

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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England

Mark L Berch  
492 Naylor Place  
Alexandria VA 22304

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The most important conflict in the hobby has now ended, with results very satisfying to me. I refer of course, to Mark Larzelere's Intimate Diplomacy Tournament, which I have just won by defeating Don Ditter in the finals. This game is a lot of fun. Mark has just started another 8-player tournament. Coincidentally, John Marsden has recently begun a 16-player tournament (4 rounds instead of 3 here) in England. Of course, this is nothing compared to the ID-madness that once swept England, with entire zines devoted to nothing but this game.

Keith Sherwood 8866 Cliffridge Ave La Jolla CA 92037 has put out a remarkable publication: "Fakes '80-84" This has capsule descriptions of 55-odd fakes put out during that period. He has almost none of the Volkerwanderung fakes, but otherwise, the coverage is amazingly good --- it includes all 5 of the DIPLOMACY DIGEST fakes. He includes best guesses as to who did it, the date, and even a rating system for their quality, as well as a Table of perpetrators and another one for the time frames. Its a delightful piece of work, and well worth the 60¢ he charges for it.

There should be 2 insertions in your issue. One is the ballot for the Runestone Poll. As I do every year, I strongly urge you to vote, even if you get just a few zines. This is particularly true this year, since Bruce will be doing a preference matrix, so that even if you get just two zines, that preference will show up and be important. I must say, however, that I am disgusted by how some people in the hobby are trying to discredit the Runestone Poll any way they can. For example, the March Feudesse has Ed Wrobel, in the midst of his criticism, noting "Publishing the names of the voters is an interesting innovation. Its done that way in the USSR, isn't it? Get ahead ---- join The Party." Well, I called up the Soviet Embassy, and unless they lied to me, the Soviets publish neither lists of voters nor non-voters. The British Zine Poll has listed the names of the voters. Or, closer to home, Larry Perry has always listed the voters in his PeeriPoll, and it doesn't seem to bother anyone. Hey, but let Bruce do it, and that's a different story....The other item is three things which go to Larry Peery. One is the form for his incredibly ambitious attempt to make a registry of all Dippy players in North America, and that includes face to face, tournament and PEEM types. Second, there's the ballot for the Don Miller Memorial Award for outstanding hobby service. The nominees are Bumpas, Byrne, Coughlan, Olsen, ~~and~~ <sup>USSR</sup> Smyth. Third is the Rod Walker Award for literary excellence. Five items, two of them a series, have been nominated. This award is close to my heart, because I think the idea of recognizing excellence in writing is such a positive idea, and because I won this last year. So please, take the time to vote. Polls make everyone equal, and thats the way it should be.

((Our opening item comes from Hoosier Archives #115, June 1973, by Howard Mahler))

### SCANDINAVIA, ENGLAND'S SECOND ISLAND, OR AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

Scandinavia, which for the purposes of this article will mean Den, Nwy, Swe Fin, and StP, is especially valuable for England ((I'd probably include Bar, Ska, and Bot as part of Scan)). There's the obvious fact of the four centers all open to naval attack. Even better, they can be defended from land attack with only three units ((Den, StP with one support)), thereby freeing one unit for duty elsewhere. With StP out of Russian hands, the threat of fleets attacking England from that flank is ended ((well, that depends on your definition of flank. German fleets can push thru from ports in the Baltic)).

England's main adversary is usually Russia, but Scandinavia affects every country on the board. Germany has trouble finding units to commit up there, but if either of the other two becomes dominant in the north, Germany can be in trouble. Therefore, German policy is often to promote a stalemate. To France, Scandinavia is a welcome jewel to lure England away from him. However, France may suddenly find England a little too strong for comfort, not to mention that Scandinavia can also be the basis of a German-English alliance. When T, A, and I look at Scandinavia, they see a virtually unattainable group of 4 centers which hurt their chances for a win --- particularly Austria.

If England decides to try for Scandinavia (with or without Denmark), France will usually be more than willing to neutralize the English Channel. This usually allows England to get to the following position prior to S02: F Bar, A Nwy, F Nth, F F Lon/Edi. If he's facing Rus F Swe and A StP, he'll have to counteract F Swe S A StP-Nwy. He can either go to Ska, sneak his army to Fin, or have the German unit in Den cut the Swedish support.

The point is that England can obtain his objective of StP or Swe by 1902 unless Russia takes steps. The most effective step tactically is A Mos-StP in S01. This should guarantee Russia at least a standoff in the north, but at the expense of weakening the south. If Russia gets two builds, he can build an army in Mos and delegate it to the Northern Front....a French attack on England is very effective.

However, Russia has many disadvantages. It must worry about the south, especially a Turkish attack, which England will try to instigate. If he concentrates up north, he is open to inland attacks from Austria or Germany, particularly if he builds a fleet in StP ((I assume he refers to nc)). Also, Germany is in a better position to do Russia ... harm than good, for example, standing off Russia in Swe in F01 or sending in a fleet into the Baltic in 1902 to get Sweden. Russia's supply center for the north, StP, is open to English attack while England's home centers are largely secure from Russia.

Russia has a tendency to write off the north when things go badly there, particularly when StP falls. He can pull back to A Mos (he won't even need that if England has a fleet in StP) and continue to fight in the south with a secure defense in his rear.

The conclusion seems to be that if England doesn't telegraph his punch, makes the proper diplomatic arrangements, and makes the proper tactical moves, he has good chances to gain his "second island" and will have a firm base from which to try for a win.

((I'd like, as you might expect, to add a few points to this:

1. Mahler assumes that an attack on Scandinavia will begin with F Bar, A Nwy, but that is not the only approach. Some diplomatic situations will call for the Bohas Opening, a name I coined for England moving F Nwg C A Edi-Nwy, F Nth-Ska in F01. While reducing England's access to StP, he improves his chances at Swe, which is likely to be more lightly defended than StP, and he even gives himself a shot at both Swe and Den in 1902 if he's feeling that aggressive. It is also not as blatant as F Bar, as it can be

presented (and may well be) anti-German. If you're interested further in that topic, you might want to see my essay on the Bohas Opening in Diplomacy World #30, which not only discusses it in some detail, but looks at a number of games which featured it, including my own win in 1978H.

2. Do not underestimate the willingness of Russian players to write off the north, once StP has been lost, especially if relations are not bitter, and England is willing to hold StP with a fleet(nc). StP is the most expendible SC on the board and one of the most difficult to retake once it has been lost. It is often in the Russian self-interest to committ nothing more than a guard in Mos (if that), and use his remaining forces to try for gains in the south. There have been games won for Russia, in which StP was not held. Russia's best strategy for retaking StP can indeed be not to contest it, hoping that England will then attack a more powerful country, and get into such a mess that he will thin his northern defenses. So don't let the fear of "certain" Russian retaliation stop you.

3. Its an elementary point, perhaps, but note that it is very risky to start off with an attack on Scandinavia unless either a) you have a very good alliance with the Germans, or b) you are sure that France is committed to an early attack on Italy or Germany. I have seen a couple of games (including one in a tournament) where England moved to Bar, even tho a)the Germans were not committed to F Den-Swe, andb) France's concerns did not go beyond picking up his neutrals. In both cases, England's very eastern stance made an F-G alliance all too appealing.....

4. Overlaying all of your strategy and tactics for taking Scandinavia should be the question: What comes next? If all of England's diplomatic and tactical efforts are directed toward just Scandinavia, then he is likely to find it a cul-de-sac. There are three main options available to England:

- A. Press the attack further against Russia, with Mos, and War the next targets.
- B. Use it as a base from which to attack Germany, giving you a second front.
- C. Lightly garrison the area, and attack France

During the time that you are overrunning Scandinavia, you must be exploring the options and then planning which one(s) you will pursue. For option B, for example, F Swe is very important, forthe others, it is not. A requires A StP, and you may even want to take Lvn before Swe is picked up. In addition to promoting the F-G war, which you've been presumably doing all along, you need to line up a southern ally against your next victim.



Lothario Jutta Hoffman Holzrichterwig 26, D-4600 Dortmund 50, West Germany  
Bohemian Rhapsody Malc Smith Bus 26, Astridplein 31-32 Antwerp 2000 Belgium  
Prisoners of War Wallace Nichol, Doug Rowling 228 Kinnell Ave Cardonald, Galsgow,  
Scotland G523RU  
C'est Magnifique Peter Sullivan 36 Bushey Hall Rd, Bushey, WATFORD, WD2 3ED England

In addition James Early has a zine but I can't find my copy -- I'll have it for next issue. Joe Clement has a zine called Fusiler but I don't have his address. And apparently there is a zine in Montreal with something like 70 subbers! BH is a restart of a zine which folded a few years back. POW will feature 7 week deadlines. I suppose I should also mention that there's been a near avalanche of folds recently: Coat of Arms, Give me a Weapon, (which I was particularly sorry to see go), The End Justifies the Means, Flame, and, apparently, Watch Your Back. Erehwon should be folding shortly, if it hasn't already. And since I've got a few lines left here, I'll mention that Nelson Heintzman has a nice column of oddities in Europa Express.



((Next, I'd like to turn to what is surely one of the finest come-from-behind wins in all of postal Diplomacy history. Its is the victory statement of Robert Eisen, and appeared in Graustark #325, March 1, 1975))

## 73BB-AN OVERVIEW

England's victory in this, my first completed game of Diplomacy gives me a great deal of satisfaction since the game was conspicuous for its active Diplomatic relations and absence of missed moves ((it was, in fact, a local game)). However, while I can fairly claim that England's good showing was in no small measure due to whatever tactical and diplomatic skills I possess, the ultimate order of finish (i.e. whether or not England finished first or second) was essentially determined by Russia's whim.

My initial moves were straightforward, and intended to secure a Scandinavian stronghold, Unfortunately, France maneuvered to the Channel in SO1, rendering my preliminary position quite precarious, especially in view of the apparent F-G alliance. My FO1 moves were among the most critical of the game. I had spread rumors of an Italian attack on Munich, and Germany defended Mun, leaving Den uncovered. It was quite a gamble to give up London (to France) in exchange for the possibility of picking up Den, but in the face of the F-G alliance it appeared warranted. Accordingly, at the end of 1901 I managed to secure a build despite the loss of London.

In 1902 conflicts developed between Turkey and Austria, Germany and Russia, and I lost Norway to Russia. However, Germany's rather foolish involvement in the east enabled me to successfully attack him from behind, while I resisted a strong Franco-German attack against the North Sea.

1903 was the second seminal year in England's development, since due to Germany's rather erratic play I was able to secure an alliance with France, (allowing him to keep London). At this point, I still had only three SCs, to France's 7. Russia had resisted Germany's attack and Austria was caught between a strong Russo-Turkish pincer.

At this point, I benefitted from my small size and peripheral position, since attacking me was more effort than it was worth for either France or Russia. Consequently, I tried to make myself as useful as possible to France without demanding much in return. While France and I consolidated our position, Russia became the dominant power by attacking both Germany and Austria (with Turkey's assistance). Altho I made an attempt at this point to gather support against Russia, no one was particularly interested.

In 1905 Germany, now in a lost position, resigned (the only resignation ((or dropout)) from the game) and France, with my assistance, continued to advance despite Russia's belated support for the new German player....At this point (1906) there were three distinct factions in the game A) Russia(11) with minimal support from Germany(2) B) Turkey(8) and Italy(3), C) France(7) and myself(3). No active conflict had yet developed among the three major powers.

In 1907 .... a united front was finally formed against Russia. (I chose this point to take back London in a coup counting on France' continued friendship.)

1908 was the year of my first betrayal. Turkey was demonstrating strongly against Russia (albeit without substantial gains) and France, also committed against Russia ((against Germany and Russia, actually. The fighting was largely in Germany proper. In FO7, for example, France attacked Russian held Kiel with 3 supports (and without success) ), was overextended, and completely vulnerable to an attack from the back.

Thus, with Russia's assistance, I made a strong demonstration into the North Sea, English Channel, and Irish Sea. In 1908, I took a defenseless Brest, but lost Belgium to the French. Russia continued to pressure (and be pressured by) both France and Turkey.

My attack on France was destined to be successful, but surprisingly, France continued to attack Russia without parrying my thrusts. Thus, Russia was weakened to 9 centers by France and Turkey while I continued to grow to 5 units by conquering an exposed Por by outguessing France's intended moves. In 1910 Russia and I each gained a unit at France's expense (Germany was now out of the game) and the low countries were secure in our hands.

1911 was marked by stepped up T-I activity against Russia, while I wrested Spain from France. At this point, I controlled 7 centers (he also had taken Bel back) France was down to 3 ((Mar, Par, Mun)), Russia, 10 ((As far forward as Den and Kie, and Hol)), and Turkey, 9 ((and Italy, now moving his fleets westward, had 5)).

1912 ushered in a rather unique diplomatic arrangement. Since France's remaining units were all in the Mediterranean, and I knew that I was not strong enough to force that area alone, I offered France survival in return for his assistance against Italy. He agreed, and together we took Pie. However, three things soon became apparent: 1) even with France help, we could not gain against Italy ((Italy's units in Tun, Wes, Ven were helped by Turkish units in Tyo, Tyr, and Ion)) 2) Russia and Turkey were stalemated and perhaps Russia was considering an attack on my rather exposed homeland ((This was real. E's home units were just F Iri, F Eng, A Bel as of F12. Russia had FS Hol, Kie, Nwy)) 3) in any event, Russia was laying claim to at least one of France's remaining centers ((Russia in fact took Mun in F12)).

I solved all of these problems "at one fell swoop" in 1913 by relieving France of her 2 remaining centers, thus securing myself 3 builds in the north. (I now had 9 centers and was tied with Turkey for second. At the same time, I consolidated my position in the Medit (which was not going anywhere in any event). The remaining countries were Russia and myself with 20, Turkey and Italy with 14. However, the I-T position was unassailable. Accordingly, in 1914, counting on continued Turkish pressure against R, I attacked Russia, who, as France before him, was quite exposed to such an attack.

There were many risks attendant upon this course of action. First, altho I was confident, I was not certain that Italy and Turkey would not ally with Russia against me. Second, I was jeopardizing a proposed 4-way draw by embarking on this course. And third, while with Turkish support the destruction of Russia was virtually guaranteed, it was logical that Russia would "give the game to Turkey" (as he vociferously threatened to do) since I was the one who stabbed him. However, while I recognized the gamble, and also the fact that the outcome of the game was now in Russia's hands, I counted on the rather blatant personality conflict between the Russian and Turkish players to assure me benevolent treatment on Russia's part. Also, at least initially, this personality difference made resistance to Russia's proposed draw come from Turkey, in the first instance, rather than myself. I had, in fact, expressed my rather reluctant agreement to a 3-way draw, but Turkey would not compromise his position by attacking Italy.

In 1915, by virtue of some rather "nifty" tactical maneuvers, I picked up 2 Russian centers (including StP), and Turkey and I were tied at 11 while Russia had 9. Shortly thereafter, it became obvious that Russia would indeed resist Turkey, thereby opening the path to my expansion, and all the remaining players agreed to concede to me. The final ((1916)) SC total was E:14, T:10, R:6, I:4.

The outstanding factor in this game, from my perspective, was the success of my diplomatic agreements. It seems to me that in the context of a "phone game" one is better able to judge the sincerity of one's opponents. In addition, the personalities which can, and in this case, did, emerge, have a decisive effect on the outcome.... While I had never met any of the players in the instant game..... I was able to keep friendships with both France and Russia beyond the period of useful alliance by avoiding the personality conflicts which appeared to doom any effective F-R or T-R co-

operation. Also, in this game, the Turkish and Italian players appeared to be friends who assisted each other throughout, but their mutual passivity resulted in a rather immobile game for both of them ((he concludes with the usual "thanks"))

((Somehow, I have a feeling that even if ITR had formed against him, Eisen would have found the path to a comeback. His tenacity and patience was remarkable ----remember, as late as 1906, he was still at 3 centers, and even in 1914, two years away from his win, he was still just in third place. His early, critical, survival, was based on his making himself useful to the one player who was in a position to finish him off. This is something England is especially well-positioned to do, especially if he has several fleets, and the other power needs them. Eisen's sense of timing was superb. It was a remarkable win.))

((Next up will be an opening, which also features an E-F alliance. The writer is Richard Hucknall in his Fall of Eagles #63, November, 1981))

## MY FINEST HOURS.....NO. 2

Er...yes...well. This is a follow-up to the article I published as long ago as issue 50. The game in question, this time is "Gore" (1976HD) which was run in Roy Taylor's Jigsaw. For me it was memorable for a coup that eliminated Germany in 1902, and although I went on to win I gained more pleasure from those first two years than the final result.

The unfortunate Germany was played by one Clive Wardley, and Russia was played by his personal friend Ron Canham. At this time they were both involved with publishing Leviathan. Franco was played by Davey Hunter and I was playing England. Davey and I were at the time playing in another game together and Roy Taylor was later to accuse us of playing a cartel - a completely false accusation as I have never played in a cartel and never will.

From the start France and I agreed on a joint attack on Germany, mainly because G & R were friends. I felt I had come to know Davey well enough and could rely on him (and use him until the time came to stab....). Nevertheless I wrote in very friendly terms to G offering him an alliance against F and he seemed eager to accept and yet did not request I moved to ENC. Strangely his biggest worry was his Russian friend! Although they knew each other very well it soon became apparent that they didn't trust each other one inch. This put an idea into my head which meant a risky strategy, but with great rewards if successful. With France being kept fully informed I told G that F had told me he would be supporting himself into Bur in SO1. I argued that it would therefore be better for G not to contest Bur, but instead to order to Ruh which would give him the chance of Bel in the autumn with my help. A move of A(Ber)-Kie would ensure Mun could be covered in the autumn as long as Italy didn't interfere. The SO1 moves were :-

E: F(Edi)-NWG, A(Lpl)-Yor, F(Lon)-NTH  
F: F(Bre)-MAO, A(Par)-Pic, A(Mar)-Bur  
G: F(Kio)-Den, A(Mun)-Ruh, A(Ber)-Kie  
R: F(Stpsc)-GOB, A(War)-Gal, A(Mos)-Ukr

Super! Germany was now set up for the big stab - as long as he would swallow the bait!

At my request F wrote me a letter for the specific purpose of my forwarding it to G. In it he said he intended supporting himself to Bel and asked me not to interfere. I passed it on to G and suggested that we kept him out of Bel with his A(Ruh) supporting my A(Yor)-Bel, and that he could take Hol as Mun was safe. The idea at this time was that F supported me into Bel (as well as Germany!) while F moved into Mun. The reply from Germany seemed to show that the plan was going to succeed, and he also said that he would be standing Russia out of Swe.

Around this time I also heard from R who told me he was certain that G would keep him out of Swe, and this suggested another refinement to the original plan.

Very close to the deadline I wrote to G saying that R had told me that because he knew he couldn't get Swe he intended moving F(GOB)-BAL. Why then should he not order F(Den)-Swe & A(Kie)-Den? Hol could always be left for later. This was followed by a 'phone call to F and with fingers crossed we amended our orders. A01:

E: F(NTH) C A(Yor)-Hol, A(Yor)-Hol, F(NWG)-Nor (Build F(Lon), F(Edi) )  
F: A(Plo)-Bel, A(Bur)-Mun, F(MAO)-Spase (Build F(Bre), F(Mar), A(Par))  
G: F(Den)-Swe, A(Kie)-Den, A(Ruh)\_S\_ENGLISH\_A(Yor)-Bel (No change)  
R: F(GOB)-Swe

We had got him! SO2 saw Germany cover Ber by A(Kie)-Ber and I ordered A(Hol)-Kie successfully. F supported his A(Bel)-Ruh from Mun and Germany failed to order a retreat so A(Ruh) died. (The little bit of luck that often seems to arrive when needed!). My F(Nor) supported F(NTH)-SKA, and in the autumn it was simple.

French A(Mun) supported my A(Kie)-Ber and F followed up with A(Ruh)-Kie. I supported myself into Den and Germany was out. I also took Stp which placed both France and myself on 8 centres.

The game then lost a lot of its interest. The plan was for me to move against Russia while France moved on Italy and his holdings in Austria. I thought I would be able to stab France when he was too committed in the Med. However, F began to lose interest and I stabbed him just as he was on the point of dropping-out, and the F standby was never able to recover the position. I finally reached 21 centres in 1908, but the best part of the game was 1901 & 1902.

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((We now turn to a radically different view. Next up is Richard Sharp, writing in Dolchstoss #53, May, 1977))

F(MAO)-IRI, F(Bre)-ENG...

Show any novice the Diplomacy board, run over the rules, then ask him what country he thinks is strongest. Pretty often he'll say, as I did, 'England' (if he says, 'Italy,' run over the rules again). So it's a great tribute to the natural self-effacing modesty of the English that England's performance in our postal games is abysmal - at the last count I believe England had won fewer games than any other country, except of course Italy, which doesn't really count.

There is a lemming-like sameness about the way England is played. We open F(NWG), F(NTH) and A(Edi) or (Yor). In Autumn 01 we land triumphantly in Norway. Aided by our loyal German allies we knock over St Petersburg in A03 (flourish of trumpets) ... and remember too late that we left the back door open, so that France, who has been pottering aimlessly about in Iberia, has suddenly come to stay: F(MAO)-IRI, F(Bre)-ENG, and it's goodbye England yet again.

Even if France misses the opportunity, this northern attack is useless; it leads nowhere. The chances of getting beyond StP are minute. And a great deal of time has been wasted, so that there is little chance of catching France on the hop, while there is no way England can really hope to attack Germany: where are all the armies coming from?

It is a fact that England and France are completely incompatible. Did you know that there is no genuine case yet of these two countries finishing in the first two places? Yet England and Germany constantly do so. The reason is simple enough: England and Germany can easily form a long-term alliance, since although they are neighbours neither is equipped to attack the other. But England and France are both essentially naval powers: although France might possibly win without occupying any English centres, England can't hope to win without attacking France, and France knows it. Try it and see: try to build an 18-centre England without Par, Mar, Bre, Spa or Por. You end up in Trieste or Sevastopol.

In this clash, France has most of the advantages. England has one, though: that a move to ENG in Spring 1901 is advantageous for England and not for France. For reasons I have never fully understood, a great majority of Englands don't move to ENG in Spring

1901; yet the move is obviously right, and can reasonably be presented to France (before or after it's made, according to choice!) as a bid for Belgium, to which England has a better claim than either of her neighbours. When not coupled with A(Lpl)-Wal, this move is not necessarily anti-French - a comparable case is F(Sev)-BLA, which is just common sense, and only become anti-Turkish when harnessed to A(Mos)-Sev.

Sitting in the Channel recently (with French permission, this time), I found myself thinking, as so often, what a pity it was that England and France couldn't ally. Then it occurred to me: they can, but only if France takes on the role of Germany, i.e. becomes totally land-bound in the north, though unlike Germany France would still have fleet activity available in the south. The only way for England to ensure France kept to such an agreement would be for England to take and keep Brest. I proposed this very logical scheme to France, and rather to my surprise he accepted.

Yes, I know, I know, you wouldn't have agreed. I wouldn't have caught you with a flimsy excuse like that - I'd have had to come out in the open and stab you like a man, right between the eyes. I know. But then, if you'd been playing France, I wouldn't have suggested it. It works: the fleet in Brest is no threat on other French centres; while the plan does involve the fleet moving down through MAO there is little risk in this, as England is unlikely to try a one-unit stab at 50-50 odds when the only result would be to lose Brest again. Both countries have better security as a result: England can't be stabbed, and France won't be.

It is, after all, no more dangerous than the Key Lepanto (actually it's a hell of a lot safer, given the respective strengths of France and Austria in defence). The only thing wrong with it is that I can't think of a suitable name for it, unless by analogy with the

~~Key Lepanto~~ we call it the Hey Bresto.

((Sharp is the only writer I know of who has tried to make the case that in a majority of cases, England's best opening is to the English Channel, yet the article makes the whole thing seem fairly plausible. I don't know, really, whether he intended this essay to be totally serious. But the item is refreshing in its own way --- you see very little unorthodox material written for England (by contrast, there is a fair amount for the central powers, especially Italy). The problem here, and the reason I suspect that Sharp wasn't entirely serious, is that he hasn't explained what is in this for France, other than the prospect of an English ally. It might be possible to sell this to France by offering support into Bel with F Nth. This bypasses, at least for the time being, Nwy, but then, England will get his build from Bre, and if allied with France, should not need a second build. SO2 should then see a standoff in Mid, a supported convoy to Hol, and F Edi-Nwg. French moves would depend somewhat on his FO1 moves. However, if France had opened A Par-Pic, A Mar-Bur (as I did recently with 1984HW), Germany might well be lulled into thinking there was an E-F war, and not guard Mun. If A Bur-Mun succeeded, France would still have 2 builds, with a third available from Spa in 1902 provided Mun could be held. The attack on Hol, and the exposure of Kie and Ber from A Mun should keep Germany under heavy pressure, and England might be able to try a supported attack on Nwy in FO2 if the SO2 attack on Hol succeeded, otherwise, a second try at it could be made. Yes, the opening does have its potential, if the personalities are right to pull something like this off.....))

## ENGLISH FILLER

Maybe a good place to start would be with Sharp's comment about how impossible it is for England to win without something of France. Taint so. The earliest example I could find was 65E, where Derek Nelson ended up with 19 centers to Koning's 11. In the final year, England landed up in such places as Ser, Tri, Rum, Bul and Sev. This featured an EF alliance which by 1905 had E with the upper hand, as they pushed back a 12 center Austria. Lets see. 72M shows E-19, F13 in the final year, with F gaining 3 in the last year, so that's probably another such game, tho I don't have the zine.....



England is the country best positioned for multiple convoys. The most remarkable example of this was Nicky Palmer's FO5 orders for 74EF in which all 8 units participated in convoys: F Nwg C A Edi-Nwy, F Nth & F Hel C A Lon-Kie, F Bal & F Bot C A Kie-StP....Another oddity from the same zine (1901 And All That) was SO8, which had 5 nations in England: Eng F Lpl, Ger A Lon, Ital F Wal, Rus F Edi, and Tur F Lon. And if you think Tur F Lon was odd, ~~Tur~~ also had F Iri and F NAO! (that was 75BE)..... One of the "shortest" England's on record was Thomas Scheben, who at one point had 15 centers, but only 9 units.....Possibly the most luscious opportunity ever offered to an English player at the opening was in 78CL, in BOAST. France moved to Gas and Mar, Germany to Pru, Sil, and Den. That meant of course that England had uncontested access to either Hol or Bel. FO1 showed the triple alliance, as France moved to Wes, and Germany stood Russia out of Swe and took War (in fact, Russia elected to cover Sev in the south, and actually had to make a removal!) England got Bel, which is just as well, since Russia stood him out of Nwy. 1902 saw the triple rolling, with Germany taking Swe and Mos, and England in Hol. But Italy stabbed Austria for 1902 builds, and stiffened his resistance to France's attack. The triple disintegrated when England finally attacked France.....

## THE ZINE COLUMN # 83

Lets kick things off with a few awards:

Most Unpolsterlike Utterance from a Pollster. John Marsden, referring to his Ode Diplomacy Magazine Poll: "A high turnout (or indeed any turnout) was not desired and would merely have landed me with a lot of unnecessary work." He got 14 votes for 40 zines, and then determined that his rules made 20 of those zines ineligible. His rules were so strict that even DD wouldn't have qualified.

It Didn't Work Out that Way, Did It? Kathy Byrne, writing in KK/W #95: "I am joining Bob Olsen in his alternative hobby. What this means is that Linsey and Berch no longer exist, and I will do my best to keep their names out of this zine." Well, I counted up the issue, and, exclusive of press, Linsey's name appears 13 times, and Berch's, a mere 6. In #97, a new way to make Bruce not exist was hit upon. Each time his name appeared, it would be carefully xxxxed out. My favorite was when the final "x" in "Brux" was xed out with an x. Its all so juvenile.....

They do things differently in England. In Dolchstoss #86, Richard Sharp describes his rating system. Each beginner is credited with a notional game, worth 100 points. Each game has a "game rating" equal to the sum of everyone individual ratings. These are allocated as: Winner: 30%, 2nd: 20%, 3rd, 15%, 4th: 10%, 5th, 6th, and 7th, 5% each. The other 10% is allocated proportional to final SC holdings. Drawers shared the appropriate points equally. Once a player has completed 5 games, the notional game is discarded, and in fact, for every five games completed, you get to drop your worst game. Games a player drops are not included unless it would harm his rating. If he drops all of his games, he even loses his notional 100, and his rating is his poorest single game, or 100, whichever is worst. Still here? OK, standbys are rated provided they have played for more than half the game (so draw it out a bit, mates, if it looks like a good one) and/or they have more than doubled a country's strength, and also provided that it would improve your overall standing. Your total rating is your total games' scores, including that notional 100 if you still have it, divided by the total number of games (including, yes, your notional one if you've still got it).

The 1984 Freshman Poll results have Flick of the Wrist, a zine I've never seen, and which wasn't even on the ballot, as top zine. Winner of the subzine Poll was Ken Peel's entertaining "Sex Apeel" The largest number of votes was garnered by Caruso's peripatetic "Foot In Mouth", which finished, quite appropriately, at 20 out of 21.

One of the most remarkable developments has been the blossoming of the No Fixed Address letter column. #29/30, an issue which ran 100 pages, featured letters from Ron

(Canada) Brown, Stegeman, Coughlan, Olsen, Quinn, Berch, Holley, Linsey, Walker, Caruso, Tallman, Langley, McIntyre, Carter, Schilling, Sherwood, Stewart, Langley, and many others --- in short, many if not most of the hobby's most prolific letter writers are contributing there. Unlike many zines, NFA allows you to contribute, regardless of which side of an issue you're on, and regardless of what your name is, and Steve sends out courtesy copies, so people know whats being said about them. And he doesn't play favorites, so that everyone's letters are subject to criticism, if he sees a non-sequitur, an unsubstantiated allegation, an unfair inference, or the like. An open letter column like this can be really quite fascinating, especially with so many people contributing. It also tends to centralize the discussion in one place, rather than having it all over the hobby. It can also be quite fascinating to see people react to being challenged, who are quite unused to having someone actually ask for proof of some dire accusation they are throwing about. The upcoming issue Steve hopes won't hit 100 again; Bruce tells me that his letter there tries to tie most of this together, runs some 33 pages, with its own table of contents! (Steve Hutton 704 Brant St London Ont n5Y 3N1 CANADA, US\$8/10 issues in US)

Finally, an Update. In DD #84, I wrote an editorial largely dealing with Kathy's most sensational and widely distributed accusation against Bruce, viz that he had written her teenage daughter a "sick" letter; some of Kathy's friends used much more lurid language. Kathy repeatedly stated that proof of this was available to anyone who asked, but I and several others who asked for the proof did not get any. Bruce has denied that the

letter he wrote was sick. I also said that I had written everyone whose name I had seen mentioned in this manner, but none would come forth to say that, yes s/he saw a "sick" letter. Recently, on March 18, Robert Sacks wrote a letter which began "Let things first: I checked with Kathy - Mark Berch has the list of people who saw the ... letter." This is false. Prior to that letter, I hadn't even heard of such a list. I did NOT have one. I have written him, trying to find out how I got such a list (which originated supposedly in Kathy's recollection --- and Kathy does NOT write me), how it was that Kathy comes to be so knowledgeable about what I have, whose names were on the list. I heard nothing from him in response to those questions (tho he wrote me on other matters). A few weeks later in NFA #31, Steve Langley published a list of 4 people who had seen such a letter: Steve Arnawoodian, Jeff Bohner, Julie Martin, Bob Olsen. I wrote them all, asking if they could confirm seeing a sick letter. I got no confirmations, in fact, no response at all. However, Mark Larzelere has said that he saw the letter and, in his opinion, it was not sick (or a "hate letter" or "smutty"). So if you hear stories, please check first. I do not know who Sacks (and/or Kathy) has told about my having this "list" --- I couldn't get that from him either.

## LETTERS

A sprinkling of letters came in from last issue, so lets get to them:

Rob Landeros: Keep up the good work. Found your last ish interesting, altho would like to have had more info on the technical side.

((This points to a conflict that I have. The more technical stuff is in a sense more useful --- but mostly to that minority of my readers thinking of starting their own zine. The down side is that such material makes less interesting reading in general.))

Name Withheld on Request: Was that stuff about John ((Caruso)) really necessary in #87/88? He said recently in his zine that he was "neutral" in his feelings toward you. Why can't you do the same toward him and then the hobby will have one fewer squabble?" ((Neutral? Neutral? In the same issue he said that, he called me "dishonest." In the previous issue he called me "venemous." In the January Feudesse, I was called "deceitful", and accused of being "guilty" of unspecified crimes, and he wondered what "other atrocities" I could be "trying to hatch". In the Feb No Fixed Address he accuses me of trying to "dictate to me .... where and what I can print or must print." He will not let me sub to his zine, and in fact, mail that I have sent to him has been refused (that was just this month). And then he has the nerve to say he's "neutral." I see no reason why anything John says about me should be given any credibility.

Mike Barno: The publishing discussions were good, but there was a gaping hole. Brad Hessel and you talked about the problems of people jumping into pubbing before they are ready, but, other than Brad's mention in passing of John Boyer's article in the 1974 IDA Handbook, there was no mention of ways to avoid the problem. Fred's simplistic 1973 ratings idea, and Ron Kelly's approval idea would help identify risky zines after they came into existence, but this does nothing to reduce the risk factor involved. I feel the discussion would be far more complete with mention of ways to improve the preparation and skill of a pubber-to-be. Of course, these methods require the attention of the new pubber, but if he knows what's available to him, he can take advantage of them if he cares.

The first... is the chance to benefit from the experience of others. This can take the form of simply talking with pubbers, and getting ideas about how they organize their time, efforts, and money; how different methods of repro compare, and what sort of growth to plan for. Information can be gathered from other sources: House of Lords, for example, and DD #87-88. If someone can pass on old IDA handbook material, some of that might prove helpful. Perhaps the most valuable "unmet hobby service" is the idea for a new publisher's handbook. Mark Luedi started plans for such a project in 1983, but nothing came of it. Maybe something can be done.... ((It's always such fun to type something I so agree with. Not long after Brad's essay, Len Lakofka, under the auspices of the IDA put out the IDA Handbook. It is long since out of print. I have a copy available for loan, should anyone want to see it (just send a business sized envelope with 39¢ stamps on it). Luedi's plans for a new handbook came to naught, and before him Allan Wells' plan to write a completely new one also came to nothing. I have, in fact the unreduced originals for the handbook, if someone wanted to do a complete reprint, but some of it is dated by now. The best way to get a new one might be for Bruce Linsey to announce that he would be doing a new one. A counter-Handbook would probably spring up in short order! HoL is, so far as I know, no longer being published, and Dick raised such a stink at the possibility of reprinting from it that I wouldn't touch that. I always recommend to new publishers that they order the back issues of DD that deal with publishing and GMing. This allows them to "consult" with pubbers who may have long since left the hobby.))

The other way a potential publisher can benefit is by getting some experience of his own before trying to bring a zine off the ground. One way, very popular in the last few years, is the subzine. This lets a person get a feel for scheduling, editing, and (if he chooses) GMing, without a big financial commitment. If he sends out the subzine to his players, he'll get some experience with production and distribution, without getting tied to scores of copies each month. Furthermore, his name and attitude get known to the readers of the parent zine ((and he gets access to the parent's zine


standby list, no small benefit if he runs into early dropouts.)) A similar idea, without the publicity, is to run the game by flyer for a while. Tom Swider, for instance, was a bright-eyed Dave Manuel type when he decided to run a game. After a year of sending out results by flyer, he was better prepared to start The Shogun's Sword. He brought me on to help out, with the added advantage that I learned about pubbing, resulting in my being able to take over the zine when his drive dwindled.... ((I can't see much of an advantage of the flyer over the subzine, and the flyer lacks several obvious advantages that the subzine can give)). Another means of gaining experience is one that I hope will see more use in the future: the local zine. Bruce McIntyre ran Vancouver-area phone games in Conference Call for a while. This surely contributed to the fact that his Excelsior postal zine had a superb debut. Politesse's local routes made it a better postal zine, tho Ken has since returned it to its earlier postal roots. ((Unless he's been in the hobby for at least two years, I usually suggest that a new pubber start with a subzine first. If he's absolutely dying to publish, he'll probably ignore my advice. Such a person is probably better off getting right into it. But otherwise, a subzine lets a "pubber" get his feet wet without getting in over his head. It basically permits him to do the GMing (and editing, if he wants) functions, but not the publishing end, which can be fairly time-consuming. He may find, after 6 months or so, that the subzine is quite enuf to keep him busy. The extra burden of publishing may turn out to be enuf to kill the zine.)) ((Mike, incidently, seeks employment as a computer programmer.))

I have just received a letter of response from Terry Tallman, for which there is not enuf space in this issue, so it will appear nextish. Stay Tuned! (D)

Mark L Berch  
492 Naylor Place  
Alexandria VA 22304

Late Flash: The Blind Tasting of Hummos  
recipies at HummosCon had Peel's come in  
first, mine,second.

Quote for the Month: "Every gun that is  
made, every warship launched, every rocket  
fired, signifies in the final sense a theft  
from those who are hungry and not fed, those  
who are cold and not clothed." ----- that  
was Dwight Eisenhower, who knew a  
thing or three about war and national  
policy.

Larry Peery   
Box 8416  
San Diego CA92102