



2 Oct 74

There are those who maintain rating systems,
those who pay no attention to rating systems,
and those who sell out to rating systems.

This publication is where members of the first group try
to screw hell out of members of the last group.

LAPUTA is an occasional publication for the Postal Diplomacy Rating Commission, a voluntary association of curators of Postal Diplomacy rating systems. It is automatically sent to members of the Commission. Interested parties may subscribe @15¢ per issue. A copy will also be deposited with the Postal Diplomacy Archives in Lebanon IN. This issue is Pandemonium Publication #554, edited and published by Rod Walker, 4069 Jackdaw St., San Diego CA 92103.

Canto I

Well, I guess we get the show on the road now. Jeff Key's packet of materials is here and they will give me enough to work with. Let me start by listing what I have. If I am missing anything relevant, I would appreciate a copy from the sender. So, we have on hand:

20 Sep 73 LEBOR GABALA II.1.
15 Oct 73 LEBOR GABALA II.2.
25 Jul 74 Ltr, Beyerlein to Buchanan, Lakofka, Power, von Metzke, Key, & Beshara. Re: PDRC meeting at DipCon VII.
29 Jul 74 Ltr, Walker to Key, cc to Beshara. Re: "local" games.
31 Jul 74 Ltr, Key to Beshara, Beyerlein, Buchanan, Lakofka, von Metzke, & Power. Re: PDRC meeting at DipCon VII.
01 Aug 74 Ltr, Key to Beyerlein. Re: 2 early games (67BD, 68BQ).
03 Aug 74 Ltr, Beyerlein to Buchanan, Lakofka, Power, von Metzke, Key, & Beshara. Re: agenda for DipCon VII meeting.
07 Aug 74 Ltr, Lakofka to Beshara, Beyerlein, Buchanan, von Metzke, Walker, & Power. Re (mostly): PDRC meeting at DipCon VII.
* 07 Aug 74 Ltr, Power to Beyerlein & Key. Re: inclusion of games in, & their exclusion from, rating systems. Copy apparently also sent to Beshara, who is aware of its contents. This is apparently the circular letter I mentioned in item 4 of LAPUTA 1; if not, I still need a copy of that.
13 Aug 74 Ltr, Walker to Buchanan, cc to Lakofka, Beyerlein, Power, Verheiden, von Metzke, Birsan, Beshara, & Key. Re: Chairmanship of the PDRC.
n.d. Ltr, Lakofka to Buchanan, Beyerlein, & Key. Re: PDRC.
20 Aug 74 Rating Census #1 (Lakofka to Beyerlein, Buchanan, Power, Key, Walker, & Beshara).
21 Aug 74 Elements of a Constitution (Lakofka to Key [?cc to Beyerlein & Buchanan]).
n.d. ROGUES' GALLERY 74 Criteria, Revised (Lakofka to Key, von Metzke, Walker, Beyerlein, Buchanan, ?Power, ?others).
05 Sep 74 Ltr, Beyerlein to Key. Re: R.G. Criteria.
16 Sep 74 Ltr, Lakofka to Beyerlein, Buchanan, Power, Key, Walker, & von Metzke. Re: Boardman Numbers.
24 Sep 74 LAPUTA 1.
27 Sep 74 Ltr, Key to Walker. Re: R.G. Criteria & transfer of PDRC.

Canto II

From reading this material, it seems to me that a number of questions vie for our attention. They appear to be as follows:

1. Membership of the PDRC...who's in and who ain't ?

2. Organization, structure, and operation. Len's proposal for a constitution is the only concrete thing we have at the moment--and as he says it is intended as a basis for discussion.

3. Distilling down a list of those games which (a) everybody rates, (b) nobody rates, and (c) somebody rates. Then distilling out (c) to find out who does or doesn't and why. This preparatory to making an attempt to bring our rating systems more into line in terms of their raw data base. (I know that Len would like to see that done, as would Jeff apparently; Walt has said he would include "local" games if that is the reasoned consensus of the Commission; I am similarly willing to exclude them...and so on.)

4. Terminology. A lot depends on what categories of games there are, and what games do or do not fit in. There seems to be some confusion as to what we mean by "local", or what the distinction is, if any, between "draw" and "stalemate".

5. Relationship of the PDRC to the Boardman Number Custodian. This initially relates to Len's "Constitution" proposal, but it seems to me that it is clearly a separate issue.

6. And probably other things; but that does seem to be enough to start.

Canto III

My proposal is that, rather than fragment our attention, we concentrate it. That means this: each separate issue of LAPUTA will be devoted to a different issue or topic. Within each issue, I will use a numbering system of some sort so that items will be easy to refer to and cross-reference. That does not mean that anything need be delayed. I might publish two or three numbers at one time, if that's how things go. This will also keep issues shorter and easier for me to put out.

By the way, my current schedule depends on my job. I use the machine at work, on my lunch hour. I have my own machine, but this is vastly easier for short runs. However, I'm up for a new job, and if I get it I may have to change how I work things.

Canto IV

1. The present membership of the PDRC stands as follows, as I understand it:

- a. Len Lakofka (R.G. Curator), 644 W. Briar Pl., Chicago IL 60657.
- b. Walt Buchanan (CPCRL Curator), RR #3, Lebanon IN 46052.
- c. Jeff Power (BROB RL Curator), Lee Point Rd., RR #2, Box 347, Suttons Bay MI 49682.
- d. Doug Beyerlein (ODD Curator), 330 Curtner Ave., #8, Palo Alto CA 94306.
- e. Rod Walker (BARS Curator), 4069 Jackdaw St., San Diego CA 92103.
- f. Jeff Key (IDA Rep. & [in future] L.G. RL Curator), 6918 NW 78th Terr., Kansas City MO 64152.
- g. Conrad von Metzke (B.N. Custodian), PO Box 4, SD CA 92112.

2. The rules for membership seem to be approximately:

- a. The Curator of a current and active rating system is automatically a member.
- b. The Boardman Number Custodian is a member.
- c. The National Archivist is a member?
- d. The IDA has a representative.

e. Other individuals could presumably be members of the PDRC felt they would contribute to our work. added if

3. One potential new membership appears to be outstanding at this time. Recently the Diplomacy Association has had printed in various places an update of the Averaged Calhamer Point Count, using the name "A Ratings Survey". The Curator of this revived rating system would seem to qualify as a member automatically, if we knew who he was. He is rumored to be either Eric Verheiden, a well-known player and writer, or Richard Miller, an otherwise unknown person who has played a few games in GRAUSTARK and ATLANTIS.

a. Len has stated that he views the ACPC as a "winner survey" rather than a rating system. If this is so, then I presume there is some question as to whether the Curator of this system can join the Commission.

b. I will be seeing Eric Verheiden at a FTF game session in L.A. on the 5th (I presume). I will discuss all this with him then. He is reportedly Chairman of something called the "International Rating Commission of TDA". I have no knowledge of what that is.

c. From the list on page 1, it is obvious that a large percentage of Commission business is being sent to a non-member, John Beshara. I assume this is because

(1) It is assumed TDA is entitled to a representative, just as IDA is, or

(2) John is Curator of the ACPC (or "Ratings Survey"), which he has denied, or

(3) He is passing these things on to whomever the Curator is, which is possible. In any event, this policy will be followed for LAPUTA 2 as well, and a copy will be sent to John (and one to Eric).

d. Thereafter, somebody is going to have to do something. I will send an official request to John Beshara. I will ask that the Curator of the "Rating Survey" be appointed the TDA rep. to the PDRC. Since it is an "official" system, those two justifications for membership are obviously combined.

e. In all the time we have been sending items to John, we have not received a single word of acknowledgement or response that I am aware of. This suggests that the DA is not interested in working with us. The official request I am sending will be the last item of PDRC business which I will pass to anyone not a member of PDRC or a subscriber. I see no reason to continue to play footsie with people who apparently could not care less. I hope everyone approves of this last attempt to make contact and then breaking it off if there is no response. I mean, why bother?

f. I might add that it is still up to the members to determine if any new prospective member meets any criterion (a) for joining. My invitation is not intended to preempt our collective judgement.

g. Yes, I know that the Chariman normally admits a new member automatically if it is obvious he qualified. Given Len's statements, the question is apparently not so obvious in this case.

Canto V

1. Please send comments on two subjects as soon as you can: Len's Constitution (not including the part on the Numbers) and also on Len's proposals re: the Numbers themselves. I will publish proposals and comments this month, when I have something to publish.

2. Len is working on Canto II, part 3. Will publish results when he sends them.