



# DIPLOMAG

VOL. II, No. 6

August 6, 1981

This is the 42nd issue of the bimonthly newsletter of the American Mensa Postal Diplomacy SIG, bringing hobby and SIG news to Mensans interested in playing the game, Diplomacy, and its many variants, by mail. Dues are \$2.00 per year (6 issues). Send all funds to the Chairman.

We help to set up All-Mensa Postal games in various Diplomacy publications run by H's. We will also notify members of other Game Openings or zines from time to time. Mensans publish only a small percentage of the 100-odd Dip zines in the world, but we'd like to think that we run some of the best.

Chairman & Publisher: Fred C. Davis, Jr., 1427 Clairidge Rd., Baltimore, Md. 21207  
Senior Committeeman: Bill Young, P.O. Box 907, Clearfield, Pa. 16830  
Junior Committeeman: Edward C. Bapple, 4531 Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60630

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## ELECTION RESULTS

As no other nominations were received, Glenn Overby and Ronald J. Brown have been declared elected by acclamation to the posts of Chairman (Coordinator) and Junior Committeeman (Editor), respectively, for two-year terms beginning November 1, 1981. In addition, the By-Laws amendment passed without a dissenting vote (All votes were "Yes" except one "Abstention"), so the posts of Chairman and Editor can be split, with the Chairman serving as Treasurer. (A copy of the revised By-Laws will be attached to members' copies of DIPLOMAG).

Your new Chairman is going to be: Glenn Overby, II, 23096 Tawas, Hazel Park, Mich. 48030

Bill Young is stepping down, so Ed Bapple will advance to the title of Senior Committeeman, and your new Jr. Committeeman and DIPLOMAG Editor will be: Ronald J. Brown, R.R. #1, Brennan's Hill, Low, Quebec, CANADA JOX 2G0. Phone: (819) 422-3215.

## POSTAL STRIKE PROBLEMS

The mailing date of this issue of DIPLOMAG will be contingent upon the status of the Canadian Postal strike. If this strike appears about to end on publication day, I may delay the mailing for a couple of days. (In any case, Ron has already been notified of his election by phone, at the number shown above).

This is supposed to be my last issue of DIPLOMAG. Ron Brown was supposed to take over with the October issue. However, if the Canadian strike lasts later than September 15th, I will do it here, as the resumption of mail service after that date wouldn't give Ron much time to get his act together. I mailed a large packet of SIG material to him on June 15th, including photocopies of every issue of DIPLOMAG back to #14, but he had not received it by 30 June, the date his P.O. went on strike. If that package got lost, I'll have to prepare and send him another one.

(over)

IF I have to prepare the next issue of DIPLOMAG, it will be done about 10 October. I will be turning the Chair over to Glenn Overby at about the same date. My last official act as SIG Chairman otherwise will be to prepare the semi-annual financial report for the AMC. The forms for this report will arrive here about 20 September.

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WINNER OF THE 1981 DIPCON TOURNAMENT was the other Ron Brown, of Bakersfield, Calif. That Ron produces a very nice zine called MURDERING MINISTERS. Subs are 12 for \$5.50. I can recommend it. Address: 1528 El Sereno Pl., Bakersfield, Cal. 93304. GM for the tournament was Dan Mathias, a BUSHWACKER player, and a Mensa candidate, who will be a member of this SIG soon. I don't have the complete order of finish for the Top Board. Maybe next time.

It has been decided that the 1982 DipCon will be held here in Baltimore! Avalon Hill will be the hosts. Looking forward to seeing several of you here for the big event.

MARYLAND HAS HIT THE JACKPOT for the summer of 1982. In addition to hosting DipCon, Baltimore will also host the annual convention of the Association of Railway Museums, an umbrella organization for the various streetcar and railroad museums of North America. Further, the Mensa Annual Gathering will be just up the pike in Trenton, N.J.

I hope these don't all occur at the same time. Wouldn't I look funny running around DipCon in my motorman's hat? Or running between here and Trenton with orders clenched in my teeth? As far as I know, the AG will be held the last weekend in June, and DipCon will bloom as part of ORIGINS on the weekend of July 23-25, 1982. I'm not sure yet whether DipCon will be held on the Johns Hopkins campus again. If it is, we want to remind people that the University campus is quite some distance from the Johns Hopkins Hospital. In 1976, some Dippy players went to the hospital by mistake. They told the men in the white coats that they were there to play Austria and conquer Europe. Almost didn't get away. I'll have more info for you on driving instructions and housing locations next year. P.S. Have just learned that ORIGINS will be held the campus of the U. of Maryland, Baltimore County, near Baltimore Beltway Exit 12.

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#### NEW INTERNATIONAL MENSA CONSTITUTION PROPOSED

The new AMC Draft for an International Constitution was voted upon and overwhelmingly approved at the Annual Business Meeting in Louisville on June 28th. This Draft will now be submitted to the IGC for a referendum by all members of Mensa. While there are other proposed amendments to the present Constitution, the big change is the elimination of the "One Nation - One Vote" rule in the current document - the same mistake that has virtually killed the United Nations as a meaningful organization. In the American Draft, only National Groups with at least 500 members would be entitled to a vote on the IGC, unless they have at least 75 members per million population and at least 250 members. (Only New Zealand meets this alternate requirement today). This would eliminate the absurdity of giving votes to such small National Groups as Belgium (42), India (90) and Ivory Coast (10!).

National Mensas with between 1,000 and 4,999 members would have two votes on the IGC. (Only Britain and Canada fall into these categories right now). National Groups with over 5,000 members would receive one additional vote for each additional 5,000 members, or fraction thereof. (Under this schedule, Britain might qualify for a third vote by the end of 1981). However, no one National Group would be permitted to have more than 40% of the total votes on the International board. Otherwise, the U.S., with 85% of all Mensa membership, would get about 12 votes.

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MENSA CONSTITUTION (Cont.)

Based on the March 1981 membership figures, the only other National Groups in addition to those listed above which have or can expect to have 500 members within the next year are Austria, Australia and France. They would have one vote each on the IGC. The Netherlands, with 330 M's, would probably be the next National Group to qualify.

To be picky, my personal preference would have been to give a voting seat to every National Mensa with at least 250 members. In addition to Holland, this change would bring Finland and Japan aboard. I feel that 250 members demonstrates a viable group. However, it was the judgement of the people who wrote this document that true viability begins with 500 people. It is possible that setting such a requirement may stir up some National Groups into launching recruiting drives, which some have not done very well in the past. Anyway, the figure has been set at 500, so that's it.

In my opinion, the American Draft is far superior to the current Mensa Constitution, and is also preferable to the so-called "Austrian" draft recently approved by Mensa Austria, or the "Oslo Draft" written by some Britons. As Diplomacy players, we should all be interested in the international aspects of Mensa. Here is a chance for all of us to say Yea or Nay on a real international agreement.

If anyone wants a copy of the American Draft, I'll be glad to send him a copy, if he'll send me a business-size SASE.

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AVALON HILL CHANGES DIPLOMACY SETS

The new Diplomacy sets no longer contain those solid square blocks for Armies, or elongated ones for Fleets. Instead, they have been replaced by small plastic pieces about one centimeter wide and only 3 millimeters high! I haven't seen these monstrosities yet, so I don't know whether the Fleets retain their different shapes. I only know that the A's are identified by stars, and the F's by anchors. Yuch! It was hard enough telling all the pieces apart in FTF games. It sounds to me as if it will be almost impossible to do so with these new pieces.

It has been suggested that everyone write a letter of protest to Avalon Hill, and request the return of the traditionally shaped pieces. (Their address is: 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, Md. 21214). I have been informed that the Canadian sets produced by House of Games still used the traditional pieces. If someone will send me the address for the House of Games, and the price, we will be glad to print that information here, so that U.S. residents can still obtain sets from Canada with the proper pieces, once the postal strike is over. It has also been suggested that someone might want to go into business making unpainted wooden blocks. Anyone want to set himself up as the Wooden Block Custodian? (A chance for eternal glory?)

The British sets, produced by Philmar Ltd., use quaint pre-dreadnought warships to represent Fleets, and rather squat and ugly shells or bullets to denote Armies. If I had my druthers, I'd like to see A-H adopt a ship-shaped piece for Fleets, but keep the wooden blocks for Armies.

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ANOTHER NOTE ON 1982 DIPCON. The U. of Maryland, Baltimore Co., is only about 4 miles from where we live. Dormitory space will be available on campus, and better space will be available in 7 nearby motels on U.S. 40 or Belmont Ave., which will all offer a discount rate for Conventioneers. Hope to meet you there.

## NEW CUSTODIANS IN POSTAL HOBBY

**NEW BOARDMAN NO. CUSTODIAN:** Don Ditter took over as BNC on June 1, 1981, from Lee Kendter, Sr. The BNC issues a designator for every known Postal game of Regular Diplomacy throughout the world. He also publishes EVERYTHING, which contains a list of Gamestarts and Game Conclusions in the current time period (which is usually two months or a calendar quarter). This provides a permanent record of all Postal games going back to 1964, for statistical and rating purposes. The BNC can declare a game "irregular" either due to the adoption of different rules from those prescribed in the Rulebook, or because all of the players are from a single metropolitan area (i.e. "Telephone games"). In either case, such games are identified with special symbols, and are not counted in any rating system or statistical count. If you'd like to get EVERYTHING, write to Don at 910 Hope St., 12A, Stamford, CT. 06907. I don't know what he will charge for subs.

### PRO TEM

**NEW MILLER NO. CUSTODIAN:** Rod Walker took over as MNC from Greg Costikyan on June 21, 1981, as Greg has apparently dropped out of the hobby. The MNC issues designators for Variant Postal games. He also publishes LORD OF HOSTS, which carries the same info. on Variant games as EVERYTHING carries for Regular ones. There was a time when 25% of all Postal gamestarts were Variants, but this figure has decreased in the past several years. Under an agreement worked out by Greg, Rod and myself, all Variant Postal sections beginning on or after January 1, 1981 were to use the new ARDA Catalog classification as part of the designator. In this way, the same identification system was to be used for both Postal Games and for the listing of games by categories in the world's Variant Banks. For some reason, Greg did not implement this system when he issued his last batch of Miller Nos., which included 5 games which began in 1981. Walker has now corrected this matter by issuing corrected ARDA numbers for these five games, as well as to all other Variant games starting in North America this year.

Rod will be turning the MNC post over to a new, permanent Custodian in a very short time, as soon as the backlog of unassigned numbers is cleared up. If you'd like a copy of the Revised ARDA Catalog (#7), listing about 400 Variants currently in the North American Variant Bank, send \$1.10 to: Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, Calif. 92024. The games are presented in both Alphabetical and Categorical listings, so it's pretty easy to pick out a scenario you might be interested in. Almost every game listed in the Catalog is available for sale.

**NORTH AMERICAN VARIANT BANK - NORTH.** This division of the NAVB is now in the custody of John Leeder, 121 - 19th Ave., N.E., Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T2E 1N9. John is one of the real Old Timers in the hobby, as publisher of RUNESTONE. Canadians should order their copies of variants from John, so they can handle the transactions in Canadian currency. Every game now in the NAVB-West (Rod Walker's main bank) will now be available in the Canadian bank.

**THE HOBBY CENSUS DIRECTOR** is Glenn Overby, 23096 Tawas, Hazel Park, Mich. 48030. The 1981 Census is now ready. This contains a complete list of North American players. You can obtain a copy from Glenn for \$1.00.

## HALL OF FAME POLL PROPOSED

Larry Peery, publisher of XENOGOGIC and another hobby Old Timer, has proposed establishing a Diplomacy Hall of Fame to honor people who have performed exceptional services in the Postal hobby. The Hall would be divided into two sections: North America and Europe. (Europe is shorthand for "Rest of the World"). Larry proposes that the Initial induction into the Hall be limited to people who are deceased or who have retired from or dropped out of the hobby, or otherwise have been inactive for at least two years. Thereafter, there would be a regular induction once every two years, and this would NOT be limited to deceased or inactive people. However, no one would be eligible for induction based on any action taken within the past two years.

(more)

HALL OF FAME (Cont.)

No decision has been made yet as to the number of people who would be inducted into the Hall on the Initial balloting. I have suggested that this be limited to 14 people (twice the number of players in a Regular Diplomacy game), with 8 places for North America and 6 for Europe. Whatever the number, it should be kept small, since the value of the selection would be diminished by too great a number.

Thereafter, it has been suggested that inductions be limited to seven people (4 Americans, 3 Europeans) every two years. "Americans" is understood to include Canadians. If the Initial or "catch-up" initiation took place in 1982, the first regular election would be in 1984.

Larry Peery has suggested that people submit to him a list of up to 25 people whom they think ought to be nominated for Hall of Fame consideration. This listing should include the nominee's major activity within the hobby (i.e. Publisher, Player, Leader, Game Designer), and a one or two sentence statement on why he is being nominated. There can be more than one reason for the nomination. Most of the prominent people in the hobby past and present have been and continue to be active in more than one phase.

Larry will tabulate the nominations. I don't know his exact criteria, but I suppose that anyone who is mentioned on "X" number of nominating lists would be included on the final ballot. This ballot would then be sent out hobbywide. However, there will be separate ballots for Americans and Europeans, so the European vote is not snowed under by the larger American response. Should Europe choose not to participate, North Americans presumably would still have the right to nominate and vote for Overseas nominees.

Since the final format of the Hall of Fame has not been established, Larry would also appreciate having input from other people on suggestions for size and selection. Send all nominations and suggestions to him at: P.O. Box 8416, San Diego, Calif. 92102.

(One problem with limiting the Initial selection to "retired" people is to determine who is retired. For example, Edi Birsan would be on anyone's list for nomination, but I've recently heard a report that Edi is going to resume some Postal play.)

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ANSWERS TO ISOLATED M REBUS PUZZLES:

Better get these in here before I forget or run out of space.

I. 1. topic, 2. locus, 3. long ago, 4. railroad right of way.

II. 1. drydock, 2. right on time, 3. ace in the hole, 4. fancy free.

III. 1. nylon hose, 2. square meal, 3. log cabin, 4. she's overweight, 5. upsy daisy.

We hope you've all subscribed to the ISOLATED M.

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MEMBERSHIP STATUS: The July-August BULLETIN, containing the complete SIG Listings, was late in being mailed, so as I write this I've only had 3 recent inquiries about joining our SIG. Most of our inquiries come in February and August, following the Listing in the BULLETIN. We have gained one new member, to go to 58, and also have several address changes to report:

New Member: Larry McCloud, 1169 S. Country Club Dr., Schenectady, N.Y. 12309

Changes of Address:

Peter J. Gaughan, 12021 Penford Dr., La Mirada, Calif. 90638  
Charles W. Letcher, 2022 N. Lobdell, Apt. 86, Baton Rouge, La. 70806  
Bruce and Sharon Poppe, 324 Penwyllt Ct., Exton, Pa. 19341  
Arnold E. Vagts, 1291 S. Carl St., Anaheim, Calif. 92806

Most of these C/A's were gleaned from the pages of other mimes. 'Twould be appreciated if M's would remember to send a C/A notice to the poor old Chairman.

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THOSE ALL-MENSA GAMES

The Canadian Postal strike has halted Mensa #12, 1980IC, run in Ron Brown's SNAPU. We have six M's signed up for Mensa #15. If just one of the new or prospective members signs up, we can get going. Let me know if you'll accept a stand-by slot in this game if it's already filled when I hear from you. (A stand-by slot is a good way for a novice player to get his feet wet, and insures that the game will continue if one of the initial players has to drop out).

MENSA #11, 1980II, shows GERMANY (Rick Young) in the lead with 8 Centers as of Spring 1905, including a F landing in Yorkshire. AUSTRIA (Letcher) appears to be going down under the combined assaults of ITALY (Myers), RUSSIA (Bruce Poppe) and TURKEY (Hanson). Austria is down to 4 units. Italy and Russia have 7 each.

I have received only the Spring 1902 Report for MENSA #13, GM'd by Chip Charnley. Chip reported that Mike Granatstein was going to resign his English position, but did not specify whether he'd submit orders for Fall. This became moot when Canada was cut off from the world. Apparently, Chip has postponed the July 19th deadline for Fall '02. Chip will give the English position FREE to the first M who contacts him and asks for it. It's a fair position, with 4 SC's. AUSTRIA has come back to life under Ralph Baty, who has regained Trieste for the Double Eagle. Chip's address: U.S. Navfac Keflavik, Box 7, FPO New York 09571,

MENSA #14, 1981 AQ, saw Mike Morris drop out as AUSTRIA, being replaced by Mark Larzelere (non-M publisher of APPALLING GHEED). As of Winter 1901, FRANCE (Casucci) and RUSSIA (Whitty) lead the pack with 6 Centers each - France getting 3 builds in 1901! GERMANY (Platt) and ITALY (Simpson) both got two builds. However, as Errol Platt lives in Canada, I don't know whether the game will be able to continue.

Our oldest game, Mensa #10, 1980 AL, has been held up, with a replay of the Fall 1906 season required. There has been a proposal for a draw between GERMANY (Van der Handel) with 9 Centers and TURKEY (Brown) with 12.

GUSHER, Mensa Variant #3, 1980 Hjj, finds ITALY (Rick Young) in the lead with 10 Supply Sources as of Fall 1903. AUSTRIA (Baty) has gone up by one to 9 Sources, taking Con and Smyrna to wipe out TURKEY. FRANCE (Wilson) recovered Brest and now owns 8 Sources (+1), having held off the Italian invasion. Thankyou, Steve Greenberg, for taking over a hopeless Turkish position.

It appears that no one is interested in playing "1885", a 9-man game which adds Spain and Sweden to the regular 7. This is the last time it will be mentioned, but no final decision will be made until the Canadian strike ends. (Only 6 people signed up; three more would be needed).

REPORT ON GEN CON EAST

Many Eastern publishers attended GenCon in Cherry Hill, N.J., over the weekend of July 24-26. Interesting reports were printed in DOGS OF WAR (John Daly), JUST AMONG FRIENDS (Al Pearson) and THE VOICE OF DOOM (Brux Linsey). I was unable to attend due to family commitments. It is reported that the Tournament games were run smoothly under the aegis of Robert Sacks. First Place was won by Bob Sergeant, pubber of ST. GEORGE & THE DRAGON, a zine we can heartily recommend. (Address: 3242 Lupine Dr., Indianapolis, Ind. 46224). Bob also won the Best Russia award. Second Place was won by James Townsend, whom I don't know. Third Place was captured by John Caruso of New York, pubber of WHITESTONIA. Linsey was awarded the Best Turkey plaque.

I understand there was quite a brouhaha over whether smoking would be permitted in the gaming room and the meeting room. Allen Wells, pubber of DOT HAPPY, who has a severe allergy to tobacco smoke, led the fight for a smoke-free environment. As a non-smoker, I'm please to report that smoking was banned from the rooms. (I've noticed that hardly anyone smokes any more at Mensa gatherings). Kathy Byrnes, a heavy smoker, took umbrage at this restriction on her "right" to pollute the air, and stormed out of the meeting in a theatrical huff, followed by a few of her fellow New Yorkers.

Hopefully, there will also be a smoking ban at DipCon in 1982.

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NEW EDITOR OF DIPLOMACY WORLD

Jerry Jones has turned the Editorship of DW, the flagship zine of the Postal hobby, over to Rod Walker, 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, Calif. 92024. With luck, the next issue of D.W. will be on its way to its readers by the last of August. It is also hoped that D.W. will now get back to a quarterly publication basis. (Only three issues have come out in the past year). Everyone is urged to subscribe to DIPLOMACY WORLD if you're not already doing so. The sub rate is \$5.00 per year (4 issues) in the U.S.A., and \$6.00 elsewhere. May I suggest that you ask for your sub to begin with Issue #27, so you can read my 7½ page article, "A Brief History of Variants." If you like to write, DW is looking for articles on any phase of Diplomacy.

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PUBLISHERS OF OTHER ALL-MENSA GAME REPORTS are requested to continue sending me copies of your Games Results, even after I turn DIPLOMAG over to Ron Brown. You'll continue to receive BUSHWACKER in exchange. Don't forget to send copies to Ron, too, if you're not already doing so, once the Canadian strike is over.

IF the strike is over by September 15th, this is my "Hail and farewell" as Chairman of the Diplomacy SIG (after 7½ years) and Editor of DIPLOMAG (after 6 years). It's been a lot of work, but has also been fun. I don't believe that anybody is indispensable, so it's probably a good idea that the SIG gets a new leader. I intend to remain quite active in the Diplomacy hobby, so you'll be hearing from me, and seeing me at DipCon and the 1982 Mensa AG in Trenton, N.J.

WELL, I managed to reach the bottom of the page. Sorry to come out with an odd number of pages, but there was just too much material to squeeze it into 6 sheets.

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- DIPLOMAG - MENSA DIPLOMACY SIG NEWS  
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