

MURD'RING



MINISTERS

Issue #46

May 7, 1982

STUFF

MURD'RING MINISTERS is a gamezine dedicated to the play of postal DIPLOMACY, and occasionally other postal multi-player wargames. Subscriptions to MM are \$5.50 for 12 issues (one year or thereabouts); 50¢/issue in smaller increments. There are openings in two regular DIP games -- see GAME OPENINGS for particulars. MM is published by that little ol' Main Minister, Ron Brown, 1528 El Sereno Pl., Bakersfield, CA 93304. Phone - (805) 834-8409.

From this point onward, NMR Insurance will not be offered. Since almost no one had it anyway, it really doesn't matter much but I thought I'd just make it official. It doesn't work very well and it's a big hassle. So from now on, if your moves aren't in by the deadline by mail OR you haven't called in your orders by the night before the deadline, then you will be NMR'd. Be forewarned!

Boy, am I pissed! One of my best games at the moment is in Al (Uncle Al the Novice's Pal) Pearson's fine zine JUST AMONG FRIENDS. I've got a strong German position in one of his games. The deadline for the next turn was April 28th. Today as I write this is April 29th. Al called yesterday (NMR Insurance) and left a message for me to call him that night. Wednesday night being what it is for me (Char's out that night leaving yours and my favorite daddy in charge of the two boys), it was 9:00 PM before I had a chance to return his call and by then I figured it was way too late. I wasn't too worried about NMRing because I had sent in my orders in or on the 23rd. Today I found those orders in my briefcase and realized I just NMR'd! It probably will keep me from doing any further expansion in this game. Damn! NMR's a lose games. So much for the value of NMR Insurance. See what I mean?

THE ACOLYTE is published by Pete Tamlyn, 17 Pelham Court, Kingston Rd., STAINES, Middlesex, UK TW18 1AL. I've mentioned before that it is an excellent British DIPLOMACY/FRE gamezine. In the latest ACOLYTE, (#36), Pete printed a book review by Ivo Steyn of Not This August, a 1955 science fiction novel by Cyril Kornbluth. The book deals with the conquest of America by a Sino-Soviet Alliance. Ivo's review was unflattering and derogated the "Cold War mentality" of the book.

This produced the following comment of Pete's at the conclusion of the review:

"... Just how war-minded the Americans are becoming has been made plain to the many European readers of Gary Coughlan's EUROPA EXPRESS. Gary, who is from Tennessee runs EE as a sort of USA-Europe contact 'zine and the current arguments over isarmament, cruise missile bases, etc. have featured prominently in his letter column. At least one of the American correspondents has gone on record as favouring withdrawing from Europe immediately and then nuking the place to prevent the Commies from getting their hands on it. Frightening."

Naturally, the American referred to is John Michalski! But even John does not seriously feel that way. And keep in mind that John likes to think of himself as "just to the right of Darth Vader". I believe the overwhelming majority of Americans are against nuclear warfare in any way, shape, or form. The comments are particularly

((Con'd next pg.))

MORE STUFF

interesting in light of the Falklands situation. I am looking forward to the next issue to see what Pete and his British friends write about the present situation.

Don't forget that if you are interested in extending your MM subscription without extending your pocketbook, all you have to do is sit down and write an article and send it my way. Payment is at the rate of one issue per two pages of type. An easy way for you to extend your sub today!

Dick Martin is going to take over the Hobby Census project from Overby. The 1982 DIPDOM Census will be completed by Origins (this August) says Dick if every publisher will support this project by sending to Dick a copy of their mailing list. I'll be sending Dick mine and I hope all you other publishers out there will be doing likewise. Dick's new address is 7400 Columbia Ave., #4, College Park, MD 20740. (301) 864-4528. By the way, Dick's latest issue of RETALIATION (#49-50) arrived today and it's a good one with lots of good stuff inside,

DAMN THE TORPEDOS, former subzine to Steven Duke's THE SCHEMER, has broken away from its mother zine and become a full-fledged Dipzine all on its own. DTT is published by Gregg and Daphne Fritz, PO Box 512, York, ME 03909. Issue #6 arrived today and looks very nice. It looks like the Fritz's really want to put out a nice zine. Why don't you write for a sample (and be sure to enclose a 20¢ stamp). DTT features a subscription rate of \$5.00/10 issues and there are openings in regular DIPLOMACY for a \$5.00 gamefee. Check it out.

Want a large list of current game openings throughout the hobby? Then send a SSAE to Rod Walker, "alcala", 1273 Crest Dr., Encinitas, CA 92024 and ask him to send you a copy of PONTEVEDRIA. He will send you a couple of pages worth of game opening information in return. Absolutely vital for someone who wants to enter a new game but isn't sure just where he wants to play.

Speaking of Walker, if you still haven't seen DIPLOMACY WORLD since he's taken it over, you really owe it to yourself to take a look at it. DW is one of the most necessary publications to subscribe to, whether you prefer the postal or FTF variety of DIPLOMACY. The next issue is due out the second week in June and will contain Mark Berch's statistical survey of all Italian wins and a Fred Davis article on alternatives to the plastic horrors (the chipmunk IUDs), and more. "Sampler" issues of #30 are still available and free upon request. The "Sampler" contains 12 pages from that issue. Write to Rod at the above address if you are interested.

Most of you have probably read of the results of the Beyerlein Player Poll somewhere else by now as they were released just about the time I was getting the last MM into the mail. In case you haven't, Kathy Byrne came in first with Jack Masters second. It is interesting to note that Kat... the earlier Caruso Player Poll and Jack finished third there. They are without doubt of the finest players in the hobby today. If you should find yourself in a game with either of them, better set your sights on second. Although Kathy has never played in MM, just check out 1980KZ and see what Black Jack's Turkey is doing there! Congrats to the two of you. I found it interesting to see that of the top 21 players in the BFP, I've played in games with eleven of them! Certainly all of them deserve the recognition as they are all excellent players. (Yes, and I mean Bob Olsen too!).

Gary Coughlan, as you probably know by now was the faker of the recent WHITESTONIA fake issue. Gary continues to hold down the position of the Hobby's foremost faker now that Black Jack is retired from the fake zine business. Thanks for the fun reading, Gary!

THE GAMES!!!!

1981AB WINTER 1905 GAME ENDS IN CONCESSION TO ENGLAND!!

1981AB has ended in a concession to Jack Fleming's England! A little unexpected, by me anyhow, no one vetoed the concession proposal presented last time. Although at only 9 SC, Jack has won as the only surviving original player. Congratulations Jack! Please send in any endgame statements by next deadline (June 11) so they can be printed with the final endgame statistics. Once again, congrats to Jack on his win!

* * * * *

1981D SUMMER 1907 Italian F Lyo-r-PIE; German A Pic-r-BEL; A Tya-r-TRI.

1981D FALL 1907 WOODY PASSES UP GERMAN SUPPORT INTO SEVASTOPOL-STILL NETS THREE SCs!! England (Arnawoodian); A Lon-WAL; F ENG-Mid; F NTH-Eng; F Lyo-MAR; F SPA(so)-s-F Lyo-Mar; F Wes-TUN; F Tys-NAP; A MOS-s-German A Ukr-Sev/NSO/;

France (Kelly)†

Germany (Langley):

Italy (Filbeck):

A LVN-s-A Mos.
NMR! A PAR, A PIC-H.
A BEL-H; A BUR-Mun; A Gal-VIE; A BOH & A TRI-s-A Gal-Vie;
A War-GAL; A UKR-s-English A Mos-Sev/NSO/.
A GAS-Bur; A Mar-s-A Gas-Bur/d/-r-Pie,OTB; F Pie-LYO;
F NAF-Mid; A TYA-Mun; A Vie-Boh/a/; A BUD-s-Turkish A Rum-Gal/NSO/; F GRE-s-Turkish F Eas-Ion/NSO/.

Turkey (Ethington)**

NMR! A SEV, A RUM, F BUL(ec), F BLA, F AEG, F EAS - all H.
Winter 1907 AND Spring 1908 due June 11, 1982. There is a call for a concession to England. Please vote with your next orders - 'NVR'='yes' vote.

*Would Jim Gray, 54 W. 8th Ave E., Columbus, OH 43201 please standby for France?

**Would Larry McCloud, 520 Geary, San Francisco, CA 94102 please standby for Turkey?

1981D 1907 SUPPLY CENTER CHART

England- Home, Nwy, StP, Swe, Por, Spa, Tun, NAP, MAR, MOS....	(12)+3
France- Par, Dre.....	(2) 0
Germany- Home, Den, Hol, Bel, War, VIE, TRI.....	(9)+2
Italy- Nap, Rom, Ven, Tri, Yps, Dud, Ser, Gre, War.....	(5)-2
Turkey- Home, Bul, Sev, Mos, Rum.....	(6) 0

1981D Press

SWITZERLAND: The strategic German retreat to Trieste came as no surprise to anyone. Analysts ask, will the German unit in Austria move aggressively into the Balkans, or sit and wait in a strong defensive posture for the Italian onslaught? Will the English decide that now is the time to pick up the odd German dot? Will the Turk withstand the temptation to steal another pair of Italian dots? Tune in to this station same time same place next month, when answers to these and other questions will be revealed.

ITALY-FRANCE: Hang in there, Daby!! Write if I can help you any. Viva la France!!

ENGLAND-ITALY: Thanks for Naples! How about Rome next year?

* * * * *

MURD'RING MINISTERS STANDDY LIST

My standby list is shrinking at an alarming rate. Unless some of youse guys out there join this list for standby positions, pretty soon there will be no standbys called for NMRing nations! Won't some of you consider joining this group? The current group of standbys for regular DIPLOMACY are:

Larry McCloud, Ron Kelly(?), Steve Hartman(?), and Dan Gorham, oops and Jim Gray. A (?) after the name indicates an NMR by these players this issue so let me know please if you wish to remain on the Standby List.

1981AP WINTER 1906

England- No Adj
 France- A Dre-r-OTB, Disbands A Dur
 Italy- Builds A VEN, F ROM, & F NAP
 Russia- A Arm-r-OTB/unordered retreat/
 Turkey- Builds A CON

1981AP SPRING 1907 FRENCH & RUSSIAN GOVERNMENTS ROCKED BY INTERNAL STRIFE AS THE MAD GARDANZO LANDS IN DREST!

England (Gray): A YOR-H; F Nth-ENG; F Hel-NTH; F NWG-Nwy; F KIE-Der; A DEN-Kie.
 France (Mercer): F DAR-Dot/imp/; A MUN-Der.
 Italy (Williams): F Dre-PIC; A Par-DUR; A Por-DRE; F MID-o-A Por-Dre; F Mar-SPA(sc);
 A Tri-VIE; A TYA & A BUD-s-A Tri-Vie; A Ven-TRI; F Rom-TYS;
 F Nap-ION.
 Russia (Hartman):** NMR! A Sev/d/-r-Mos,OTD; F NWY; A DER, A DOH, A GAL, A UKR - all H.
 Turkey (Haffey): A Rum-SEV; F ULA & A ARM-s-A Rum-Sev; A Ser-RUM; A Con-DUL;
 F SMY-H; F Alb-GRE.

Fall 1907 due June 11, 1982.

*Keith Mercer has resigned. Would Dan Gorham, 1365 Edgecliffe Apt. 3, Los Angeles, CA 90026 please assume the French position?

**Would Larry McCloud please standby for Russia? Address listed for standby in 1981D, pg. 3.

1981AP Press-

CON-LON: Norway is yours, Sweden too it looks like. Hope you take them. I'll try for Sev.

* * * * *

1980IX WINTER 1907 I/R DRAW FAILS!

England- Disbands A EdI
 France- Builds A PAR
 Germany- Disbands A-Der
 Italy- No Adj
 Russia- F Nwy-r-DAR, Builds A STP

1980IX SPRING 1908 HAS E/F/G STOPPED THE I/R ADVANCE?

England (Schiwautz): F NWG-Nwy; F Hel-DEN; F Hol-NTH; F Mid-POR; F SPA(sc)-s-French A Mar.
 France (McCloud): F Nat-MID; A MAR-H; A Dur-RUH; A Par-DUR; A KIE-Der; A Den-SWE; F SKA-s-A Den-Swe.
 Germany (Heinowski): F DAL-s-French A Den-Swe.
 Italy (Pearson): A TYA-H; A TRI-Ser; A DUL-Ser; F SMY-H; F Aeg-ION; F Tys-WES; F LYO & F NAF-s-F Tys-Wes; A PIE-Mar.
 Russia (Cunningham)*: A NWY-s-A Swe; F DAR & A STP-s-A Nwy; A Swe-s-A Nwy/d/-r-Pin,OTD; F LVN-Dal; A Pru-DER; A STL-s-A Pru-Der; A MUN-Kie; A VIE-Tri; A RUM-Bul; F CON-H; A ANK-Smy.

Fall 1908 due June 11, 1982. There is a proposal for a E-I-R draw. Please vote with your next orders - 'NVR'='yes' vote.

*COA- George Cunningham, 75 Cedar St., Burlington, VT 05401.

1980IX Press-

MOSCOW-LONDON: For the past 3 game years I've been faithful to all my commitments. I admit that we've had some communication problems, but that isn't the same thing as a broken treaty. Why not join Al and me in a three-way draw?

MOSCOW-PARIS: I've proposed a three-way I-R-E draw. I've done this for two reasons. One, you have publicly attacked me and have said "war between us is inevitable," and secondly, you are the new kid on the block, while E-I-R have all played from the start of the game. If you want a share of a draw, you'll have to prove your position is viable.

BAKERSFIELD-MOSCOW: Is taking Sweden from you counting towards viability?

* * * * *

"It is not nor it cannot come to good."

HAMLET I, ii, 158.

1980KZ SUMMER 1907 Turkish A Vie-r-BUD

1980KZ FALL 1907 ITALY & TURKEY CONTINUE MARCH AS GERMANY TREADS WATER!

- England (Kelly): NMR! Has A HOL, F NTH, F NAT, F NWY, A FIN - all H.
- France (Sperakos):** NMR! Has F Tun-H/d/-r-Wes, Naf, OTB; F LYO, F SPA(sc) - all H.
- Germany (Stephens): A Pic-BRE; A PAR-s-A Pic-Dre; F DEN-Nth; F Dal-SWE; A Lvn-STP; A SIL-War; A BOH-s-A Vie; A Vie-s-A Mud-Tya/a/; A Mun-TYA.
- Italy (Hugh): A Gas-DUR; A Tus-PIE; F TYS-s-Turkish F Ion-Tun; A VEN-s-Turkish A Tya/OTM/
- Turkey (Masters): A WAR-H; A UKR-s-A War; A GAL-Boh; A Tya-VIE; A BUD-s-A Tya-Vie; F TRI-H; F ADR-s-F Tri; F Ion-TUN; F Aeg-ION; F APU-s-F Aeg-Ion; A Bul-SER; A Arm-SEV.

Winter 1907 AND Spring 1908 due June 11, 1982.

*Would Larry McCloud please standby for England?

**Would Dan Gorham please standby for France? Both addresses are given on preceding pages.

1980KZ 1907 SUPPLY CENTER CHART

England- Home, Nwy, HOL.....	(5) 0
France- Spa, Por, Tya.....	(2) -2
Germany- Home, Den, Hol, Bel, War, Swe, Par, BRE, STP.....	(9) +1 (one short)
Italy- Home, Mar.....	(4) 0
Turkey- Home, Bul, Rum, Sev, Mos, Gre, Ser, Bud, Tri, Vie, WAR, TUN....	(14) +2

1980KZ Press-

POPE-TO ALL THOSE WHO'LL LISTEN: Domino, Nebisco, Nebotimo -- Deviti!!! (In English) - All you damn waps get offa' the grass -- now!!

BAKERSFIELD-TO ALL THOSE WHO'LL LISTEN: I think the Pope's been on the grass himself!

ANKARA: Since the Pope has managed to restore the Italian postal service on his own, there is no need for the Turkish troops to visit Italy. As for France and Germany however?

BAKERSFIELD-ANKARA: And don't forget about England. I hear it's really nice there this time of year!

* * * * *

1981AY WINTER 1904

- Austria- Builds A TRI
- England- NBR!
- France- No Adj
- Germany- Builds A KIE
- Russia- F Rum-r-BLA, Disbands A Gal & A Pru
- Turkey- Builds A ANK

1981AY SPRING 1905 IS TAKING ANKARA LAST ACT OF DEFIANCE BY RUSSIA?!

- Austria (Lucas): A Tri-TYA; A Vie-BOH; A Dud-GAL; A RUM-s-Turkish A Arm-Sev; F ADR-ION.
- England (Hartman): NMR! A Del-H/d/-r-Hol, OTB; F ENG, F IRI, F NTH - all H.
- France (Winger): A Bur-BEL; A PIC-s-A Bur-Del; A BRE-s-A Pic; A Spa-GAS; F POR-s-Turkish F Wes-Mid.
- Germany (Albrecht): A KIE-Lvn; F DAL-c-A Kie-Lvn; F BER-Kie; A StP-MOS; A WAR-s-A StP-Mos; A Mun-BUR; A RUH-s-A Mun-Bur.
- Russia (Deck):** A Mos-Lvn/d/-r-Ukr, OTB; F Bla-ANK.
- Turkey (Halls): F Wes-MID; F NAF-s-F Wes-Mid; F LYO-H; F Tys-WES; A GRE-H; A Bul-CON; F Sev-BLA; A Arm-SEV; A Ank-ARM.

Fall 1905 due June 11, 1982.

*Would Jim Gray please standby for England? Address listed under 81D result.

**COA - Andy Halls, 539 Pennsylvania St., Denver, CO 80203.

1981AY Press-

CASABLANCA-LONDON: The Turkish Expeditionary Force has enjoyed the easy sailing in the Mediterranean and we now look forward to joining your fleets in the Atlantic. We humbly request permission to pass through the straits of Gibraltar without conflict with your Royal Navy. We must tap the huge fisheries in the Atlantic to feed our growing Empire. . . or, did we want to sun ourselves on those deserted beaches in

((Con*d next page))

Portugal that you always read about? Besides, what is Germany going to do with his fleets . . . I hear from good sources that the Norwegian hospitality is truly remarkable. I bet the Kaiser is sailing to Oslo for R&R.

FRANCE: The French Emperor announces that, in May, the French embassy will be relocating from Potomac, MD to Denver, CO. After May 31, mail for the French government may be sent to the annex at 419-16 Piccadilly Pl., San Bruno, CA 94066. When the embassy opens in Denver, the world will be notified.

BUDAPEST: (PP) A silence has fallen over Europe. Austrians huddle by their radios hoping for news of the world conflict. But they huddle in vain, — even the French press has ceased publishing. The Austrians don't know they can't read newspapers on the radio.

BAKERSFIELD-BUDAPEST: Are they Polish refugees?

FRANCE-TURKEY: Hey, Andy, how about a little FTF. Since we're friends, let's be neighbors.

CONSTANTINOPLE: The Sultan announced today that new levels of understanding and cooperation have been reached with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We are looking forward to the new epoch of peace and tranquility. It's too bad that Russia can't participate in this alliance. The Sultan never did fully recover from the shock of the Revolution in Russia. After several unanswered attempts the Porte gave up on establishing diplomatic relations with the new government. It is also interesting to note that the Generals from the two countries have been busy developing common plans to defend against the marauding Hun.

PARIS-THE OFFENDERS: Look out, here comes the cavalry!

* * * * *

GAME OPENINGS!!!!

Regular DIPLOMACY - One game is more than halfway filled with four signed up. I will definitely open one other in addition. It's always hard to say for sure, but it appears as if a few more of the current games may be drawing to a close. MM will always have at least six DIP games running concurrently, so you will know what to expect. The next game of regular DIPLOMACY will be designated MM-15 until a Boardman number is assigned. The gamefee is \$6.00 and you must include an NMR deposit of \$3.00. The NMR deposit of \$3.00 will be added onto your subscription (6 issues) if you do not NMR while you are in the game. All players are expected to maintain a subscription to MM. Houserules are available upon request. All MM DIP games are grey press games. (See the article on the next page if you are unfamiliar with that term).

* * * * *

"Love thyself last; cherish those hearts
that hate thee;
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle
peace,
To silence envious tongues: be just, and
fear not.
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy
country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then if thou
fall'st, O Cromwell!
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr!"

HENRY VIII, III, ii, 444.

GRAY PRESS - WHAT IS IT AND WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

by
Ye Olde Main Minister

All veteran DIPLOMACY players, postal DIPLOMACY players I should specify, know what the term "press" is. But for those who may be new to the postal version of this great game, let me begin with a brief definition. Press is a condensed form of "press release". A press release in postal DIPLOMACY is anything the player may wish to have printed in the "World Press" along with a turn's game report. Richard Sharp in his book The Game of Diplomacy states, "After the game report, when you can tear your eyes away from it, there may come some 'press', which to the newcomer is the most baffling thing of all. What, you may well ask, is all this aimless fantasizing, sometimes loosely connected with the game, but more often not? There is no answer to this. If you enjoy writing press, you'll enjoy reading it too; if not, you'll just stay baffled. Press can be used as a tactical weapon -- e.g. an appeal to the other countries to rescue you from a nasty spot in their own interests -- but more often it is just fun."

Press releases have been divided into various color-coded categories as:

1) White Press - This gives the restriction that the press release's dateline MUST be a city or province under control of the issuing Power. A dateline, of course, is the place of origin of the press. White press guarantees that every single press release printed during the course of the game has its place of origin known by everyone in the game. In other words, you know which player is responsible for the authorship of all press. Some people think that this is the best way for the GM handle the rules governing press. Then, you know exactly who is saying those crazy things in the press about you. There are obvious advantages to this as well as disadvantages. For one, it tends to give the tone of the releases a pretty tame nature. You see, when everybody knows the origin of what is being said they tend to remain a little more civil. Players may hold back the urge to launch into a verbal tirade because of this. The main disadvantage is that it negates the use of any anonymous press.

2) Gray Press - Anonymous press is the biggest advantage of gray press. Gray press allows the player to use as his dateline any city or province on the map that currently controls PLUS any neutral area. In other words, a neutral province that has not yet been conquered by a Great Power may be used as the dateline for a press release. If a neutral province is given the other players will not know for sure who the player submitting it is. This can be a big advantage sometimes as a player. If you want to plant a subtle hint to someone without them knowing it was you, this presents a way. For an example of this, look at this issue's game report for 1981D on pg. 3. There is a press release datelined SWITZERLAND. Now as you know Switzerland is always neutral and cannot ever be controlled by anyone. Who wrote the press item? Was it England, France, Germany, Italy, or Turkey? Even though two of those nations NMR'd, how do you know beyond doubt that one of them didn't send in just some early press and mailed their moves late or some accident of some sort? So Gray press allows this option. (All MM games fall in this category as I like it best). The other restrictions of White press still apply to Gray -- i.e. you may not dateline a press release with an area owned by an opposing player. This defeats the attempt to write something nasty and try to blame it on someone else by giving one of their cities/provinces as the place of origin. Which takes us to . . .

3) Black Press - This allows TOTAL freedom of the press; you can say whatever you want and give any city or province on the board as its dateline. This can really generate a lot of press amongst the players as I know from experience having played in several Black press games before. This must be looked upon as advantageous. And some of the press items can be very clever and witty . . . and pretty outrageous too. Sometimes a little too outrageous. The disadvantage to this kind of press is that when you know there's going to be a ton of press, all of which is totally anonymous,

((Con'd next pg.))

GRAY PRESS (Con'd)

the Mr. Hyde in some people emerges. What one won't say about someone or something when they believe the recognition (blame?) will go to another. Although these games produce interesting press, you should realize what you are getting yourself into before you jump right in. If a press release stating terrible things about your mother doesn't bother you, then Black press may be just your cup of tea. If so you may also like . . .

4) Blue press - This means very simply obscene press. Exactly what constitutes an obscenity is a question each publisher must decide for himself. A publisher has a right to refuse to publish something he feels should not appear in his zine. In MM for instance, you may see mild profanities appear in print but not the kind of stuff that appeared in the Black Press games of the BRUTUS BULLETIN's heyday. You must read what the gamesmaster has to say about Blue press and then trust to his judgement if you submit a borderline press release.

Of these four major types of allowable press, I have chosen Gray press as the most congruous with my tastes as a publisher. I have found that Gray press allows the player to use the diplomatic advantage of anonymous statements through the game's press section of the adjudication without all the added temptations of distasteful rantings brought on by Black and Blue press.

There are several ends which can be brought about through the discreet use of press.

The first devious use of Gray press is to spread rumors. Let's say, for instance, that you are Turkey and want to get Russia to move his Armies north because in 1962 of the game you have decided to try an invasion of Russia. You may decide to try and get the desired effect by a press release with a neutral dateline (Switzerland, Iceland, Washington D.C., or wherever). You might be afraid that if you came right out and directly told the Russian that England was going to be heading north, he might become suspicious of you and quickly deduce your true motives. On the other hand, a press release stating "that England would be heading north" might just make the Russian worried enough to make the desired move.

Another use of Gray press is to convey information. Once again, it might be advantageous to disclose information but not for everyone to know it was you who did it. Well, then why not just write to someone if you want to tell them something? Believe it or not some people in this hobby will actually take your letter and make a copy of it and send it on to another player. This other player might not be very happy with the information you gave away if it happened to be a "secret". So you can communicate it through the press for everyone to see! You get the message across, XX and if you're careful, no one knows who is responsible!

Another use of Gray press is to use it to persuade. You can make an impassioned plea for help, make a subtle suggestion, or drop a witty remark. Any of these may be geared into and coordinated with, your diplomatic efforts.

The fourth and final use of Gray press, and all press in general, is to entertain. Press is fun to write. Your imagination is the limit for adding an imaginary persona (Tsar, King, Foreign Minister, Pope, etc.) to the guiding forces of the game, making observations of the game through parody or satire, or simply venting your frustrations. Many players write their best press releases as an outlet for frustration when they are losing the game. It adds a very vital ingredient to the game. In short, writing and reading press releases helps to make playing postal DIPLOMACY the enjoyable hobby it is. Now let's see, where was I in that press release I was looking for? Oh yes, " . . . Snake Mercer coughed up a gout of frothy blood. The French blade had written his finish, but he had one card left to play. Louis-Louie watched with growing horror as 'Snake' Mercer slowly straightened up and turned to face him. "I only did it to save you from Von Braun," he sobbed in terror.

Young Mazzerman, whispering in the French monarch's ear, assured the Frenchman that 'Snake' was harmless. . . " This is part of a Gray press release from a recent game of mine. Now who wrote it? Was it me, Olsen, Mazzer, Mercer, Langley, or . . .

PLEASE STAND BY

by

Jerry Jones

((This article first appeared in Steve McLendon's zine DRAGON & THE LAMB #40 - Steve's address: Box 57066 Webster, TX 77598. It was reprinted in BRUTUS BULLETIN #58 and now is before you. The comments at the end of the article in ((())) are John Michalski's, while the comments which follow John's in ((-)) are mine. - RB.))

Ah, at last a subject that I can get my teeth into! For as long as I can remember (which is about the time of my first postal game and a standby came in and screwed up the game), I have been anti-standbys.

Are they needed? Most will immediately respond with a yes. Why? Because they help maintain the game balance.

Hogwash!!!

When a standby enters a game, one of two things happen. One, the standby does little more than if the units had remained in civil disorder. Or, which is by far more often the case, you've got a brand new game and you'd better treat the entire game as brand new. How many standbys do you think go back and look at the earlier game results? If you think any, then you're a dreamer. No, they look at the current position and make all the decisions from there without any regard for what's gone on in the past. Try to convince the standby that the war that is between him and you is a "phoney war". Lots of luck! Try to convince him that Belgium was to be his only until Fall 1905. Dream on! The minute a standby steps in, EVERYTHING that transpired in the past is for naught. How can anyone believe that that promotes play balance? No, I fail to see the love affair that the North American hobby has for the standby.

Do I have a better way? C'mon, I'm just an agitator. I do believe that the games would continue, possibly in a different manner; one that would require new skills. Let's look at some basic game situations and see how the no-standby rule would affect you:

1. The Strong Alliance - Player A NMRs. As the other half of the alliance, you have a couple of options. One, since his supply centers are more than likely exposed to you, you will either try to protect them until he returns (assuming he might), or try to take the majority of them for yourself. The other option at your disposal is to send the moves you want for him to make to him and have him sign them and mail them to the GM. I prefer either of these options to having an unknown entity come in as my new "ally".
2. The Four Center NMR - This is probably the most common. As the attacking power(s), this will probably increase your attack time on that country by a year or two. It is up to the other countries to band together all that much quicker in an attempt to stop you. But if you are that close to eliminating a country, the other powers deserve what they get if they haven't already banded together to meet you head on.
3. The Early Game NMR - In my opinion, this is the only time that I would ever consider player replacements. After Winter 1901, never. With an S'01 NMR I would not be opposed to the GM using general orders and asking for a standby; in F'01, no movement and a standby called for. After that . . . nothing.

Granted, the non-usage of standbys would only work well in a reliable zine that comes out on time, keeping player interest. But I'll tell you what: I have nothing against winning a game because of the fact that I was the only player willing to complete the game. When I sign up for a game, I agree to compete against six other players in a head-to-head conflict where the majority of those who start out will lose. Adding new wrinkles doesn't seem to me as if it's going to improve the odds.

I suppose that I've incited some people to riot with my sacreligious disregard for the standby, but before you take to the streets, ask yourself: what has a standby done to me? (Notice that I said TO me. Rarely have I seen a standby do anything FOR me.)

((Con'd next pg.))

PLEASE STAND BY (Con'd)

(((This article really hit the nail on the head with me. 77IC is a classic example for me, the sole original player, and it has just ended after going through 13 players. I am so much in agreement with what Jerry has pointed out here that no standbys will be used in any future games run here. I used to think that one would be needed for a large power at the end as well as 1901, but IC showed me otherwise. A 14 center Russia went to a standby who stabbed me, the good ally, and made it to 16, then dropped himself. Only a miracle brought Graig Crossley to take 16 and vote FOR a 4way survivor draw. (I doubt I would have turned down a sure win.) But why have SDs at all?)))

((I really have to feel a little for both sides of the argument, but overall, I have to come out in favor of using standby players for NMRing Powers. You have just read two very experienced and knowledgeable players give their opinions about standby players. Al Rodriguez is another who felt this way. And I agree with the points and arguments raised herein. Well, to a certain extent anyway. John related his experience in 77IC where a standby nearly ruined the game for him. Well, I have stories of not having a standby ruined the game.

I was playing Turkey in 1980HN amongst a singularly group of uninterested players. Russia moved A War-Sil; A Mos-StP; F Sev-Bla; F StP(sc) in Spring '01 and then dropped from the game. After S'02, Austria had armies in Alb, Ser, Rum, Gal, Ukr, and a F Gre. Yes, that's right, the Russian NMR gave Austria three builds in '01: Rum, Ser, & Gre and no resistance for further expansion into Russia. The entire eastern half of Europe was having its fate decided by Austria, Russia, and Turkey, only Russia was just sitting while Austria leisurely (and he could easily afford to be leisurely) mopped up on my 4 center Turkey. Had a standby player been called, I would have at least had the chance to try some diplomacy to change things. Have you ever tried to conduct diplomacy with a 4 center Russia that is in CD in 1901? Needless to say, 80HN was not my most favorite game. The final result? Austria won, of course.

As for some of the points that Jerry raises in his article, some are not very relevant. In number 1., "The Strong Alliance", why can't you do this whether or not a standby will be called or not? It's happened before in standby games that I've GM'd. One member of the strong alliance begins to lose interest in the game so the other makes his moves for him on a preaddressed postcard, and sends it along for the required signature. All the player has to do is sign it and mail it. If the member is too disinterested to do even that, then would you prefer your strong "ally" to go into CD or take a chance on his successor coming into the game and following the present course of the game. Two more things along this vein: first, isn't the game of DIPLOMACY supposed to simulate the goings-on among the rulers of Europe in 1901? Aren't these nations' rulers capable of "dying" through assassination, sickness, old age, or whatever? And when and if that occurs, doesn't a new ruler emerge; one who may not want to do things exactly the same way as his predecessor did them? Secondly, if this does happen and you are faced with a new player where your old ally used to be, isn't it up to you through the skillful use of diplomacy to persuade him to follow along with the wonderful alliance he has fallen into?

Don't get me wrong. I am not totally against no-standby games. If you feel the original players are all interested, strong players, then it might not be so bad. There are other situations where it might be preferable to make the game a no-standby game. Prize money games and tournament games are two which come to mind easily. But as a generalization, I have to say that I am in favor of using standby players -- both in the games I GM and in the ones I play. Perhaps it is the lesser of two evils, but I think it's superior nonetheless. - RB))

STILL MORE STUFF (Con'd from pg. 2)

A brief request that you will see me print from time to time: Please remember when you write your orders to include the following items: 1) Your game's identifying Boardman Number - this is what I look for when I separate the orders; 2) The season currently being played, remembering that Winter is a separate season; 3) The orders using the MM abbreviations or take your chances if a misinterpretation (the GM will use common sense) should be possible. In short, try to be unambiguous in your orders; 4) Your signature - Optional but take your chances; 5) The Date should be there with the date you sent the orders. Just a friendly reminder. Thanks.

A fake DIPLOMACY DIGEST landed here soon after the last MM was in the mails. It was a minifake, a supposed "Grandson of Lexicon" with a series of entries that Mark Berch "should have included", and a TZC with a comment about Mark's not making it to the seminar he was supposed to give at last summer's ORIGINS. In Mark's mention of the fake DD in (the real) DD #53, he says he doesn't know who did it but he can tell that "it had a definite west-coast flair," and the person responsible "... gets the GENERAL and probably MURD'RING MINISTERS." Who did it, Mark? I know for sure that the faker was at ORIGINS, lives on the west-coast, and yeah, I'd imagine you could say he sees every issue of MM.

The 1982 North American Zine and GM Dolls have been beginning to get mentions in several zines. John Caruso even did us all the courtesy of enclosing a ballot inside his last WHITESTONIA. I haven't heard anything from Leeder yet but we assume he is once again handling the tabulating chore. So start thinking about which zines you like most, least, etc. and start giving them a mental rating of 1-10 with 1 the pits and 10 the best zine you've ever seen. Make sure you send your ballot to John Leeder, 605 15th St NW Calgary Alta CANADA T2N 2B1 and be sure to sign it. Publishers, you are requested not to vote for your own zine. You may also vote for any gamemasters you have played under using the same method. I think the votes must be in by June 30th, 1982 so mail yours soon.

Available from Mark Berch, 492 Naylor Place, Alexandria, VA 22304 is FARRAGO #6, a two page flyer highlighting all the details about the upcoming DIPCON at this summer's ORIGINS. The Big O will be held July 23-25 at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Campus (UMBC). Write for registration forms for the con at Origins, 82 P.O. Box 15405, Baltimore, MD 21220. The Dip tournament will cost \$4.00. Write to Mark for #6.

Keeping the scoring system secret is the best way! Yay, Langley!

Here we are, now back on the ground again. Did I tell you about the ~~flak~~ ~~Aggie~~ Aggie who asked for a job selling brushes? The boss thought he was pretty sorry looking and wondered how a poor slob like this could be a salesman. So he told him to take this pack of 500 toothbrushes and see if he could sell them in a week's time. Well, the guy was back the next day saying he sold them all and wanted to get some more to sell. So the boss gives him a crate of 2,000 toothbrushes. The guy returns the next day having sold them all! The boss says to the guy, "You have to come to the board meeting and explain how you sold over two thousand toothbrushes in two days!" The Aggie says there was nothing to it and explains, "I went to the airport with my special dip and lots of chips. As people got off their planes all hungry and everything I'd offer them free dip. After taking a bite they'd say, 'That tastes like shit', and I'd say, 'It is! Wanna buy a toothbrush?'"

"Those that much covet are with gain so fond,
For what they have not, that which they possess
They scatter and unloose it from their bond,
And so, by hoping more, they have but less."

VENUS AND ADONIS, 1. 134.

WRAP-UP

That's about it for this time. I got some stuff I couldn't squeeze in this time that will appear in the next issue, letters from Olsen, Williams, and Winger, an article by Stan Johnen on Austria, and more. I've about decided that MM #50 will be a big issue with reprints from MM's past . . . sort of a "Best of . . ." kind of thing. This will be fun going through all the back issue and picking out from all the articles that have appeared the few best. So, until next time don't go to sleep with any knives under your pillow . . . you'd hate to wake up in the middle of the night dreaming of a DIPLOMACY game . . . Bye! - RB

CONTENTS

STUFF.....	(pg. 1-2)
1981AD, 1981D, MM, STANDDY LIST.....	(pg. 3)
1981AP, 1980IX.....	(pg. 4)
1980KZ, 1980AY.....	(pg. 5)
GAME OPENINGS.....	(pg. 6)
"GRAY PRESS".....	(pg. 7-8)
"PLEASE STANDDY".....	(pg. 9-10)
STILL MORE STUFF.....	(pg. 11)
WRAP-UP.....	(pg. 12)

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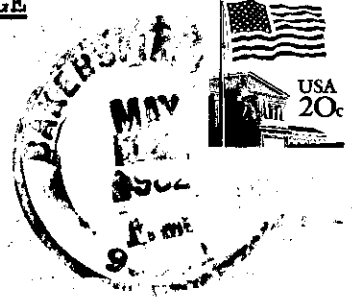
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