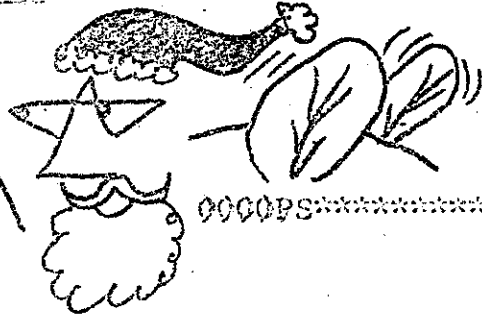


"OH, SANTA," SAID THE GOOD FAIRY OF POSTAL DIPLOMACY, "WHAT A UNIQUE PLACE TO HANG A CHRISTMAS STOCKING! AND LATER ON, PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO TAKE GOOD LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS THEIR PRESENTS AND BAD LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS THEIR COPIES OF

EREWON 93 *Cracky-poo*  
 15 December 1975



.....Gee, my first night in New York and already I've been invited to play Diplomacy with Rosenberg, Grossman, Neiger, and all the Big-Name Conspirators. I hope I don't forget anything...a sheaf of daggers, armored vest, Beshtoud Basic Issue Prayer Rug (so Bob Lipton won't be offended), two sweaters, fur coat, kerosene lamp, sawed-off shotgun (I hate the subway!), purn ointment, two quarts of plasma....

\*\*\*\*\*

FROM ALL OF US...ME, JIM, PUSSY, THE DOGS, THE SNAKES, THE COYOTES, THE TARANTULAS...MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR IN WHICH TO STAB!

and now, our home-brew production of:  
 THE NATIVITY

Mary . . . . .	Peggy Gemignani
Joseph . . . . .	John Loeder
Jesus . . . . .	Edi Birsan
Cows, sheep, &c. . . . .	IDA Council
Herod . . . . .	Besh
Herodias . . . . .	Dickmiller Collum
Salome . . . . .	Eric Verheiden
Fawning courtiers, harem, &c. . . . .	Kovalcud, Bipty (Gog)
Court Astrologer . . . . .	Herr Boardman
Angel . . . . .	Conrad von Metzke
Chorus of Angels . . . . .	Dippy Widow's Ass'n.
Shepherds &c. . . . .	P.D.R.C.
Caspar . . . . .	Randolph Bart
Melchior . . . . .	Mike Homeier
Belshazzar . . . . .	Bruce Schlickbernd
Amahl . . . . .	Len Lakofka
God . . . . .	(modesty forbids...)

\*\*\*\*\*

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AND TO THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY SIEG HEIL!

\*\*\*\*\*

The distraught nun ran into the head office at the convent. "Reverend Mother," she cried, "there's a case of syphillis in the infirmary!"  
 The Mother Superior smiled beamingly. "Oh, how nice. I was so tired of that Chablis."

\*\*\*\*\*  
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ERHWON is an irregular 'zine of postal Diplomacy and other sugar plums. Subscriptions are 5/\$1...however, if you are a postal Diplomacy publisher, and if I have refused a trade agreement, and if you are not a member of "TDA", you may subscribe at 8/\$1. US \$, of course, stamps or cash.

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ALLRIGHTYOULINEARSEPARATORNUTSYOUCANREARMINFORAWHILEMAYYUALLGOFLINDFROMM

WATCH YOUR WALLETS--HERE COMES GORDY

Anyone who is in touch with reality knows that John Beshara wants to be Puppet Master of Postal Diplomacy. Gordon Anderson's ambition, no more modest but much more practical, is to rip off the hobby. He has leveled booties of inept broadsides at everyone who has opposed his attempts to extort a bunchabuks from the rest of us. His latest attempt to blackmail the hobby consists of a pile of vacant threats to "copyright" the name of our annual DipCon. I regret that we believed this malarkey for a while, forgetting that Gordy Anderson has never made a serious threat during his entire short (but not short enough, alas!) hobby career.

Fred Davis has already suggested what to do about this character. I say, "suggested";...I am going to come right out and say what we should do. The time has come to have nothing further to do with the one-man Chicago Conspiracy. Fred has already cut his trade agreement, and I have followed suit earlier this month. I would like to suggest, strongly, that everyone else do likewise.

Now, as to the "DipCon" hassle. Neither Anderson nor anyone else has trademarked that name. According to our best information, a trademark is not even pending. I do not believe we should give in to the disgusting type of blackmail Anderson has been trying to pull. I am going to call our annual convention by the traditional name, DipCon, and I ask everyone else to do so...as a matter of principle. I also hope the Baltimore people will abandon the "DiploCon" substitute.

Finally, if Anderson actually does organize something he calls a "DipCon", it should be boycotted. We should not even mention it, other than to tell fans to avoid it like the plague.

There is no room in this hobby for rip-off artists like Anderson and the "TDA" crowd. We will be well rid of them, the sooner the better.

"TDA" CONTINUES TO MISCALCULATE RATINGS

The anonymous (why should they own up to it!) individual(s) whose job it is to rate all of Beshara's "wins", plus any other games he happens to come up with, has put out "A Rating Survey 6". Typically, he is unwilling to admit what games he used in these alleged computations. Well, let's have a look at the results ("TDA"'s cult of elitism forbids the publication of results below the first 20 people).

Score	Name	Won	Points	# Games
833	Walt Buchanan	7	7.500	9
759	Mike Rocamora	6	6.833	9
708	John Beshara	9	9.200	13
628	Tom Eller	7	7.533	12
561	Doug Beyerlein	11	12.900	23
555	Monte Zelazny	5	5.000	9
542	Randy Bytwerk	6	6.500	12
497	Andy Phillips	10	12.917	26
494	Lew Pulsipher	6	7.900	16
482	Tim Tilson	5	5.783	12
433	Burt Labelle	4	4.333	10
433	Pete Rosamilia	3	3.900	9
425	Ron Kelly	6	10.633	25
400	Rick Brooks	3	3.200	8
357	Arn Vagts	1	2.500	7
353	Jeff Power	4	4.583	13
333	Bruce Kindig	2	2.667	8
325	Eric Verheiden	2	4.550	14
323	Elliot Lipson	2	2.583	8
320	John Smythe	8	8.333	26

You will remember that "TDA" steadfastly refuses to admit that it stole the design for this system from the original system devised by Allan Calhamer and Brenton Ver Ploeg.

Anyway, Walt Buchanan has won 6 out of 8, not 7 out of 9. Mike Rocamora's score, mirabile dictu, is actually correct.

Beshara has won only 4 out of 9 games. The other 5 "wins" were put-up jobs. The latest of these was a game in ATLANTIS, run by Beshpuppet Chris Schleicher. One of Besh's buddies, Elliot Lipson, had 16 units in the game and

all of a sudden just had to resign. Besh took over and "won" in the next year. Just couldn't help himself. Even normally docile Beshpuppet Eric Verheiden had to admit in a recent issue of TURNABOUT that the only reason Besh took the position was that it was big. That was also the only reason Lipson resigned it to Besh...to create another "win" for the big ego of the Big Apple.

Tom Eller has won 6 of 12 games, not 7. Doug Beyerlein should be rated for 25 games, not 23. Zelazny has won 3 of 12 games, not 5 of 9. Bytwerk has won 5 games, not 6. Phillips has won 4 of 30 games, not 10 of 26. Pulsipher has won 4 games, not 6. Tilson has won 4 games, not 5. Labelle has won 1 in 7 games, not 4 in 10. Rosamilia has won 1 in 10, not 3 in 9. Kelly has won 5 games, not 6. Rick Brooks has won 2 in 10, not 3 in 8. Vagts has yet to win a rateable game. Power's score is 4.833, a bit higher than the "TDA" miscalculation. Kindig should be rated for 9 games, not 8. Verheiden's total score is 3.683, not 4.550; but since he is probably the one "computing" this mess, he is no doubt getting every benefit of every doubt. Lipson should be rated for 10 games, not 8. If John Smythe is an active player, I am not aware of it. (Please note, by the way, that "TDA" is computing nearly everybody wrong. They have me down for 2 wins; I've won one game. However, this is a natural result of their need to justify a policy which will allow them to rate every game John Beshara "wins" by taking over 16- and 17-unit positions.) (My other "win" was a 12-unit position I took over in XENOGOGIC and won by defeating...guess who...John Beshara. I am surprised "TDA" counts that one, since he has threatened repeatedly to have that game purged from the records. Perhaps he was mollified, since Peery [as Besh has admitted many times before] gave him a walk-on "win" in another game to make up for it.)

There is an interesting story behind the material on page 3. You may recall that "IDA" told Eric Verheiden was attempting to get to me via the IDA Judicial Committee. When I resigned as Ombudsman, there were many unresolved issues regarding the phoney "IDA" "copyright", Eric's ability to bring suit on behalf of the so-called DA, and so on. I heard nothing more on this until John Leeder announced that Robert Sacks had reached a "decision" in the case!

Some salient facts about the Sacks "decision":

1. Sacks was never delegated by me as Ombudsman to hear the case, contrary to claims he apparently laid on Leeder.
2. None of the outstanding issues involving the legality of the suit itself, and of the appropriateness of the "plaintiff", was resolved; Sacks went ahead as if they did not exist.
3. The "decision" dealt with issues not raised in the original suit, and did nothing about the issues which were raised.
4. At no time during the "hearing" did Sacks contact me for evidence, arguments, or anything. He didn't even tell me...the alleged defendant in this thing...that his kangaroo-court "hearing" was even going on!
5. The decision demands I stop reprinting the DA's crud and apologize for doing the deed. Pardon me whilst I snicker. Page 3 is my answer to that.

The Sacks "hearing" is the grossest miscarriage of justice I have seen in this hobby outside the "IDA" purges of 1971 and 1972. Of course, you have to realize that he gave Verheiden everything he asked for, which is understandable when you realize that Sacks owes big political debts to the DA and is undoubtedly paying them back.

I have naturally filed suit in the IDAJC for Sacks' impeachment for malfeasance in office. Anybody who decides a judicial matter without asking for testimony or evidence, without even allowing the accused to be confronted with the witnesses and evidence against him, has no business occupying a position of public trust.

Which reminds me: if Sacks is behaving this way in a judicial capacity, how is he behaving elsewhere? Has anyone looked into the question of whether he merits continuation as Miller Number Custodian? Perhaps we need a MNC whose concepts of fair play are a little less warped.

YES IT OOFEL THAT RICHARD KOVALCIK (JR OR WHATEVER) IS BESH PUPPET OF THE YEAR ANY YEAR YOU

COSTA COSTA COSTA COSTA

Yes, COSTAGUANA is coming back. A phone call from Conrad confirms this. He will be publish a smallish "zine" (6-8 pages) on our ditto machine up here. Circulation will be limited to 25. Games, trades, and subs will be by invitation only, so don't get too excited. Conrad's address these days is 5005 Diane Ave., San Diego CA 92117. His phone number is 565-something, but is listed. Welcome back to Dippy, Connie-poo!

CARETONAMEHE IS PROBABLY ALSO THE MOST LUDICROUS BESH PUPPET OF THE YEAR CONSIDERING THAT

THE BEYERLIEN POLL #8

Just released (in DIPLOMACY WORLD II.4) is Doug Beyerlein's poll, rating the people who are considered the best players in the hobby. To wit:

TOP BOARD		S	N	SECOND BOARD		S	N
1.	Walt Buchanan (16)	548	34	8.	Tom Eller	141	13
2.	Mike Rocamora (12)	496	29	9.	Eric Verheiden (1)	129	23
3.	Edi Birsan (3)	373	32	10.	Don Pitsch	115	15
4.	Doug Beyerlein	350	28	11.	Rod Walker	99	13
5.	Len Lakofka (1)	288	26	12.	Lew Pulsipher	99	13
6.	Ron Kelly (2)	221	23	13.	Marie Beyerlein	61	11
7.	John Boyer	214	23	14.	Andy Phillips	51	7

THIRD BOARD	S	N	The "S" column is total points; N indicates the number of people who mentioned that name. The number in parentheses indicates the number of first places. Also-rans (20 or more points): Berry, Beshara, Childs, Drews, Fleming, Gemignani (1)%%%, Lagerson, Leeder, Lipton, Loomis (1), Smyth, Wartenburg (1), Weswig (1). It is interesting, is it not, to note what happens when Besh
15. Steve Brooks	50	8	
16. Tim Tilson	49	7	
16. Jeff Power	49	9	
18. John Stevens	48	6	
18. Joel Klein	48	7	
20. Bruce Schlickbernd	41	5	
20. Arn Vagts	41	11	

is not having his little toadies out hustling votes for him, and when he's not passing out pre-voted ballots at the DipCon. Refreshing, too.

**BESHCALLSEVERYONEINNEWYORKANDLAYSHISLATESTTRIPSONTHEMBEFOREHEBOTHERSTOCALL ABOUT THAT CONTEST...**

Would you believe I got no answers at all, much less a correct one? Come on, guys, it's not all that difficult.

OK, here is another list of words. The words in list also have something in common (besides being in the same language). The thing they have in common is similar to what the last list had in common, but it is not exactly the same thing.

Apples, Brig, Chancy, Concise, Court, Egg, Elm, Fully, Grabs, Grandson, Gland, Lens, Pully, Sent, Yens.

Again, any correct answer I receive before Wednesday, 15 January 1976, will receive a full (\$1.50) sub to EVEREST. You must answer both contest questions, but if you know the answer to one, it will not be hard to find the answer to the other.

**HISMOSTVOCIFEROUSBESHPUPPETWHOTHENCALLSUPEVERBODYELSETOBABBLEOUTWHATBESH ABOUT THAT GAME...**

1975CY is in need of restarting at various stages. The Spring 1902 orders were published in an issue of BESEROVIA and will appear below. The press is in spotty condition so we are going to delay that part of it. The Fall 1902 orders are delayed owing to the Canadian snafu, the "code-word" snafu, and the Wop snafu. We will refer to those again, also below.

Spring 1902: ITALIANS TROMPED AT LEPANTO, FRENCH DUMPED ON IN BAVARIA, GERMANS BETRAYED AT BRESLAU, B.E.F. LANDS AT OSTEND.

- AUSTRIA (Watson): A Tri-Bud, A Bud-Gal S by A Vie, F Gre H S by A Ser.
- ENGLAND (Lakofka): F Lon-Eng, F Nwy-Ska, A Yor-Bel C by F Nth.
- FRANCE (Schlickbernd): A Par-Pic, F Mar-Spa(sc), F Bre-"Brg" (no such place), F For-Mid, A Spa-Gas, A Mun-Kie /r//Boh, Bur, /d/.
- GERMANY (Leeder): A Ber-Mun S by A Ruh, A Hol-Kie, F Den-Kie.
- ITALY (Wyman): F Nap-Ion, A Tun gnashes teeth, F Ion-Eas, A Trl /h/, A Boh-Sil [nsu].
- RUSSIA (Ulanov): A Mos-War, A Sev-Rum S by A Ukr, A War-Sil, F Swe /h/, F Rum-Bla.
- TURKEY (Rosenberg): F Smy-Eas S by F Aeg, A Bul S RUSSIAN A Sev-Rum, A Con S A Bul.

Fall 1902 orders (final versions) are due on Wednesday, 15 January 1976. In Summer 1902, FRENCH A Mun R-Bur.

NEW ITALIAN PLAYER: Warren Wyman has resigned. Italy will now be played by Randolph Bart, 9950 Reseda Blvd., #13, Northridge CA 91324.

The delay of the game occurs for the following reasons:

1. The Canadian snafu. You know, the strike.
2. The "codeword" snafu. One of the players attempted to use a

"codeword" system of sorting out orders. Since there is more to say on that later, let's not spend much time here. I declared this device contrary to the Rules and asked for a resubmission. Then the strike hit.

3. The Wop snafu. Warren Wyman resigned without submitting orders ...or press...for Italy. We can't have that, so I am delaying things until the new Italian player has a chance to do his thing.

PRESS SITUATION. I am going to use the press originally intended for Spring 1902 in the Fall. This means that Nicky Ulanov and Randolph Bart should send press by the deadline; the rest need not. I have an item from Nicky which is not (apparently) intended to be press, and I am going to try to fit it into this issue.

Length: I may have to ask that PRs be cut back some. If we start a symposium on "codewords" (see below), I have got to make room for it.

TOLDHIMTHEONLYPROBLEMISTHATHESTOLDTHEMPREVIOUSLYITMUSTBEFRUSTRATINGTOBE

"CODEWORD" ORDERS

...a Symposium?

### Introduction

In 1975CY, a player sent me several sets of orders whose operation depended on the use of "codewords" by other players. To illustrate, let us say that PANNONIA sent me three sets of orders: one to be used if SCYTHIA submits codeword mangle; one to be used if HYPERBOREA submits codeword revenge; one to be used if no codeword is submitted at all. Let us start by observing that if both codewords had been submitted, all of PANNONIA's orders would have been invalidated and his units would have stood in civil disorder.

That was carelessness. The theory behind "codeword" orders is clear enough. The question is, should they be allowed? I ruled them contrary to the Rules of Diplomacy by implication and directly contrary to my HR9, which provides, "Under no circumstances may a player submit conditional orders based upon the results of the same season."

I am not entirely unyielding on this point, if I can be convinced otherwise. I would like to have a symposium on the "codeword" thing, and anyone who cares to express an opinion is welcome. I received one strong demurrer to my ruling from one of the players (not necessarily one involved in the codeword business in the first place). His words follow.

### John Leeder

I believe that you ought to reconsider your stand on codewords. Their use is exactly analogous to the longer process of writing to a person, getting a reply, then basing your orders on that reply. Orders conditional on codewords are in no way based on the "results" of the same season (i.e., the orders the other person gives), but rather on his stated intentions for that season.

If you rethink this I believe you'll come to agree. I have permitted codewords in RUNESTONE for some time and found them to be quite a useful device to help speed up the negotiation process, which is one of the drawbacks of the postal game.

### Rod Walker

I have many misgivings about this way of doing things. As a GM, I want a single, unequivocal set of orders from each player. I do not like conditional orders in the first place, but many times they are necessary to avoid unnecessary delays in the game. I do not wish to complicate my job any further. I prefer to record orders as they come in, in case I misfile them later, and whenever I neglect to do this, some problem arises. I could not do this with orders dependent on codewords.

Codewords also seem like a convenient new way for a player to screw himself (see the first paragraph of the Introduction). I am not certain

a responsible GM should welcome new opportunities of that sort; players are doing an adequate job in that regard already.

I realize that the "codeword" itself is not precisely an order, but its submission is with orders and has the quality of an order. One example of this springs readily to mind. You will recall that universally players are not allowed to submit orders conditional on whether or not another player gets his orders in. The "codeword" method could be a convenient way of getting around that. If you asked another player...particularly an ally...to submit a codeword for any option being negotiated, about the only way he would submit no codeword would be to submit no orders at all. You could then have your "no codeword" option based on that premise. I do not claim the codeword would always be used in that way, but the possibility that it could is enough to make me feel particularly negative toward it.

At the moment, I am not going to allow codewords. The Rulebook implies that there is only one set of orders to be submitted for each country; the usual sorts of conditional orders take into account situations which would be resolved separately in FTF play. The "codeword" method, however, seeks to change a situation which pertains both to FTF and PBM Diplomacy...and rightly so, I believe...the need to squeeze your negotiations into a limited time.

Further submissions on this subject are welcomed and encouraged.

**SUCHALOYALLITTLETOADANDTHENHAVETHEBIGDADDYDROPHISEXCLUSIVESONNONBELIEVERS**

Allan Calhmer writes, "I suppose you have had your fill of this type of story, but you might like this one:

"Somebody bounced up to Winston Churchill and pushingly asked him about 'the traditions of the Royal Navy'."

"Churchill of course never served in the Navy, but was First Sea Lord. He replied, 'The traditions of the Royal Navy? There are three: rum, sodomy, and the lash.'"

**OHWELLSUCHISLIFEIFYOUTOADYTOBESHYOUCANHARDLYEXPECTHIMTOTOADYTOYOU NOWCANYOU!**

### THE GIFT OF THE MAGUS

Nicholas Ulanov

[Dedicated, with affection, to Joanne Csete.]

She smiled. "Have you ever done it the French way?" she asked the man next to her.

Paul Morven was an accountant, a pretty good one at that. But his love-making was crummy. He'd been on his lunch hour from the accounting firm he'd worked for since he got out of college, where he'd been an economics major. He only had one date during his college studies, a blind one. Acquaintances--you couldn't really call them friends--had arranged the date. She was tall and big, very big, and had a hairy upper lip. They had gone to an ice cream shop and she had kept asking him what college was like as if expecting divine revelation. At ten o'clock he had her home and she kissed him, a bad taste he carried with him to this day.

He was eating his tuna and lettuce sandwich in the park across from his firm's office building when she sat down next to him. He noticed immediately a beautiful smell he took to be perfume. She had a very elaborate ruffled blouse on and tight-fitting, bell-bottomed blue jeans. A wide belt was slung around her hips. She had long, brown hair down to her waist, and an air of satisfaction and success. It was then that she asked him the question.

"What?" he answered, somewhat hesitantly with what he hoped was an ingratiating smile that faltered a little. She laughed a pay laugh and took his hand. He jumped a little and his heart started pumping. She pulled on his arm, forcing him to drop his sandwich and paper bag and follow her

She led him around the park and out the opposite side. They went down a small street to number 3 and entered the building. As they climbed the steps Morven began to ask himself "What am I doing here?" but forgot to finish the question.

She led him into her apartment, furnished with foreign gallery posters on the walls and tiffany lamps. In the bedroom she started taking off her clothes. Morven gulped. Naked to the waist she came up to him and began undoing his shirt. He noticed she had nice, rounded nails, not like those hideous flat ones so many people had. He'd always been proud of his. When they were both undressed they made love. Or rather, she made love to him. He was no longer a virgin.

Somewhat later he finally completed the question and found he had no answer. He got up off the bed and dressed himself, walked out of the apartment, down the steps and back to his office, mumbling some excuse to his boss about his delayed lunch hour being unexpected.

The next afternoon she did not come; neither did Morven. There was a bitter-sweet taste to the liverwurst that was Wednesday's lunch. The ham and cheese and egg salad were the same. The weekend was no different.

A year dragged on. Paul Morven met a plain-looking and thinking girl and married. The years went by. The sandwiches grew more bitter and less sweet. And then one day, Paul Morven died.

GREENICKYIDONTKNOWIFTHEFANSWILLBEABLETOSTANDTHESHOCKOFMYPRINTINGSOMEThingNOT

### TUBULAR BELLS and Other Rock Delights

Musical language changes over time. Everybody who has ever had a music-appreciation course can probably recite the usual classification of the periods of musical language...Baroque, Classic, Romantic, Impressionist, Modern (whatever that is), not to mention the Style Gallant, Neo-Classical, Neo-Romantic, &c., &c., &c.

The "Modern Period" is of course the hardest to classify. The last of the Wagnerian romantics, Richard Strauss, didn't die until 1949. The first of the composers one generally thinks of as "modern", Arnold Schoenberg, was hitting full stride before World War II. Classifying Stravinsky seems impossible. Our eclectic age seems to be a blend of traditions rather than a new one.

There is of course the school of "abstract" composers...Schoenberg, Berg, Varèse, Stockhausen, Boulez, and the rest. My own opinion of them is that generally they represent a self-reinforcing but sterile loop in musical history.

Music that lasts must have an appeal to the public. The modern "abstract" school tends to jettison the classical musical virtues of timbre (or coloration), rhythm, form, and melody...especially the last two...but it is clear that the music which lasts deals successfully with all of them. Still, each musical period seems to emphasize one of them. The Baroque period was most concerned with rhythm (growing as it did out of a period in which most secular music was dance music). The Classic period emphasized form; the Romantic, melody; the Impressionist, coloration.

That's oversimplification, of course. The Baroque period, for instance, also was characterized by a search of new and interesting colorations for the rather dull Renaissance orchestras, as exemplified by the tremendous variety of new instruments which were invented at that time...a tendency beautifully satirized, by the way, in the "P.D.Q. Bach" concerts.

Anyway, if the Modern period provoked a tendency to break away from all musical traditions and a search for a truly "new" musical language, it is also typified by a return to the Baroque tradition...an emphasis on rhythm and striking coloration. The major output of Stravinsky...Rite of



Spring, Symphony of Psalms, Ebony Concerto, Fairy's Kiss, Petrushka, &c., are in that tradition. All of the works of Karl Orff are intensely rhythmic. ... But outside the realm of serious music, there are the major "pop" traditions: ragtime, jazz, and rock.

The rock tradition is one of heavy emphasis on rhythm, almost to the point of somnolence. But anyone who has heard Rite of Spring or Carmina Burana knows that the rock people have simply picked up on something that predates them by a generation or two.

The problem with rock thus far is that it throws a very inadequate harness over a powerful musical force. Thanks to a whole barrage of amplifiers, a rock group can make more noise than a symphony orchestra in full cry, but the sound the various groups make gets pretty dull after you've heard it a few thousand times. The tunes are usually pretty derivative, and the lyrics are OK merely (they are considered significant in that they frequently have social or emotional content, but Mahler and Strauss did most of them much better 50 years ago and more).

Notwithstanding the drawbacks of over-eclecticism, rock is a vital musical force. Its debt to the Baroque style... particularly of Bach... is all too evident, which may explain why Bach is becoming such a cult hero at the moment. The time has come for it to revitalize serious music. We are frequently faced with one of three choices: the old warhorses, a revival of music which all too often was forgotten for good reason, or the unsatisfying crud the "modernists" are turning out (try the Bernstein Symphonies, or his Mass, for instance... gaaaaah!).

Rock has now moved into the "big time". There are at least two rock operas extant, Tommy and Jesus Christ, Superstar. I haven't made up my mind about the former... it is undeniably interesting. JCS, however, has many problems. Not the least, it suffers badly from its music-hall approach. It is not so much an opera as a sequence of songs and production numbers (arias and choruses, if you will), loosely connected by a plotline which the audience is expected to have already in mind. That is not so bad in a way... the earliest operas had much the same sort of approach. I suppose that JCS is more a cantata with stage sets than an opera. The approach to the subject, however, is deadly. It cheapens and minimizes the enormity of what happened to Jesus and tends to make cardboard of the characters. The best job is done on Judas. If you want to see a really good opera which outrocks the rock operas, see Orff's Der Mond.

I suppose Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells is a sort of rock symphony. It is extremely good. It does show its sources, however: Oldfield obviously knows Karl Orff, Alan Hovhaness, and Ralph Vaughn Williams; his debt to them is all too clear. Other portions of the piece sound like a soundtrack for a TV western. But that's like chiding Schubert for sounding like Mozart on occasion. The piece is pretty good.

There are two versions: a "chamber" version (for your traditional consort of electric guitars and such) recorded in 1972, and a recording made with the Royal Philharmonic in 1974. You have got to hear them both because they are virtually two different pieces of music. The former is interesting and brash; the latter is rich and important. Listen to each of them two or three times before you make up your mind what you think about them. They are worth it. Tubular Bells is one of the most important pieces of this century; don't miss it.

ONLYSTRAIGHTBUTSERIOUSASWELLPEOPLEAREGOINGTOWONDERWHATEREHWONISCOMINGTO

**NOTE:** I need stand-by players for THE DIPLOMAT. Please check last issue for details. The "001" game gets under way on 20 December; the regular game is already moving (the first Spring deadline is, however, the same for both).

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