wish you were here....

the go·between

THE GOBETWEEN

Is a postal games magazine published approximately every six weeks.
It's primary function is to cater for people who play games by mail. The Go Between seeks to fulfill this function by:

1. Running postal versions of boardgames like DIPLOMACY, KINGMAKER, STARFLEET BATTLES etc

2. Presenting articles, reviews, information on commercial play by mail games such as those offered by the Missing Tiger and other moderating services.

3. Providing information on the Play by Mail field in general.

4. To help bring information, people and products related to the PBM field together.

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

A year's subscription costs $12 for approximately 8 issues. To subscribe make out a cheque or money order to Go Between Publications for $12.

HOW TO PLAY POSTAL DIPLOMACY ETC?

To enrol into one of our postal games just write to us at Go Between Publications telling us that you would like to play in a game and we will place you in the next game of your choice that is starting.

If you are interested in other games such as Postal Go, chess or other boardgames not normally played within the ambit of this magazine turn to our OPPONENTS COLUMN for details.

I WOULD LIKE INFORMATION ON....??

If you would like to know more about a particular game, activity or where to get things like articles, rules etc then send your request to us with a stamped self addressed envelope and another stamp (to help defray our costs) and we will try and provide you with that information or tell you where and how to get it.

We will try and give you a reply as soon as possible but this service is subject to the resource constraints of our other activities.

I WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE

If you are starting up a new service, promoting a tested and proved product, maybe got a few hundred Dragons to offload etc then consider advertising in the Go Between. Currently our subscribers number over 150 from all over Australia and New Zealand. We have a number of special deals and can carry even the smallest ad. Just write to us for details.

EDITORIAL.

Well here is the first issue published by Go-Between Publications. A special thanks to all GMs, and those mentioned in the honours list, for helping in presenting work to be published. We still would like to hear from the rest of you - even if it is to say HI or to give ideas as to improving The Go-Between (apart from getting it out on time).

Go-Between Publications are looking for persons with Diplomacy experience, conception of what 'deadline' means, and a few free hours eight times a year, who would be prepared to take over some of the Diplomacy games presently being run by Rick. Please write to Go-Between Publication (GPO Box 286C, Hobart, TASMANIA,7000.).

To all that rang to see how we fared during the snowy season (25 to 26 July 1986) thanks for your concern. We were stuck in the house for a day (which is at the bottom of a very steep hill) and could not get to work - it was great!

Esther

From the sub-editor's desk

Slowly slowly plans and ideas start to take on a life of there own. A lot of ideas that have been mooted from one issue to another are actually one or two steps closer to being achieved. This issue, despite good intentions and effort has been slightly delayed. The main reason has been an unexpected changeover of partners in the Missing Tiger, with Johnny dropping out and Lindon coming in. More about this later in the magazine but it did severely disrupt our attempts to get the Go Between out on time. Things like looking for a new partner shouldn't be done on the week you planned to do the Go Between in.

The Go Between has been getting a good reception from old and new subscribers, from New Zealanders and in America. now we just have to keep on keeping on....

I would like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement.

And yes you guessed it I am sitting here listening to Bob Dylan with the almost Go Between Publication blues again.

We have enclosed a special feature called "The Age of Miracles" which will be a comic review section that will appear in the Go Between from time to time. But more importantly it is due to be the basis of a seperate magazine produced by Brooke Alexander, a newcomer to the ranks of Diplomacy players. The first issue of the magazine will be out in October.

If you have time to give some feedback on the Go Between we would love to receive it.

Until Spring   Rick (yes I know I only got one piece left in 84 E).

Hönöur Röll:

Our thanks to the following persons for submitting articles, letters etc;

        Daniel Johnson.
        Eric Roche.
        Anthony Richards
        Darryl Davis
        Brooke Alexander
        Mark Dewis
        Lindon Flood
        Ian Plumb
        Tony Graham

To all the GMS. (listed on the inside of the back page)

To the following for advertising

        Brooke Alexander
        Australian Wizard
        Jane's Computer Supplies
        The Armchair General
        PBM Games
        Neil Ashworth

To Cameron Thomas who has promised some material for next issue.

Without these helping hands the Go Between would be a very poor shadow of what it is, and what it is heading towards. If I have overlooked any one I apologise.

TA,
Esther
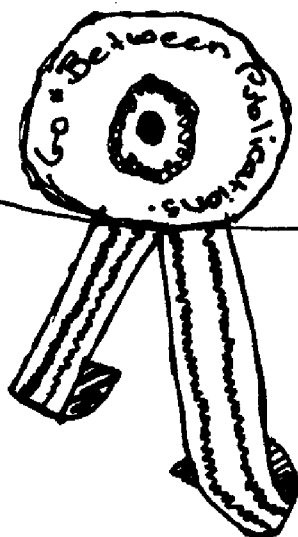
Dear Rick,

Ever thought of a genuine PBM database? Imagine having rulebooks, reviews and example turns (or even a whole game) available for player perusal.
They'd then know exactly what a game is all about before they sent off their money.

But that would be just one aspect. Role Playing PBM's could be run via electronic mail; an up-to-date rumour board; player contacts. everything your information exchange would have could be put onto database - for quicker access and delivery of information.

Quite a task, but it could be done, with financial backing - either from a PBM association, PBM companies, or games run on the database computer.

What do you think?
                                    Ian Plumb   Melbourne

As you know Ian, and I think some others are getting the idea, I am an information addict. Such a proposal would be terrific and yes it would fit into the "Information Exchange" idea. Esther raises the question of a PBM association from a different perspective later in the magazine. In "On the Road" are a few other ideas and projects that could fit in with Ian's ideas. If anyone is interested in following this line of thought further please write to me.
      Rick

Dear Esther and Rick

....Best of luck with the takeover by Esther the cleaning lady (surely a less demeaning title could be devised). As an aside what proportion of players in either Diplomacy or Return From Sirius are female? Its just idle curiousity but I can't remember seeing a female name in the pages of TGB (apart from that of Esther the esteemed editor).

                        Tony Graham
Dear Tony,
            We will give a free subscription to the person who can suggest a better title for Esther, apart from middle of the road nameplates like editor etc. The proportion of females is less than 1% (You are in a very small minority, Marg,Nadine and Jane).   Rick

Dear Rick
            My ego is on overload (just remind me of what Daryl kibble did to me in Dip. 84-E this turn, and that'll bring me down...)
                                    Cameron Thomas

Dear Cameron,
            Just remind me of what happens to someone who plays in the same game as you and forgets to put two sets of orders in and I will certainly help bring you to Earth.
                  Rick

DIPLOMACY 84-D   SPRING 1907 & FALL 1907

ENGLAND(A. Collister)
A StP - Liv, A Nor - StP, F Kie - Bal, A Den - Kie, A Par - Bur
A Hol - Ruh, F Bel - Hol, A Pic - Bel, A Edi - Den, F Lpl - Iri
F Wes - Tun, F Mar - GOL, F Mid - NAf, A Lon H
F Nth C A Edi - Den
TURKEY(D. Bedlington) **NMR #2**
A Mos H, A War H, A Rum H, F Bla H, A Ank H, F Smy H, F Con H
A Gre H, A Ser H, F Aeg H
ITALY(P. Cox) **NMR #2**
F Ion H, F Tyr H, F Adr H, F Alb H, A Tri H, A Ven H, A Bud H
A Ber H, A Mun H

GM COMMENTS: Well after two warnings, both Italy and Turkey
have NMR'ed again. This leaves only England moving this turn.
Rather than ask for replacement players, I will point out the
hopelessness of the situation. England has gained Tunis, and
now can't lose it. England can also take both Munich and
Berlin without loss elsewhere, giving a total of 18 centres,
and the game. Thus I will finish the game here, as a Fall 1907
move, so Andrew will receive a higher and correct Player
Rating. The game started well, with a great deal of player
interaction, and it is a shame to see it end this way. Still,
Andrew deserves his win totally.....
                                          Cameron Thomas.

ANDREW COLLISTER PLAYING ENGLAND
WINNER OF DIPLOMACY 84-D

6.

ON THE ROAD ....with Rick.

As the Japanese saying goes "a 10,000 mile journey begins with the first step". From the outside it may appear that not much happens from issue to issue with the ideas that are raised in the magazine. However a lot of journeys are well under way, although occassionally stalled.

GMS MANUAL

This idea first raised in the early months of 1985 is still progressing slowly. It has been one of my most cherished objectives but due to other commitments, workloads etc it has often been forced to have a lower priority than I would have liked. But during the period before the next Go Between it should have reached the almost finalised stage.

DIPLOMACY PLAYER'S POSTAL HANDBOOK

This project has been slowed until I receive copies of a couple of similar books from the USA and the prospect of reprinting articles from Diplomacy World is finalised.

BULK BUYING DISCOUNT

We still haven't got any feedback from suppliers. In the next three weeks the Go Between will be undertaking a campaign for advertisers and we will be chasing up suppliers both by letter and phone. I am also looking at working in co-operation with a local games store.

REPRINTING OF DIPLOMACY WORLD

We are coming close to having the American based DIPLOMACY WORLD magazine printed in Australia, thus eliminating the cost and hassle of subscribing to an overseas magazine. DIPLOMACY WORLD has long been the flagship of postal and face to face diplomacy playing in America. DW will either be printed by us or another party, which ever happens it means that it will be more readily available in australia and New Zealand.

PLAY BY MAIL REFERENCE BANK

Thanks to an overlong visit from Ian Whitchurch, during the ALP national conference, my Generals and other magazines have been indexed. But time hasn't allowed me to progress beyond this point. Neil i have still got your request. James Vickers will be giving us a hand a couple of hours a month so progress should be made in this area. Ian Plumb's comments on the letters page may lead us to widen our scope.

Larry Peery, the editor of DIPLOMACY WORLD, has also suggested the idea of a lending library, for the local scene and the pbm field. We should be receiving copies of Diplomacy magazines from all over the globe thanks to Larry.

FACE TO FACE

We have now instituted a <u>Face To Face notice board</u> in the magazine. I hope that this will help make it easier to find or organise a face to face game in some areas. If you would like to participate in this service just let us know.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Back in issue 2 (vol 4) I discussed the idea of an Information Exchange. Basically this idea stems from the general difficulty of finding out information. For instance if you live in Albany and are interested in Science Fiction how do you find out about clubs/magazines and other people interested in this field in Australia and New Zealand?

Did you know that there is a very active Starfleet Battles Association in Australia? How many Kiwi PBM groups are there? Did you know that Lew Pulsipher has published at least 2 books on Diplomacy?
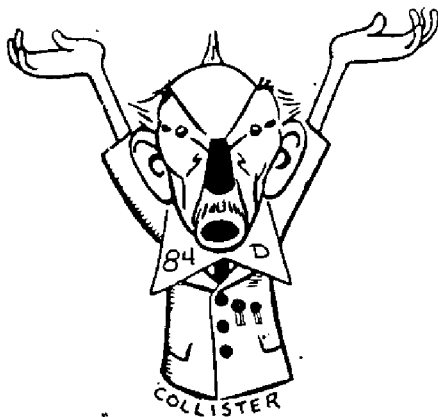
I would be very interested in hearing from others who have thought about this idea.
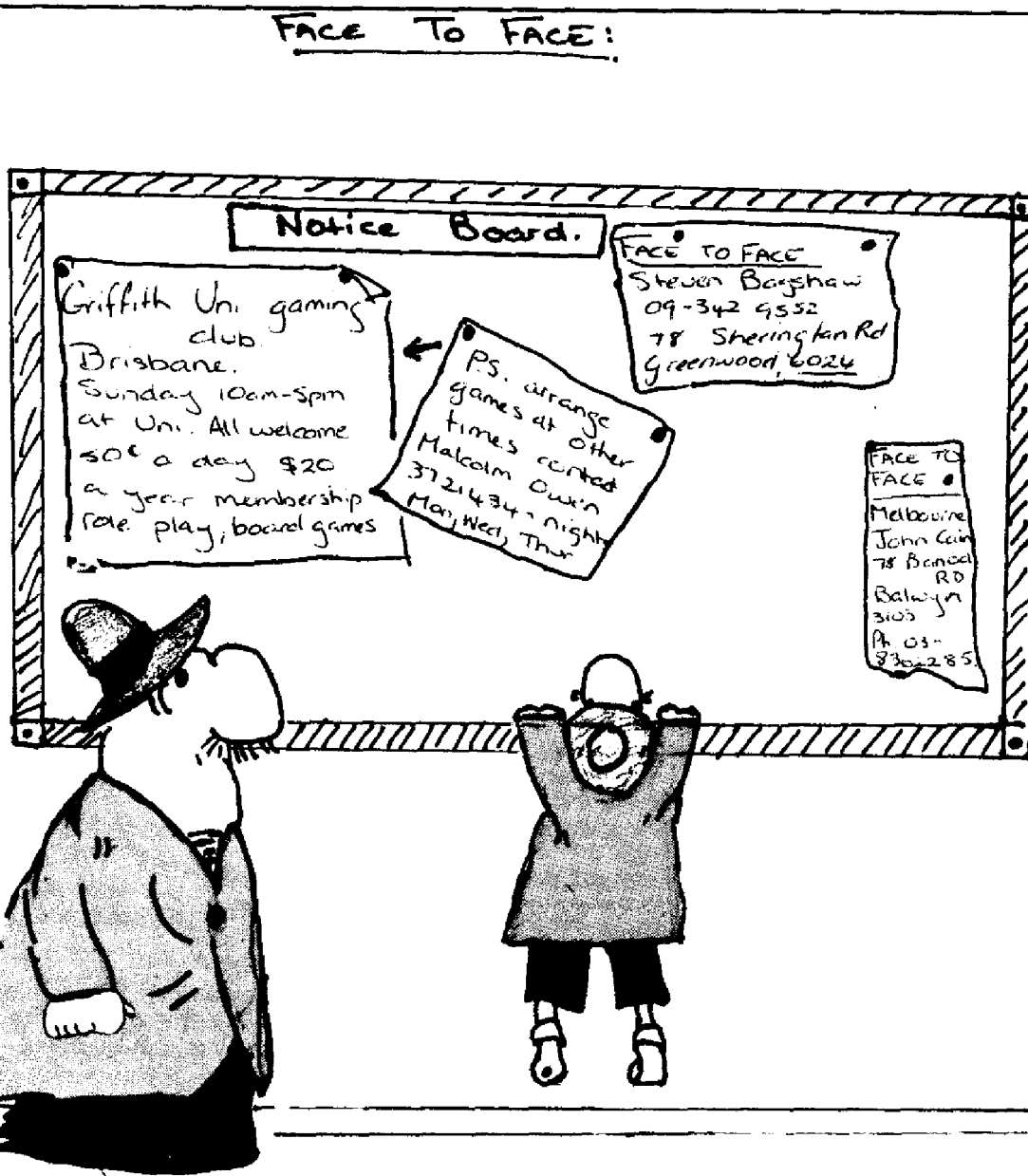
DIPLOMACY WORLD

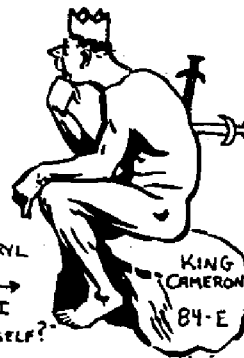COLLISTER
"WHAT HAPPENED TO
SPRING MOVES?
I'M FLABBERGASTED!"
84-D

FRIEDRICH   GEISSMAN
DEATH LIST
85-K
"ANYONE SEEN
THE TSAR?"

DUKE MELLOR
BOMBS FRANCE.
AWHC

85-J
WILKINS
YORK
WHITE COACH
"BYE, BYE EMPEROR COLLIS!"
.... THE 3 LOVELIES HE
LEFT BEHIND

IF I AM
REALLY DARYL
KIBBLE —
SUPERSTAR →
WHY DID I
STAB MYSELF?
KING
CAMERON
84-E

Darryl Davis has been providing cartoons to the Go Between for a very long period of time. His skill at picking the appriopriate names and cartoons to put together is terrific. Except for the one depicting me with a balding head, who told him? Darryl has been one of our longest serving subscribers so his contributions to this magazine are many fold. Including his skills at GMing and Stabbing.

Diplomacy
AWHC
Fall 1911

Germany (Shipp)   A Hol H
England (Bamsley)   F Wal - Lon
Austria (Searle)   F Arm - Bla; <u>A Smy - Arm</u> (no such army); A Sev - Mos;
                         A Ukr S A Sev - Mos; A War S A Sev - Mos; A Gal - Sil;
                         A Vie - Boh; A Bul - Ser; A Tri - Tyr.
Italy (Mellor)   A Ven - Pie; <u>F Eng - Bre</u>; A Mar S A Mun - Bur; <u>A Spa - Gas</u>
                         A Mun - Bur; <u>A Par S F Eng - Bre</u>; <u>F Smy - Syr</u>;
                         F West - Spa (S.c.)
France (Thomas)   <u>F Por - Spa (s.c.)</u>; <u>A Gas S A Bur - Mar</u>; <u>A Bur - Mar</u>
                         (retreat Pic) <u>A Bel S Rus F Nth Sea - Hol</u>, F Lon H
                         F MidAt S A Bre; <u>A Bre S A Gas.</u>
Russia (Cox)   No move recieved. A Mos Retreat Liv...
Builds   Russia -2   Disband A Syr [StP, Den, Nwy, Swe, Ber, Kie = 6]
                         Austria +2 (Mos, War) A Vie A Bud [11]   Germany and
                         Italy +2 (Spa, Par) F Rom, A Ven [10]   England no
                         France -2   Disband A Bel, F Lon [5]   change

30 July 86.

10.

diplomacy

ITALY (PENMAN)

F ION HOLD
A APU S A VEN
A VEN HOLD

FRANCE (NORTHEY)

F POR - SPA (SC)
A GAS - PAR
A MAR - BUR
A PIE S A MAR - BUR
A BUR - MUN
A MUN - SIL

RUSSIA (HAUGHEY)

A WAR - LIV
A UKR - MOS
A SEV S F RUM
F SWE - NWY
F RUM S AUST A SER - BUL

TURKEY (ROCHE)

A BUL - GRE
F AEG S A BUL - GRE
F BLA C A ARM - BUL
_____
A ARM - BUL

AUSTRIA (GRAHAM)

A SER - BUL
A BUD - SER
F GRE - AEG   (DISBANDS DUE TO NO
_____   POSSIBLE RETREAT)
F TRI - ALB
A TYR H

ENGLAND (RHODES)
NMR

PRESS   FRANCE: "FRIENDS, ROMANS, COUNTRYMEN, LEND ME
                YOUR ARMIES"
                II.
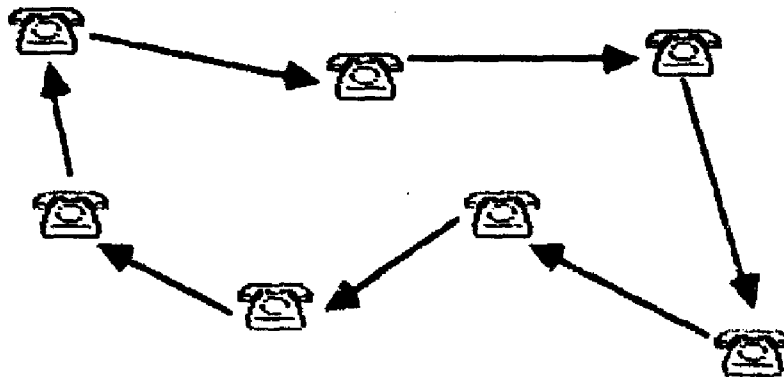
PLAY DIPLOMACY BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

Two week turnaround on seasons

One yearly subscription covers all costs.

No more hassles with stamps, envelopes, and postal strikes.

Total anonymity. Players are identified by country only.

You need: A computer
A 1200 baud or 300 baud modem
$20.00 a year

Send to: Misofa P/L 25 Park Ave Roseville NSW 2069

Yes, I will be an interesting innovative person.
Send me more information.

Name: _____

_____

Address: _____

_____ Post code _____

SEND NO MONEY (YET)

12.

diplomacy

85-N
FALL 1902
GM: RICK SNELL
"THE GAME TIME FORGOT"

FRANCE (Ashworth)

A GAS - BUR
F SPA (sc) - MAR
F MAO - POR
F BEL - HOL
A HOL - RUh

BUILDS
   A PAR (SURPRISE SURPRISE)
   F BRE

ITALY (ALEXANDER)

F TUN HOLD
A PIE - TUS
A TYR - BOH

BUILD A VEN

* NEW ADDRESS
   BROOKE ALEXANDER
   98 MT STUART Rd
   MT STUART HOBART 7001

TURKEY (GOULD)

F BLA S A RUM - SEV
A RUM - SEV
A BUL - RUM
F AEG - BUL (sc)

BUILDS
   A CON
   F SMY

ENGLAND (Chris Smith)
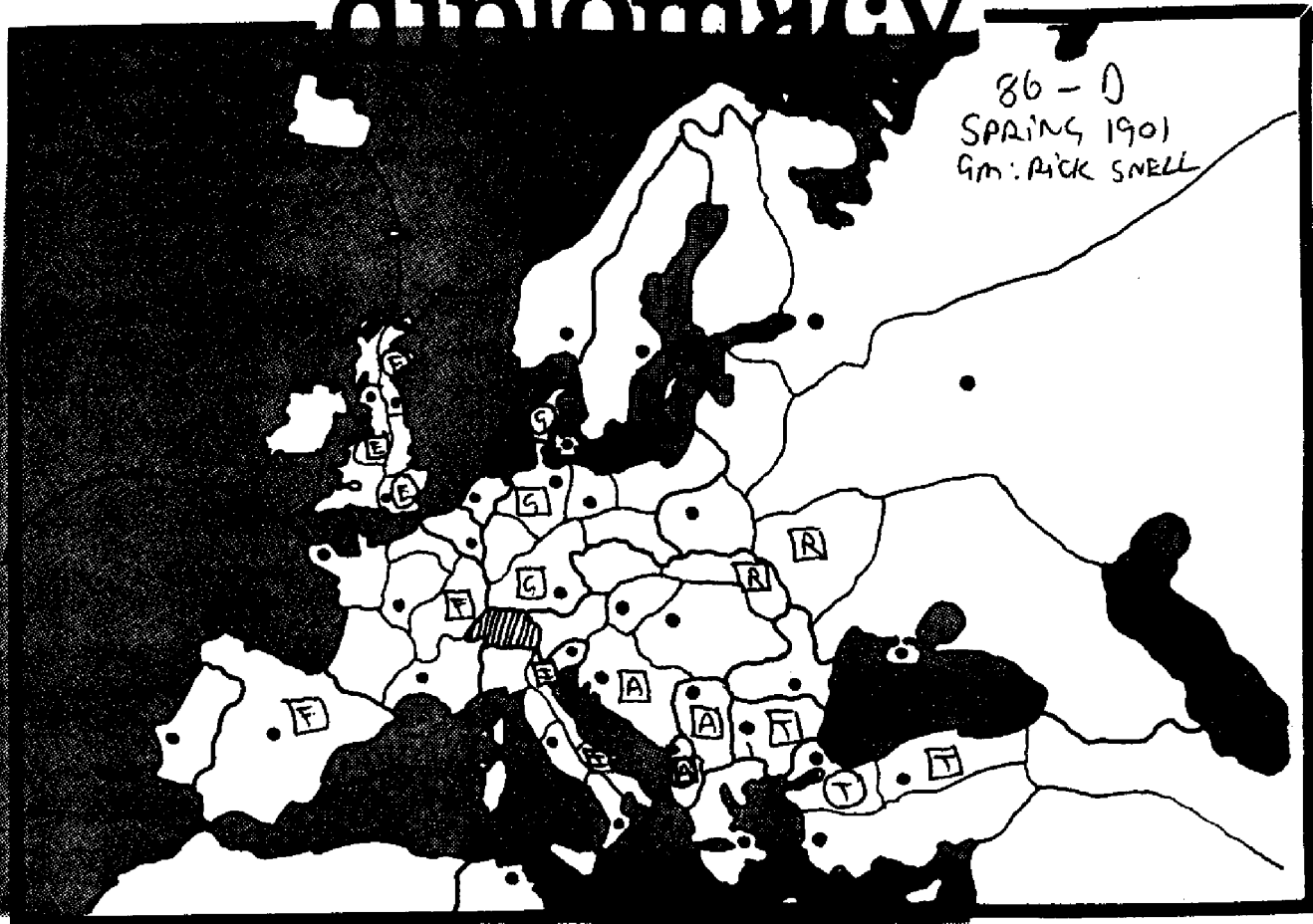
A SWE S F NTh - DEN
F NTh - DEN
F LON - NTh
F SKA - NWY

BUILDS   F LON
           A EOi

AUSTRIA (RUSKIN)
NMR

13.

diplomacy

FRANCE (O. WINDER)

A MAR – SPA
A PAR – BUR
F BRE – ENG

* NEW ADDRESS *

76 BELLEVUE ST
NTh PARRAMATTA
NSW 2151

GERMANY (Schacht)

F KiE – DEN
A MUN HOLD
A BER – KiE

AUSTRIA (JESPER PETERSEN)

A BUD – SER
A ViE – TRi
F TRi – ALB

TURKEY (GiBSON)

A CON – BUL
F ANK – CON
A Smy – ANY
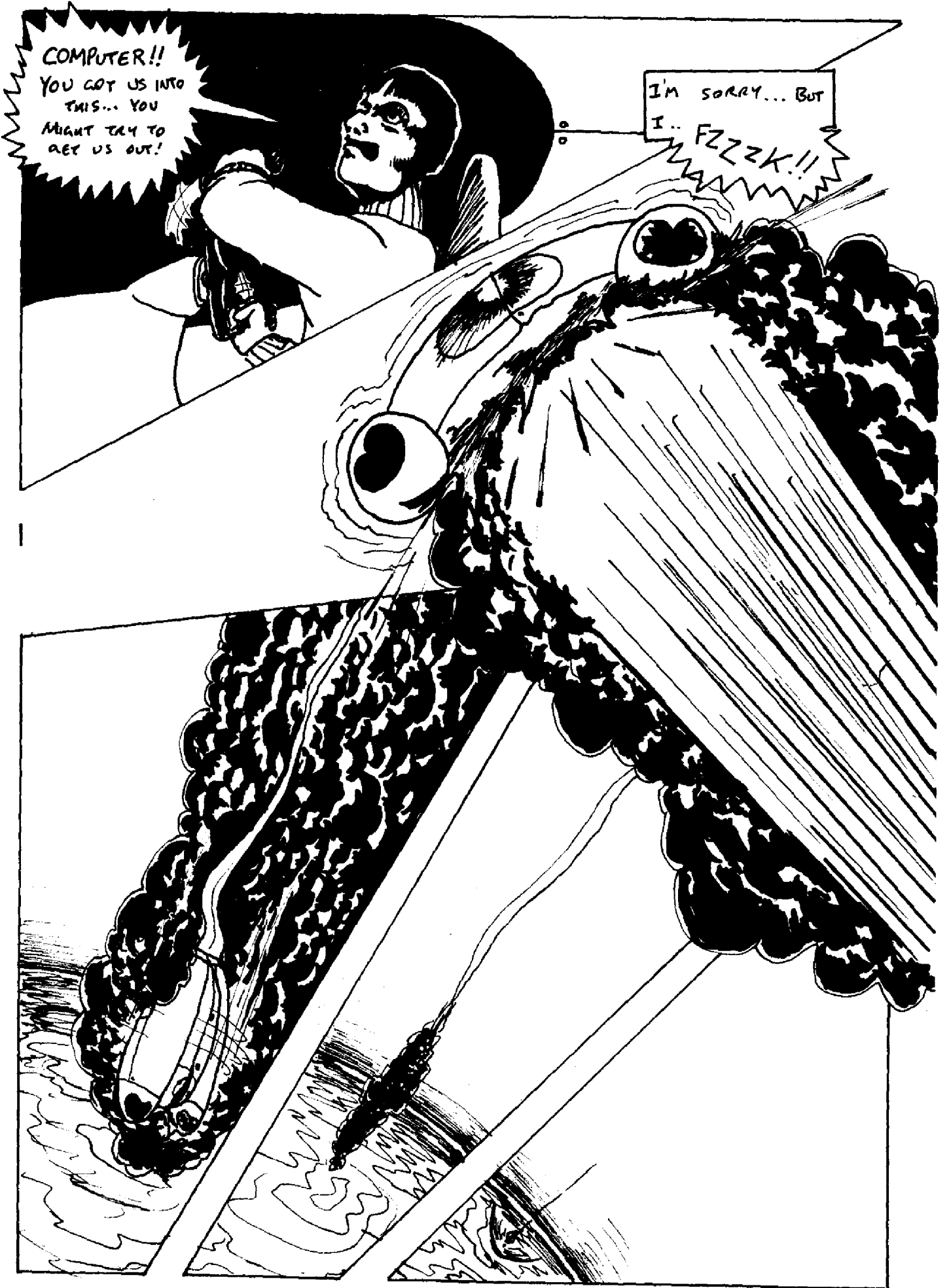
RUSSIA (jovich)

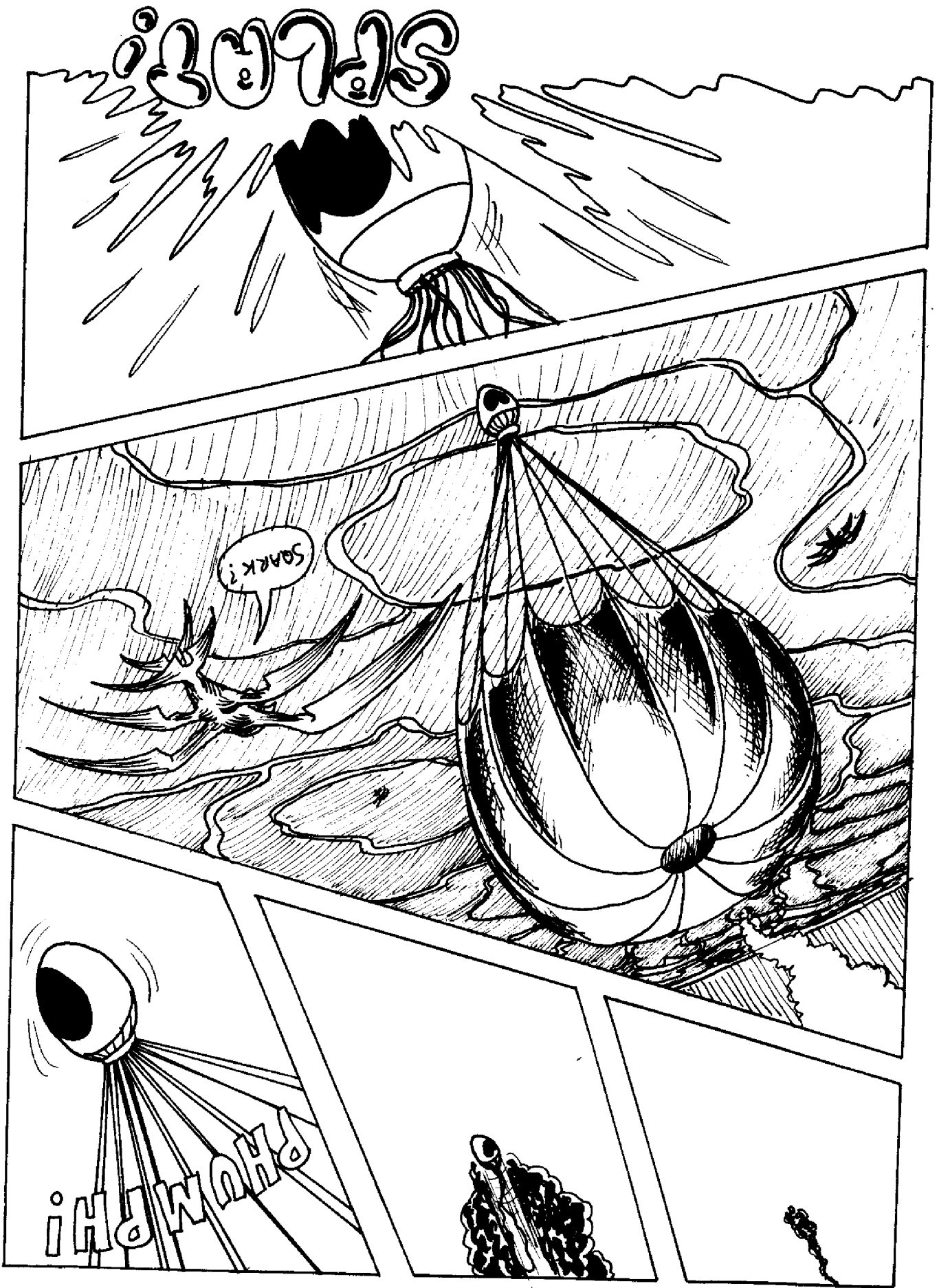A MOS – UKR
A WAR – GAL
F SEV – BLA
F STP – GOB

ITALY (BALL)

F NAP – ION
A ROM – APU
A VEN HOLD

PRESS : RUSSIA " HOW CAN YOU MAKE AGREEMENTS WITH THE SILENT?"

TURKEY " LOOKING FORWARD TO A NICE CLEAN FIGHT
LETS KEEP THE BALKANS EMPTY TILL 1905!
WHAT A CONCEPT!"

14.

16.

MEANWHILE...

CHIPPA—A KRRKT?

WHAT!? YOU DARE COMMAND A KAPPA KNIGHT TO PURSUE SOME LOWLY YANIC FUGITIVE$ AS IF I WERE A COMMON BOUNTY-HUNTER!?!
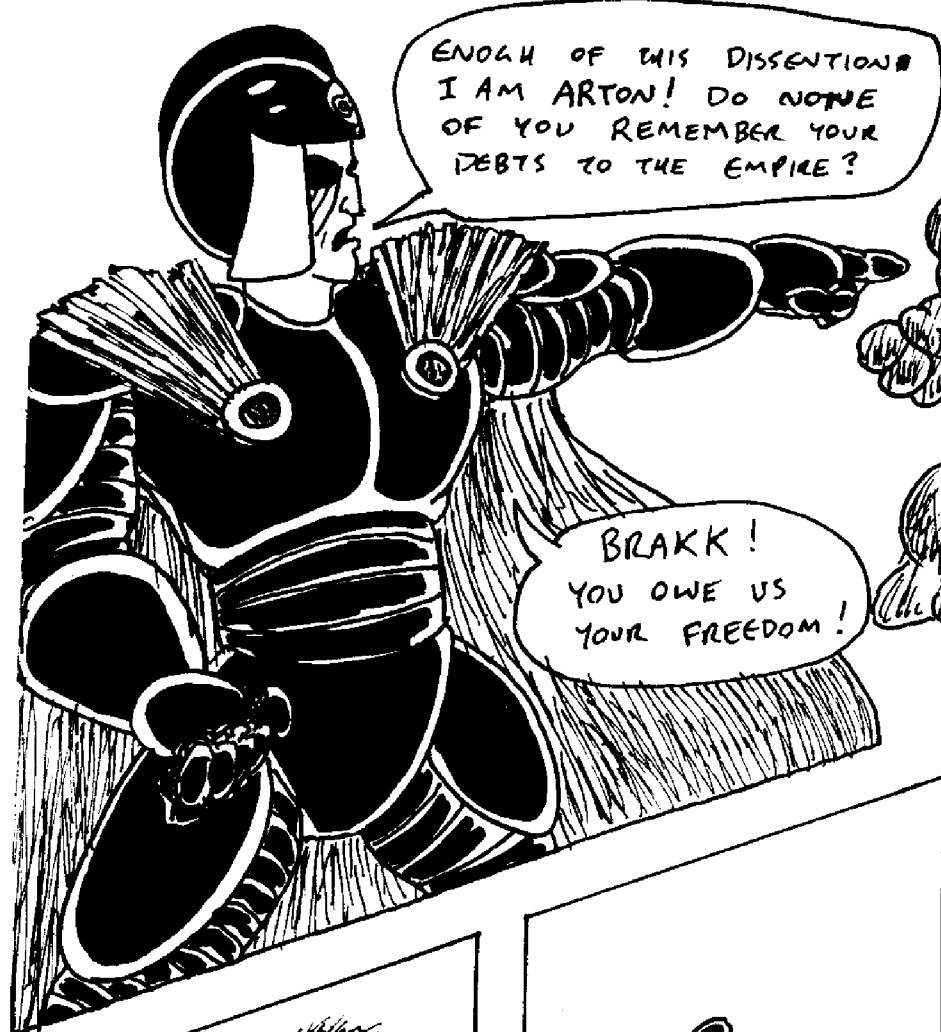
I WARN YOU, ARTON THIS TIME YOU STEP TOO FAR!!!

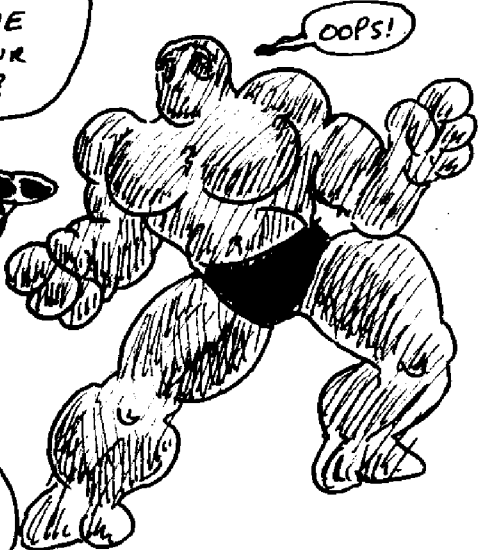AND I REMIND YOU, THAN, OF YOUR ORDER'S OATH OF FEALTY TO THE INFINITE EMPIRE.

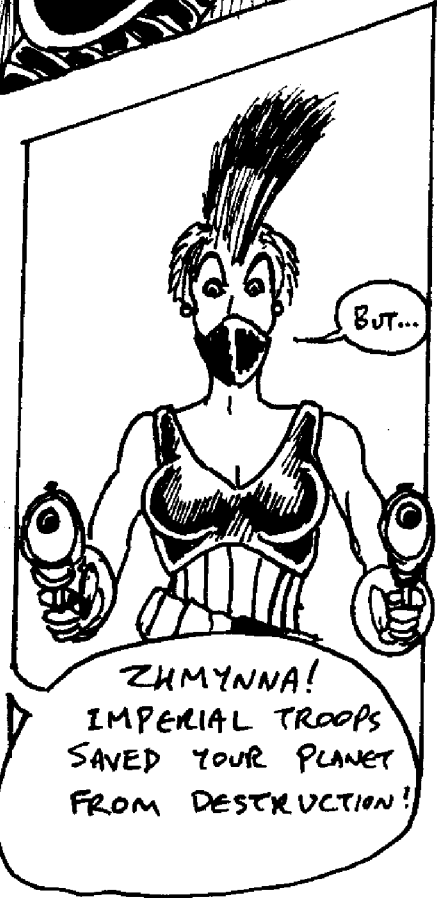YOU SIMPLY HAVE NO CHOICE.

CURSE YOU, YES!

BUT BEWARE, ARTON THAT YOU DO NOT ABUSE OUR OATH TOO MUCH...

18.

FRANCE (Brown)
```
  F ST.P(N.C.) - NOR
  F BAR - NWG
  F NTH S F ST.P - NOR
* F BRE - ENG
  F LYO S A MAR - PIE
  F WES - TUN
  A DEN - SWE
  A KIE - MUN
  A RUH S A KIE - MUN
  A BUR S A KIE - MUN
  A MAR - PIE
  A ALB - GRE        DISBAND
```

AUSTRIA (Davis)
```
  F AEG - GRE
  F ION - NAP
* F TRI - ALB
  F ADR S F TRI - ALB
  A RUM - SER
  A MOS - ST.P
  A FIN S A MOS - ST.P
  A SIL S (GER) A MUN
  A SMY - SYR
  A ARM S A SMY - SYR
  A ROM - APU
  A VEN S A ROM - APU
  A PIE - TUS
  A TYR - PIE
```

GERMANY (Hopkins)   NMR
```
  F NOR  hold    DISBAND
  A PRU  hold
  A BER  hold
  A SWE  hold
  A MUN  hold    DISBAND
```

ITALY (Smirnov)
```
  Disband  A SYR
  F NAP S A APU - ROM
  F TYR S A APU - ROM
  A APU - ROM
```

KEY:
    *   Builds
        Failed moves
  NMR   No Moves Received

PUBLIC STATEMENT :

ROME: "Due to the rebel attack on NAPLES, the Empire of Austria-
      Hungary is forced to declare war upon Corporal Garibaldi and
      his 'Godfather', Pepi La Pew."

diplomacy

okuguut 76

SPRING
1909
84-B

SUPPORT

RUSSIA D.DAVIS

F Bar. Supp A Mos -St.Pet
F Sw - Nor **FAILS
F HELG - DEN
F Blak - Con
F Con - Bul (sc)
A RUM SUP F CON - BUL(sc)
A ARMENIA -SYN.
A SERB SUP - F GRE
A MOSC - St Pet.
A SEV - Mos
A KIEL SUPP - A RUH
A MUN SUP - A RUH
A RUH BURIES DEAD
A VIENNA - TYROLIA
A PIE DEFENDS ITALIAN BORDER

ENGLAND TERRY

F Alb - Adr
F TUN - TYR
F ION S F TUN - Tyh
F GOL - PIE **FAILS
A MAR SUP F GOL -PIE *F
A BEL - RUH *F
A BUR S A Bel -Ruh *F
A HOLL S A Bel -Ruh *F
F Nth S A Holl
F Eng - Bel *F
A Nor - St Pet *F
A Noth Sea - Nor *F

ITALY: WAYNE

A Tus Sup R A Pie
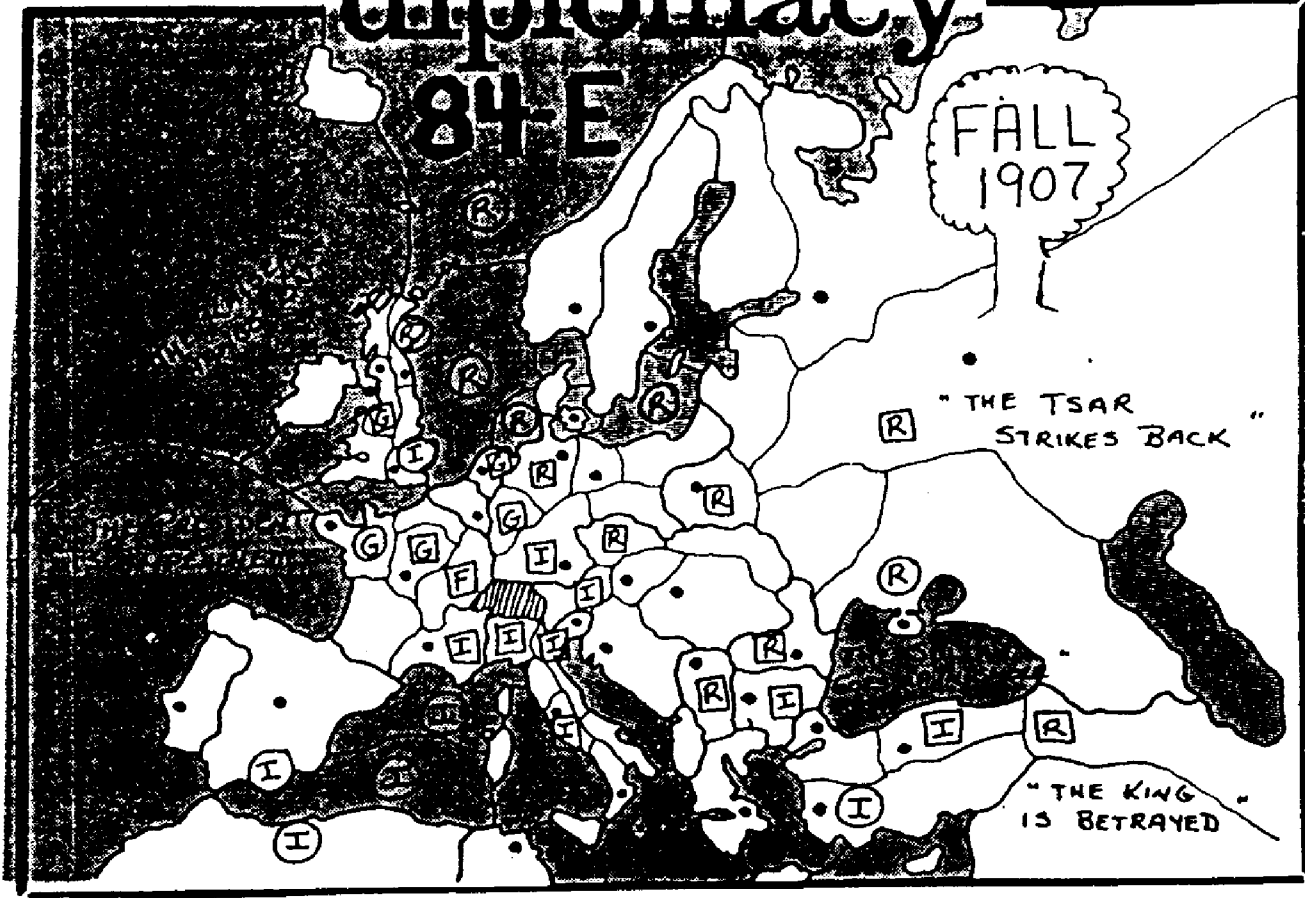F Nap H
F Apu H
F Tra H

TURKEY

F Bul   Retreats Blk sea

The Aggressive English have launched
yet another futile sneak attack into Tsarist
territory - this time butchering thousands
in the Ruhr. Remember this king
tenance — THE RUSSIANS ARE COMMING

Isar Davis

FALL 1907

"THE TSAR STRIKES BACK"

"THE KING IS BETRAYED"

DIPLOMACY 84 - E	FALL 1907	GM - DARRYL DAVIS

RUSSIA (D. KIBBLE)

```
F NWY - NTH
F NTH - EDI
F NWG S NTH-EDI
F DEN - HEL
F BAL S KIE
A BER - MUN
A KIE S BER-MUN
A BOH - VIE
A BUD - SER
A RUM S BUD-SER
A ARM S (IT) CON-ANK
```

TURKEY (D. COX)
```
   ***NMR***
F ANK H (DISBANDS)
```

FRANCE (R. SNELL)

```
   *** NMR ***
F IRI H (DISBAND)
F ENG H (DISBAND)
A MAR H (DISBAND)
A BUR H
```

GERMANY (P. SZABO)

```
F BRE "sings to Turkey"
A PIC - PAR
A RUH - KIE
A HOL S RUH-MUN
A LPL - EDI
```

ITALY (C. THOMAS)

```
F SPA(sc) S PIE-MAR
F GOL S PIE-MAR
F LON - ENG
F TUN - NAF
F TYR - WES
F SMY cry "VICTORY"
A PIE - MAR
A VEN - PIE
A MUN cry "VICTORY"
A TRL - VIE
A SER - RUM (ret BUL)
A CON - ANK
```

PUBLIC STATEMENT: (BORIS the BEAUTIFUL)
"I, CAMERON THOMAS' alter-ego, do
hereby declare war upon myself. I shall
always remember myself for what I am not,
and shall always help the needy whenever
I feel in need. One must sacrifice the
love one has for oneself, if Europe is
ever to be united under one so <u>great</u>
as myself."

TSAR BORIS to
KING CAMERON:

"WHO LOVES YA,
        BABY! "

POWERS   **CENTRES - BUILDS**

RUSSIA:	StP/War/Mos/Sev/Swe/Nwy/Vie/Rum/Bud/Den/Ber/Edi/Kie/Ser	(14)
	BUILD = <u>F SEVASTOPOL</u> / <u>A WARSAW</u> / <u>A MOSCOW</u>	
ITALY:	Rom/Ven/Nap/Tun/Tri/Gre/Bul/Smy/Lon/Mun/Con/Ank/Spa/Mar	(14)
	BUILD = <u>A VENICE</u> / <u>A ROME</u>	
GERMANY:	Hol/Bel/Lpl/Bre/Par	(5)
FRANCE:	Por	(1)
TURKEY:	THE SULTAN IS DEAD! LONG LIVE HIS MEMORY!	

SULTAN COX

AUSTRIA (Benton): A Mos-War   A War-Sil   A Gal S A War-Sil   A Boh-Mun   A Tri-Vie
     A Tyr S A Boh-Mun   F Adr S Turkish   F Aeg-Ion

ENGLAND (Goldie): F StP(nc) S A Edi-Nwy   F Nwg C A Edi-Nwy   A Edi-Nwy
     F Eng-Mid   F Bre S German A Par-Gas   F Mid-Por

FRANCE (Schacht): A Mar-Bur   A Gas S A Mar-Bur (d)   F Spa-Por

GERMANY (Worgan): A Pic-Bel   A Par-Gas   A Sil-Ber (d)   A Mun Hold (r-Kie)
     A Bur S A Mun Hold   F Liv-Bot   F Bot-Bal

ITALY (Bradley): F Nap-Rom (d)   F Tun-Tyn

RUSSIA (Haughey): A Pru-Ber

TURKEY (Griffiths): F Tyn-Wes   A Ven-Rom   F Ion-Nap   F Apu S F Ion-Nap
     A Gre-Alb   F Aeg-Ion

ADJUSTMENTS			
AUSTRIA	Vie, Bud, Tri, Rom, Sev, War, Ser, MUN	(8)	1 build
ENGLAND	Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nwy, StP, Bre	(6)	No change
FRANCE	Mar, Spa, Por	(3)	1 unit short
GERMANY	Ber, Kie, Den, Hol, Bel, Swe, PAR	(7)	1 build
ITALY	Rom, Tun	(2)	1 build
RUSSIA	Mos	(1)	No change
TURKEY	Con, Ank, Smy, Bul, Gre, Ven, NAP	(7)	1 build

GM Comment: Note last minute return of Mr. Schacht. I am pleased
to have a full game. There was only 1 applicant for
the vacancy and he was 3 days late (sorry Jim).

                W. Brown
                1/7/86

Commercial Play-By-Mail.

Since the early 1970s a new beast has entered the field of play by mail games. Until the advent of Flying Buffalo Inc, under the guidence of Rick Loomis, play by mail was very much a hobby. People would run a few private games with friends or a magazine like the Go Between (started by David Cox to run Postal Diplomacy games) would spring up. The key feature of these activities was the very small fee if any that was charged to run the games. given that all the games mastering had to be down by hand it was either that or charge a fee that would have been exoberient.

This approach to play by mail still continues and I hope it does for a long time yet. there is an enthusiasm and strange gleam in the eyes of such devotees that isn't matched by those of us involved in more commercial endeavours.

With the emergence of computers commercial moderating became more of a reality. With a good mini-computer, or more recently a good personal computer large scale games could be designed where tens or hundreds of moves could be processed over a week or even a weekend.

From this issue onwards we will be bringing you background/updates etc on commercial PBM groups, Australian and overseas. I will start from the closest to home first.

The Missing Tiger

Who are they ?

Originally the Missing Tiger was formed from a chance meeting in the Blue Dolphin Fish shop in February 1984 between John Campbell and Rick Snell. John was just putting the finishing touches (or so he thought) to a pbm game he had designed and was looking for a financial backer. Rick was playing space invaders and taking a break from working on the house while Esther was holidaying in Sydney. By the time she returned the Missing Tiger had got out of control.

As mentioned later in this section John has now formally left the Missing Tiger. John has been replaced by Lindon Flood the programmer and designer of FINAL DAYS.

Why the name:

Apart from "Is it still missing?" the most common question that is asked is "why that name"? As with a lot of ventures the last thing John and Rick needed to get started was a name for the business registration form. After being stuck for a name for several days they retired to the Globe hotel for a counter tea. By leaving time the "Missing Tiger" name was in existence. Possible sources that might have played some subconcious part in the name include : The tasmanian tiger, William Blake (Tyger Tyger burning bright in the forests of the night), Nietzsche ("they see the smile on the face of the tiger "), and Flying Buffalo Inc.

The Missing Tiger began slowly in April 1984 using a borrowed Sirius business computer. The game Return From Sirius got its name from an awful double pun on wanting to get a return (financial for john and Rick, a turnsheet for the players) from using the Sirius computer. The original house magazine the Hunted Star (one of Sirius's names is the Hunter's Star) got its name from the combination of a pun and a spelling mistake by John.

In December 1984 the tigers purchased an Apricot PC computer. Around March 1985 the designing of FINAL DAYS began. From October to March of 1986 a playtest using sixty odd players was conducted for Final Days. At the moment all those closely connected with the Missing Tiger have full time jobs (Rick,Lindon,Esther and John). This means that nights during the week, normally between 6 pm - 11 pm, are spent answering the mail, enrolling new players, doing the accounts, inputting moves, answering telephone calls and if time permits some thinking. Saturdays are spent inputting moves while Sundays are normally spent running and printing out the games.

A Brief Wander Around The Traps

In New Zealand
                    Richard Mason and Tony Charles are meeting a good response with their Game of Princes or GOP for short. a trans tasman game should be starting shortly. Any australians interested in joining that game can write to us at the Go between for more information.

            Peter Findlay is forming a play by mail club in Christchurch. Australians interested in doing a similar thing (or moderators) should write to Peter at 11 Parklands Drive Christchurch NEW ZEALAND.

In England
            The first ever British PBM show was held in London earlier this year. A newcomer to the PBM scene SLOTH ENTERPRISES won the Company of the year award.

In United States

        At last count Graaf Simulations were running six games of the Australian Wizard "Spiral Arm".

    Schubel and Son have been circulating all the pbm moderators to verify their claim that they are the largest moderator of play by mail games. they have 14 full time employees and during the calendar year 1985 grossed $360,000 (102,800) turns.

Rick

A PBM LOOK AT AUSTRALIA.
By A. Richards.

From the dark recess of downunder in Underwood, the plaintive plea from Rick has bought a spark of creativity from an Apple (an Apple IIc that is) to produce a little article.

Australia has (historically speaking) just started producing commercial play by mail games that rank up there with overseas competitors. One of the great successes is The Australian Wizards "Spiral Arm".

Spiral Arm is a SF game where the player makes his fleet from a number of different types of ships. Mixing economic, trading and combat aspects and in a simple form makes it a challenge to the experianced player.

For those who want grudge matches, try the Spiral Arm Tournament. It has more deadly unknowns than the bigger version. (For more information Ref: Flagship [a pbm magazine] No.10 or send a letter to The Australian Wizard, GPO Box 350, Brisbane, QLD. 4001.)

The Australian Wizard is working on a number of new games that look quite good from what I've been told, keep an eye out while reading Flagship and the Go Between for details.

The Missing Tiger has a number of interesting Aussie games. Their Return From Sirius has been enjoyed by many players and appears quite popular.

Their two new computer controlled games Final Days and Witchking show a lot of promise. As yet it is too soon for me to give an accurate rating but I feel that the experenced gamer will get the most out of these highly stratigic games. I believe it is well worth your while to get the rules to at least see what it is about. These two require the hardy and adventurous "dam - the - torpedoes" players; when to go full out, when to hold back ususally spells sucess or failure.

These games are at the moment receiving some attention from a number of enthusiasts, there are a number of other games around just as good, but these are some of the Australian designed games that show that we do produce some high quality games.

Please write to Go-Between Publications(GPO Box 286C, Hobart 7001) or A.Richards (PO Box 43, Underwood, QLD 4119) on any games made by Australians that you feel need a mention and we will endevour to see that they receive their due.
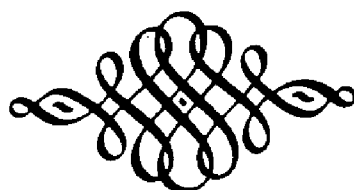
SOUR GRAPES.

Have you considered how you would complain about unfair treatment received from a Play By Mail company ? Unlike most consumer orientated business the PBM industry does not have a 'BIG BROTHER' to which it must answer if bad or unfavourable services are provided by that company. There is presentally no PBM union / corporation / association organised in Australia nor New Zealand. America does have a PBM Association this Ass.n protects the players in the case of a PBM company folding and is self policing in maintaining a good level of service to the player.

What do you, as a player in an Australian or New Zealand game do if you have any serious complaints ? Well you can complain to the company involved and hope they reply, go to the Trade Practices Commission, complain to your mates, or cease playing that particular game, or mouth off about that group to another PBM group-- none are really satisfying when you may consider that you have not had a fair go.

Go-Between Publications consider that it is important that an association should be set up to protect players from being 'ripped off' by fly by night PBM cons like "Great new game" send money to .... and the last you hear is a chuckle to the next ripoff. This activity hurts players, prospective players and people starting up a genuine but new PBM group (once bitten twice shy, I'll wait for a year or so and see if that group is still around). How do you find out things like a group's reputation, length of time in the business etc?

This need for some form of association is increasing as the Australiasian P-B-M market is beginning to grow, and more companies are entering the scene. There are a few ways that such an organisation could be run; either a player run group, a moderators based group, or a moderators and players group similar to that organised in America.

There is a problem. To create such an organisation there must be a person, or group of persons, willing to devote the time to initially set up the Ass.n. And then keep it running.

Is there anyone out there willing to take on this monster? - If so Go-Between Publications are willing to give you support, space in our magazine, and a list of possible contributors- please write to us.

Anyone else who is interested in supporting the idea with time / labour / money / suggestions but cannot spare the time and effort to get the idea up and running can write to us at the Go Between and we will pass your offer of assistance along.

We would also like to hear from players and other moderators about their reactions to this proposal, be it favourable, against or just indifferent.

Esther

the Sirius Sector ⊖

Return From Sirius News

        The big news is the changes in the partnership that makes   up   the
Missing Tiger. John Campbell,   the   designer   of RFS, has formally dropped
out   of   the partnership to be replaced by Lindon Flood, the programmer of
Final Days.
John has opted out due to a combination of   injury   problems,   other   work
pressures and a desire to   get   more   into game designing and programming.
Being   a   games   moderator   leaves   very   little   time   for   designing   or
programming.

        In terms of bums on seats etc it is more a case of musical chairs.
John   is   still   associated with us but is now less involved in the day to
day running of the Missing Tiger except for WITCHKING.   John's   experience
now as a games designer,programmer and   moderator puts him in the enviable
position of directing his talents towards providing old and new moderating
services   with   good quality games that are a joy to moderate, not only in
Australia   but   overseas   as   well.Who   knows   with   the   success   of   the
Australian Wizards Spiral Arm in America we might be   heading   towards   an
export service industry. Long live   the   J   curve   and a little bit of day
dreaming.

Other News:

    A   few more games of RFS have finished, game summarys are shown later.
Hopefully we will get a few game reports from   the   players   in   the   next
issue.
I am quite proud to have just   over   20 games of RFS finish since we first
started   in   1984.   I   think   our   efforts   at   trying to stick to regular
turnaround times have helped in that regard.

    The Special Game 50.

    Yes we have finally reached the stage where RFS   Game   50   is   open for
players. To mark this   special   event   and   Johnny's   formal exit from the
Missing   Tiger we have decided to make Game 50 a special event game. There
is an ad for for this game later in the magazine. This game will   be   open
to all comers (whether you have played RFS before or not) and the emphasis
of the game is on having fun   and raising some money for charity, so think
about applying to join it.

MISSING TIGER T-SHIRTS BACK FROM THE PRINTERS

    IF   anyone   is   interested   in a Missing Tiger T-Shirt send $10 to the
Missing Tiger and details of your size and we will send you one.
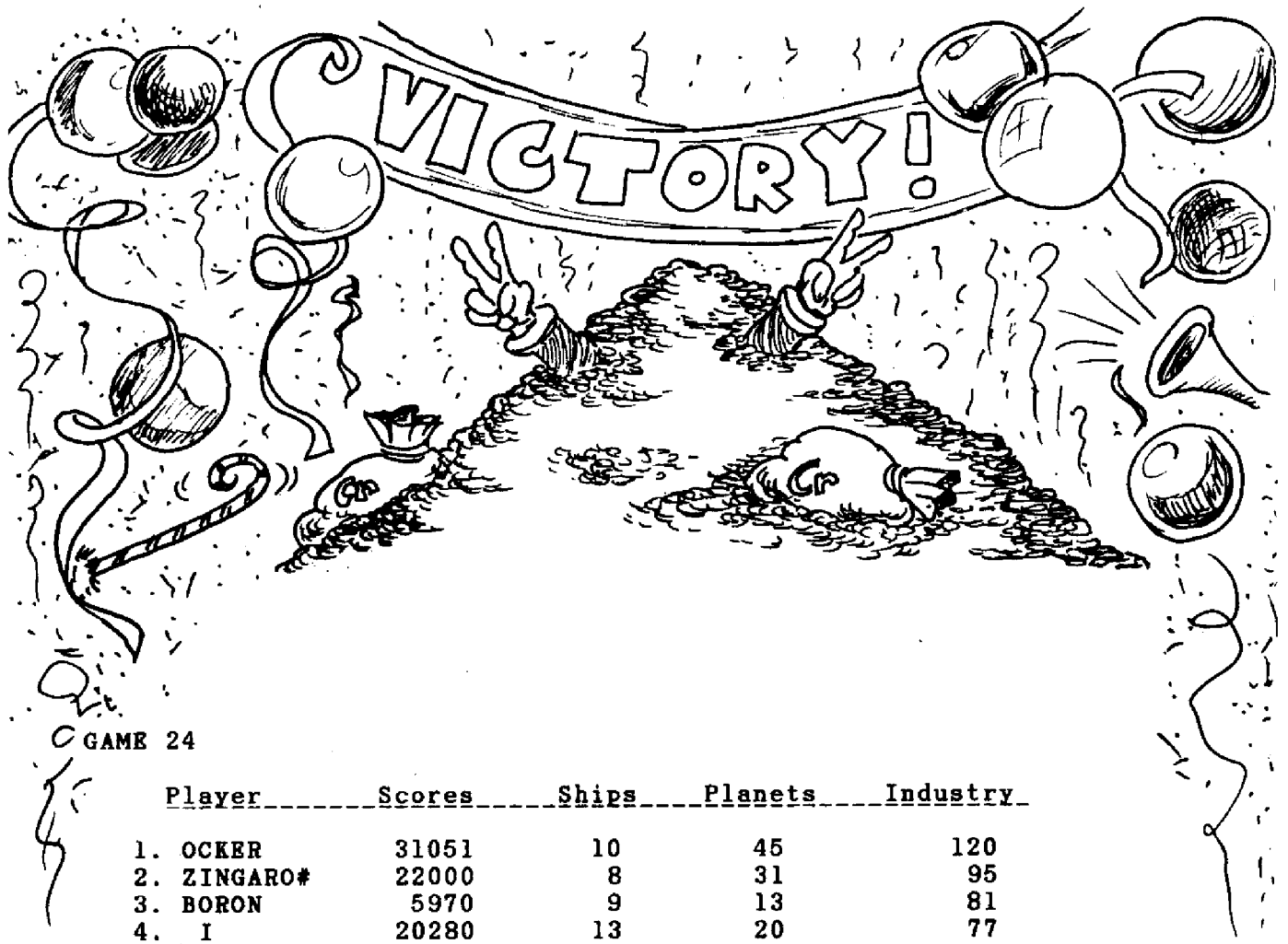
GAME 24

Player	Scores	Ships	Planets	Industry
1. OCKER	31051	10	45	120
2. ZINGARO#	22000	8	31	95
3. BORON	5970	9	13	81
4. I	20280	13	20	77
5. GERM 1	21680	8	23	82
6. SEXIANS	21600	6	23	91
7. TURBO	18049	9	17	67
8. THOR	32397	7	26	93
9. JASON	19720	8	19	64

GAME 25

Player	Scores	Ships	Planets	Industry
1. MADAMAN2	13980	9	11	67
2. MAXDMONK	24866	8	40	99
3. ALDER	21859	6	25	82
4. WILDSTAR	30746	12	22	101
5. ALBOS	9526	6	4	92
6. TANPORUS	16695	4	17	74
7. UNTRAGH	26905	14	54	82
8. HELRIC 1	13722	12	22	72
9. RADAR	25332	15	51	85

30.
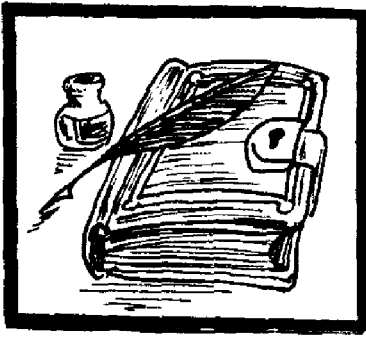
ROAMER'S DIARY
Game 31

Well I must say the editor hasn't endeared himself to me following his snide little comments following the last Roamer diary. Look whose talking about being a little weird.

Well Dagrod finally gave up planet 311, or at least thats what his diplomatic communication claimed. Being a trustworthy lad I was all set to gift back the odd hull or two when alas the following turn he again struck, sacrificing his final battleship in another futile attack. What can one think of a player with such a complete lack of honesty. We turn now to a very sore spot, my back. Turn 15 I received a very nasty knife wound courtesy of CEREBOR. Beautifully executed you have my congratulations. Fortunately by the time this goes to press, like all great men, I'll be back on my feet and in there kicking. A lovely research planet turn should see 2 of CEREBORs ships cut-off from his empire and ready for the plucking.

LUCIFER claims a victory -- against who I would like to know. just who is allied to who anyway.
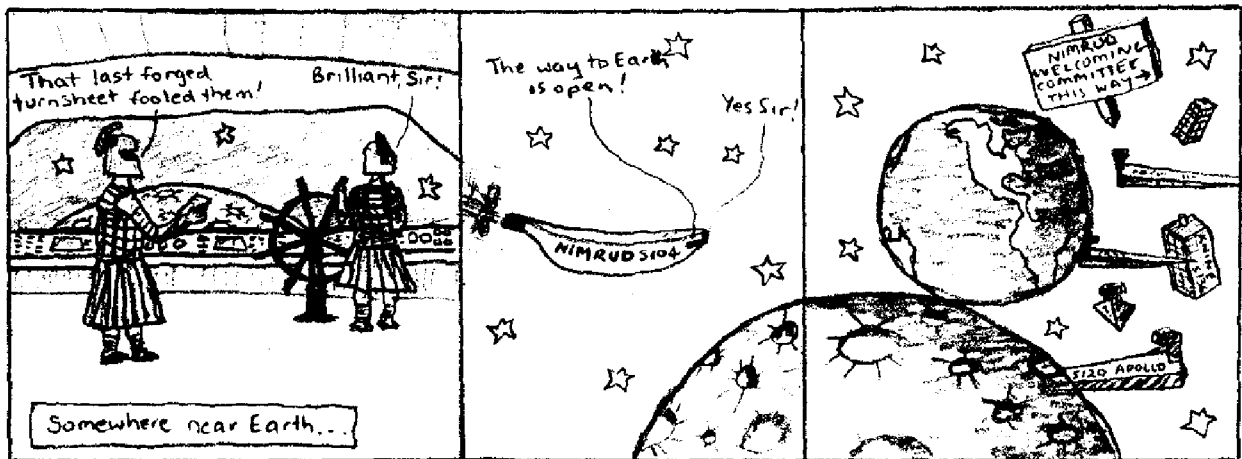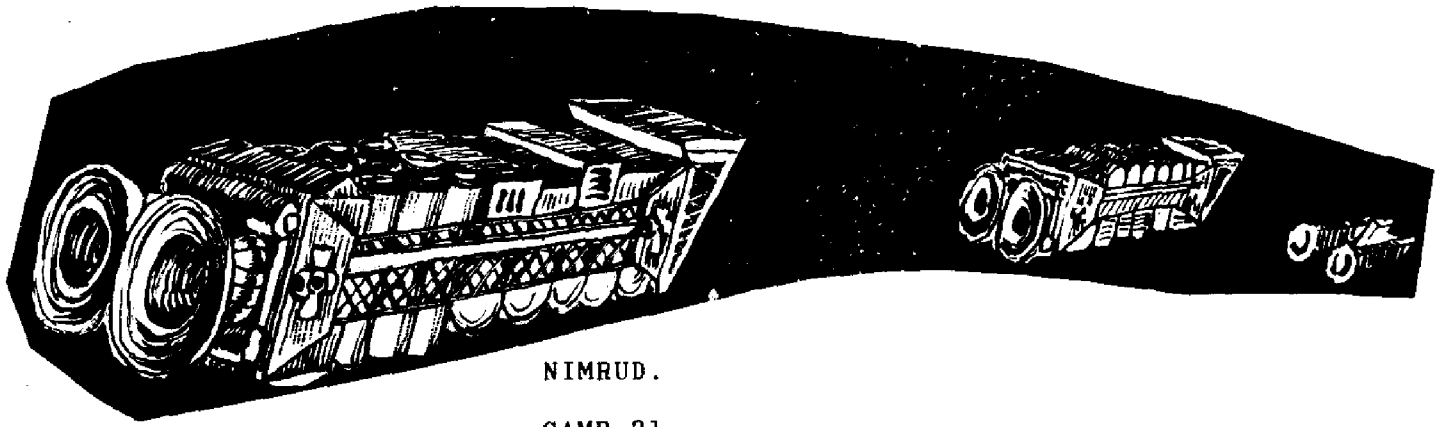
NIMRUD.

GAME 21.

RETURN FROM SIRIUS

As Prime Minister of (new) Assur, I NIMRUD had the task of carrying
out the orders of the Emperor, Sargon the Great. When the mysterious
Sirians gave us 5 ships, my Emperor said "conquer the galaxy". A tough
task.

It struck me that the bottleneck was going to be ships. The more you
have the more you can do in a turn. We set about building a ship in turn
2, another in turn 4 and about one every two turns for the rest of the
game. We built industry or mines only when nothing else could be built
instead – each industry generates 5 cerdits/turn but planets give 25
credits per turn on average.

Using 4 ships to explore and 2 to supply industry and to put planetary
defence (PD) on C ring planets,* we had all but one of the C ring planets
by turn 6, most defended. By turn 11 we had 28 planets including 3
research planets, and had 10 ships.

Turn 16 came along; we were up to 46 planets, 34 with PD on them.
Unfortunately, the secret was out we were winning! The rest of the game we
spent building medium battle ships and having them blown away. We reached
49 planets in turn 19, but were back to 46 in turn 22 – the last one. At
the end there were 8 ships from APOLLO and KNINE on our worlds, and these
players had kindly donated 2 hulls to our Navy.

Overall, we kept alliances as much as possible and only attacked players
who attacked our allies. XENON suffered from this! We used our RP's to
either build type 2 ore (which was rare) or to move our exploration ships
about – to areas of the empire which looked like providing a few more new
planets.

Despite what APOLLO told everyone, this WAS my first game. Thanks for
the game everyone!

NIMRUD.
(for Sargon the Great.)

* Editors Note: C ring planets are two jumps out from a player's
homeworld.
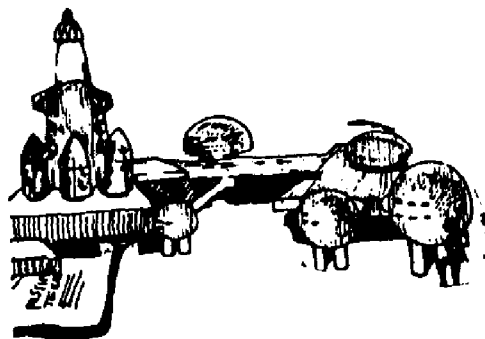
As entropy in my empire sets in it is comforting to know that you sit above it all watching with undisguised humour.

The great machine which allows some to dominate and some to be crushed occasionally slips a cog but your careful eye detects it quickly and the world continues again.

Thank you for your effort.
Yours,
One who's empire is crumbling early,
MELDAN.

Snippets from various games:

Game 22

Cobra has just launched an attack on Mongoose's homeworld. Meanwhile on Earth Elarco and Mongoose are claiming that their battlefleets have uncovered a sneaky "Earth Coup" by that terrible D.Lange.

The next turn Panther arrives with a battleship, whereto now?

Game 23

As Jandar fires at Earth defences the wily Germania attacks Jandar claiming that he was really trying to hit the radio button.

Game 31
FTHROG is winning in this game but HARKAMAN is doing his best to derail this lazy merchant.

Game 43

PSYCHE and PHOENIX remain at loggerheads over a neutral Research Planet.

Game 45
Is echoing to the sounds of the Batman theme as the boy wonder chips in.

Game 46
This first FAST LANE game (a turn every 7-10 days) is starting to churn through the turns.

****

We will accept any information/ disinformation/ solgans or whatever any RFS player wants to write about games they are in. All contributions will be edited to fit the available space.
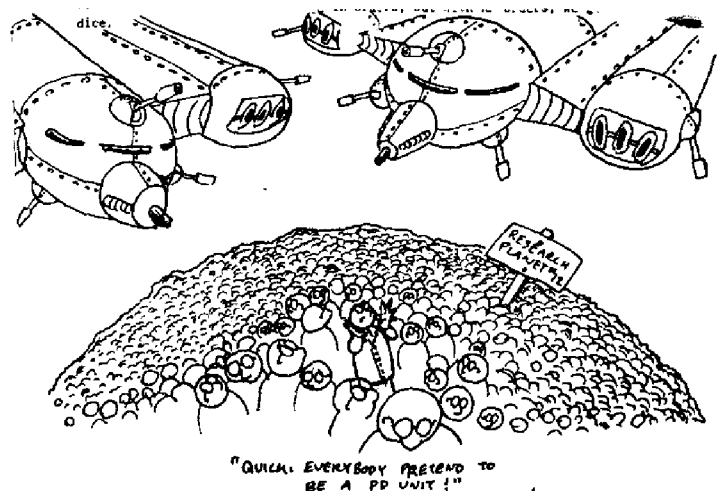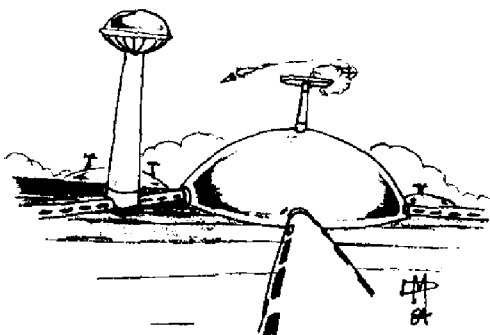
Reseach Planets.

Of all the features and elements in the game of Return From Sirius the wild card element "Research Planets" has proven to be the most debated and discussed feature. For those new to Return From Sirius Research planets are planets devoted to the cause of research. There are 27 such planets in each game, counting for just over 10% of all planets. The planets give special benefits to their owners every four turns from turn 10 onwards.

Research planets in Return From Sirius have lead a long and twisted life changing as time goes on. John Campbell (the designer of Return From Sirius) once explained the original design concept of Research Planets in the game in The Hunted Star (the original house magazine devoted to Return From Sirius)

"...An early version of RFS had 25 volumes of a mysterious book scattered throughout the galaxy. The player could get heaps of points by owning three or four volumes. I didn't want them to be able to be removed from the planet they were found on so I tried to think of a justification. That's very hard. Can you imagine a situation where a single book was so well protected that a high technology, space-faring race couldn't lift it? So I thought I'd make it a HUGE book. Still doesn't sound right.

I then briefly considered turning them into TEMPLES capable of performing miracles for the player who owned it. Finally I hit on the idea of having Research Planets - also capable of performing miracles for their owners, but fitting in better with the idea of science fiction. the program still has some variables called BOOK in it."

In the early games of Return From Sirius the special benefits side of the research planets were overlooked for a while and they played a role akin to planetary monopoly railway stations, merely acting as a point multiplier.

"QUICK, EVERYBODY PRETEND TO
BE A PD UNIT!"

At that point we returned to the special abilities role of research planets and haven't looked back. One of the most enjoyable aspects of moderating the game comes from dealing with Research planet requests. as mentioned in earlier issues we occassionally get 15 page novellettes outlining a research planet request. More frequently and more enjoyably we get one page requests written in a role playing vein. These type of requests relieve the rut of typing in endless lists of orders. Such requests appear like the following:

From: Lord Underin
To: Eli Na Terin

My dear friend,
            I wish to thank you for your fantastic efforts of the past few months. To reward your fiercely inquiring mind, I have a new problem for you to solve:

1. Could the use of our specially trained infiltrator spy corps into the union system of a specified planet be able to stop ore production and/or destroy stockpiles (through strikes and go slow campaigns) on that planet.

    This player made Eli Na Terin (actually Rick) head of a research planet and even named the research planet after old willy Eli Na for his efforts on the notorious NOTHINK project aimed at overcoming the resistence of local inhabitents from native mines and industry being removed from a world.

    The request for spy/infiltrators is a very interesting one because early in 1984 before releasing Return From Sirius we were thinking about adding a roleplaying element such as spys and saboteurs to the game to disrupt industry and/or ore production.

    The answer to the spy/infiltrator one is yes the request is possible but a player must notify us two turns before a RP turn that that will be the request used for a specific research planet. If he no longer owns that planet on the Research planet turn the request is cancelled. No other order can be given by the requesting player once the request is made. the targeted player will be told the turn before the Research planet turn that a team of infiltrators and spies are on that world. That player than has the option of trying to nullify the team by using a research planet request.

Other recent requests:

1. Using two research planets to destroy a link between planets when only half the normal conditions could be meet.

2. An attempt at creating a Ghost battleship over a planet for a single turn

3. Deflation of Earth's Market.

4. Trying to double scan. A player does an extra scan and if one of the linking planets of that scanned planet falls between a range of approx 50 planets, i.e., a player chooses the range 240-290 he then gets to scan one link meeting that condition as well. Therefore getting 3 scans in one turn.

5. About 50% of research planet requests involve the increasing of cargo or fighter units on ships.

6. Only about 5% of requests involve additional sacrifices like the loss of ores/mines/industries/credits and/or ships to gain greater success with the research planet request.

...FINAL D�He☺YS

The Final Analysis

by Lindon Flood.

We intend this column to be a regular commentary on the progress of Final Days. In the next couple of editions we will take a look at what is happening in FD 1 and possible future directions for the game system. This time we are going to take a light-hearted look at the darker side of programming; The Final Bugs.

In its short lifespan, the computer industry has produced many catch-phrases and sayings. GIGO (garbage in, garbage out) and "There's always one more bug" are just two examples. Final Days has taken about 1.5 years to reach a point where it is working more or less the way people want it, and consists of about a dozen programs, both big and small. So there has been ample opportunity for the bugs to find some good places to hide. Many that were uncovered during playtesting were open to some interesting interpretations.

THE WALLS HAVE EARS. This was one of the earliest bugs that led us to believe the computer was in fact smarter than those programming it. At this time the computer was supposed to nuke any HQs that its own units discovered. However, a small omission meant that the computer took note of any report on HQ location no matter whose unit radioed it in. The result was player 10 being nuked after only 4 turns, just because another player had stumbled onto his HQ. This explains one of the craters that currently appears on the play-test maps. The position of player 10 (after the bomb) was later given to Kevin Flynn (of AUS WIZ fame) in a later play-test. It was an accident Kevin, honest!

EVERYBODY OUT. Some of the early testing had an annoying problem where a truck and the unit it was carrying would part company. The truck would continue to behave correctly, but the squad still believed it was in the truck and would not respond to orders. To make matters worse the squad was always left sitting in the middle of a crater absorbing radiation. The section of the program that handled movement through craters was to blame.

CONTINENTAL DRIFT. When a command is issued to a unit only the relevant parts of its status flags are changed. This means that a unit that is told to hide has its status set to "H", but its last movement directions are not reset. Unfortuneately the line of code that dictated which units were to go through the movement routine was accidentally erased during an alteration. The result was that all units that were in hiding after moving in a previous turn ended up a couple of hexes away, still under cover.

WHY DID THE ELEPHANTS WEAR SUNGLASSES? Just before releasing Final Days commercially we decided to rationalise the unit type numbers. Human units 1-10, computer 11-20, mutants 21, where the various numbers had previously been
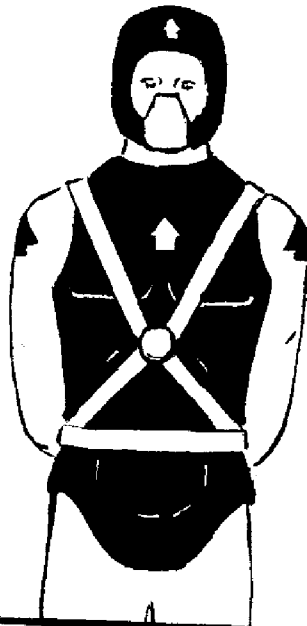
mixed together in the order they were introduced to the game. This meant putting the existing test games through a program that would alter the unit types to the new values. As it turned out the heavy tanks were given the type number that HQs used to be, and as we all know HQs hide automatically at the end of a turn. To the casual observer all heavy tanks suddenly dematerialized.

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM. This was another bug which was caused by the change in type numbers. Although the program that processed the moves had been changed to handle the new numbers, the wrong version of the program that produces the reports was used. The result was that the CPU showed up on a player's report as a sapper. This was noticed before the moves were sent out, and the correct reports printed.

UNDERCOVER AGENTS. About mid-way through testing it was noticed that some units were going rabid and shooting their own fellows. The cause of the problem lay in the way the ID numbers of destroyed units were subsequently reallocated to newly created units. This meant that a unit number originally allocated to a computer unit could subsequently be reused for a player's unit number. However, the section of code that maintained the computer's list of active units was failing to delete those that had been eliminated, so the computer issued those unit numbers with commands as if it still owned them. A command from the player would override the computer's command, so the problem only occurred intermittently.

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA. Right at the beginning of our in-house testing it was noticed that units which hadn't been given a command were acting as if they had. On investigating, we realized that we were not zeroing the units' status at the end of each turn. Therefore, if a unit was not given an order, it repeated last turn's order. This was seen to be quite a useful feature, and enhanced so that units repeated orders with some discretion. (Reminds me of another computer industry saying, "A documented bug is a feature.)

I seem to recall another bug where computer units that were attacked turned into sappers belonging to the attacking player. The exact circumstances elude me. So I'll end with one last pearl of wisdom from the computer industry "If your program works the first time, frame it, it's the only one you'll ever get."
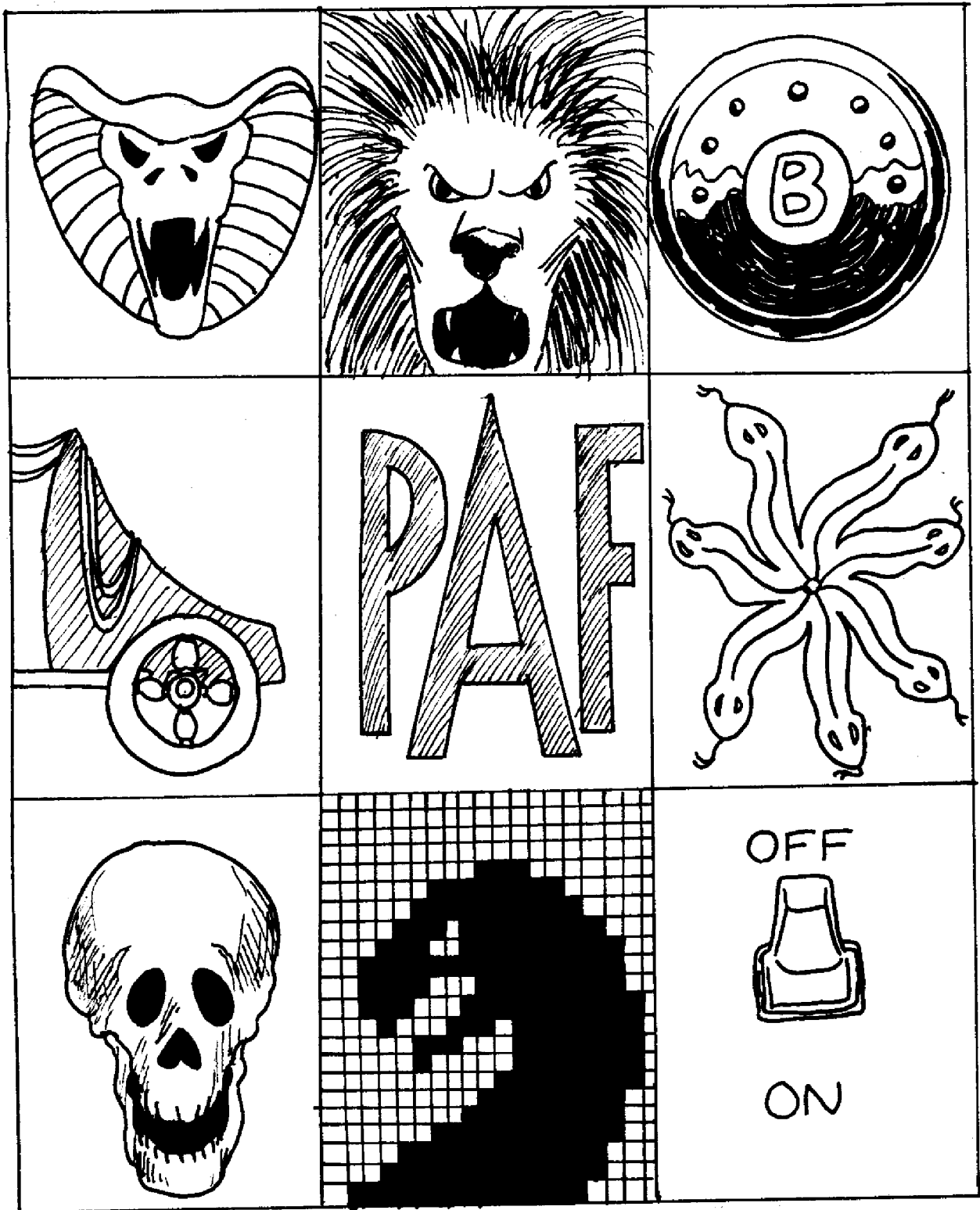
MAD MARK'S VIEW.

ON FINAL DAYS;
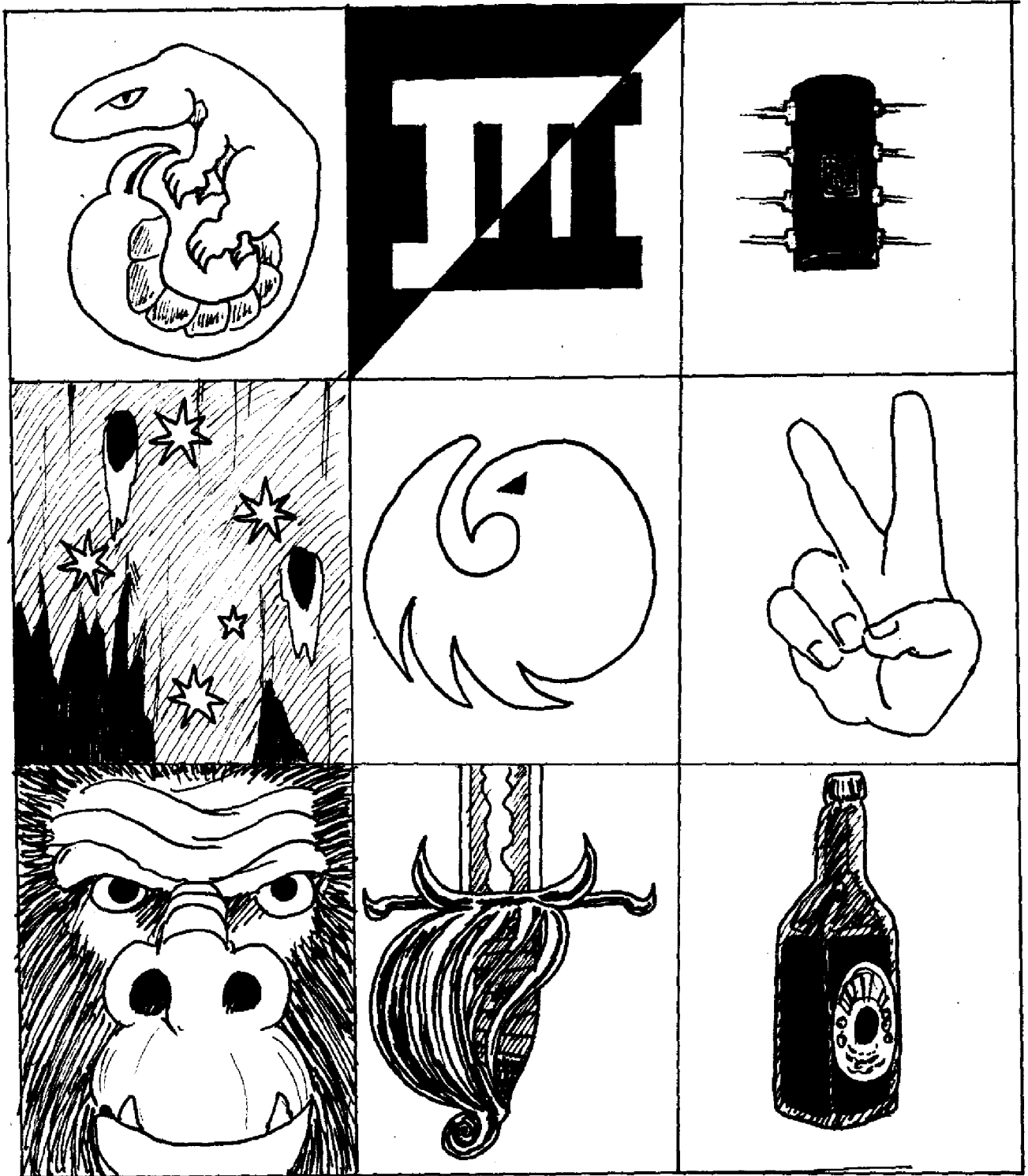
CLASS PHOTO;   FINAL DAYS GAME 1   1986.

TOP;   Tailend Charlie, Third Demi-Brigade, The System.

MIDDLE; Southern Cross Lance, Mad Mark Marauders, Winston Churchill.

BOTTOM; Kong,   The Dorsai,   Glendower.

P.T.O

Spetsnaz Forces-Cobra, Azlan Tiger , Bimulous.

Tantel El Hur , P.A.F. , Hydra.

Usal Deathcrier , Snake byte , Deactivators.

FINAL DAYS
Rick's Initial Impressions

Most PBM games such as Return From Sirius and Spiral Arm have inbuilt features that encourage conflict between players or groups of players. In Return From Sirius the features are limited numbers of expensive ships that only one player can control and,more importantly, use worlds and reseach planets. Research planets allow players to adjust elements in the game every four turns, allowing a player to compensate for mistakes or bad luck or speed up developments such as ship building.

In Spirial Arm the formal alliance system coupled with automatic combat between non-allied ships produce and encourage conflict between players.

Final Days is very different, in fact players who have moulded their playing styles on achieving a "Big Stab" and picking up the pieces of their victims' empire will suffer a serious dilemna in Final Days.

The game is based on the conditions facing rebels/guerillas in any environment with an added twist instead of a small mixture of rebel groups, there are 18 small, diverse operating groups facing a powerful opponent.

The computer forces outnumber all the player's forces in terms of units and firepower. It has an added powerful weapon of tactical battlefield nuclear weapons, and it is building a weapon capable of destroying all its foes.

Among the dilemnas facing players in Final Days are:

1. How far can you trust your fellow players? The news from FINAL DAYS game 1 is not very far at the moment. In turn 3, thirty odd units were destroyed and the computer was absent from many of these deadly combats.

2. What role will you play?

Building up your own powerbase by controlling the populated areas in your vicinity. Conserving your strength/forces, making an occasional attack on an isolated CPU (the short hand term for the computer's forces) maintance robot?

3. Will you find the nearest factory, gather a few other rebels and launch a dramatic assualt?

4. Find a factory and begin a long attrition campaign against it, and any CPU forces that arrive with hit and run attacks, ambushes, laying mines on key approaches.

5. Participate in a mapping exchange, knowing that you are giving away information that might just make it easier for other players to set traps for you? On the other hand it would be useful to know the terrain around the CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT.

6. Send valuable troops out into the dangers of the weirdlands to recruit independent units?

7. Will you send a sizable force towards the centre of the region where the CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT is bound to be, and where victory points for attacking CPU units are higher (but so is the concentration of CPU units)?

8. Will you produce a number of trucks to become the player who can transfer other players units to hot spots or reinforcements to bring them quickly and thus earn the appreciation (votes) of other rebels?

9. Will you lead/encourage 3 or 4 other rebel groups into a foolhardy attack, so you can pick up population centres from their weakened control?

10. Will you try and get players to unknowingly converge on the same area just as computer flyers are sweeping the area (after your earlier attack on a maintaince robot) so they attract a tactical nuclear strike?

The above is only a brief run down on some of the various options and combination of options that a FINAL DAYS player is faced with. Below this article is a semi-humourous look at the forces in Game 1 of Final Days.

Witch King

There are currently five Magic School games underway with another one to start shortly. In the games being played at the moment at least three witches towers have been destroyed or captured (but only one where the attacked magic user has not already replaced it with another). In at least one game a dragon has been controlled.

The games have proven a challenge to both moderators and players. The freedom of interaction and the close parrells to the operations of fictional magic have been a real boon to players.

All in all though Witchking has been a tremendous drain on moderating resources. It has not been an easy game to run. Occassionally one player's orders may take over an hour to input and check or it may take that long to find an answer to a player's question. We have slowly been working on this problem but we have been faced with a Catch 22 situation. Witchking takes a long time to moderate thus there is very little time and energy left to invest in overcoming this problem. We hope that with more time on his hands and the eventual acquistion of Turbo Pascal that Johnny will help Witchking to become easier to run. One of our original intentions with this game was to spend time on providing a roleplaying atmosphere to the game. we still want that goal.

Witch King: some magic lessons.
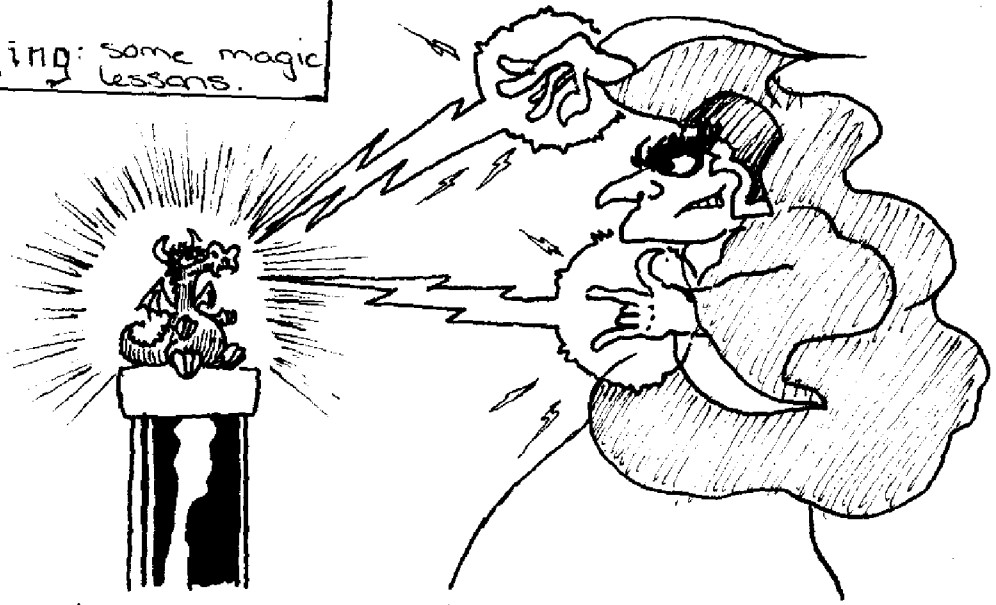
ALWAYS USE SUFFICIENT MANA FOR THE JOB.
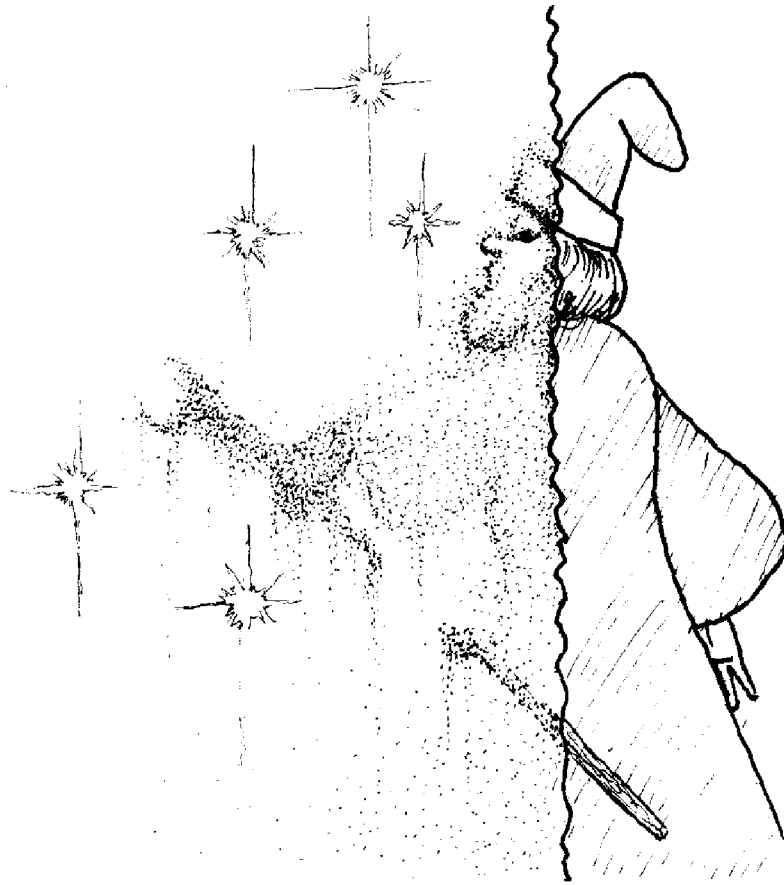
THE MAJORITY OF PROVINCES ARE NOT WARDED.

RESERVED NAMES FOR MISSING TIGER PLAYERS.

Any player in any Missing Tiger may reserve their playing name providing that name has not already been reserved by another. You do not have to use this name in all your games. To reserve 'your name' pick a name of 8 characters or less for return From Sirius and Witchking and up to 24 characters for Final Days and pay a fee of $5.00 to The Missing Tiger.

This player name is reserved for all time for all games run by The Missing Tiger.

NAMES THAT HAVE BEEN RESERVED:

Che	Nogrog	Mjolnir
Fthrog	Monkey	Aivtares
Draco	Paf	Dylan
Cortez	Drfi	Drago
Trajan	Zarquon	Drako
Phoenix	Khougar	Dark Star
Robspier	Warlord	Zaphod

At Last: they have arrived;

T-shirts boasting

The Missing Tiger logo.

This is a limited print so Order your t-shirt early.

*Good quality white t-shirts with black logo. (EXACTO T-SHIRTS)

THE MISSING TIGER.
GPO Box 286C, HOBART TAS 7001

Please send me......shirts.
Size:.................

Name:...........................

Address:.......................
....

Cheque, money order, Bankcard /Visa authority for $Aust10.00 (this includes postage within Australia).

Signed:.........................

Repack NYLON Ribbons

OLD CARTRIDGE   +   NEW RIBBON   =   SAVING*

JANE repacks most 6,8,9,12,19,25,38 & 50 mm wide NYLON RIBBONS
used for computer and other printers.

JANE repacks in conventional boring **BLACK** or
            so you can be different from everyone else, in

BLUE   GREEN   RED   BROWN   PURPLE

FOR:-

    COMPUTER DOT MATRIX PRINTERS, TELEX MACHINES, POS, ATM'S,
    CASH REGISTERS AND DATE CODING MACHINES

    ***   PROCEDURE FOR SCORING EFFICIENCY POINTS IN THE OFFICE   ***

10   **DON'T** throw away your printer cartridge or spool.
            (If you're not sure if your cartridge can be repacked send a used
            one to Jane for a quotation).

20   **FIND** an old shoe box or equivalent (you'll need this later)

30   **PLACE** "used" cartridge in shoe box.

40   **IF** shoe box is full - GOTO 50 , ELSE, GOTO 30.

50   PACK & WRAP box full of cartridges.

60   **POST** TO JANE (See address below)
            (Don't forget to say which colour you want.)

70   WAIT 3 working days (while Jane works hard, repacking your cartridge
      with brand spanking new ribbon, [P.S. she pays the return postage])

80   USE YOUR OLD CARTRIDGE WITH NEW RIBBON WITH SAME RESULT, FOR LESS $'s.

90   WATCH YOUR REPLACEMENT COST SHRINK

95   **SAVE** the shoe box for next time.

99   **ASK** FOR PAY RISE - you've earnt it!

            TELL YOUR FRIENDS!!!!!

P.S. Oh! By the way we sell NEW ribbons too! (But we try to keep that a
      secret)
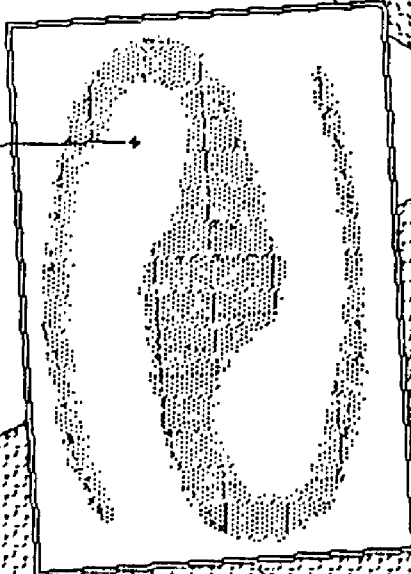(* Savings of 30-80% on replacement cost can be made)

-44-

SPIRAL ARM.
A COMPUTER GAME OF GALACTIC CONQUEST.

DEATHSTARS INCORP.

You be here!

SPIRAL ARM
by
The Australian
Wizard.

Spiral Arm is a 50 player, computer moderated Play by Mail game of space conflict in the far future. Played on a map containing over 600 stars, each player begins with one star and a home planet. His initial fleet is small and he is required to travel to nearby stars to take possession of them for colonisation. All too soon he will be encountering other expanding players intent on controlling more and more stars. At home his people use Industry and Raw materials to build more warships and Transports for colonists. Once landed on a new world the colonists will need support and , industry to help them grow to where they too can begin building ships to travel to the stars with. At the same time you will be meeting other players with whom you

can exchange information. If they are friendly enough you can even ally with them, allowing each others ships to pass freely over each others worlds, or to combine to fight a common foe. Warships include Scouts, Destroyers, Cruisers, Battleships, Dreadnoughts and Monitors. Technology may be invested in with planetary income to improve your fire power, and eventually gain unknown powers to daunt your enemies. Spiral Arm is a game of planning and diplomacy, you are almost forced to co-operate with others as you attempt to gain control of vast areas of the galaxy and achieve the final victory. Spiral Arm has two week turn arounds and each move costs $3.50. Every move you get a report of your empire and a new submission sheet.

(or they shot Queenslanders don't they)

This is a semi-serious review on my favourite non-Missing Tiger game. Currently I am playing in the Australian Wizard moderated game SPIRAL ARM. (for an excellent serious review of this game read BREAKOUT 22). I am cleverly playing under the nom de guerre of MISSING TIGER player 1 and doing very well thankyou in Game 5 (at least up to turn 19 when I lost my main ally). The service offered is fast regular and reliable. Due to mail being processed in Brisbane on Saturdays (as opposed to Sundays in Tassie) most of my Spiral Arm moves reach me on Tuesday or Wednesday at the latest.

The rulebook is set out in a nice logical sequence but it certainly helped to have Johnny close by (who had played in Spiral Arm 1) to help fill in some details about movement in the game. With the review in Breakout ,the new players handbook (no one has sent me one sob sob) and the articles in the Wizards Grimoire any beginning player should be equipped to tackle the game.

After nineteen turns of playing I now own 22 planets, several of them fully industrialised. With the help of an ally destroyed another player in the game.

However I do have some minor gripes about the game these are:
1. The Wizards ban on passing diplomatic messages via them add a tremendous cost to the playing of the game if you are going to take it seriously. With the "Queensland Factor" (a problem I will discuss later) quick diplomacy is vital but you find yourself having to make numerous STD calls or priority paid letters to organise basic pacts and actions with your allies for the next turn.

As moderators of a large number of games I know that they feel it would add significantly to the time in processing the games and possible expenses if players started to send 50 communiques a turn to all other players in the game. But this problem could be solved by placing an upper maximum of say five messages per player per turn. There are 50 players in the game and by turn 19 I have only communicated directly with 8 of these and only know the player names of another twenty (and not their addresses.

2. The Queensland Factor.
Maybe because the Wizards are Brisbane based, or maybe because bannanas come in bunches but I am plagued by the paranoia of having

Queenslanders to the left of me
Queenslanders to the right of me
Queenslanders to the front of me
Onward Onward Ride the brave tigers and allies

I have heard similar expressions of paranoia from other non-Queenslanders in SA5 and other Spiral Arm games. I do not know of the overall statistical break down per game of Spiral Arm of Queenslanders (a phone call from Kevin Flynn gave a rough breakdown of about 25% of players being from pineapple juice land) except they seem to be under every rock in Spiral Arm 5. It maybe they are just like a toothache and always playing on my mind.

(written by Rick.)

diplomacy

85.9

FALL 1904

<u>AUSTRIA</u>: NMR. <u>A</u> VIENNA ~~DISBANDS. RETREAT~~ ~~TRIESTE~~ DISBANDS.

<u>ENGLAND</u>: NMR. WHO WANTS TO TAKE OVER?

<u>GERMANY</u>: M^cKINLEY = ALL HOLD (RATHER INSPIRING?)

<u>ITALY</u>: GOULD= TUNIS, IONIAN & SPAIN HOLD. TYRR & ADRI SUP ION.
TRIESTE-SERBIA. TYROL SUP R BOHEMIA- VIENNA.

<u>RUSSIA</u>: YOVICH.= S PBURG HOLD. BOH-VIENNA. SE POL-RUMANIA
SUPPORTED BY GALICIA. BUDA SUP I TRI- SERBIA

<u>TURKEY</u>: SNELL= NMR. RUM RETREAT BULGARIA
SERB RETREAT ALBANIA

FA DISBANDS.
AA DISBANDS.
ENGLAND +1 (ENGLAND, BRE, NOR, DEN, SWE)
GERMANY +2 (GERMANY, PAR, MARS, BELG, HOLL)
ITALY +1 (ITALY, TRI, SERB, TUN, SPA.+ PORT
RUSSIA +2 (RUSSIA, RUM, VIE, BUDA)
TURKEY -2 (TURKEY, BULG, GREE)

85 - I
FALL 1904
GM: Rick Snell

ITALY (WHITCHURCH RIP):
F ROM S A NAP;
A NAP S F ROM:
Goverment- Venezuala.

RUSSIA (CLOSTER):
F SWE-DEN;
F SEV HOLD;
A STP-NOR;
A SIL A LIV -PRU
A LIV-PRU;
A GAL-WAR;
A BOH S FRE A MUN;
A VIE HOLD:
The knife is sharp,
I hope it goes deep.
BUILDS:
F STP(NC); A MOS:

MESSAGES: 'Because of the barbaric act of
agression against my ally, President Cherry, by
the warmongering Briton. I have been forced to order
my forces into British territory I regret the
necessity of this act.'
Czar of Russia

ENGLAND (SIMMONS):
F NAO-MAO;
A BRL-PAR;
F ENG-BRE;
A KIE-RUH;
A HOL-BEL;
F NTH S A HOL-BEL;
F HEL-HOL:

TURKEY (MELLOR):
A VEN S A TRI-TYR;
F ADR-ION;
A APU S F ION-NAP;
A TRI-TYR;
F ION-NAP;
F AEG S F ADR-ION;
A SMY-CON:
BUILDS:
F SMY; A ANK:

AUSTRIA (R.I.P.)
A TYR (DISBAND):

FRANCE (CHERRY):
A TUS-ROM;
F TYR S A TUS-ROM;
F GOL-TUS;
A MUN S A KIE(ENG)-BER;
A RUH S A MUN;

A BUR-PAR;
F TUN HOLD:
MESSAGES: The French Gov.
today announced further trade
embargoeson the English pigs.
No more restaurants will be
established in London, A
STRONGLY worded communiqué
suggested : '' No more frogs
or snails for those
Philistines" snapped
President Cherry.

diplomacy

Germany (Braun) A Kie-Mun; A Mun S Il; A Ber-Pru; F Bal S A Ber-Pru;
F Den S F Bal.

ITALY: (Whitchurch) F ALB-ION; A PIE-VEN; A TRI S (Aus) A VIE; F NAP-TYR.

Russia (Wilkins) F LIV-BAL; F BOT-SWE; A SWE-FIN; A NWY SF BOT-SWE;
A GAL-VIE; A TYR-VEN; A BUD S A GAL-VIE.

AUSTRIA (Collister) A VIE-GAL (Disbands)

FRANCE (Yovich) A WAL-LON; F ENG S A WAL-LON; F IRI-LIV; F MAO-SPA(SC);
A BEL H; A BUR-MAR.

ENGLAND (CIVIL DISORDER) A YOR H; F LON H (Disbands); F NTH H.

TURKEY (YORK) NMR A CON H; A SER H; F GREM-F AEG H; F SMY H; F ION H;
F TUN H;.

BUILDS:		
GERMANY	BER, MUN, KIE, DEN; HOL	= NO change.
ITALY	VEN, ROM, NAP, TRI	= NO change.
RUSSIA	NAR, MOS, STP, SEV, SWE, NOR, BUD, ROM, VIE	= 1 BUILD (A WAR).
AUSTRIA	(BYE - BYE).	
FRANCE	PAR, MAR, BRE, SPA, POR, BEL, LON, LIV	= 2 BUILDS (F BRE, A PAR)
ENGLAND	EDI, 1 DISBAND (F NTH).	
TURKEY	LON, ANK, SMY, BUL, GRE, TUN, SER	= NO change.

MESSAGES: ITALY "Can I be anyone's puppet, please?"

AUSTRIA "Good bye"

When Rick Drew up last turn's map, he left off France's
F ENG (sign) Nice to see that the Russo-Austrian-Hungarian-
Scandenavian Empire is still growing.

49.

art © Garry Leach

AN AGE OF MIRACLES.

Brooke Alexander.

Superheroes.

Have you ever wondered what the American comics industry would be without them? A lot healthier, perhaps. Or dead. The "giants" of the industry, Marvel and DC, seem generally content to pander to an aggressively conservative fandom that is unwilling or unable to relinquish its adolescent fantasies of power. Ordinary superhero comics are aimed at a predominantly male readership that isnt really interested in experimentation or innovation, hence the profusion of currently popular mutant and super team titles. Fortunately, fandom is just large enough and just diverse enough to support an elite of more substantial works. It could be argued that without THE X-MEN and NEW TEEN TITANS, there would be no LOVE AND ROCKETS, no JOURNEY, even no CEREBUS [though Dave Sim's earth-pig seems to have his own small army of fans, independent of the mainstream.]

Having said all this I have to admit that occassionally along comes a creator with talent enough to breath real life into the moribund superhero genre. An excellent example is Frank Miller. Miller has rejuvenated Marvel's DAREDEVIL not once but twice, he has re-defined the Bat-Man with his DARK KNIGHT series and, in an exciting collaboration with artist Bill Sienkiewicz, is presently enthralling readers with the tale of his tragic anti-heroine, Elektra. But I do think that the concept of the superhero has never been better used than it is by Alan Moore in MIRACLEMAN, published by Eclipse Comics.

Moore is an Englishman who, it has been claimed, bears a striking resemblance to Jesus Christ. His work first appeared in 2000 A.D. and Dez Skinn's WARRIOR magazine. [In fact, the first five issues of MIRACLEMAN reprint material that originally appeared in WARRIOR]. On the strength of this, Moore was selected by DC to replace Martin Pasko as writer of the ailing SAGA OF THE SWAMP-THING. The rest, as they say, is history...

50

Speaking of history, a short lesson is now in order. Miracleman [or as he was originally known, Marvelman — the change was thought necessary in order to avoid legal trouble with a certain hyper-sensitive American company when the big blue banana crossed the Atlantic] was born in 1954 when London based publisher L. Miller & Son Ltd. ran out of American CAPTAIN MARVEL reprints. Len Miller turned to Mick Anglo's Gower Street studio, and the result was six years of light-hearted adventure. The key word "marvel" was kept, but the character soon differed dramatically from his American counterpart. In this his latest incarnation, nothing of the old Captain Marvel remains.

The date is March 15 1948. An alien space-craft has crashed in England. [As depicted by artist Alan Davis the vessel looks truly alien, which is no mean feat]. The job of examining it is given to a secret government agency known only as the "Spookshow". The task falls to the Spookshow's principal scientific adviser, Dr. Emil Gargunza. A man of genius and twisted, hidden evil, Gargunza gradually unravels some of the Visitor's secrets. He learns that the alien was actually a mind with more than one body. It could select the form most suited to the task at hand, storing the others in what became known, for want of a better term, as " infra-space". Using a process akin to cloning, perfectly evolved superhuman replicas of a trio of kidnapped orphans are created. To control these supermen, other Visitor-derived technology is used to generate malleable comic-book personaes for the three dreamers. [Thus, Moore beautifully incorporates the old Marvelman continuity and simultaneously strengthens his own story-line]. Years pass. Gargunza disappears, and a terrified government attempts to use an atomic bomb to destroy the creatures it had called into being. One dies with both bodies crushed obscenely together. One vanishes. The last, Micky Moran, is found broken and amnesiac. Nearly twenty years are to pass before he awakens.

caption The Visitors Space craft (Issue 5)

Caption: The Apollonian Face of the Superman (Issue 1).

Alan Moore is writing a horror story. Nowhere is this more evident than in issues six and seven. Many of the initial threads of plot are resolved. Miracleman has discovered himself. He knows that he is a product of Gargunza's "PROJECT ZARATHUSTRA" [this is not Moore's only reference to Friedrich Nietzsche — in issue one he uses a quotation from THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSTRA to link an early Anglo Marvelman story with the opening of his own]. He also learns that Gargunza wants to live forever by possessing his [Miracleman's] unborn child. But there is a third secret. Miracledog. " We always experiment on animals first dont we ? " says Gargunza. The beast, Pluto, is a monster in the same mould as the entity in ALIEN, impossibly strong and durable, and implacably malevolent. But the real horror, in issue seven, is to be found in two other memorable sequences. In the first, Miracleman confronts three of Gargunza's guards. For one, Heinz, the encounter is practically a religious experience:

" Forty years. Forty years we have
waited for you, the first of the
blonde gods that would replace us.
Overman. You have come at last."
" Yes," replies Miracleman, " You
can go now."

He then pushes his hand through the
unfortunate Heinz's chest.
Graphically violent, yes, but not
gratuitous. Simply inevitable.

The climax of this issue [literally
one suspects] is the death of
Gargunza at the hands of his
creation. In an act of almost
sexual retribution, Miracleman
carries Gargunza high into the sky,
" my parting gift ", kisses him and
then throws him earthward with such
force that his body burns up in the
lower atmosphere. What Alan Moore
has done oh-so-effectively in this
comic is to adapt to his own ends
the tale of the Modern Prometheus.
Before there was Gargunza, there
was Frankenstein

art © Chuck Beckum

Caption: Poor Heinz. Yet the violence
in this comic is never without
purpose. As Mike Moran, the hero has
been tormented beyond all reason.
As Miracleman he takes remorseless
vengeance (issue 7)

art © Chuck Beckum

Like any good horror story MIRACLEMAN grasps the reader on several levels at once. There is the attempt to horrify with sickening events and sights, but a "purer" unease is created as Moore unerringly fingers several " phobic pressure points ", to use a term coined by author and horror theorist Steven King. One is that universal fear of losing one's identity, and another is the age-old equation of sex with death. And then there is the BIG one - the fear of dying itself. Emil Gargunza is motivated principally by a refusal to accept his own mortality. Mike Moran dies every time he utters the word "Kimota", which triggers the brain implant responsible for the body switch. The product of all these sub-texts is subtle, persistent tension.
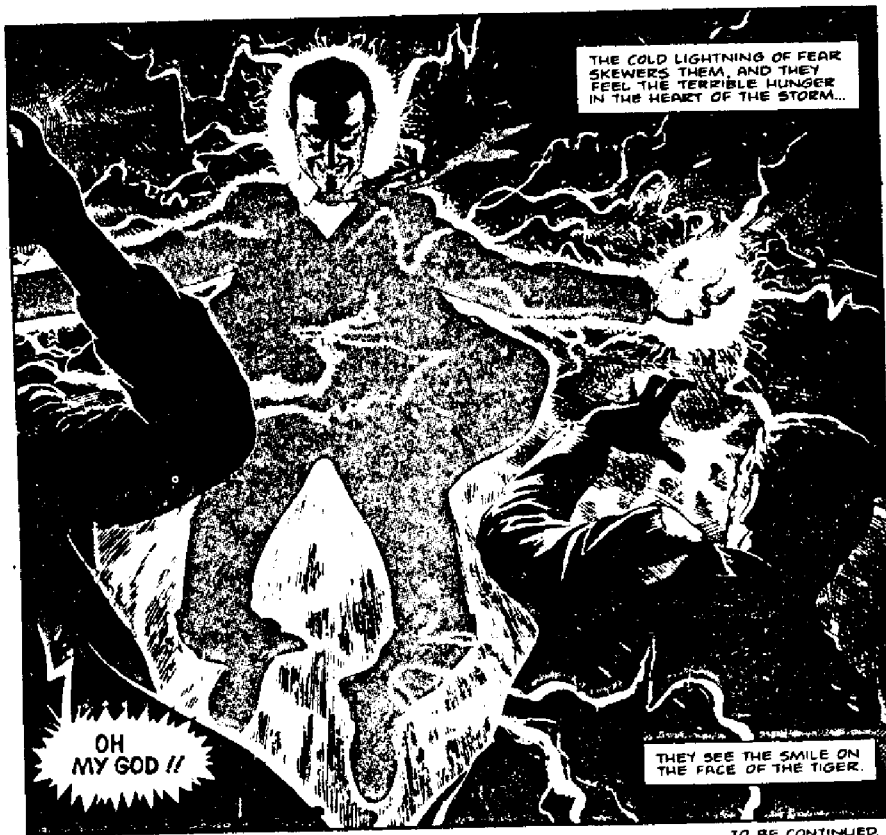
If proof is needed that Alan Moore enjoys immensely what he is doing, one need look no further than his grasp of characterisation. He can't seem to resist the temptation to give even the smallest and least important members of his cast real psychological weight. He excells in the creation of unusual, often bizarre three-dimensional characters - a good example is the black assassin with the blue sapphire teeth and the marvellous name, Evelyn Cream. However, Moore's most fully realised character is not, oddly enough, the beautiful, godlike, Miracleman [though this achievement is impressive enough]. Instead, it is Emil Gargunza. Though utterly in the tradition of all those other mad scientists who trod paths of forbidden knowledge in a myriad horror films in the 1930's, his is a restrained insanity which is coupled with a most unusual life history [no Doctor Doom clones here, thank God!] to make Gargunza a compelling and convincing figure. Lord, he even loves his mother.

By now you have probably realised that I am more than a little impressed by Alan Moore's skill as a writer. I would like to offer one last illustration to support the thesis that MIRACLEMAN is essentially a horror-story. Moore sees the inherent potential of Overman all too clearly to ignore its sinister face. Miracleman wasnt the only survivor of the trap sprung on that October day in 1963. Little Johnny Bates, Kid Miracleman, also escaped, but with his memory and powers intact. He was sixteen years old. He was also the most powerful being on earth. When he and Mike Moran meet again twenty years later, Moran realises that he is not Johnny Bates, is not in fact anything human.

He sees "...the smile on the face of the tiger." They fight, but this is not a superhero "slugfest". No, they fight because they must. It is a conflict of diametrically opposed forces, one Dionysian, the other Apollonian. Bate's is the Hyde to Miracleman's Jekyll. But Bates has been a superhuman for over twenty years. His might surpasses that of his opponent. Their struggle is god-like but it can have only one outcome. Miracleman falls. The battle in chapter 5, issue 2, ends on this evocative and frightening note:

" His dragon eyes peer through the curtain of dust, searching for a sign of life, of survival...but there is no sign. None at all. He smiles a tiger smile...After a while he turns away to look at the city spread behind him...London, huddled against the stinging rain...He wonders what to do next."

Bates is not that staple of the superhero genre, the corrupted god. He is a corrupted MAN. His humanity has soured and a become a frightening thing. He is the Old Dragon. Somewhere at the heart of Moore's art there is an awareness of the sometimes beautiful-seeming and seductive nature of corruption. MIRACLEMAN expresses eloquently the classic Apollonian/Dionysian dichotomy. So beware, Gentle Reader. Here there be tygers. And Dragons.

Caption The Dionysian face of the Superman   31
(Issue 1)

diplomacy

FRANCE (kunit Bentley) A Hol S (Eng) A Den-Kie; F Mar-GOL; F Tun-Tyr; F Bre-MAO;
     A Bur-Ruh; A Par-Bur; A Gas-Mar; F Bel S A Hol.

ITALY (Benito Bean) F Tyr-WMed; A Ven-Pie.

AUSTRIA (Smirnoff) A Bud-Ser; A Gre-Alb; A Tyr S A Rom-Ven; A Rom-Ven; F Alb-Tri.

RUSSIA (Cutra-back) A Nor-Fin; F Swe-Nor; A Mos-Ukr; A War-Pru; A Gal-Sil;
     F Blk-Con; A Ank S F Blk-Con; A Sev-Rum; A Vie-Boh; A Bud-Vie.

ENGLAND (E, Roche) F Liv-Iri; F Lon-Nth; F Nwy S F Lon-Nth; A Den-Kie.

GERMANY (KKK) N·M·R. Ret FNth-Hel; A Kie-Mun.

TURKEY (Wilkins?) N·M·R. Ret A Con-Smy.

56.

diplomacy

Spring 1904. (alright Ben, I'll try it)

```
AUSTRIA (T.Friedrich) : A Gal S A War; A Ser S ITALIAN A Gre; F Alb-Ion;
            A War Hold; A Sev S A Rum-Ukr; A Rum-Ukr; A Bud-Rum;.
GERMANY (B.Aveling)   : A Bel S A Mun-Bur; A Ruh S A Mun-Bur; A Mun-Bur;
            F Den S ENGLISH F Nwy-Nth; F Kie-Hol; A Ber Mun.
ENGLAND (A.Geissman) : F NAt-Mid; F Wal S F Nth-Eng; F Nth-Eng;
            F Nwy-Nth; A Fin Hold.
FRANCE  (J.Ball)     : A Pic S A Bur; A Mar S A Bur; A Bur S A Pic;
            A Spa-Gas; F Eng-Mid. F Eng retreats to LONDON!!!
TURKEY  (D.Walsh)    : A Bul Hold; F Con S A Bul; F Ank-Bla; F Tun-Ion;
            F Aeq-Gre.
RUSSIA  (G.NORTHEY)  : A Ukr-Sev; A Liv-Mos.  A Ukr destroyed.
ITALY   (M.DEWIS)    : NMR. A Apu; F Nap; F Ion; A Gre.
```

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES.

Because of the number of messages, and lack of space, I am forced to
rewrite most.

'For the first time Russians will know democracy, freedom, & peace'
                                                    AUSTRIA.

'France mobilises for total war, & will fight to the second last man'
                                                    FRANCE.

'France & Germany, why fight a war of attrition, when both Italy &
Austria are open for attack'   RUSSIA.

'To swap: one fleet, aquired in error. Wish to trade for army.
President Ball need not apply. Anyone interested?' GERMANY.

diplomacy

FRANCE (SMARK)   A BEL H ; A PIC S A BEL; F MAO -NAO ; F BRE- ENG , A GAS H

ENGLAND (RUDKIN) F SKA S A DEN ; A DEN H ; F NTH -HOL ; F LON -NTH

RUSSIA (SJOLLEMA) F BUL (EC) S A RUM ; F SWE-NOR ; F BLA -SEV ; A WAR-SIL ;
                  A GAL -BUD ; A RUM S A GAL-BUD .

ITALY (WATKINS)   A TYR-VIE ; A TRI S A TYR-VIE ; F APU-ADR , F TYR-ION .

TURKEY (AVELING) A CON-BUL ; F ANK-BLA ; A ARM MASSACRE LOCALS .

AUSTRIA (CIVIL DISORDER) A VIE H (RETREATS GAL) ; A BUD H (DISBANDS) ; A SER H ; F ALB H .

GERMANY (DODDS)   NMR. A MUN H ; A RUH H ; F KIE H ; F HEL H ; A HOL H .

BUILDS: FRANCE   PAR , BRE , MAR , SPA , POR , BEL = +1 BUILD (F BRE)

        ENGLAND LON , EDI , LIV , DEN   = NO CHANGE

        RUSSIA   MOS , WAR , STP , SEV , SWE , RUM , BUL , BUD , NOR = 3 BUILDS (A WAR , A MOS
                                                                          A STP)

        ITALY   ROM , VEN , NAP , TUN , TRI , VIE = 2 BUILDS (A VEN , A ROM)

        TURKEY   CON , ANK , SMY   = NO CHANGE

        AUSTRIA SER   = -1 BUILD (F ALB DISBANDS)

        GERMANY MUN , BER , KIE , HOL   = -1 BUILD (F HEL DISBANDS)

SORRY NO ROOM FOR MESSAGES, BUT   A) AUSTRIA IS NOW A DROP OUT

                                  B) THIS GAME REMAINS SLOW TURN AROUND.

59.
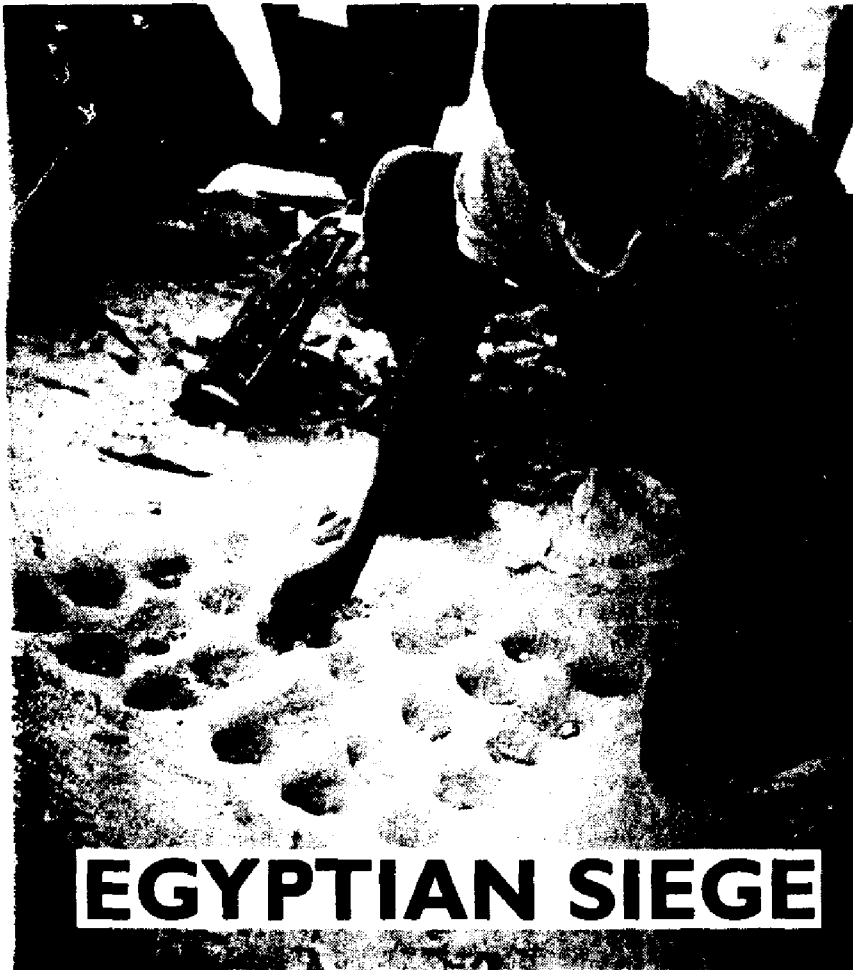
EGYPTIAN SIEGE

by Philip Stewart

THINK OF A BOARD GAME, and you will probably see images of yourself cooped up indoors on a wet day or a long winter evening, or perhaps sitting in a great hall taking part in a chess tournament. Nothing could be further from being out of doors feeling the wind or the sun's warmth, looking at soil and rocks and plants. Well, let me share with you the secret of *seega* or Egyptian siege, a board game that fits so well into its outdoor setting that it seems almost a part of nature.

Siege combines the simplicity of checkers with the infinite variety of chess or go, the slowly un-folding geometry of go with the rapid cut and thrust of chess or checkers. In addition, it has an aesthetic appeal all its own. But if Siege is so good, why have so few people heard of it?

I first met the word "seega" in an Egyptian novel I was translat-ing. My dictionary gave no help, so I asked my Cairo friends. They were learned people — university teachers and students. lawyers

and doctors — but most of them did not even know the game. One friend, though, was able to tell me that it was "a childish game, played by peasants, not interesting at all." I felt uneasy, but got no further.

Having finished my translation, I left the noise of Cairo for a holiday in Uper Egypt. Staying in a village near Luxor, I at last found men playing *seeja* (the Up-per Egyptian pronunciation, from which I have called it "siege" in English). I understood at once

why my Cairo friends despised the game: they were too grand to sit down in the dust and move pebbles around. Worse still, if they had stooped to playing, they would have been soundly beaten; these villagers were highly skilled. They trounced me every time I tried my hand. I soon came to realize that this game was as difficult as chess. The "simple peasants" had mastered some-thing as intellectually demanding as anything in the university cur-riculum of my Cairo friends.

The game is played on a board of 25 stations, five by five. On sand or soft earth the stations are little hollows, pressed with the knuckles. On hard ground, they are the intersections of two sets of five lines, scratched at right angles. On a surface too hard or rough to mark, they are the squares formed by two sets of six twigs or grass stems, laid at right angles. Each player has twelve pieces. These can be of any two contrasting materials: lumps of grey and red schist, knobs of flint and limestone, water-worn pebbles of different colours . . . it could, for that matter, be played with fruits or nuts, bones or shells, even snow-balls and icicles. Part of the beauty of the game is its reflec-tion of the physical scene.

The game takes place in two phases. First, the players take turns setting out their pieces, two at a time, till all the stations except the central one are filled. In the second phase, the players take turns moving their pieces, starting with the player who set his pieces down last. (As each player has the first turn in one phase of the game, neither has the heavy advantage of the white pieces in chess.) A move consists of moving a piece to an adjacent square, horizontally or vertically (not diagonally). Pieces may move

backward as well as forward, so the board does not have two ends as in chess and checkers. If a player is unable to move when it is his or her turn, the game ends in stalemate.

The object is to take as many of the opponent's pieces as possible, and the game is won when one player succeeds in reducing the other to only one piece. Taking — which is optional, not obligatory — is effected by moving one of your pieces so that a single enemy piece is caught between it and another piece of yours (horizontally or vertically, not diagonally); the enemy piece is then removed from the board. Two or three pieces, on two or three sides of the station you move to, can be taken simultaneously with one move. If the piece that has just taken can take again, it is allowed, but not obliged, to do so straight away, before the opponent's turn, making as many moves as there are successive takes to be made. (Pieces that are caught between two enemy pieces during the setting out are not thereby taken.)

These are all the rules of siege, and they can be learned in a few minutes. But the simplicity is deceptive. There are hundreds of thousands of viable starting positions (not leading to immediate stalemate), after allowance has been made for those that are rotations or mirror images of each other, as opposed to only one starting position in chess or checkers. Out of each starting position the branching tree of alternative moves grows very rapidly as captures increase the number of empty spaces into which moves can be made. The number of possible games must far exceed the number that have ever been played.

As in chess, the experienced player visualises the board and his position as a whole, judging it by certain broad features. In one way this is even harder in siege than in chess, since the board does not have a black end

and a white end, a king's side and a queen's side. Position must be recognized from any angle. Great variety exists in the extent to which each army is gathered together or divided, and in the shapes of the groups of pieces and in the gaps between them. There are closed games in which two armies press on each other, trying to force losing moves, and open games with rapid change over a wide front. Surprises come the moment attention lapses — not least the surprise of sudden stalemate just when one player seems poised to overwhelm.

Once you have mastered siege — if you ever do — you can progress to double siege, played by the same rules but with twice as many pieces on a board of 49 stations, seven by seven. Here the number of opening positions is on the order of a trillion — more than the number of cells in the human brain. Egyptian villagers assured me that it was possible to go even further and play on a board nine by nine, but I think they were only teasing, though in theory there is of course an infinite number of possible siege boards.

There seems no way of knowing how old the game is. Played on the ground with pieces of rock, it has left no apparent archaeological trace. Linguistic evidence suggests that it predates Arab cultural imperialism in Egypt; there is no convincing Arabic etymology for seega. I am convinced that the game is very ancient and perhaps was played in the shadow of the rising pyramids. If the perfection of a game is measured by the relation between the simplicity of the means and the variety and complexity, then siege has been perfected to a degree that suggests a long evolution.

Of course, it is possible to bring siege indoors and lift it onto the table. For the millions of people who do not live close to nature this is no doubt the form in which the game is most likely to spread. The best layout is sug-

gested below; the board can be used for either simple or double siege, with the extra stations marked with open circles to distinguish them. The centre circle is also open as a reminder to leave it empty during the setting out. The lines connecting the stations indicate the direction of moves. Siege can also be played with one (or two) sets of checkers pieces on 25 (or 49) squares of a checkers board. Siege could and should be translated into the language of the computer.
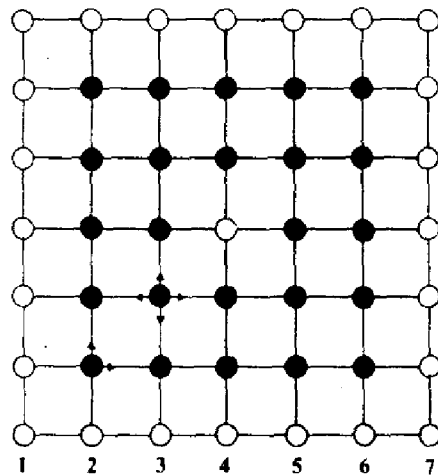

A board for siege and double siege.

A few extra conventions are needed for the game to become standardized. It would be convenient to call the sides "black" and "white," whatever their actual colour, and to agree, say, that black sets out first and white moves first. A simple notation is suggested above, and used in the sample game given below. For match play it would also be necessary to add regulations about the touching of pieces without moving them, the taking back of moves, the correcting of wrong moves, and so on. Time control might also be required.

For me the true siege is still the outdoor game, played on a makeshift board with whatever pieces come to hand — a perfect symbol of the natural roots of human thought. ■
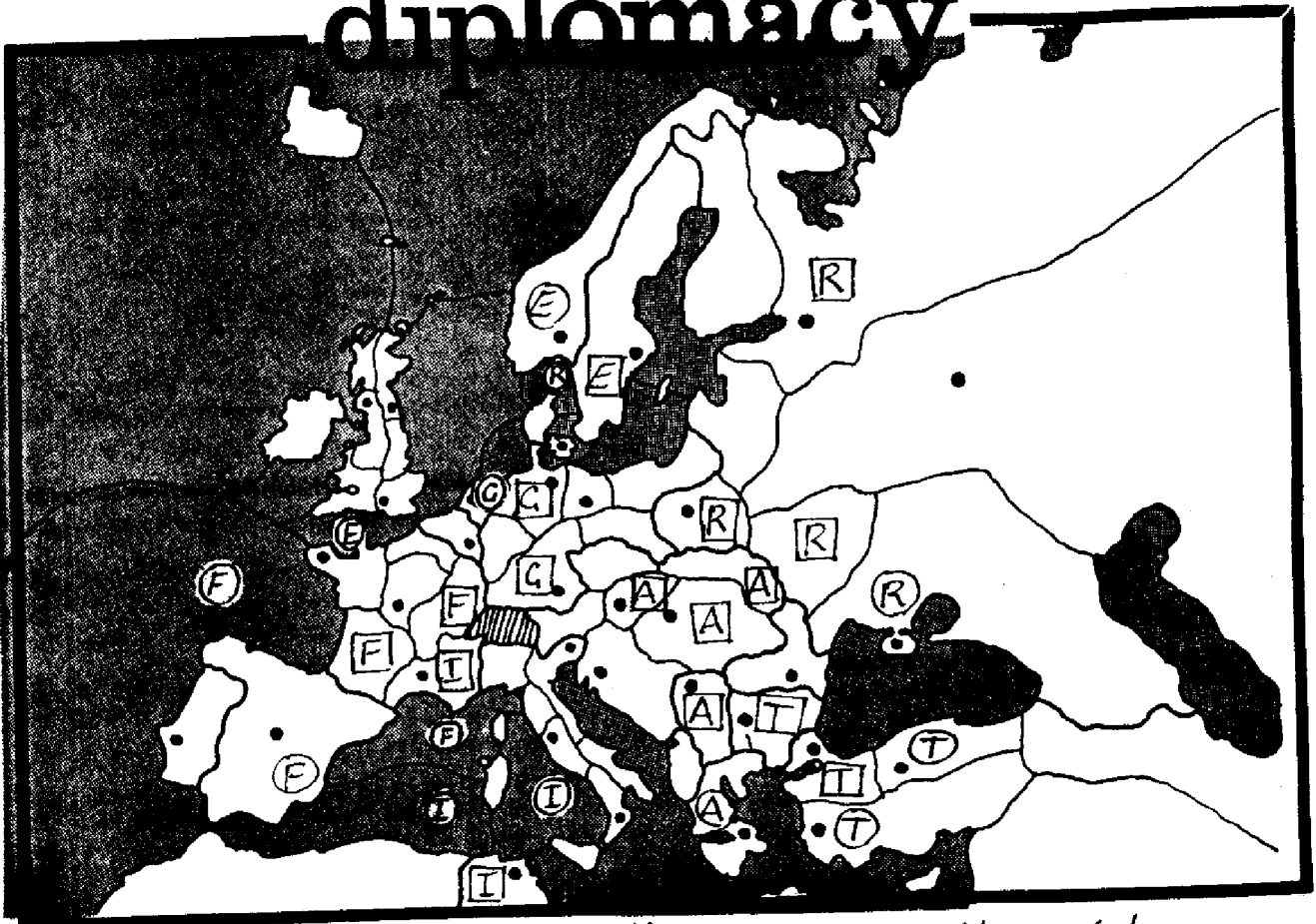
Diplomacy 86 B   Spring 1902   *** Builds next turn ***

Russia (Whitchurch): F Sev - Rum , A War-Gal , A Mos-StP,
    F Swe - Ska , A Gal S F Sev-Rum (NSO)

France (Myers) : A Bur - Mun , A Spa - Gas, F Por - Spa (s.c.),
    F Bre - Mid , F Mar - Gul

Italy (AVDH): F Tyn-Wes , F Nap-Tyn , A Pie - Mar , A Tun H

England (Yovich): A Den - Swe , F Nwy S A Den-Swe , F Nth - Eng

Turkey (Wilson): F Ank H , F Smy - Aeg , A Con S A Bul,
    A Bul S Russ F Sev - Rum

Germany (Penman): F Kie - Hol , A Ber - Kie , A Mun - Bur

Austria (Smith): A Gal - Ukr , A Vie - Gal , A Ser - Rum
    A Bud S A Ser - Rum , F Gre - Aeg

** New German Player : Jim Penman, 20 Wolseley Cres, Blackburn, 3130 **

Press: The British Government wishes to apologise to the people of Germany,
having just received that nation's message of commiseration over the
death of Queen Victoria. It is believed the message was delayed by
Russian pirates in the Baltic

                                  Tony 8/86

An Age of Miracles.

Do you love comics ?

Would you like to read a magazine that takes a close look at the best creators and creations to be found in this medium ?

If the answer to both questions is YES, then AGE OF MIRACLES is the magazine for YOU.

Published every second month AGE OF MIRACLES is devoted to providing the comics aficionado with balanced, informative, well-written reviews and articles. Each issue will feature the best in Australian and foreign comics.

Single issues will cost $3.00 each, and a one-year subscription will be avaliable for $15.00.

FIRST ISSUE: October 1986.

DEADLINE: For submissions of artwork and letters, 26 September 1986.

INTERESTED ?   CONTACT;

Brooke Alexander.
GPO Box 286C
Hobart 7001, Tas.

diplomacy

86-E
SPRING 1901
GM: Rick Snell

ITALY (ROCHE):

A VEN-TYR;

A ROM-VEN;

F NAP-ION:

RUSSIA(TOLHURST):

F SEV-BLA;

F STP(SC)-BOT;

A WAR-LIV;

A MOS-UKR;

AUSTRIA (SIMMONS):

A VIE-GAL;

A BUD-SER;

F TRI-ALB:

GERMANY (GRELIS):

F KIE-DEN;

A BER-KIE;

A MUN-RUH:

FRANCE (BRAUN):

A MAR-SPA;

A PAR-PIC;

A BRE-MAO:

TURKEY (BAGSHAW):

A CON-BUL;

F SMY-CON;

F ANK-BLA:
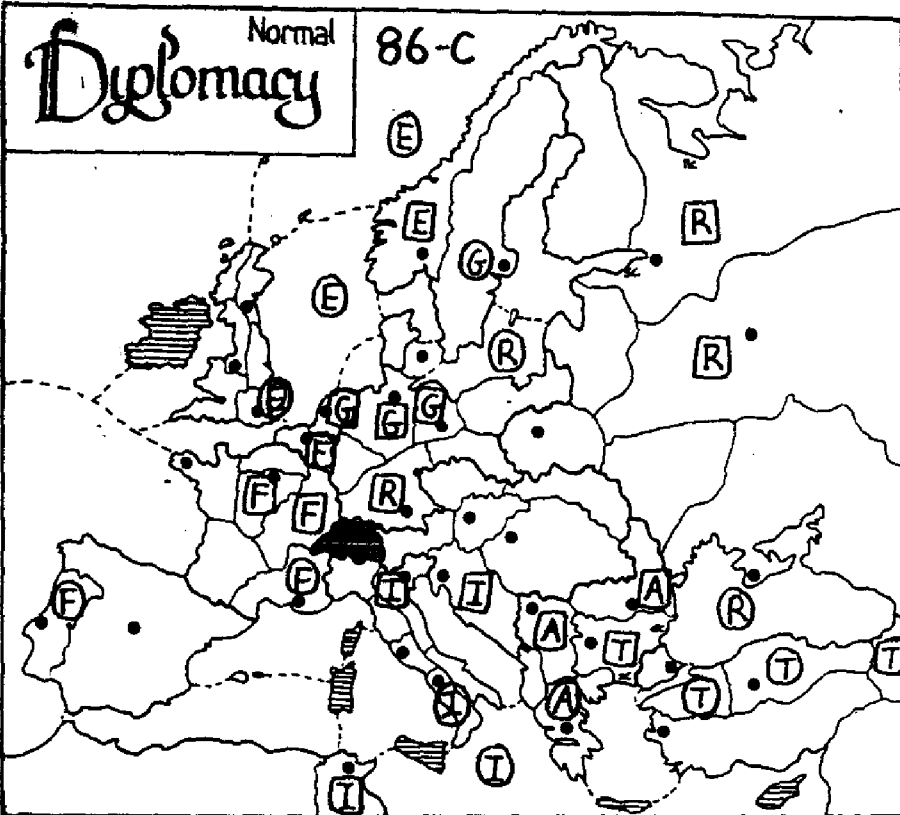
Comment

Not all players agree to speeding up the game so the turnaround will remain as is.

Mistake in Englands orders for Fall 1901 F Nth SA Edi-Lon should have read F Nth SA Edi-Nor. The map was correct. Transcribing error on my part.

Andrew

Orders and Fall Adjustments

ENGLAND: build F Lon

FRANCE: A Par, F Mar

ITALY: A Ven, F Nap

GERMANY: A Kie

AUSTRIA: NBO

RUSSIA: A Mos

TURKEY: F Con

New address: Turkey, Glen Northey, 255 Hoxton Park Rd,
Cartwright, NSW, 2168.
Ph. (02) 607 0828

Press

Constantinople: "New address means I did not receive any letters that may have been sent (sorry!)"

Rome: "We seem to have taken a wrong turn at the Austrian border - sorry."

GO·BETWEEN PUBLICATIONS

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES,

GMs:

85 J and 86 A Mark Dewis 31 Mary St East Launceston 7250	**84A** Paul Mellor 149 Hurstville Rd Oatley NSW 2223	**84B** A. Geissman 24 Caroline St Kingsgrove NSW 2208
84C Duncan Baxter 53 Myall Ave Kensington Gardens SA 5068	**84D** Cameron Thomas 7 Parker St Chelmer QLD 4068	**84E** Darryl Davis RMB 5403 Manor Hill Close Holgate NSW 2250
84F William Brown F4/35 Caroline St East Hawthorn VIC 3124	**85G** Andrew Schacht 5 Pentland Ave Punchbowl NSW 2196	**85H** Terry Bradley 18 Cook St Satur via Scone 2337
85I Rick Snell GPO Box 286C Hobart 7000	**85K** Wayne Closter 358 Burwood Hwy Burwood Vic 3125	**85L** Roscoe Taylor Trinity College Parkville VIC 305
85M and 85 N Rick Snell GPO Box 286C Hobart, TAS 7000	**86 B** Tony Graham 90 Green Point Rd Oyster Bay NSW 2225	**Machiavelli 2** Shane Mc Ardle 6/79 Potter St Dandenong VIC 3175
AWHC Diplomacy Mark Haughey 8 Goodenia St Rivett NSW 2611	**86 C** Andrew England 91 College Rd Somerton Park SA 5044	**86 D and E** Rick Snell GPO Box 286C Hobart, Tas 7000

NEXT TURN DEADLINES

All moves to the GMs by: FRIDAY 26 September 1986.
GMs results to Go*Between Publications by: FRIDAY 3 Oct 1986

Rick and Esther Snell.
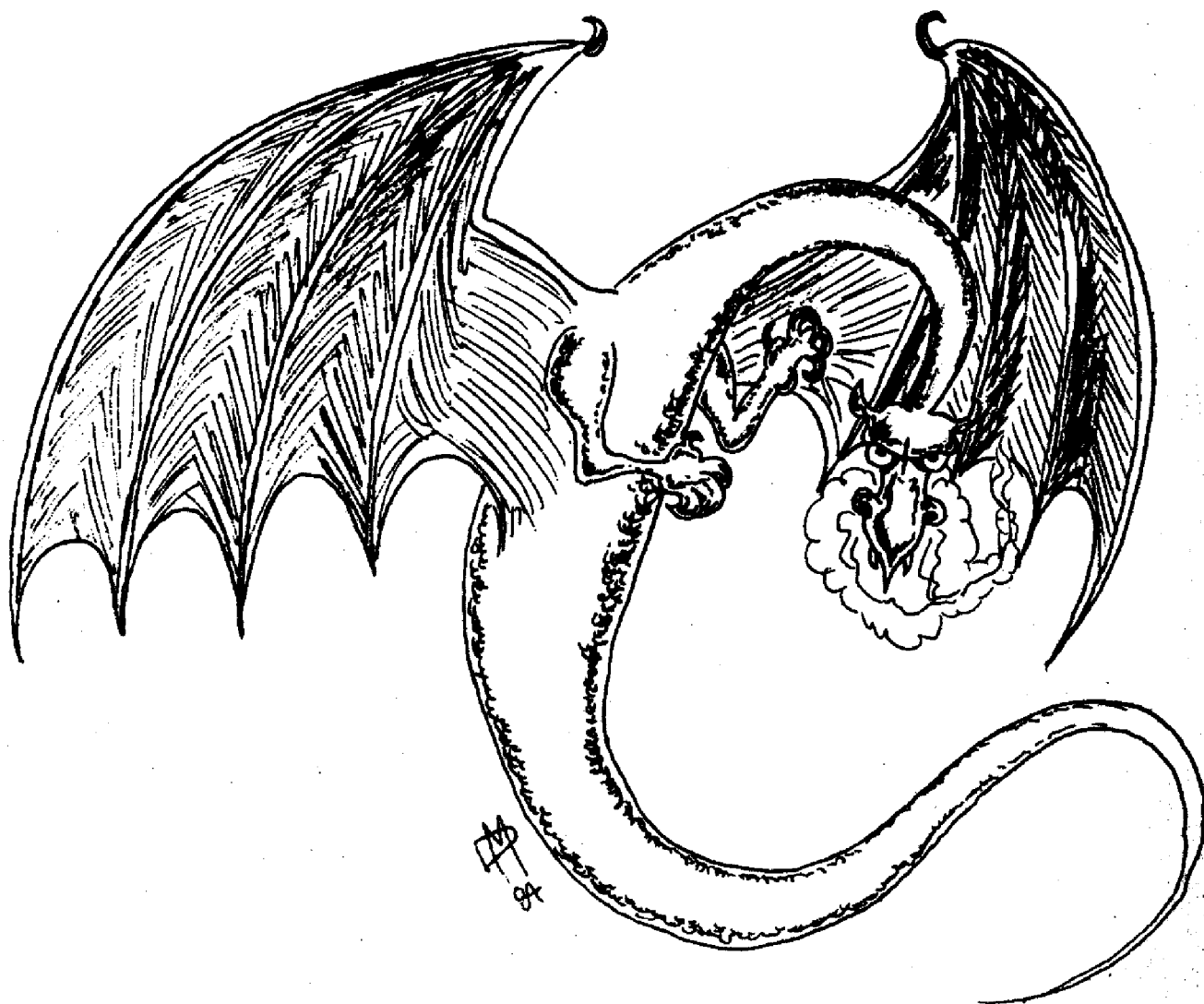
If a tick appears in this space _____ there are some facts that you need to know:
1. Our friend above thinks that your subscription is now due. Therefore you should pay us $12 before you receive your next issue. Payment should be to Go-Between Publications.
2. Our friend above is very vicious and loves to extract payment in blood.