel)), and allow me to force it to retreat by a supported convoy ((A BEL S & F Nth C A Edi-Bel)). I slipped into Tyo, as the Italians came down from there to protect Ven ((against a non-existent A Pie-Ven)), and I also piled right into Mun ((without support)) as the Germans moved in a shift against the Russians ((A Mun-Sil, A Boh-Gal, F Den-Bal)). This came upon the board right after a realignment of the eastern powers against Turkey, only this time the

Turks were really caught and shafted beyond any hope of recovery. Germany was now on the ropes with French armies in Hol, Bel, Mun and Tyo and no hope of relief. ((before we move on, I did want to mention the Italian attack on Turkey. Once Italy sets up the Lepanto

(A Tun, F Ion, F Eas), he must decide to go right for the convoy to Smy, or temporize with a convoy to Syr, with a supported attack the following season. In FO2, SO3, and FO3 Italy tried Smy each time --- and was thwarted each time. Only in SO4 did the convoy (from Alb, actually), succeed in taking Smy, and only because of help from Aus F Aeg, as T was led to believe that Austria would support the Turkish attack on Russia. This to me highlights the great weakness in the Lepanto opening. No other opening, so far as I can recall, is so dependent on guessing correctly. To short-circuit the guess, Italy needs help from Aus F Aeg or A Con, or Rus A Arm, which may take quite a while to materialize. OK, now, back to carving up the Germans))

Smythe (R), seeing my massive shift into Germany, still demanded that he take Den, Kie and Berlin, even tho he was nowhere near taking any of them without my support. I could have taken Kiel in the next year and locked up Ber and Den myself, but Smythe insisted that he get Kie, Den, and Ber regardless. This was the background to the so-called second "giveaway".

Considering the realignment of all three eastern powers, and R's unwillingness to budge on the territory problems, I had to make a quick decision in regard to Germany. If I pressed my attack directly on Germany and tried to take Kie and Berlin, I would be fighting G and R with the spectre of a united Eastern world ((united against T, down to 2 pieces in WO4)) coming after me led by Russia. If I didn't press the attack on G, and let Smythe take over the areas, it would allow him to grow so large as to be the major power on the board even after I had chopped up England as he would have had an easier expansion route to more SCs than I would. i.e. the expansion into Austria and the Balkans is much easier for Russia than an attack on Italy is for France.

The only other way out was to get Germany to ally with me, the guy who stabbed him, so as to make use of the German armies in the east ((A Sil, A Boh)) to stop the expected eastern power block from coming in central Germany and buying time for my fleets to invest the north and south seas ((he had 5 fleets by WO4)). I called Key (WO4) and to my surprise, not a single one of the eastern powers had made contact with him in regard to guaranteeing his survival if he would join them against me. It seems that Russia's greed for the German centers, and Lakofka's ((A)) growing interest in Italy ((?? --- not reflected in any FO4 moves or WO4 builds)) and Russia were precluding them from a rational policy. Luckily, Key made the offer to me first that I let him survive, in exchange for him pushing into the east. This was fantastic, even tho I wasn't quite sure of believing him but everything was going so well (until FO5 I had one move fail out of 57 written orders) that I'd see what his removals were, and if they were as we had planned, he wouldn't be in any position to do anything to me anyway, so why not trust him?

With the Winter removals of Germany ((dislodged army Hol, which could have gone to Kie or Ruhr was removed, as was F Bal), I began to really get paranoid about the eastern powers. With Germany and France obviously aligned by the removals (altho I played up Germany being in a hurry to retake Mun as the explanation to Russia), it was equally obvious that unless the three eastern powers got together France was going to roll all over the board. Therefore, I decided that since their best strategy was to attack me, I'd best hit them first. You might call it reverse paranoia, as its basis is that the other guy thinks you are after him (in this case, correctly) and you know he thinks so (in this case, they didn't for some reason) so you then plan to hit them as they must hit you if they follow their own perceived logic. (How's that gem of reason grab you?????)

Anyway, I had to move on all of them quickly. This was the height of the whirlwind of knives as I virtually stabbed everyone on the board in anticipation of them hitting me. Walker((I)) and I had arraigned a standoff in Tun with my one southern fleet ((Wes, Tyr)) I instead moved to Pie with an army and right into Tyr Sea, so I had a position to take out one Italian center guaranteed in the fall((Walker's A Rom, A Ven would have to face A Tyo, F Tyr, A Pie))....With Austria, I supported the Germans into Vie from my perch in Tyo, which destroyed an Austrian army outright. In the north, I moved into Ska, thus violating a deal I had set up with Russia, and setting up an at-

tack on Sweden with German help. When I read my SO5 moves, I was still being protected by some strange patron saint of Diplomacy, as all the moves worked, with the wonderful bonus of I and A moving as if they were planning an immediate war on each other. I really felt stupid for a minute. Here I was planning on being at war with all of Europe, and going after every single one of them when, bingo, nobody but nobody attacks me! I thought, "Mi gahd, vhat have I dun!!!!? Oy vay!"

There was no way out of it now, I thought; they are all going to come after me. I talked to Russia, and he was after me half-heartedly. I heard from Austria, figuring he would be ticked off at me for the German support into Vienna, but no, he wants to nail Italy. Italy writes and says he doesn't want to fight me and wants to fight Austria. The Parisians went running around the mail room screaming FAR OUT!!! I told Italy I would support him into Tri from Tyo, and arranged for the Germans to cut support in Bud while I would also pull out of the Tyr sea. I informed the Austrians that I wouldn't support the Germans in Vie in exchange for him making peace with me. (It was actually a somewhat empty gesture on my part since A Tyo was going to support A Pie-Ven in the Fall, so he couldn't support the Germans anyhow). As it looked to me, the Italians would make a backstab into the Austrians, attacking Tri and possibly Con or Gre ((Italy had F Aeg)) at the same time as I took out most of domestic Italy. I figured that Austria would go into a rage and never would ally with Italy in the game against me and even if he did, there wouldn't be much left, as all I wanted was rights over domestic Italy and Tun. This was the so-called "third giveaway": Italy being nailed by me in FO5, losing both Nap and Ven while attacking Tri ((unsuccessfully)) and taking Gre ((from Aeg)) and Con((from Smy, with 2 Turkish supports)) from Austria. More than a giveaway it was a bad choice on Walker's part for not taking a more defensive role in his homeland with a foreign fleet in Tyr. ((Thus, France took Ven, Nap, Berlin and Sweden, for 15 centers. No other player was able to build; G, R, and T had removals))

The Winter of 1905 saw the game stabilize for two consecutive moves, leading to the concession in SO7. Austria maintained a steady flow of rage at the Italians and refused to jump on the bandwagon of "Stap Birsan" that Iltay was finally mounting. In the center, the German and French forces made gains against War, taking it in FO6 when the Austrians slipped into Rum to break the back of Russian resistance. In the north, the Russians were tossed out of several sea areas in preparation for the northern push against StP. In the south, a bad move by myself allowed the Italians to recapture Nap and lose a freshly spring-captured Rome in the fall. But the investments by several fleets were paying premiums in the south as Tun or Rome was bound to fall in 1907 as was all of Northern Russia. The concession came in the wake of all this and ended the game amidst grunts and groans from several quarters.

In looking back, the so-called "give aways" are easier to understand: In one case, it was an attempt to go on record with a suicide tactic for threatening use in future games (Prosnitz-E) or the failure by the other powers to guarantee survival to a weak power (Key-G) or the misjudgement of a situation by a country that risked too much and got caught.

Billed as a grudge game, it probably has generated more grudges than went into it. Altho I might add that the game allowed for some of the participants to have an excuse to write to each other again. On my part, I hold no ill will towards the others now ((why should he? Nobody ever laid a glove on him.)) and must affirm that we should play each game separately but equally, or at least as much as we can.

((Not everyone saw it quite that way. With the WO5 moves, the Russian player Smythe groused that, "I had intended to play Diplomacy, not "give away", and said that Key(G), Prosnitz(E) and Walker(I) had done their "best to ruin" the game. This brought a stinging rejoinder from Prosnitz in the SO6 press. It was incredible, he said that this complaint would come from Smythe, "the leading architect of Birsan's victory". He recounted the generous offer that he had made Russia, and criticized him for being "foolish enough to fall for Birsan's blandishments" in turning it down and stabbing him --- which was all the more reason why Smythe, not Birsan, should fail in this game. He felt that his tac-

tic of threatening Key and Smythe with zero English centers was a perfectly legitimate tactic for trying to break up the triple alliance. He continued:

"However, this tactic would never be successful if it were merely a bluff; the tactic would then lack credibility for the future. The above was not the only reason I gave all my centers to Birsan. The other reasons were as follows:

(1) I believe in the basic principle, if you have to go down yourself, shaft as many of your enemies as possible. This can be accomplished by giving all of your centers to one person and leaving your other enemies relatively weak.

(2) From a standpoint of logistics, France was the only country in position to obtain all the centers.

(3) I believe in rewarding intelligent, rational play....Smythe would have been much more rational to accept my proposition. He would have all that he has now, plus Den, Ber, Kie, Mun(maybe), plus a friendly England holding Hol and England. This would have given Smythe 7 or 8 extra units to fight on his side. His failure to accept this deal was a surprising blunder for a player of his expert rating.

As for Key, his play was irrational from the beginning.....for Germany to join with France and Russia against England when neither France nor Russia is menaced in the south is suicidal; Germany just gets ground between F and R after the fall of E. And for Germany to do so in this game, when it obtained no English centers ... and didn't even get Bel, is doubly suicidal.....By contrast, Birsan's strategy was intelligent .....

(4) When faced with a choice between rewarding an honest player, and a double-crosser, I always reward the honest player. Both Smythe and Key made false promises, and then stabbed me. By contrast, Birsan never really misled me; he told me a few lies, but then I never really believe anything Edi says anyway, so I never felt that he had double crossed me. ((This is rather strange logic, to say the least. Birsan is being rewarded, in effect, for being such an untrustworthy fellow that he can't mislead anyway, which contrasts totally with his, "I always reward the honest player." And Birsan apparently did mislead him on the topic of who it was who torpedoed his original plan)).

The reason I state that Smythe, and not Key, is the leading architect of Birsan's victory is that Key is a comparatively inexperienced player, whereas Smythe, as an expert should have known better.....To sum up: I was powerless in this game; I really did, I believe, everything I could. By contrast, Smythe was in a position where he had power; instead, he bungled it....."

So that's England's view. The crucial question tho, is: once Birsan said NO to the idea of a triple attack on Germany, was the plan really feasible any more? I have my doubts that Smyth deserves so much blame for turning down this wonderful plan, since France's veto pretty much made it impractical. France's help, for example, would have been required for England to have taken Holland. OK, next, Austria checked in with his excuses, agreeing with the Russian player: "....This has never been a contest of skill, unless talking people into committing suicide is skill. Birsan has seen NO resistance at all, and for that, I'm ashamed to be involved with this fiasco. This was billed as a top-flight game, but our three kamikaze artists have turned it into a side show ..... you and I are the only ones who have struggled with this game...." As we saw in the French account, however, the Austrian decision not to go along with a stop-Birsan plan in 1905-6 made the result inevitable. And to complete matters, the Turkish player checked in with his agreement with the Russian player. But I don't find all that outpouring of sour grapes very persuasive. Birsan controlled the game with his aggressive approach. Sure, some plums dropped into his lap. But Birsan shook the tree.)



((Most big-time publishers leave the nobby at the same time they fold their zines, so we never get a chance to hear what they have to say about not-publishing. One conspicuous (to say the least) exception has been Bruce Linsey, who sets forth his withdrawal symptoms, if you will, from publishing))

Non-publishing: My New-found Hobby

by BRUX Linsey

Realistically, I'm the wrong person to be writing this article. While it's true that I have just stopped publishing, you'd never know it by glancing at my current level of hobby involvement. A typical ex-publisher would relate tales of his new-found free time, his increased wealth, and the exuberation of his local postmaster due to a drastic decrease in the tonnage of mail deliveries to his residence. But no one has ever accused me of being typical, and I can tell no such stories. So why am I writing this article? Well...it's difficult to say "no" to Mark Berch after all he's done for me and this hobby. So, I'll give you my point of view, but please don't regard it as typical.

The biggest thing I noticed about non-publishing once I resumed it after a five-year hiatus is that it's one heck of a lot of work. Consider the following. When I was a publisher, I almost never had to write letters. In a very real sense, Voice of Doom was my "letter" to all my friends out there. When a long letter from a friend would arrive, all I'd have to do was dash it off on the typer, plop down a quick response, ditto the page, and presto! -- there was my reply to whomever wrote the letter, with the added benefit that a hundred other people would read it and some of them would then write in with more letters contributing to the discussion. Generally, my readers understood that my zine was a medium for responding personally to letters. I can think of only two people -- Peter Ansoff and Ty Hare -- who ever chided me for not writing privately more often.

Now, however, matters are different. I have at hand a stack of personal letters that I've yet to respond to, going all the way back to November. I feel bad about this -- people like Bruce McIntyre, Chuff Afflerbach, and Rob Schmunk, to whom I owe letters, are still waiting. Without VD, it isn't as easy to get off fast replies. So baby, do I ever miss the spare time I had as a publisher.

Not only is non-publishing very time-consuming, but it's awfully expensive as well. Back in the days when I was not non-publishing, my zine was a relatively inexpensive way of communicating with people and getting my points across to the hobby, and people were willing to pay for it. I mean, brother, I had it easy! If I had a new proposal for a hobby service, or a bit of supporting evidence for my position in a hobby feud, or if I just felt like saying hello to someone; heck, I'd print it in VD and a hundred people didn't mind subsidizing it. Now, in order to communicate, I must resort to long-distance phone calls, circular letters, and the dreaded spectre of private correspondence. This is of course very costly, and can you imagine what the reaction would be if I were to ask people to subscribe to these forms of communication?! "Your sub to my personality is up, Chuff, renew now or I'll never write you again..." Perish the thought! So boy, do I ever miss the extra cash I had as a publisher.

The third drawback to non-publishing is that my postman, who has a weak back, is thoroughly pissed off at me for the added workload. You see, before I took the plunge and became a non-publisher, it was so simple: once a month I'd mail out the zine, and ten days later I'd get the flood of response. On these two occasions the Dalton Post Office would bring in an extra truck for the occasion; the rest of the month they had nothing to do but sit in the lounge and speculate about what was going on with that weirdo on Ashuelot Street who periodically sent out mountains of envelopes adorned with lightning bolts.

Now, however, I keep 'em hopping continuously with all these mass mailings and -- YUK! -- personal letters. There is no set schedule, and so the posties never know just what their volume is going to be on any given day. And let me tell you, they're pissed! In fact, they aren't even delivering everything I send out anymore. One of my recent circular letters was found lying unceremoniously

in the gutter. (At long last, a statement with which even my enemies will agree!) So man, do I ever miss being on good terms with my not-so-friendly postal workers.

I must summarize then by stating that my experience as a non-publisher has not lived up to its advance billing. I don't know how I ever did it for all those years while I was growing up. Indeed, the process is so time-consuming, so costly, and has my postman so aggravated that one of these days, I may be forced to give it up.

((Bruce's reference to "circular letters" may be a sore point to some of you, as a few of these have been less than brilliantly executed. Recently, however, he's switched his approach drastically, and put out "One Evening at a ByrneCon". This is easily one of the most entertaining (and ingenious) items he's ever written on any topic. I don't expect it will be published, since he's mass-mailed out several dozen copies already. But if you'd like a copy (it runs 7 pages), drop Bruce a line at 73 Ashuelot St, Dalton MA 01226. A self addressed envelope with a stamp would be nice, too.))

## **PITCHFORKING Fiddlefaddle**

Well, thats what it seems like sometimes. Since this is a theme issue on publishing, it would be a good place to let you know how I put this zine together, and to discuss some issues that have arisen.

It starts with my going thru old dipzines, looking for items I might one day want to reprint. If I see such an item, I jot down its name (or a brief description), along with a category or two for it, plus the zine's name, issue number, and page. When I've got a page or so of these accumulated, I transfer the information to a notebook. Here, the material is organized by category, so that there would be, for example, several pages of "Turkey" items, and the new ones I ran across will be added to the list. Thus, when I come to do a theme issue on, for example, Turkey, I've got the material all gathered in one place, even tho it may have been collected over a period of 8 years. Its not a matter, tho, of just pulling the zines and typing up what I've got. I may decide to narrow the topic. For example, rather than doing "GMing", it might be "GMing errors", as was done in #54. Usually, I'll need to strike some sort of balance. If I've got an essay on an Italo-Turkish alliance, I'd like to also go with an opening based on an Austro-Turkish alliance, and perhaps an endgamestatement for a game in which Turkey had an alliance with Russia or Germany. I also try to avoid too much from any one writer, any one zine, or a narrow time frame. I also need to have a variety of article lengths ---- I don't want all short items or all long ones. For North American material, I usually avoid (but not always) stuff that is less than 4 year's old, to reduce the number of eople who've already seen it (or who will remeber it). If the topic permits, I like to have contrasting views. This means I have a slight bias in favor of reprinting material I don't agree with, since I can then provide the contrasting view myself. As you've probably inferred from all this, I try to put out the kind of zine that I'd like to read, with some allowances made when I'm familiar with reader preferences other than my own. Of course, its seldom possible to meet all of these goals, given the limitations of space and the material available. Most of the material has to be retyped (alas. Thats is by far the least interesting part of the process, and the most time-consuming part too), but sometimes I can copy material direct, and as time pressures become greater, I may have to do more of that.

OK. let me take up some selected topics next.

1. Permission. As you can see from the above, I do not obtain the permission of the writers whose material I reprint. This raises some legitimate questions: WHY not? Do writers object to this? If I had to obtain the writer's permission, I doubt that I would have the ability to put out the zine at all. At least half, I'd estimate, of the material I have I would not be able to use. The pple are long since out of the hobby. Even if I do have an address, they are unlikely to respond. With so much material disqualified, what I could use would obviously have to be of lower quality, since I'd have

to rely on marginal material that I don't presently have to use. There would be a tremendous bias against stuff from the 60's and early 70s, since most of those writers just aren't around. Some of them are dead. I would need enormous lead times for the issues, since when I started on the "Turkey" issue, I'd have no idea what would turn out to be useable. I'd also have to do the bother of asking for permission to reprint stuff I don't even want to use. If I have a good A-T alliance article, and a so-so one, I'd probably write both, rather than lose the time it would take to wait on the first before writing the second. It's a lot of work putting out this zine as it is; that additional work, coupled with the fact that I'd be putting out a much inferior product, would probably finish off DD.

But what of the rights of the writers? Am I trampling on them? A few people in the hobby have said just that. All the evidence, however, indicates that they are wrong. When I first started the zine, I wanted to see how people felt. I wrote every publisher, plus a few well known writers who didn't publish. I asked for a blanket permission to reprint. I would say that less than 1/3 of them even cared enough to respond. With two exceptions, all said "OK". Bob Lipton had a certain essay that he didn't want reprint because it was poorly written (I wouldn't have considered it for just that reason). Larry Peery didn't want me to use a certain series of play-of-the-game essays on the 7 countries, since he had incorporated that material into one of his "books". And that was it. Even more convincing evidence came later. I have by now reprinted hundreds of items. NOT ONCE HAS SOMEONE WHOSE MATERIAL I REPRINTED OBJECTED TO THE FACT THAT I REPRINTED IT. Its never happened. I include in that both a situation where someone tells me that they don't want a certain item reprinted, and I do it anyway, and a situation where I reprint it, and the writer tells me that he didn't want it reprinted. These things have just not happened --- I won't say that it can't, just that it hasn't. So when someone suggests that I am damaging the rights of authors, I have a one-word response: "Who?" The fact is, most people write so that others can read what they have to say. And that's just what I let them do here.

2. Copyrights Don't run away. I deal with the law of intellectual property each and every day in my job, and I certainly didn't come to this hobby to get more of it. So there will be no long dissertation on the topic. Terry Tallman, in his zine North Sealth West George has raised this question of DD-and-copyrights numerous times and at some length. It began with him saying that a good lawyer could keep me from publishing altogether, which is absurd. I then tried to explain to him what the purpose of copyright laws are, and how they pertain to what I do. Apparently, I wasn't very persuasive, because all the while Terry stuck to his criticism, and dispensed a very confused version of how the law works --- while also saying that one of these days he was going to consult with some copyright expert. This culminated in an issue of NSWG Xeroxing a page from a law text, along with a citation of various stringent penalties. This was accompanied with much self-backpatting about how Berch had finally been proven wrong. When I wrote him back, trying to explain where his analysis had gone wrong, Terry took the easy way out: He refused to print the letter (so far as I'm aware).

Basically, there are two types of reprinting:

- A. Reprinting material which is covered by statutory copyright
- B. Reprinting material which is not covered by statutory copyright

The various penalties (injunctions, enormous fines, etc) that Terry was so fond of citing deal with situation A. What I do is situation B --- there is in fact very little in the dippy literature that has been copyrighted. I or anyone else who reprints ordinary hobby articles am not taking the risks that Terry has described. Terry has made the common mistake of confusing quoting the law with understanding the law.

Indeed, the real irony in all this is while Terry has hammered me for reprinting material not under statutory copyright, he (and a few other publishers) reprint material which is under statutory copyright (i.e. situation A). I refer to the reprinting of "comic strip" art-work, with or without text. That is usually copyrighted, either by the artist or the syndicate which distributes it. Unlike about 99.9% of what appears in newspapers, this artwork does have some potential value (either collecting the reprints in a book, using the characters in advertising, etc), and the syndicate may even be legally

obligated to the artist to police those copyrights. So there's a risk to doing that. Certainly it is a very small one, tho its one that I do not normally choose to take. So at any rate, I do not consider myself to be taking any meaningful copyright risk by doing what I do, and if you hear otherwise, I urge you to take it with a grain or two of salt.

3. Courtesy copy. If someone's letter is printed here, or I make critical comments about someone, or someone's actions, that person will get a courtesy copy. That is a fixed policy. I have (the only exception might be if someone specifically asked not to be sent such a copy, tho that's never happened). In this regard, in the DIPLOMACY DIGEST #85, I printed a letter from Kathy Byrne and another one from Phyllis Byrne. I responded brierly to both letters. In the January issue of Feudesse, Kathy Byrne has a letter in which she complains that if Woody hadn't told Phyllis, Phyllis wouldn't have even known about this. (Woody is one of my subbers). So far as I'm aware, what Kathy says is true. What happened is this. I put a copy of the issue in an envelope, addressed to both Kathy and Phyllis. Kathy wrote on the front, "Unsolicited Trash Return to Sender"; it was sent back to me, apparently unopened. (A Xerox of the envelope face is available on request for an SASE). It is all too typical of Kathy's hobby ethics that she would insert her daughter into a fabricated dispute by refusing a courtesy copy, and then complaining that notification wasn't sent.

The next item up is by Fred Davis, and appeared in Bushwacker, Vol 2, #11, Oct 1973

#### A RATING FOR DIPLOMACY ZINE PUBLISHERS?

The Diplomacy press is rife with reports of 'zines folding or about to fold, leaving a pile of orphan games behind. This is most unfortunate for novice players who are just getting into the hobby. Some may never return, if their first game is "washed out" What is a player to do in picking a 'zine to play in? Should there be a central bureau somewhere which could advice players on the best (or safest) 'zines?

I believe the main problem is that some people jump into the publishing game without thinking, open too many games too soon, and then become overwhelmed when the mail flows in. I played for 3 years before I started BUSHWACKER, and there will never be more than 3 games at a time in this 'zine. Some publishers don't seem to realize that they're morally committing themselves for the next two years when they start to GM a postal game. It looks like fun in October, but when May rolls around, bringing forth both final exams and bikinis, bye bye Dippy.

I've made up a "40 Point" rating system for 'zines, which I hereby throw out for grabs. It may sound a bit prejudiced against younger publishers, but I believe statistics will show that most 'zines which folded without warning were published by people under 21. Under my proposal, a publisher gets so many points in each of 4 categories, with a maximum rating for any 'zine of 10, and a minimum (normally) of 1 or 2. There is also a special provision to reduce the score of a highly irresponsible publisher. Here's how it goes:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. <u>For length of Publication:</u><br/>         Under one year        +1<br/>         One to two years       +2<br/>         Over two years        +3</p> | <p>2. <u>For Regularity of Publication:</u><br/>         Irregular history       0<br/>         Fairly regular history   +2<br/>         Very regular history    +3</p>  |
| <p>3. <u>Age of the Publisher:</u><br/>         Under 21                0<br/>         21 to 25                +1<br/>         Over 25                 +2</p>  | <p>4. <u>Status of the Publisher:</u><br/>         Unemployed, non-student -1 (minus)<br/>         On active military duty   0<br/>         Student, full-time        +1<br/>         Employed, full-time<br/>         (Other than military)    +2</p> |



5. Responsibility Factor: If a publisher is deemed "highly irresponsible" by a 2/3 vote of the IDA Council or a similar body, deduct 4 points from the total. (I know of only 2 cases in the past where this would have been necessary).

Under this system, most of the quality 'zines in North America would earn a "9" or "10." BUSHACKER would also be rated "9" (knew there was a flaw somewhere!), since I've been publishing for a year and a half. Novice players could be advised to play only in 'zines with a rating of "6" or better. (Category 2, regularity of publication, could not be computed, of course, until after a 'zine had published about 6 issues).

This does not rate the 'zine on quality of material or reproduction. The sole purpose of this rating is to give the player advice on whether there is a good chance that he will get what he's paid for from a particular publisher; namely, the likelihood of a completed game within a reasonable period of time.

Comments are welcomed.

((Such an approach has rather severe limitations. It reflects only Fred Davis' opinion of what are the predictive variables for a zine's reliability. Other people might weigh these factors differently, and might include other factors (such as how many games are being GM'ed, how long the person was in the hobby before he started publishing) which Fred did not use. Next, we turn to a related undertaking. This was apparently a dittoed copy, and I'm using the version as printed in DIEMAN #8, October 1975. It went out under the name of "Ron Kelly, International Diplomacy Association Evaluation Director." What follows are comments by Brad Hessel, an interesting discourse which is the main reason that I'm reprinting this piece. And now, on with the show))

Ron Kelly: The IDA has established a service in your region to maintain a record of GM and publisher performance. Each quarter a list of "acceptable" publishers and GMs will be made public as a service to the hobby's players. We invite your participation in this project to better inform our players of each GM's and publishers' record. To achieve the rating of "acceptable", a publication or GM must meet or surpass the following standards:

To be acceptable as a GM, the GM's games must <sup>not</sup> on the average have errors exceeding one per gameyear GM'ed. In addition, games not insured ... will be noted, altho acceptability will not be refused if games are not guaranteed.

To be acceptable as a Publisher, reproduction must be legible. In brief, if the publication can't be read, we can't deem it acceptable. Publication may not be over 3 days late per issue on average over a three month period. ((there goes DD.....))

In addition, other statistics such as the duration of publications' existence, average page length, and average length of non-game material in pages per issue will be presented for publications. WE invite your participation; there is no cost to join. If you do not wish to join, we understand, and no mention of your zine or you will appear as part of our lists. If you have further questions.....

Brad Hessel: Well -- a few words of background. For years, the existence of "gafiating" publisher, whether caused by sickness, irresponsibility, over-extension, some outside disaster or (worst of all) as the crowing touch to a ripoff, has plagued the hobby. The main problem appears to be that pubbing, a singularly unique experience, is hard to properly conceive of before one actually does it --- and many people find that they are not up to some of the less appealing aspects of it, or more generally, that they cannot afford after all, all that much time out of the rest of their lives --- that is, they find it out after they have already begun to publish. ((This guy just doesn't like to end a sentence)). For example, the March-April version of the Archives Publisher's Survey compiled by Walter Buchanan contained a list of 3 publishers who had begun their publishing activities in 1973, and on the Sept-Oct list (both of these from 1974), 17, nearly half had been deleted. ((By way of an interesting but irrelevant contrast, the Runestone Poll ballot lists 92 zines, meaning the number of pubbers is somewhere in the 30s. Some of these of course have folded, but I suspect the number of zines is at an all-time high))

The drop-out rate is especially high among new publishers, such as myself. Once a zine has been going for a year or so, it is liable to be around a good while longer. ((I'd use a predictive date of closer to two years.)) For example, of the 10 pubbers mentioned above that had survived till the fall of 1974, 15 were still active, as of the ....July listing.

This is obviously a real problem for the player, particularly the novice who likely doesn't know what is coming off. And we publishers, it must be admitted, have generally not really done much to help the situation. True, the actual ripoff artists have generally been exposed and tossed out, but they are actually a rare (thankfully) occurrence, and therefore, a very small part of the overall problem. ((I wouldn't take that too literally. I can't think of anyone who was ever "tossed out." The ripping off generally consists of departing the hobby, so that he's no longer around to be tossed out.)). Actually, the core of the difficulty lies with the all-too-familiar pattern of the raw recruit, who hops into the hobby with all the friskiness of a young bunny, flitting here and there, seeing the sights and smelling the scents, and coming to the conclusion that pubbing is where the action is, and then dashing off to the store for a couple of reams of paper, begging, borrowing, stealing a duplicator, and cranking out a couple of issues, and then suddenly realizing that a rabbit's proper place in life is not sneaking around silently after school, hoping for the opportunity for illicit use of a spirit duplicator, not collating and stapling and stamping hundred of pieces of paper in an arbitrary order, and not vainly arguing with an ignorant and self-important civil servant that 6 pieces of 16 pound paper cannot possibly weigh more than an ounce not matter what his silly scale says, but rather he ought to be out in the sunny meadows, seeking lettuce patches and goes along with all those other rabbits. ((It seemed like that sentence went on for weeks.... ))

...We publishers, all of whom have gone thru the experience of getting started, have considered how it might have turned out differently if we hadn't been fortunate enuf to get over those early hurdles, and have no doubt also considered how it might be if we could do something else this weekend. ((Actually, that's one thing I do have trouble visualizing. I've heard, and read, that a zine with a large number of games can easily consume an entire weekend in bulk, since a great deal of work has to be crammed into a small time frame. For me, that would be totally impossible. The only way I can put this zine out is to be able to spread the work out fairly evenly.)) We probably, as a group, tend to grant the fellow just starting out the benefit of the doubt quite readily. And after all, how does one tell? .... Beyond certain base limitations, pubbing a dippy zine reliably has little to do with intelligence, writing ability, artistic talent, one's taste for literature, politics, etc. And the potential burnout may produce some fancy, interesting, good first efforts before throwing it all off suddenly .... and the poorly spelled or typed or reproduced or organized slop one receives from somebody with an unknown name may conceivably develop into a very good zine, given enuf time and encouragement ((time, yes, but that kind of "slop" is unlikely to get much in the way of encouragement)). And after all, as with anything, the greatest resource the hobby ... possesses is the people in it who are willing to devote time and energy into its pursuit. Such people ought not to be taken lightly .... And be that as it may, a new publisher is liable to receive generally favorable marks from his more established colleagues at the least, and, the logic goes, this encourages the problem of dropouts, as people who "shouldn't" are encouraged to publish, rewarded with innocents, led on by optimistic appraisals in established zines who flock to the newly established ones, and let down when 50% of them fold: and hence the need for an "objective" evaluation of zines by a central authority. ((This "honeymoon" period, when it is considered to be in bad taste to say anything negative about a new zine unless there is something really drastically wrong with it, is a much more pronounced phenomenon here than in England. There it is apparently considered acceptable (tho not the universal practice) to be critical of new zines if ~~the~~ editor doesn't feel the zine has gotten off to a good start. On the whole, I think the attitude in England, while harsher (the new pubber is much more anxious for approval than is a well established one) is better for the hobby. Praise is essential, but constructive

criticism is much more valuable. The result can be that the hobby gets such zines as The Chamber (to name one safely in the past) which are, shall we say, hopelessly premature, and nobody wants to say anything out loud.)) There is a lot of validity in that logic. But if it leads inexorably to the proposal that Kelly has outline above, then somewhere along the way, it has parted company with me.

First, this is an explicitly negative proposal. Only "acceptable" GM's and zines will be listed --- presumably the idea is to withhold approval, and hence, players, from those zines not meeting these standards. ((Actually, I don't read the proposal as saying that. A list of not acceptable zines would not be inconsistent with what Kelly wrote)). I assume that the designers of the system have made some provision for the listing of newly started publishers, who obviously would not meet the standards listed. ...((a sort of not-rated list)) If they have not ... then the project is manifestly unfair and absurd --- for how can one get players till one meets with the approval and is put on the list, and how can one meet with approval and get put on the list until one has had players and run games....I fail to see what good it will do to toss people off the list after they have already been proven to be poor GMs --- once a person gaffates, he is gone; taking him off the list of acceptable GMs is neither going to hurt him or help the players he has left in the lurch. In essence, I object to this proposal in that it attempts to deal with the problem at hand thru a mechanism of "punishing" people for their crimes in a gratuitous and ineffective manner after the crimes have already quite effectively been committed. ((This criticism strikes me as very wide of the mark. The mere prospect of being deleted from the list might keep a pubber, especially one who is anxious to fill a couple more games, from letting things get slack. Moreover, the standards are strict enough that they will catch more than a publisher who has already let things irretrievably deteriorate. Its a very common phenomenon that azine will deteriorate slowly over a period of many, many months, with things very gradually getting worse. The IDA's standards will knock the zine off the acceptable list long before such a zine finally hits bottom. In the meantime, the delisting might well dissuade new blood from joining the zine, and thereby block that last game from getting started --- a game which will probably be orphaned. So it can be very effective in the right circumstance. Moreover, any negative or punitive system can be turned around and be used as an advertising system (e.g. "This zine has been on the approved list for the last 6 quarters") for those interested in attracting new players or readers.)) A much better, much more effective approach (I feel) would be to go to the root of the problem, and try to solve it before it even develops. How 'bout an organization ((this was written at a time when IDA was effective, and so "organization" was not the cuss word it is today)) which took it on itself to aid/promote prospective new pubbers as to what they are getting into, i.e. a positive approach? Of course, no one can tell completely ahead of time how pubbing will suit him or his lifestyle, but one could get a damn good idea if people who knew whereof they spoke would actually speak. I know I wish I'd had the opportunity to read John Boyer's article of his pubbing activity which he printed in the 1974 handbook before I began...

Secondly, altho I like the idea of a hobby-wide zine catalogue, I am not very enthusiastic about the limitations the letter above place upon it. Of course, they specifically call it a service to the hobby's players, but I wonder. The experienced players in the hobby are less in need of such a list, being pretty familiar with the character of most of the zines by reputation at least, and certainly knowledgeable about how to go obtaining such information....Undeniably, most would find the statistical information proposed on the letter of interest, but hardly vital. Probably those who would find the list most informative would be novices and the casual players, who are, in fact, those most likely to get burned by gaffation, and therefore the group, presumably, which the architects of the proposal .. had foremost in mind. It is not at all my view that the hobby would be well served by providing such people with a list which is so strongly prejudiced toward the players' predilections. The statistics that would be quoted could never adequately communicate the character of the zine or the publisher, and several zines which I receive in trade would never qualify .... despite the fact that they have much to offer and would leave the hobby poorer by their departure.. In the absence of a complete list, newcomers to the hobby would be given an incomplete picture of the tremendous range

and scope with which the hobby scene is graced, and those publishers whose punctuality is hurting (or whatever) would be denied a fair crack at the new blood, without which any zine ... would soon die. Those to whom games are important, but whose raison d'etre for their zines went beyond their games, and whose games, consequently, failed to conform to such strict standards would be unfairly penalized for their different standards --- and the hobby would suffer in the long run from the loss of variety. What would be wrong with a comprehensive list, which included statistics on the relative GMing merits of all the zines which go in for that kind of stuff, but which also included those zines which don't measure up to the suggested standards, and which featured, in addition to the dry statistics, a short statement from the pubber as to what the aim/character/"advantage"/whatever of his zine were. Such a list could be updated quarterly, and of course include relatively up to date info on addresses, sub fees, openings, etc.

Well, I have carried on about this for quite long enuf. I am interested to see what sort of response these thoughts will elicit.....  
((The next issue carried a brief letter from Ron, saying that the idea was primarily the work of the IDA Evaluation Committee Chairman, Robert Correll. Ron said that he agreed with many of the points, and works forward Brad's remarks on. The idea did not get much support, and I think the listing never did appear. Instead, the hobby has split the two ideas, and used a different mechanism. Lists of games openings have been kept by Walker (Pontevedria) and Robert Sacks (Known Game Openings), but neither features stringent standards for admission --- both, for example, will list brand new zines. The broader and more descriptive coverage, including Brad's suggestion for pubber-written self descriptions has appeared in the Zine Directory and Zine Register. In terms of evaluation, the hobby has relied on a variety of polls, rather than some fixed formula. The British hobby has a survey which isn't available here, which in effect lists the average turnaround time for zines, and these reports do seem to be given a fair amount of publicity. Part of the difficulty of the IDAs plan is that there would not likely be widespread agreement on how strict the standards should be, or even on what constitutes a GMing error. The latter can vary from inconsequential typos that are barely worth mentioning, to massive screw-ups, which makes evaluations difficult. And of course, there are a lot more zines these days. Brad's zine, incidentally, folded less than three years after that essay appeared.))

## ARBITRATION

Many of you have probably heard about, or read, Doug Beyerlein's editorial in EGGIART #183, January 1985. In just a few sentences, he was able to sketch out the great damage that the Linsey-Byrne feud has caused already, and could cause in the future. He pointed very clearly to the dangers that this feud poses for the hobby and its institutions. And in a constructive vein, he offered his services as an arbitrator for binding arbitration.

For those of you who are new to the hobby, Doug has been around since the 60s, in an enormous variety of roles. Doug is one of the most fairminded and impartial people to have ever been in the hobby. He had not previously (so far as I know) made any comments on the Byrne-Linsey feud. There would be no one in the hobby better placed to do such a thing than Doug, and I support the idea 100%.

Whether the arbitration is in the personal interests of either Bruce or Kathy is doubtful. I think most people would agree that binding arbitration would entail each party making some apologies and retractions. And its debateable whether either party really wants the issues resolved.

But of this there can be no doubt: Binding arbitration is in the best interests of the hobby. THE HOBBY NEEDS TO HAVE THESE ISSUES ADJUDICATED ONCE AND FOR ALL, SO WE CAN BE DONE WITH THEM, AND GET ON WITH A HEALING PROCESS. Even if arbitration is not perfect, it can achieve a type of resolution which is not possible with the way the matter

is being handled now. Moreover, successful arbitration of this dispute could be of great value in the future, for keeping future disputes (by anyone) from getting completely out of hand, as this one has. If someone knows that someday, his statements might come under the cold scrutiny of a binding arbitrator, then he's probably going to be a lot more careful than he might otherwise. Wouldn't that be a blessing!

It's been said that one good solution would be for either or both of them to just shut up. But that just allows the issues to fester rather than be resolved. Both sides have surrogates to continue the debate. There are a variety of marginal tactics that either Kathy or Bruce could use, and still claim that s/he was shutting up (personal letters that just happened to get copied and passed around by friends or enemies, anonymous letters to be published in zines, complaints about the tactics of an unnamed party, etc). They might not even agree on just exactly which issues fall within the "Linsey-Byrne dispute" (after all, they haven't agreed on much else). This would be no solution at all.

The idea has apparently elicited a tremendous amount of support. But both parties must agree. In EFGIART #184, Doug reported that "Bruce accepted my offer; Kathy did not." Kathy is apparently going to pursue "her own solution", which apparently has involved her contacting a lawyer. Of course, one of the whole points of having arbitration in the first place is to avoid having to drag in lawyers.

I'm personally disappointed about Kathy's stance toward arbitration, because I could have used some myself. Kathy recently had a letter printed, which had some accusations against me (having nothing to do with Bruce, incidently) which were so dishonest, and so irresponsible, that I'm not even going to waste the space here to respond to them. Instead, I wrote to Kathy, suggesting that this issue be turned over to a binding arbitrator. If he agreed with her accusations, I would run a page one apology in the very next DIPLOMACY DIGEST, and promise never to do it again. If the ruling went against Kathy, she wouldn't have to apologize, no no, all she'd have to do is write a letter of retraction. Needless to say, she did not accept the proposal.

There remains still the possibility that Kathy will change her mind, and accept Doug's offer. I hope that she will. But if not, I think the hobby has gotten a much clearer picture of whether its Bruce or Kathy who will put the hobby's interests first, and who would really like to have the issues resolved.

## **THE ZINE COLUMN # 82**

Two zines have hit important milestones recently. Steve Heinowski's Ter-ran, well known for its excellent Gming, recently arrived at issue #100. Don Del Grande's Life of Monty, which is humor oriented, just came out with #50. Don is planning to run the "Lifers" awards, and ask for nominations in various categories such as Best Letter Column, Dirtiest fold, Best Zine for Hobby News, Biggest Hobby Personality, and, in a special category which I'm sure Don created just for my benefit, True Hobby Master. Send those nominations in to Don at 142 Eliseo Drive, Greenbrae CA 94904. Because of considerations of space, Don, I had to delete the last 4 digits of your 9-digit zip code.

How Times Change Department: Under the current DipCon Charter, only those attending a DipCon can vote on where the following year's DipCon will be, and on who the people will be on the Administrative committee. This gave rise to a proposal about 2 years ago that, for a fee, proxy votes be permitted by those not attending. This resulted in a lively and interesting correspondence between myself and John Caruso. John was very much in favor, I was opposed, as I still am now (it smacks of blatant vote-buying, and there's no demonstrable problem that it is to solve). So what should show up, but John Caruso editorializing in Whitestonia #94 that "Some of the hobby old guard have lost the meaning and goals of Dipcon....No one, should be allowed to control Dipcon, whether via an "In crowd", or by proxy votes...." (underscoring his). I guess what John means is that he's one of the hobby old guard, and that he's "lost" one of his original "goals", namely, getting a proxy proposal approved.

Midcon is the most important British Dippy tournament, and I was tickled to learn that my scoring system (devised for Dipcon '82) was used for Midcon 83 and 84 (with only one very minor change; apparently they dropped the tiebreaker provision) and was also used in a slightly modified form for this year's Manorcon. Apparently there was a controversy this year about how good the system really is. Derek Caws in his War and Peace #23 has a rather nice discussion (and defense) of the scoring system, and how it has worked out. So far as I know, this is the first example of a tournament scoring system jumping the Atlantic.

Unless you've been living in a cave, you're probably aware that the latest hobby rage in certain quarters is to "Boycott Bruce". It almost seems as if people are vying with each other to come up with the most destructive, or silly proposal. My favorite in the latter category is Jim Meinel, who concludes his list with, "6. If I am in the same room with him I will leave the room." Can you visualize them both at the same Convention? Jim would be blown from room to room, like a leaf in the autumn winds, as Bruce wandered about. Less humorous are the various attempts to undermine any hobby project that Bruce has gotten his cooties onto. The best publicized of these torpedoing attempts is the plan to boycott the Runestone Poll, which Bruce is running with the help of Pat Conlon. This got to the point that Randolph Smyth (the previous Custodian) asked Bruce to put together a list of pubbers who were willing to plug the Poll, and asked Jim Meinel to prepare a similar list of those who will not plug the Poll because Bruce is running it. Despite talk about how vastly unacceptable Bruce is, Randolph reports in Folsi Fie that "combining the lists suggests that publishers are still generally behind Bruce by about a 3-to-1 margin." I should note that "behind" him doesn't mean they necessarily agree with everything that Bruce has said or done, but that they will not participate in any boycott. A second target has been the "Zine Register", which isn't even Bruce's. Bruce had offered to help out with the data collection and typing --- the blaggard! This has earned Roy some abuse ("vidictive spitefulness" said John Caruso. I wonder if John offered to help.) It also brought out one Robert Sacks, who unilaterally proclaimed that the post was vacant, and besides which, Bruce was generally unacceptable to the hobby. I had written Sacks at that time that I'd be willing to send him the information about DD for the "Zine Directory" that he is planning to do. However, he has since told me that he does not feel obligated to get Mike Mills' permission to use the name "Zine Directory" (which Mike coined), for reasons too inane to repeat here. Well, forget that! The next fabricated controversy in this regard is that Roy and Bruce plan to --- my fingers hesitate to even type this ---- list all the zines! Imagine! A handful of publishers have protested. In the past, zines have been listed involuntarily, but this year, that's going to be a big crime --- remember, now, anything to discredit the project. Thus, we have sweet-tempered Kathy Byrne saying in Whitestonia #94: "...if anyone writes me and says that they want a sample because they read about my zine in the ZR, they are going to be told that I don't have a zine, and the Zine Register is a farce packed with lies!" (Remember when the hobby used to be a fun place?) Kathy also said, "... as far as I'm concerned listing us in ZR is just like listing us in Penthouse which promotes obscene material." See? Penthouse = Zine Register once Bruce gets his cooties on it. I find it extremely amusing that Kathy, of all people should raise this argument. If you'll recall, Kathy was until recently the Boardman Number Custodian. And BNCs have a policy of listing all games (that qualify) in Everything. This is true even if the player or GM doesn't want the game listed or even to have a number (and there've been a few who haven't). I would just LOVE to have Kathy educate me on why it's just fine for a BNC to list ALL GAMES in Everything, but it's some horrible crime for Roy to list ALL ZINES in the Zine Register. I'd also be curious to know why Kathy (and a few others) want Roy to put out a deliberately incomplete ZR. The time was in this hobby when Custodians were encouraged to do as good a job as they possibly could --- not an incomplete one. Now we have people who try to torpedo the Runestone Poll, who want the ZR to be incomplete, and who will not plug the Novice Project to novices. The irony is that many of the people involved in these sorts of destructive activities are the same people who accuse Bruce of perpetrating great harm on the hobby.

A couple of polls are out. The "Marco" poll has Europa Express at the top of the zine poll, Jim Keinel topping the GM poll, and Fiat Bellum as best subzine. This is a somewhat more limited poll than the Runestone, since you can only vote for your top 5. I'm not quite sure what to make of the results, tho, of a poll where Diplomacy Digest gets the same number of points in the zine poll as the subzine poll. 67 votes were cast, which is down some from last year. By far the most ambitious poll in the hobby is Larry Peery's Peeripoll, which I forgot to either plug or vote in this year. Zines were evaluated in 11 different categories. Larry included some one-shot publications, such as the 1984 Census and Walker's "Gamer's Guide", a practice I don't agree with, and the latter won the overall ranking. Strangely enuf, of the next 5 finishers, 4 of them are apparently folded by now. Categories included Regularity, Variety and GMing, as well as vaguer categories such as "Stimulation". Larry presents the results with a good deal of his commentary, so that it makes much more interesting reading per se than other polls. 34 people voted, which limits the reliability of the results --- you have to be fairly committed to go thru all the categories. I hereby promise myself (and Larry) and that next year, I'm going to vote.

Lets get some short takes in here now. John Daly's Dogs of War, long known as a fine place to play, and Woodson's Raging Main are folding, and it would appear that Dick Martin's House of Lords has folded .... Ken Peel has taken over publication of Politesse, a rare example of a North American zine switching editors. Ken will also be taking over some important functions at Diplomacy World....Ozog's "Diplomacy by Moonlight" is returning as a subzine in Cunning's zine Cathy's Ramblings....There will be a Dippy tournament at Northeast 3 Game Con (320 New York Ave., Apt 8, Elizabeth NJ 07202). The con will be in New Brunswick, NJ April 12-14 (Rutgers University).

## NEW ZINES

The Canadian Diplomat Robert Acheson c/o Echo Bay Mines, Lupin NWT XOE 1MO Canada  
Conference Call Bruce McIntyre 6191 Winct St Burnaby BC Canada V5B2L4  
Redwood Curtain Kevin Tighe 290 12th St., Arcata CA 95521  
Rebel Melinda Holley P.O. 2793 Huntington WV 25701  
Not New York Paul Gardner P.O.Box 60 Eugene OR 97440  
Just Another Warwick Zine Alex Zbyslaw B45 Allesley Hse, Rootes, Warwick, Coventry, England  
Swansea With Me, Matt Williams 24 Moor St, Coventry CV56EQ England  
Zombie Flesh Scott Burrell 2309 Gene Ave., Albert Lea MN 56007  
Omnipotent Robert C. Sweeny, Jr. 614 Custer, Ft. Leveanworth, KS  
Back to the Dark Ages Richard Downs 79 Caling Croft New Ash Green, Dartford Kent DA38PY  
Yellow Yellow Eddie Duralski 63 Adler Rd Conventry England CV67DN  
Hacking Times Dylan Harris 76 Haddo Hse, Haddo St, Greenwich London SE10 England  
Excelsior Bruce McIntyre 6191 Winch St. Burnaby B.C. Canada V5B 2L4  
Coolnacran Nicholas White Loughbrickland Hse, Loughbrickland, Cty Down, N. Ireland BT323NH

Behold the Power of the Dipimaster: Last month I mentioned there was a dearth of Canadian zines, and whammo, there's three new ones....Well, its March already, so its time for the plug for the Runestone Zine and GM Poll. Rate any zine substantially devoted to dippy which you've seen at least two issues of since April 1, 1984 on a scale of 0 (the lowest) to 10 (the highest). No fractions. Do the same for subzines; rate them separately from the parent zine. Sign your ballot, and indicate a relationship to the hobby (e.g. "I sub to DD"). For the GM poll, rate any GM you played under since April 1, "under whom you played long enuf to gain an objective assessment of his or her copetance as a GM." You MUST rate the GM by name (not zine), and distinguish the two Ron Browns. In either poll, please list alphabetically; you cannot vote for yourself or your zine or subzine. Send your ballots by June 29 (but do it sooner so you won't forget) to Bruce Linsey, 73 Ashuelot St #3, Dalton MA 01226, or if you prefer to Pat Conlon by June 22, Box 17014 LSU, Baton Rouge LA 70893..... One final item, Kieth Sherwood 8866 Cliffridge La Jolla CA 92037 is now incharge of the Orphan Games Project. If your think your game has been orphaned, write him, and let it be his headache too.

Mark L Berch  
492 Naylor Place  
Alexandria VA 22304

If the number 07 or 08 appears after your name, your sub has expired, and its time to renew.

A STUDY was conducted recently of the federal judges appointed by President Reagan during his first term. This showed that 98% were Republican, 90% were white, 92% were male, and one-fourth of them were millionaires. You might agree or disagree with that kind of selection, but those are interesting statistics for those of you who might find yourself in federal court someday.



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