

# GRAUSTARK

The first 'zine for the postal play of Diplomacy, a game of negotiation and conflict designed by Allan B. Calhamer and published by Hasbro

#772

2002D, "Fall 1909"; 2004C, "Winter 1905"

4 February 2006

## u.s.a. ♥ iraq

Dear Iraq, when one country invades another country, it's usually because they don't like 'em. But trust us, that's not the case this time.

WE'RE BRINGING YOU FREEDOM...

... BECAUSE WE CARE.

Don't think of it as a war AGAINST you, think of it as a war FOR you.

NO NEED TO THANK US, REALLY.

We are invested in this; it's not like Americans are just going about their normal lives as if there wasn't even a war on.

SON, WE MUST ALL CHIP IN AND DO OUR PART - CONSERVE ENERGY AND SHARE IN THE SACRIFICE - FOR THE IRAQIS.

god BLESS IRAQ

why do you think we called it "Operation Iraq Freedom"? Because you're special!

BELIEVE ME, WHEN WE'RE NOT PRAYING FOR OUR AWESOME MILITARY TO KICK ASS IN JESUS' NAME, WE'RE PRAYING FOR THE IRAQIS.

You're a priority to our leaders.

IT'S UNANIMOUS! WE HEREBY REPEAL ALL THE TAX CUTS TO THE SUPER-RICH IN ORDER TO BEST AID OUR IRAQI SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

CELEBRATE IRAQ!

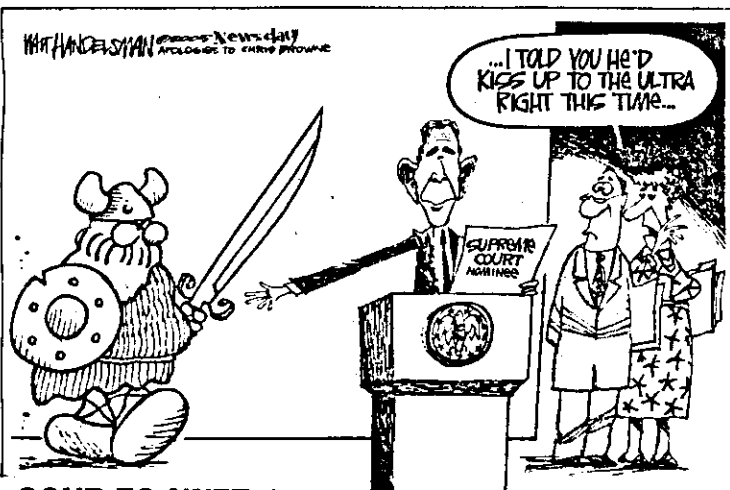
And we haven't been ignoring how many of you we've killed - it's just that we don't talk about it because we feel so sad for you.

I DUNNO -- 30,000?

IT'S NEXT QUESTION.

Thanks for understanding! Lotsa Love, U.S.A.

THE NEW AMERICAN...



### SOUP TO NUTZ

The Pastor at the Church is leaving...

WHY? DID HE DO SOMETHING BAD?

APPARENTLY SO... THE CONGREGATION STOPPED TYTHING...

OH MY... DID HE STEAL CHURCH MONEY? DOES HE HAVE A GAMBLING HABIT? BOOZE? DRUGS? DANCING GIRLS?

MUCH WORSE...

He organized a Peace Group...

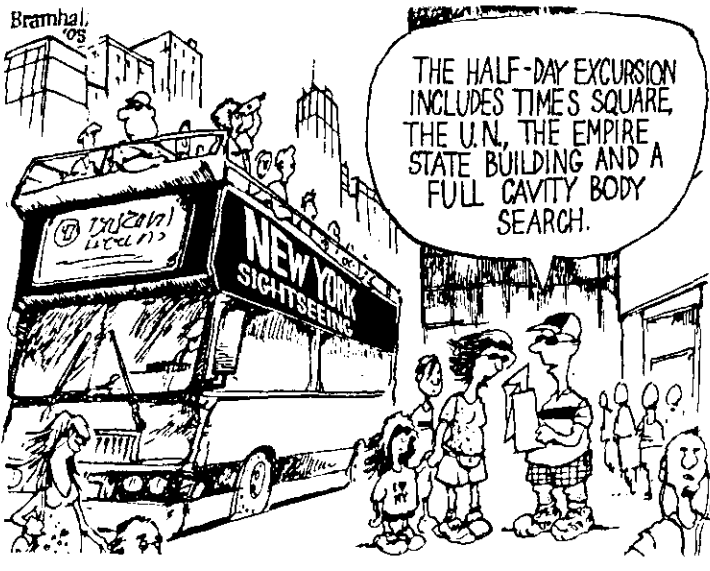
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### By RICK STROMOSKI

What seems to have changed more than anything since, say, the Vietnam War is the volume of protest. I don't want to sound like a nutcase, but I don't see that at all. In 2003, 10 million people around the world marched in protest even before a single shot had been fired in anger. A lot of us have complained that Americans are apathetic. And it's convenient for those in power to say that we're apathetic, though what we really are is helpless. We live in a complex society that bears a heavy weight on us. Still, that didn't stop hundreds of thousands of Americans from participating in those protests. If you take the analogous year in Vietnam—1963—I think there were maybe 14 Quakers who marched down Fifth Avenue.

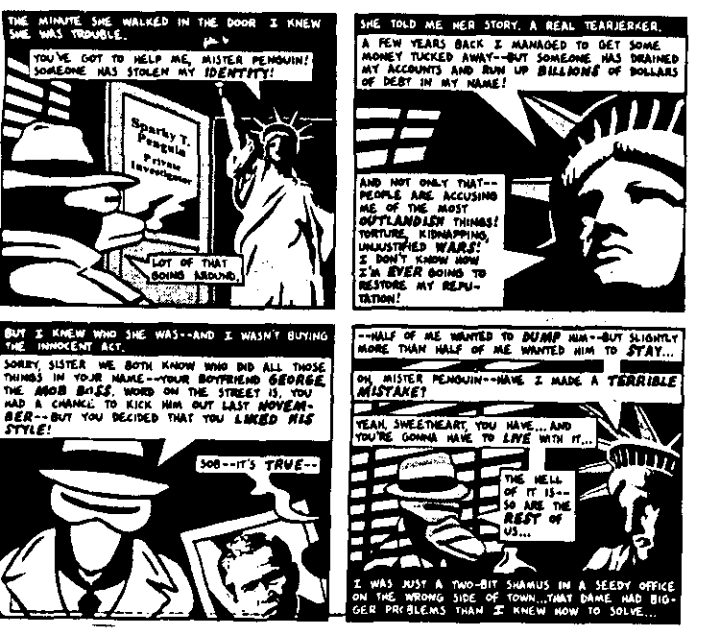




by Tom Tomorrow



THIS MODERN WORLD By Tom Tomorrow



SUTTON IMPACT By Ward Sutton



REPUBLICAN TALKING POINT CLARIFICATIONS



THIS MODERN WORLD By Tom Tomorrow



## MARE NOSTRUM, SORT OF

John Maddox Roberts, *SPQR IX: The Princess and the Pirates* (2005, St. Martin's Press, NY; \$23) For reviews of the eight previous books in this series see Graustarks #600, 614, 708, 740, 758 and 762.

In these pages have been reviewed three series of crime novels set in ancient Rome, in the late republic or early empire. Their heroes Gordianus the Finder (by Steven Saylor), Senator Decius Caecilius Metellus Junior (by John Maddox Roberts) and Marcus Didius Falco (by Lindsey Davis) have all discovered that, as the saying goes, "Honesty is the best policy." This is true out of selfish as well as moral considerations. If you are scrupulously and consistently honest, particularly in a society as corrupt and venal as ancient Rome, important people may eventually realize this, and give to honest persons the opportunity to attain influence, power, and even wealth. There are very few situations in which morality and selfishness lead people to the same conclusion. This is one of them.

It is the year 51 BCE, the civil strife of the Roman Republic continues, and Decius's large and influential family of the plebeian nobility is contemplating the transfer of its allegiance from Caesar to Pompey. This makes Decius doubly an embarrassment to them, since he has grave doubts about the wisdom of such a betrayal, and moreover is happily married to the niece of Julius Caesar. Decius, after two fairly successful years in the office of aedile, wants to run for praetor, the next step up in Rome's hierarchy of public office. (A very informative glossary informs readers about the complications of Roman politics.) Military experience is considered a qualification for this post, and Decius is firmly opposed to returning to Caesar's army in Gaul. So he is sent off to the island of Cyprus to lead a flotilla of three warships against pirates, and mainly to get him out of the way. Besides, piracy is once more threatening the busy commercial shipping of the Mediterranean.

Pompey had allegedly suppressed piracy, but in the absence of an effective naval force it was not staying suppressed. Rome's military power was based on the heavy infantry of the legions, and naval power never figured greatly in Roman assessment of armed might. If it became necessary, as in the old wars with Carthage, Rome would build a navy from scratch, and after the necessity was ended the Republic would go back to its principal dependence on the legions.

At this stage in Rome's history, the biggest foreign policy problems were Egypt and Parthia. (Gaul was not really a "foreign policy problem" any more than the conquest of the western tribes was regarded as an American "foreign policy problem".) Egypt was ruled by the incompetent Ptolemy Auletes, who had already been kicked off his throne by his eldest daughter and her husband, and had bribed the Roman general Aulus Gabinius to restore him. (Note the obvious parallels with Bush War I and the reversal of the Iraqi conquest of Kuwait.) Rome has just occupied the formerly Egyptian possession of Cyprus, which is now in a state of administrative limbo, being held as security until King Ptolemy coughs up what he owes for his restoration - and he has to be careful to do this without extorting so much from his subjects that they overthrow him again. How he does this, Decius discovers, is basic to solving the murder of the Roman governor Silvanus, who was murdered by someone who crammed a wad of frankincense down his throat. And Ptolemy's new heir is the 16-year-old Princess Cleopatra, on hand to look after her father's interests in Cyprus. (Actually, Cleopatra was 18 in that year.)

(Silvanus, incidentally, is not a historical figure. His name isn't even human; it belongs to an ancient Italian god.)

Upon his arrival, Decius discovers several prominent people on the scene. There is the soon to be murdered Governor Silvanus, who invites him to stay at his official residence. There is Princess Cleopatra. Also present is Silvanus's friend General Gabinius, now temporarily in exile for plundering a province but expecting soon to be called back into service for the conquest of Parthia - a hope never to be realized. And, when the grain fleet stops by on its way to Egypt, it disembarks Decius's wife Julia and his friend the political boss and street brawler Titus Milo, recently defended unsuccessfully by Cicero on a charge of murdering a rival, the notorious Publius

(continued on p. 15)

## THREE UNITS ACTUALLY MOVE - AROUND IN A CIRCLE

ENGLAND (Wiedemeyer): A Mos-Sev; A St.P-Mos; F Bar-St.P(n.c.); F Nwy, F Nrg, & F Lon hold.

FRANCE (Lischett): A Tyr S GERMAN A Boh-Vie; F Nap-Apu; A Ven S F Nap-Apu; A Pie S A Ven; A Apu-Rom; F Rom-Nap; F Tun-Ion; F Tyr S F Tun-Ion; A Par holds.

GERMANY (Quirk): A Ukr S ENGLISH A Mos-Sev; A War S A Ukr; A Pru & A Liv S A War; F Bot & F Bal S A Liv; A Boh-Vie.

ITALY (Verheiden): F Adr-Ven; A Tri S F Adr-Ven; A Bud S RUSSIAN A Vie; F Gre S RUSSIAN F Ion.

RUSSIA (Neal): A Rum S A Sev; F Ion holds; F Aeg S F Ion; A Vie S ITALIAN A Tri; A Alb S ITALIAN A Tri; A Gal-Ukr; A Sev S A Gal-Ukr.

Underlined moves are not possible. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Edi, Liv, Lon, Mos, Nwy, St.P. (6)

FRANCE: Bel, Bre, Mar, Nap, Par, Por, Rom, Spa, Tun, Ven. (10)

GERMANY: Ber, Den, Hol, Kie, Mun, Swe, War. (7)

ITALY: Bud, Gre, Ser, Tri. (4)

RUSSIA: Ank, Bul, Con, Rum, Sev, Smy, Vie. (7)

France may build one unit. The order for this build should come in with the "Spring 1910" orders, which may be made conditional upon it. The deadline for "Spring 1910" orders is NOON, FRIDAY 3 MARCH 2006. Since the game seems to be nearing a stalemate, players are invited to send in their votes for or against a draw with the "Spring 1910" orders. An abstention will be counted as a negative vote.

I have fixed the problem with my answering machine, and moves may again be safely left on it. I found on it moves for Graustark #771 from Andy Lischett and Fred Wiedemeyer. I had already got these orders from them by phoning them.

PLEASE STAND BY

I am willing to take over games that have been abandoned by their gamesmasters. So if you are a postal gamesmaster who is no longer able to publish, or if you are a player in a postal game of regular Diplomacy that has gone for two or three months without a move being published, please get in touch with the Orphan Games Director, Michael Lowrey. (See p. 11 for his address.) If the game is to continue in Graustark, I would need the addresses of all active players, the current position, and a list of who owns which supply centers. If subscription money can be passed along to me, fine. Otherwise I will ask players to join a new game in Graustark, or to subscribe to Graustark if they do not already do so. Players who resign or drop out can be replaced by Graustark stand-by players.

Stand-by players are always needed for postal Diplomacy games in Graustark. If you volunteer as a stand-by, you may be called upon whenever a current player misses a move. If you send in moves for that country for the next turn, and the present player does not, you will take over play of that position. No game fee will be asked, though you should keep your subscription current, or enroll in a new Graustark game. No stand-by will be called upon in a game in which he or she has already played.

Stand-by volunteers who are willing to take on additional games of postal Diplomacy are listed below. A stand-by player who is already playing in a Graustark game is indicated by "\*". If you wish your name added to or removed from this list, please let me know. These data are accurate to the date of 3 February 2006.

Hank Alme  
John R. Biehl  
Harley Jordan

Michael Neal\*  
Michael Quirk\*  
Eric Verheiden\*

Fred Wiedemeyer\*

## PATRIOTISM - XLVI

- PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.
- PATRIOTISM is the unprincipled cause of war.
- PATRIOTISM is proclaiming that it is your patriotic duty to allow the government to open your mail and listen in on your e-mail and phone calls.
- PATRIOTISM is believing Bush the Son when he claims that he wants to order warrantless interceptions of phone calls and e-mail messages only to listen in on messages to and from "terrorists".
- PATRIOTISM is believing that this excuse also justifies federal orders to Google to yield up its search engine contents for all calls to its adult entertainment web sites.
- PATRIOTISM is the docile obedience of Google's competitors Yahoo, Microsoft, and America Online to orders to furnish the federal government with the origins and texts of such calls.
- PATRIOTISM is continuing to patronize the Yahoo, Microsoft, and America Online search engines.
- PATRIOTISM is not questioning why the prudish Muslim fanatics of Al Qaeda might want to contact Google's adult entertainment websites, or why those websites might be regarded as "terrorist".
- PATRIOTISM is a federal baggage screener removing \$80,000 from a suitcase checked to Pakistan at Kennedy Airport. (Well, the Department of Homeland Absurdity has to finance itself *somehow*.)
- PATRIOTISM is sending Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen, to Syria to be tortured, while telling his attorney that he had been sent to a jail in New Jersey. (Nina Bernstein, *New York Times*, 10 August 2005)
- PATRIOTISM is the list compiled by the conservative "Bruin Alumni Association" of the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) of the "Dirty Thirty", instructors "who've stated positions against President Bush and the military." (*New York Post*, 19 January 2006)
- PATRIOTISM is the offer by Andrew Jones, the founder and president of the Bruin Alumni Association, to give \$100 per name to any students who provide additional names for this list, supported by tapes or lecture notes. (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is Rev. Jerry Falwell's 2004 statement that "God is pro-war." (Charles Marsh, *New York Times*, 20 January 2006)
- PATRIOTISM is the sermon in which Rev. Charles Stanley, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Atlanta, stated that "We should offer to serve the war effort in any way possible. God battles with people who oppose him, who fight against him and his followers." (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is the statement by a Baptist missionary, that "American foreign policy and military might have opened an opportunity for the Gospel in the land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is the support that 87% of America's evangelical Christians have given to the decision to invade Iraq. (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is how some preachers interpret 2 Kings, "to link Saddam Hussein with wicked King Nebuchadnezzar of biblical fame." (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is refraining, with difficulty, from addressing American soldiers as "Torture Boy". (Or "Torture Girl". Here, as elsewhere, women have equal opportunity.)
- PATRIOTISM is the "Vegan Community Project", the FBI surveillance of a vegetarian organization in Indianapolis, under guidelines issued by Attorney General Ashcroft. (Eric Lichtblau, *New York Times*, 20 December 2005)
- PATRIOTISM is a FBI surveillance document alleging that the group Catholic Workers "advocated peace with a Christian and semi-communistic ideology". (Gotta watch them Christians!) (Jarrett Murphy, *Village Voice*, 25 January 2006)
- PATRIOTISM is a database created by the Pentagon's TALON ("Threat and Local Observation Notice") which "listed several protests, including a Quaker meeting in Florida, as 'suspicious incidents'." (*Ibid.*)
- PATRIOTISM is not allowing Edward Allen to board an airplane because his name is on a "No-Fly List" of terrorists. Edward Allen is four years old.
- PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.

## THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Graustark is the Very First bulletin for the postal play of Diplomacy. It is published every fourth Saturday by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302. Diplomacy is a board game of negotiation and conflict for the period of World War I. It was designed by Allan B. Calhmer and is now published by Hasbro. Another new postal Diplomacy game is now being organized in Graustark, at a game fee of \$35. (For Canadian and Mexican addresses the game fee is \$50, and for other foreign addresses it is \$100, or 85 euros in cash.) This game fee includes a subscription to Graustark for as long as the game lasts, whether or not you are eliminated. With your game fee send in a list of the countries you'd like to play, in your order of preference, and I'll try to put you as close to the top of that list as I can. If you do not already have the postal rules for Diplomacy, which were last published in Graustark #749, let me know when you send in your game fee, and I'll send you a copy.

This is  
O At  
P Great  
E Intervals  
R This  
A Appears  
T To  
I Inflamm  
O Optic  
N Nerves

Graustark subscriptions for non-players are 10 issues for \$15 for U. S. addresses, and \$40 or 35 euros for others. Back issues as available are 10 issues for \$5 for U. S. addresses. To foreign addresses, back issues have the same price as for foreign subscriptions. # 2120

Players who phone in their moves should call me at 718-693-1579. (The other phone number, which I have printed in previous issues, is no longer valid.) Until further notice, please do not leave messages on my answering machine, as it is out of order. If a live person is not available to take your moves, please call again later, or mail in your orders.

I want to again remind players that the U. S. Postal "Service" is not capable of reliably getting mail here in less than a week. Please take this into account in sending in your moves. If, a few times, your moves have arrived here by mail in less than a week, do not assume that this will always be the case.

\*

We still need one more entrant to fill a board for the next Graustark postal Diplomacy game.

\*

Graustark readers who are interested in postal games which don't run here, are invited to write to the publishers of 'zines with which I trade, and ask what game openings they have. For their addresses, see all the readers indicated by "(T)" for "trade" in the Graustark Directory on pp. 10-11. Several of these publishers run a wide variety of postal games.

\*

The recent change to new postal rates has been very badly handled. Postal clerks themselves did not know whether international rates had also been changed, nor did many of them have in stock the stamps which covered the new rates. I have finally been able to get hold of the new domestic rates, but the new foreign rates are still largely a mystery.

The new domestic rates are 39c for the first "ounce" (a medieval unit of measurement, approximately 28.35 grams), and 24c for each additional ounce up to 13 ounces. Anything between 13 and 16 ounces must go at the priority mail rate of \$4.05. Postcards are 24c each, plus an additional 2c for the card itself.

Postal clerks refuse to give out lists of the new international rates, and will only look up rates for you on their grimly guarded lists. This is of little use to someone whose next mailing might need anything from the three-ounce air mail rate to Australia to the air postcard rate to Israel.

\*

The legal basis for keeping religious notions of "creation" out of the public schools consists of not one but two U. S. Supreme Court decisions, Epperson v. Arkansas and Edwards v. Aguillard. The former, in 1968, made it unlawful for a state to forbid the teaching of evolution in public schools. The latter, in 1987, made it unlawful to require the teaching of "creationism", which is a religious doctrine, in public schools.

# ERODING LIBERTY



RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS WE HAVE NEEDLESSLY  
LOST IN THE NAME OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Through the enactment of the USA PATRIOT Act and subsequent executive directives and regulations, essential rights and freedoms that were once guaranteed to all individuals have been substantially degraded. Many Americans still do not realize the significance of what we have lost. The resulting expansion of government powers, and the erosion of 1st, 4th, 5th, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8th and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment rights and freedoms have transformed the United States.

## 1st AMENDMENT FREEDOM OF SPEECH

- The Patriot Act broadly expands the official definition of terrorism, so that many domestic groups that engage in nonviolent civil disobedience could very well find themselves labeled as terrorists.
- The Government may now prosecute librarians or keepers of any other records if they reveal that the government requested information on their clients or members in the course of an investigation. It has become a crime for these individuals to try to safeguard your privacy or to tell you that you are under investigation.

## 1st AMENDMENT FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

- Government agents may now monitor the First Amendment-protected activities of religious and political institutions, and then infiltrate these groups with no suspicion of criminal activity. This is a return to domestic spying on law-abiding religious and political groups.
- You may now be the subject of a government investigation simply because of the political, activist, or advocacy groups you are involved in, or the statements you make within these groups.

## 1st AMENDMENT RIGHT TO ACCESS GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

- A U.S. Department of Justice directive actively encourages federal, state, and local officials to resist and/or limit access to government records through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
- The Government has conducted immigration hearings in secret behind closed doors. Such proceedings were once open to the public. Hundreds, if not thousands, of immigrants have already been deported in secret.

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NEW YORK  
*Bill of Rights*  
 DEFENSE CAMPAIGN

8

# ERODING LIBERTY



RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS WE'VE LOST SINCE 9-11

## **4th AMENDMENT FREEDOM FROM UNREASONABLE SEARCHES & SEIZURES**

- Law Enforcement authorities may now conduct secret searches and wiretaps in your home or office without showing "probable cause." They need only to claim that intelligence gathering is "a significant purpose" of their intrusion, even when the primary goal is ordinary law enforcement. They may also monitor where and to whom you send and receive e-mail, or where you go on the internet, recording every e-mail address and website you have been in contact with.
- Law Enforcement may now demand any personal records held by any source including your doctor, employer, accountant, or library. All they have to do is claim that it is related to an investigation into "terrorism." The record keepers may not reveal that your records were provided to the government.
- Judicial oversight of secret searches has been effectively minimized. The Patriot Act directs judges to consent to secret searches based only on the Government's assertion that a "significant" purpose of an investigation is gathering information related to "terrorism," as the government defines it.

## **5th AMENDMENT RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS & FREEDOM FROM BEING HELD WITHOUT CHARGE**

- Americans can now be jailed without a formal charge & without the right to confront the witnesses or evidence against them. American citizens are now being held in military jails without charge and without a clear path of appeal for their indefinite confinement.
- Hundreds of Arab, Muslim and South Asian men were rounded up in the Ashcroft raids following September 11, and held for weeks without charges until all were cleared of terrorism charges.

## **6th AMENDMENT RIGHT TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION**

- Hundreds of U.S. residents have been detained for months at a time, and denied access to the advice and advocacy of an attorney. The Government may now monitor conversations between attorneys & clients in federal jails.
- The Bush Administration filed papers in court that arguing that an American citizen held in a military jail without charge should be denied access to legal counsel because such access would interfere with the process of his interrogation.

## **6th AMENDMENT RIGHT TO A SPEEDY AND PUBLIC TRIAL**

- The U.S. Government may now jail its residents and citizens indefinitely without charge & without a public trial.

## **8th AMENDMENT FREEDOM FROM CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENTS**

- The U.S. Government has taken into custody individuals they identify as "material witnesses," transported them across the country, and held them for months in solitary confinement without charge or contact with their family.
- According to the Justice Department's own Inspector General, immigrant men rounded up in the Ashcroft raids following September 11 and held in the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, NY were subjected to a pattern of "physical and verbal abuse."

## **14th AMENDMENT RIGHT TO EQUAL PROTECTION**

- Over 82,000 men from Arab, Muslim and South Asian countries registered with the Government under the Special Registration program. Over 13,000 are now in deportation proceedings. None have been charged with terrorism.

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[www.nybordc.org](http://www.nybordc.org) • [www.nyclu.org](http://www.nyclu.org)



## THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 6)

Both are solidly based on the First Amendment, which we can therefore expect to be the next target of attempts to require the teaching of religious doctrines in the public schools. Indeed, there are so many rival religious theories of creation, all of them unprovable assertions, that they have been made the base of parody. As shown by an item which Mark Blackman found on the Internet, and which is included in this issue, there is an Internet joke about a "flying spaghetti monster" which created the universe, and this is no more provable or disprovable than the account of "creation" in Genesis.

\*

The front cover of *Graustark* #771 reprinted a *Blondie* strip in which a waiter refuses to hand menus to *Blondie* and *Dagwood* unless they can present current identification. I can testify that this is not a joke. A couple of years ago in Washington I was refused admission to a food court because I do not carry photo identification. The next time I'm in the nation's paranoia capital, I will first ask, upon entering a restaurant, whether they require photo ID. If they do, there is no sense wasting my time or theirs, and they can simply consider how good such a policy is for their business.

The same thing happens here in New York City. I recently received a flier from the New York Public Library, asking for contributions. I sent them back nothing, explaining that I was getting tired of having my book bag searched every time I entered. Curiously, this policy is in effect only at the central branch, and not at local branches. Meanwhile, have you heard of anybody blowing up libraries lately?

Equally surprising is that this gag appeared not in a comic strip with a known political orientation such as *Doonesbury* or *The Boondocks*, or strips that poke fun at public stupidity such as *Soup to Nutz*, *Non Sequitur*, or *Dilbert*. It was in the pedestrian family strip *Blondie*. In addition, *Beetle Bailey* has begun to abandon the "Meet Your Cuddly Army" orientation which it has had ever since *Beetle* enlisted during the war with Korea, and has offered occasional criticism of current American military adventurism or the doings of the Department of Homeland Absurdity. Major segments of American life are gradually slipping out from under Bush the Son.

\*

The military occupation of Iraq is not proceeding with the ease expected by "President" Bush's handlers, and they have found themselves running out of National Guard and Reserve members to call up. Most recently, they have tried to make up this manpower shortage by unilaterally extending military tours of duty, so that men who thought that they had been mustered out have received "official" notifications to return to Iraq. At least 1,000 of these people have reacted to this "back-door draft" by seeking help from the War Resisters League, the American Friends Service Committee, Citizen Soldier, or some other anti-war organization, to rescue them from an ill-considered "commitment" or unexpected and unlawful extensions of their "military obligation". In New York City, orientation sessions for new members of draft boards are being held. However, at least so far, very few people of influence in Washington have seriously suggested draft calls, even though draft registration has allegedly been compulsory for 18-year-olds since 1980. (There hasn't been a prosecution for non-registration since 1985.) Because of heavy use of the National Guard and the Reserves in the past 15 years, enlistments in these military units are down, and there may not be enough troops to fulfill Genghis George's plans for the rest of his "Axis of Evil," Iran and North Korea, or for a possible side trip into Syria. But we know from the war with Vietnam what either large casualty counts or the imposition of a draft would do to the already declining public support for this war. So if you, or someone important to you, has injudiciously made a commitment to the National Guard or the Reserves, or is even on active duty, call the GI Rights Hotline, 1-800-394-9544, and check out your options. Or you could get in touch with the War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012-9911; 212-228-0450. And if you made the mistake of registering for the draft, and it should be revived, you should also get in touch with the WRL. They helped many people in the armed forces get out of the Gulf War, and are ready to do it again. A few dollars to help them do this work would also be welcome. Another useful source of information is the International Action Center, 39 W. 14th Street, New York, NY 10011.

## THE GRAUSTARK DIRECTORY

Players in a current postal Diplomacy games are indicated by its Boardman Number, with the initial of the country being played, and with "S" indicating an active stand-by player. (E. g., "2002C-R" or "2002D-FS".) Paying subscribers will be indicated by the number of the issue with which the subscription expires. Other designations are:

N: entrant in a new postal Diplomacy game now being organized in Graustark. (See p. 6 for details.)

T: trade copy

C: complimentary copy for a gamer

R: complimentary copy for a non-gamer interested in the mystery novel reviews

U: uncomplimentary copy

This directory is accurate to the date of 6 January 2006. Please let me know of any corrections or additions that need to be made, particularly if you want your nine-digit ZIP code, phone number, fax number, or e-mail address added to your listing. This is particularly important for electronic addresses, which seem to change more frequently than do postal addresses.

If you are already a Graustark subscriber when you decide to send in a game fee, then when the game begins, the number of issues you had coming when you joined will be added to your subscription once the game ends. After your name in the Directory will appear some such notation as "2004C-T+6".

Stephen Agar (T), 4 Cedar Gardens, Brighton BN1 6YD, ENGLAND; 01273-562430;  
<stephen@stephenagar.com>

Hank Alme (2004C), 506 Paige Loop, Los Alamos, NM 87544; 503-672-0883;  
<almehj@alumni.rice.edu>

Thom Anderson (R), #5-D, 10 Park Terrace East, New York, NY 10034

Ruth Berman (R), 2809 Drew Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55416-4209

John R. Biehl (2004C-R), #8, 11530 84th Avenue, Delta, BC V4C 2M1, CANADA; 604-816-0460;  
<jrb@dccnet.com>.

Mark Blackman (C), Apt. 4A, 1745 E. 17th St., Brooklyn, NY 11229

Paul & Meg Bolduc (T), 203 Devon Court, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32547-3110; 850-863-9081;  
<prbolduc@aol.com>; <bolduc@eglin.af.com>

Anne Braude (R), 5313 W. Acapulco Lane, Glendale, AZ 85306-3416

Colin Bruce (2004C-T+6), 22 Alliance Court, Hills Avenue, Cambridge CB1 7XE, ENGLAND

Jim Burgess (N, T), 664 Smith St., Providence, RI 02908-4327; 401-351-0287; <burgess@world.std.com>; web page <<http://devel.diplom.org/DipPouch/Postal/Zines/TAP/index.html>>

Brian Burley (C), 23 Reynolds Place, Harrison, NJ 07029

Allan B. Calhmer (C), 501 N. Stone, La Grange Park, IL 60525-5523

Paul Cardwell Jr. (C), 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418-2913; 903-583-9296

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2004C

"Winter 1905"

The French "Fall 1905" move "F Wes-Tyr" was incorrectly underlined as impossible in Graustark #771, actually succeeds. The Italian retreat was misprinted, and is actually "A Tyr-Tri". All players were informed. The "Winter 1905" orders are:

GERMANY (Mathias): Removes F Bar.  
 ITALY (Mooney): Builds F Rom.

RUSSIA (Biehl): No removal received.  
 Gamesmaster removes F Bla.  
 TURKEY (Bruce): Builds A Smy.

The deadline for "Spring 1906" orders is NOON, FRIDAY 3 MARCH 2006. Stand-by orders for Russia should be sent in by Harley Jordan, whose address is on p. 10. I have fixed the problem with my answering machine, and moves may again be safely left on it. I found on it moves for Graustark #771 from John Biehl and Fred Wiedemeyer. I had already got these orders from them by phoning them.

## WHEN DO YOU EXPIRE?

The subscriptions of the following readers expire with the indicated issue of Graustark. This information is valid to the date of 3 February 2006. See p. 6 for information about extending your subscription or joining a new game.

772 - Jim Dapkus	777 - W. Andrew York	780 - Michael Neal
777 - Eric Verheiden	780 - Mike Fisher	799 - Brenton Verploeg

## THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 9)

(212-633-6646; fax 212-633-2889; e-mail <iacenter@iacenter.org>; <www.iacenter.org>) They can provide you with information about this "war" that the U. S. government doesn't want you to know, and they may be able to direct you to anti-war organizations and demonstrations in your vicinity. And there is yet another way out, for anyone, soldier or civilian, who might get mobilized or drafted as a result of President Bush's private, undeclared war. If you are in danger of being called up for his grandiose schemes, get in touch with Citizen Soldier, 267 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016; 212-679-2250; fax 212-679-2252; <www.citizen-soldier.org>. "Citizen Soldier has been working against US militarism for the past three decades", particularly "to provide leadership support for thousands of young GIs who'll be looking for information and advice...Our strategy has been to advocate and defend GIs and veterans who stand up against illegal or immoral military practices."

And, while there is at present no conscription, Canada is being perceived as a refuge by military deserters. One of them is now petitioning for political asylum, making the obvious claim that the war is illegal. Watch for this to increase as other members of the "Axis of Evil" come under American military attack.

\*

The new American practice of secretly sending prisoners to foreign prisons where they can be tortured out of sight of American journalists or attorneys is being called "rendition". This word dragged from my memory the phrase "the rendition of Anthony Burns". These words turned out to describe an incident that greatly increased the tensions that led up to the Slaveholders' Rebellion. Anthony Burns was, in the delicate words of the Constitution, "held to service" in Virginia when he made his escape to Boston in 1854. President Pierce (incidentally an ancestor of the present incumbent) sobered up long enough to order Burns' "rendition" back to slavery. The strongly abolitionist city of Boston erupted at this attempt, and a deputy marshal was killed during the ensuing riot. (The federal government abandoned attempts to punish anybody for this, realizing that they would never get a conviction from a Boston jury.) Pierce called out marines, cavalry, and even artillery, and was able to get Burns arrested and shipped off to Virginia on a revenue cutter. "On June 2," wrote James M. McPherson in *Battle Cry of Freedom*, "the troops marched Burns to the wharf through streets lined with sullen Yankees standing in front of buildings draped in black with the American flag hanging upside down and church bells tolling a dirge to liberty." This event turned thousands of New Englanders into fierce opponents of slavery and the infamous Fugitive Slave Act. Walt Whitman wrote a scathing poem, "A Boston Ballad (1854)", in which the ghosts of the men who died to ensure this nation's freedom march out, in disappointment at what their descendants have done. He then suggested that, since the War for Independence was clearly a failure, Bostonians ought to bring over the remains of King George III and crown them instead.

When precedents from the American Civil War, which Sir Winston Churchill called history's least avoidable war, can be invoked, you know that very serious matters are afoot. The federal government's use of the word "rendition" to describe its treatment of prisoners has sown the wind. We will be indeed fortunate if it does not reap the whirlwind.

\*

One of the more gaseous statements that has come down to us from the Reagan Administration is the assertion that democracies do not go to war with one another.

(continued on p. 15)

# In the beginning there was the Flying Spaghetti Monster

(Filed: 11/09/2005)

**In recent weeks, a satirical attack on the teaching of Creationism in American schools has become the world's fastest growing 'religion'. The Noodly Saviour looked at the furore He had created and pronounced it good, writes James Langton**



For a growing band of devoted followers, He is the Supreme Being; creator of the universe and all living things. To the rest of us, the Flying Spaghetti Monster looks like a giant heap of pasta and meatballs topped with eyeballs on stalks. As it turns out, both interpretations are correct.

In the past few weeks, the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster has become perhaps the world's fastest-growing "religion" and maybe its most improbable. While no one can be sure of the exact numbers of "Pastafarians", as acolytes are called, they may number in the millions.

All of which has come as something of a shock to Bobby Henderson, an unemployed physics graduate from Oregon. According to Mr Henderson, the FSM - as His Noodliness is sometimes known - "revealed himself to me in a dream". Like most mysterious prophets, Mr Henderson communicates with the outside world only occasionally, although this may be more to do with having only one telephone line to his home in the small town of Corvallis and a Google e-mail account swamped by hundreds of messages every day.

Not that he ever saw himself as a rival to Mohammed or Abraham. The divine inspiration that came to the 25-year-old one night earlier this year was originally intended as a satire on attempts by some Christian groups to change the way evolution is taught in science classes in some American schools.

In particular, Mr Henderson was taking aim at the concept of Intelligent Design, or ID, which provides a supposedly scientific alternative to the Old Testament belief that God created the world in six days and nights, but which dismisses most of the fossil record as false and which relies on the Earth being far younger than geological evidence shows.

Supporters say the universe is so complex that it can only be the work of a higher intelligence. They are pushing to have it taught in science lessons as an alternative to Darwin's theory of natural selection. It has the support of many leading conservatives, including Senator Bill Frist, the Senate majority leader, and President Bush, who has said ID has a place in the classroom "so people can understand what the debate is all about".

But while the "theory" relies on the existence of a god, it does not specify which god. It was only when the state of Kansas announced earlier this year that its schools could teach ID in science classes that the Flying Spaghetti Monster made Himself widely known.

In an open letter to the Kansas Board of Education in July, Mr Henderson wrote: "I think we can all agree that it is important for students to hear multiple viewpoints so they can choose for themselves the theory that makes the most sense to them. I am concerned, however, that students will only hear one theory of Intelligent Design.

"I and many others around the world are of the strong belief that the universe was created by a Flying Spaghetti Monster."

He ends his letter with the telling comment: "I think we can all look forward to the time when these three theories are given equal time in our science classrooms across the country, and eventually the world; One third time for Intelligent Design, one third time for Flying Spaghetti Monsterism, and one third time for logical conjecture based on overwhelming observable evidence."

To support his account, he added a crudely drawn picture of the deity "creating a mountain, trees and a midget" and, as an afterthought, posted the whole thing on his website.

Barely three months later, Mr Henderson has discovered that he really has created a monster. His website - [www.venganza.org](http://www.venganza.org) - receives as many as two million hits a day. It has been featured on several widely read blogs, one of which is offering a \$1 million (£545,000) prize for "proof" that the Flying Spaghetti Monster does not exist.

Some of the faithful have created images of their Divine Saucy Leader, including one that reproduces Michelangelo's Creation of Adam, but with the image of the creator replaced by the Flying Spaghetti Monster.

Some "Pastafarians" speak of the rapture that they felt when first touched by "His Noodly Appendage" or offer prayers that end with the word "ramen" - as in the Japanese noodle - rather than "amen". Others may have been drawn by a vision of Heaven that includes a stripper factory and a beer volcano and what its founder calls the church's "flimsy moral standards".

In addition, according to the creed of Flying Spaghetti Monsterism, every Friday is a religious holiday, while true believers are urged to dress as pirates because of their founder's discovery of a causal relationship between global warming and a decline in the number of buccaneers in the past 200 years.

The serious message behind FSM, however, is not lost amid its bizarre mythology. Kansas has long been a battlefield between America's religious right and supporters of Darwin. In 1925, the Scopes Monkey Trial saw the state's unsuccessful attempt to stop the teaching of any aspect of evolution, including the theory that man and apes share a common ancestor.

More recently, conservatives have taken control of the state's board of education, pushing through a review of science teaching by a majority of six to four votes. The board is expected to endorse the teaching of ID next month, and other states are thinking of following suit.

Only three members of the Kansas School Board have replied to Mr Henderson's appeal to have Flying Spaghetti Monsterism placed on the curriculum - all of whom are opponents of ID, which they see as Creationism dressed up as a pseudo-science.

"I will add your theory to a long list of alternative theories I intend to introduce when it is appropriate," wrote one, Sue Gamble. "I am practising how to do this with a straight face which is difficult since it's such a ridiculous subject; it is also sad that we are even having the discussion."

It is a sentiment that Mr Henderson shares. "I don't have a problem with religion," he says. "What I have a problem with is religion posing as science. If there is a god and he's intelligent, then I would guess he has a sense of humour."

In his original appeal to Kansas, the physicist demanded that his pseudo-religion be given equal time in the classroom with both evolution and Intelligent Design. If rejected, he has promised to take legal action, with an offer of free help from at least one lawyer. Pedro Irigonegaray, who defended the teaching of evolution at the school board hearing earlier this year, says: "I have made myself available to the Spaghetti Monster as counsel of record, at no charge."

Of the thousands of e-mails Mr Henderson has received, he says that about 95 per cent have been supportive, while the other five per cent "have said I am going to hell".

One wrote: "It is interesting that evolution advocates use derision and sarcasm to deal with those who believe Intelligent Design." Another said: "I pray for mercy for you as you seem to feel so comfortable hurting and mocking the very creator who gave you the ability to do such. It's a little ironic."

Meanwhile, true believers can now order souvenirs from the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster website, including T-shirts from \$13.99 (£7.50), a coffee mug and a car bumper sticker. Mr Henderson says the proceeds may be used to fund the campaign or, in the best tradition of dubious cult leaders, to buy a yacht that he has long fancied. If the sales really take off, it may also help him avoid having to take up his only job offer so far since leaving Oregon State University - programming slot machines in Las Vegas.

Other recent developments include the discovery of a toasted cheese sandwich miraculously bearing the image of His Noodliness that sold for \$41 (£22) in an eBay auction and a hymn whose tune at least will be familiar to members of the Women's Institute or England cricket fans. The chorus runs:

*"Bring me my bowl of pasta gold!  
Bring me my meatballs of desire!  
Bring me my sauce with herbs untold!  
Bring me my bolognese of fire!"*

As for whether there will still be Pastafarians in 2,000 years from now, there are already signs of trouble ahead. Some of the faithful question whether their Noodly Saviour might be made of linguini rather than spaghetti. Such people, Mr Henderson says, "give me a headache".

## MARE NOSTRUM, SORT OF (continued from p. 3)

Clodius. (For the details on this case see Steven Saylor's novel *A Murder on the Appian Way*, reviewed in *Graustark* #663. Historically, Milo was at this time in exile in Massilia.)

At this time Rome could easily conquer Egypt, and was prevented from doing so by its own internal rivalries. The conqueror of Egypt or Parthia would automatically become the richest man in Rome, and thus for all practical purposes its ruler, so other Roman politicians would not authorize any such conquest. But Egypt would be a much easier nut to crack, so its fate was already sealed.

Naturally, Princess Cleopatra would not admit this. But piracy was even a greater problem for Egypt than for Rome, since good ship timber does not grow in Egypt. And it was Egypt's trade that was being spoiled by their depredations. For these reasons, she puts her royal yacht under Decius's command in the campaign against the pirates, thus increasing his forces by a third. Moreover, it develops that the pirate leader Spurius may be a Roman citizen with military experience, and Decius begins to suspect that he and many of his men are Gabinius's veterans. He thus becomes suspicious of the role of Gabinius in this matter, and wonders what plans he may have for using these men in the future. The pirates seem to be very well informed about measures being taken against them, and also seem to have access to Roman naval supplies. Spies and other agents of Spurius are clearly operating in Cyprus.

So many people are clearly disguising their motives and loyalties that Decius has trouble fighting the pirates and discovering the governor's murderer. For most of the time Gabinius is his principal suspect, but in the end it is Gabinius and his soldiers, plus Decius's slave-bodyguard Hermes and the street-smart Milo, who rescue Decius after he falls into the hands of the pirates. This climax takes place when the town is crowded for the orgiastic Festival of Aphrodite, who was allegedly born on Cyprus.

Hermes, who had been given extensive gladiatorial training at Decius's expense, is rewarded at the end of this book with his freedom. But there is a hint of future trouble, since he and Cleopatra's bodyguard Apollodorus clearly do not get along, and we can expect a showdown between them in a future book.

Decius is impressed by the intelligence, self-possession, and drive of the teen-aged princess. Writing from the perspective of his later years, he denies the popular tales that she was a great beauty, and presumably would also deny the extravagant tales about her spectacular sexual techniques. As the ruler of a nation that is no military match for Rome, she had obvious motives for charming whoever was in charge of Roman forces in Egypt, and charming is something she was very good at.

\*

I am still unclear about what happened to the book which, in the German translations, preceded this one. It was published with a title that translates as *In the Name of Caesar*. The major event of 52 BCE, the previous year, was the murder of Publius Clodius by Milo, but Caesar was away in Gaul, and had nothing to do with the murder or with the prosecution of Milo. Perhaps it was thought that Saylor had pre-empted this event with his *A Murder on the Appian Way*, or perhaps the publisher thought that the sexy Cleopatra would attract more readers than would yet another murder in Rome's escalating civil strife.

## THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 12)

This assertion is designed to persuade us that if the government of a foreign country is somehow describable in Washington as a "democracy", it ceases to be a danger to its neighbors.

If "democracy" means that the government should provide the voters with what a majority of them want, then this is not always a guarantee of peace. We saw that in the southern part of the United States in 1861, when secession and war was the explicit and clear-cut choice of a large majority of voters, with well-known consequences. The recent elections among Israel's Arabs have elevated to power a faction which refuses to recognize Israel's very existence, and has a long record of *guerre a l'outrance* against Israeli Jews. The belief of Bush the Son, that democracy guarantees peace, is about to be proven invalid. And, since total war between Jews and Arabs in Israel cannot end in

majority of them want, then this is not always a guarantee of peace. We saw that in the southern part of the United States in 1861, when secession and war were the explicit and clear-cut choice of a large majority of voters, with well-known consequences. The recent elections among Israel's Arabs have elevated to power a faction which refuses to recognize Israel's very existence, and has a long record of *guerre a l'outrance* against Israeli Jews. The belief of Bush the Son, that democracy guarantees peace, is about to be emphatically proven invalid. And, since total war between Jews and Arabs in Israel cannot end in any way other than a crushing Jewish victory, the Arab survivors will have much opportunity to lament their recent enthusiastic choice.

"Unca' Billy", whom my great-great-grandfather and some 60,000 others followed through Georgia and the Carolinas, expressed what is the present Israeli policy:

"We are fighting not only hostile armies but a hostile people, and must make old and young, rich and poor, feel the hard hand of war...We cannot change the hearts of those people...but we can make war so terrible [and] make them so sick of war that generations would pass away before they would again appeal to it."

And that is what the Arab population of Israel, by their electoral choice, have let themselves in for.

\*

Incidentally, Bush the Son obviously regards Sa'udi Arabia as a reliable American ally in the struggle to bring democracy to the Muddle East. Not only does this monarchy lack any semblance of popular government, but its laws make it a capital crime to become a Christian. The fanatical evangelicals in the Bush Administration have not yet explained their support of this alliance.

\*

A couple of years ago I found, in my favorite coffeehouse, a copy of a periodical that otherwise never comes to my attention. It is the *Tablet*, a weekly tabloid published by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn. An article mentioned that some Catholics are trying to get Kaiser Karl I of Austria (who was also King Karl IV of Hungary) recognized as a saint.

If good will rather than effectiveness is the most important qualification, the last Austro-Hungarian emperor is certain to be canonized. The famous tyrannicide of his uncle, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, on 28 June 1914 in Sarajevo, made this undistinguished young man the heir to the throne of his great-uncle Kaiser Franz Josef. When he succeeded to that tottering throne in November 1916, one acute observer characterized him as "thirty, looking like he is twenty, and thinking like he is ten."

By then it was obvious to anyone that the Central Powers were losing World War I. However, Kaiser Karl (or, more likely, his advisers) knew perfectly well that if Austria-Hungary tried to pull out of the war, it would be immediately occupied by German troops and forced to keep fighting. So the new Kaiser decided on his own to open up a private line of communication with his brother-in-law Prince Sixtus of Bourbon-Parma, an officer in the Belgian army.

However, Kaiser Karl bungled these efforts badly. The Germans know nothing definite, but they suspected he was up to something. When confronted with their suspicions, Kaiser Karl flatly lied to his nominal allies, a lie that was quickly found out. And the Entente Powers had made commitments to the dual monarchy's nationalist rebels that were incompatible with the continuing existence of that rickety empire. After more than a year of fiddling around and getting nowhere through negotiations with Kaiser Karl, the exasperated Entente Powers decided that the best way to get Austria-Hungary out of the war would be an invasion through the Balkans.

A multi-national Entente force invaded under the command of a French general, Franchet d'Esperey, nicknamed by the British "Desperate Frankie". The front collapsed, and Germany realized that Kaiser Karl had, in effect, opened the back door of the Central Powers to the enemy. So Germany sued for an "armistice" that was in practice a complete surrender, and a peace of sorts came to Europe.

Kaiser Karl's initiative, though undertaken from the best of motives, failed, and

(continued on p. 18)



## DUNGEONS &amp; CHRISTIANS - CLXXXVII

"Dungeons & Christians" has been running in my gaming 'zines since 1984, when it began by reporting John Sapienza's demolition of Pat Pulling's campaign against Dungeons & Dragons (D&D). It has since chronicled the continuing campaign by Christian fanatics to ban D&D, other Role-Playing Games (RPGs), live-action RPGs (LARPs), and collectible card games including Magic: The Gathering, Vampire: The Masquerade, Werewolf: The Apocalypse, and others.

Important sources of information about game-bashers are the Game Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games (CAR-PGa), "an international network of researchers into all aspects of role-playing games". This column relies heavily on reports from both of these organizations. CAR-PGa Newsletter is published monthly by Paul Cardwell Jr., 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418 at \$12.00 a year for domestic, and \$13.50 a year for foreign, addresses. It keeps us posted on attacks on D&D and other RPGs, and provides us with arguments and strategies to be used against attempts to censor or ban games. It also lists upcoming gaming conventions. And, when space and time permit, I am going to cite its reports of the latest such attacks, and hopefully the crushing rebuttals made to them.

Naturally, RPGs are not our society's only targets of irrational attacks made from largely religious motives. Not since the 1920s, another period of rapid and major changes in American society, have so many aspects of American culture and science come under attack by people who believe them "anti-Christian". Obviously, RPGs are relatively minor targets compared with evolution by natural selection, the "Big Bang theory" of the expansion of the universe, the growing acceptance of members of non-Christian religions and of homosexuals as fully empowered members of our society, and the apparently fiercely controversial belief that peace is preferable to war. So these topics necessarily also come under the purview of a resistance to attacks on RPGs.

By the way, any time I cite a website in this column, or elsewhere in Graustark, I am inviting readers who are on the Internet, as I am not, to investigate it and let me know what is going on there. And CAR-PGa has its own web page: <[www.theescapist.com/carpga.htm](http://www.theescapist.com/carpga.htm)>. There is also a CAR-PGa page at <[members.aol.com/waltonwj/carpga.htm](http://members.aol.com/waltonwj/carpga.htm)>. And CAR-PGa has an e-mail discussion group at <[egroups.com/group/car-pga](mailto:egroups.com/group/car-pga)>, to which there is a link on <[theescapist.com/car-pga](http://theescapist.com/car-pga)>.

In recent issues of Graustark I have commented on the defeats that Christians have suffered in their attempts to disguise the first chapter of Genesis as "intelligent design" and force the public schools to teach it as if it made sense. But they have also aimed their attacks on the scientifically supported chronology of the universe. The fact that its expansion began about twelve billion years ago (the "Big Bang" theory) is grossly out of line with biblical chronology. A Bush apparatchik, who seems chiefly responsible for suppressing scientific findings about global warming, also takes the view that the "Big Bang" should always be described as a "theory". Like most anti-scientific propagandists, he seems to believe that "theory" means a raw guess that is unsupported and probably wrong. One of these days, some Christian will discover that, for philosophers and scientists, "theory" means a principle solidly backed by the observational and experimental evidence, and capable of serving as the source of successful predictions of new observations, the sort of thing that is also called a "scientific law". Then the screaming and yelling among them will be wondrous to behold.

Incidentally, evangelicals have lately come out with a pronouncement that global warming is not only real (which nobody doubts) but that it is the result of human actions (which is highly dubious), and that Christians have to Do Something About It. The rest of us now have to consider whether anything said about a scientific question can be valid if it comes from people who believe that virgins can have children, that dead men can come back to life, and that all the present animal and plant species came into existence just a few thousand years ago. And another well-known Christian flake, Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, claims that Hurricane Katrina was divine punishment for the American invasion of Iraq. (*New York Daily News*, 17 Jan. 2006) This notion should be filed away with the claim of the eminent conservative columnist P. J. O'Rourke, that the New York Giants lost the 2001 Superbowl because god was mad at New York for electing Killery Clinton.

Even works of fantasy fiction have not escaped an apparent Christian demand for

control over every aspect of life. Some Christian ministers have burned J. K. Rowling's tremendously successful Harry Potter books, even as a Southern Baptist church in Colorado Springs is trying to "teach children about Christianity by play-acting aspects of the Harry Potter stories". (Mindy Sink, *New York Times*, 8 March 2003) It's a nice try, but while Rowling's books are not recruiting a generation of children into "black magic", neither are there Christian chaplains, school chapel meetings, or invocations of any deities in the spells taught at Hogwarts Academy.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 16)

only the reality of the Entente invasion of the Balkans brought about the end of the war. Yet sainthood is apparently based on good intentions rather than on success, and I would estimate that Kaiser Karl deserves it on those grounds.

He did his best to hang on in Austria and Hungary after the war, but two attempts to restore him were failures. He and his empress were finally exiled to Madeira, where the peace treaty supposedly guaranteed them an income of £20,000 a year, equivalent to about a million modern dollars in purchasing power. This money was supposed to be contributed in four equal parts by Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia. But these nations decided that they had been supporting Habsburgs long enough, and refused to pay. Eventually some benefactor scraped up a pittance for them. Kaiser Karl died of tuberculosis and heartbreak in 1922. His widow survived him by over sixty years. Their eldest son Otto, now in his nineties, still maintains his claim to the non-existent throne. It is said that he was once asked whether he wanted to see the Austria-Hungary soccer match. He is supposed to have replied, "Who are we playing?"

GRAUSTARK #772

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