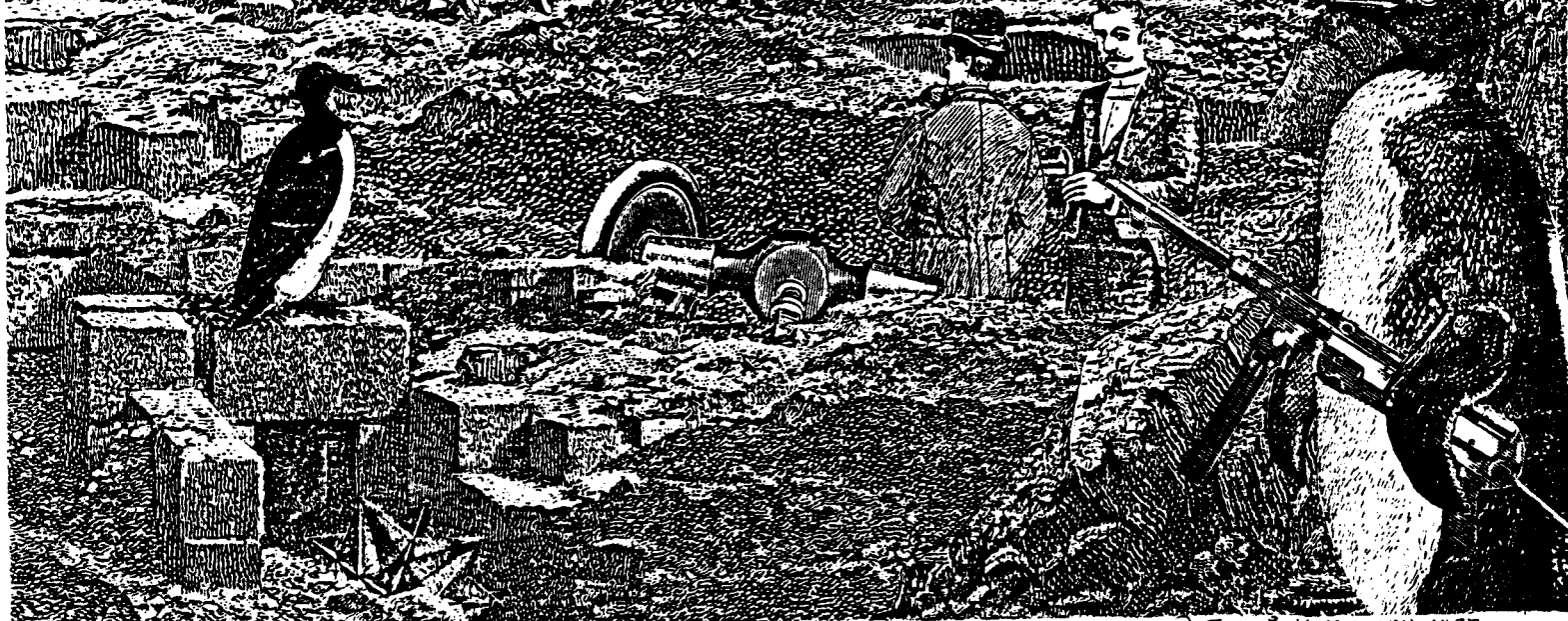
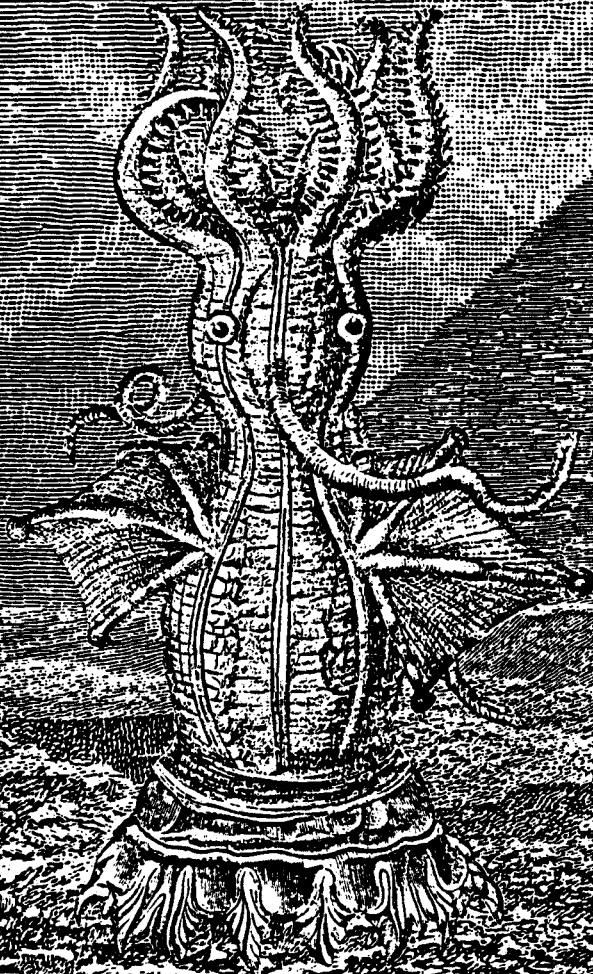
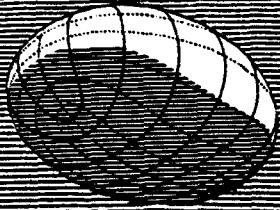


PENGUIN DIP #8



Welcome to PENGUIN DIP #8. PENGUIN DIP is a science fiction and fantasy fanzine, an artzine, a general gaming and role playing game fanzine, and a Dipzine, running postal Diplomacy games. It is edited, published and copyrighted (except where noted) by Stephen H. Dorneman, 95 Federal St. #2, Lynn, MA 01905. PD is available for contributions of articles and/or artwork, the usual, and as a 10 issue (1 year) subscription for \$10.00. Only standby game positions currently available, but see below.

FROM THE FLOE: FLU

Don't ask me what kind of influenza it was. Like the victim of a hit-and-run accident, I was in no condition to get its license number. All I know is that somehow I lost the first two weeks of October in a fever daze. So if you sent me a zine, letter, suggestion for an article, turn result, etc., be reassured, I'm not just ignoring you. I've been ignoring everybody, doing just the bare amount of hobby activity and fanac to keep me from NMRing (No Moves Received) in my games and being dropped from the mailing lists of my zines. The only good thing to come about from this disease is that I did get to watch a lot of scab football . . .

And I've recovered enough to get this issue of PD out on time. The theme this month is professional Play By Mail (PBM) games, with three featured reviews. As far as amateur PBMs go, a number of you have asked if I'm going to be running any more games of Diplomacy or Whatever, and I'd like to throw out a couple of ideas to the readership and see what you think.

Of course, the easiest thing to do would be to run another Dip game, or perhaps a Gunboat Diplomacy game, but neither would add much entertainment value to the zine for the non-Dip readership. Three other possibilities occurred to me during my recent illness, though . . .

The easiest to run, but perhaps the least interesting, takes its inspiration from the recent gyrations of the stock market. The Ultimate Fan Interest Portfolio would have up to 10 players taking the roles of mutual fund managers, buying and selling stocks of companies in the fannish fields of Publishing, Computers, Space Systems, Hotels, Entertainment, Beverages, and Restaurants. Each person would start with, say \$50,000 to invest in up to 3 different New York Stock Exchange stocks each turn, and the first player to build his share up to a million would be the winner.

The other two games would both be fantasy role playing PBMs, but with two very different twists. The first would be a Call of Cthulhu game, with required press. The press would be the investigator's diaries, letters home, or scholarly publications. Investigators would start separately, but may or may not be drawn together as the plot (and blood) thickens. Perhaps up to six players, with new players able to enter as the older investigators die. My other thought wouldn't be a press-intensive game, but would have a regular 'newspaper' format turn results and press outlet. Players would take the roles of higher-ups in various organizations in my current AD&D campaign (High Priestess of Isis, Head of a Merchant House, Prince of the Dwarves, etc.), and with a limited budget of magic, gold and personnel work towards various goals. They would also be changing the world background of my face-to-face AD&D player's campaign.

Anything there that you'd like to play in? Anything there that you'd enjoy reading about if you weren't playing? Let me know what you think, and while you're at it, how about sending me an article or review that you'd really like to see in PENGUIN DIP, and I'll be glad to publish it for you.



CREDITS this issue for artwork go to **John Kingsbury**(cover), **Jim Tozzi**(4,5), **Phil Tortorici**(7), **Steven Fox**(8) and **Steve Langley**(14). Two issues subscription credit per piece going out to each of them, and thanks again for the quality work. PD always needs more artwork (I'm still low on Covers and small (3x5 or less) interior artwork on gaming themes as well as SF and Fantasy), with the artist retaining all of his or her rights to the work.

LETTERS

CRAIG LEDBETTER: "Ron Cameron's ideas are good until the market goes bust as it has in Texas. Even if I sell my house in Dallas (it's been on the market for one year) I'll have to bring money to the closing to pay off what I owe. I've lost money on two houses in a row (both during an oil crunch) so for me at least Real Estate ain't the way to go to make money."

SHERYL BIRKHEAD: "About the housing costs - where I was in school (this last time around) the standard of living was (in general) lower than the D.C. area - SUBSTANTIALLY - but housing ran about the same since there was a rather large captive population (and the job market - other than the University is practically zero). So, housing costs need to be compared based on expected income and that goes along with the potential of the area."

ROD WALKER: "I was pleased to see Garret Schenck's review of one of Ermine de Havillard's books. Not that I'm fond of her books -- they run the emotional gamut from dull to inert. However, she is the only French SF writer to deal with maps of her creations -- my fannish subject. So, I guess if I can read the Gor novels of 'John Norman', I can read the Marno novels of Ermine de Havillard. I just can't tell which of them is worse. . . . But if you like the writing style (set aside the subject matter) of Taylor Caldwell or 'Norman' (or even, retch, retch, Shirley McLaine), you'll love de Havillard. I used to think she might not be well served by her translators. Then it occurred to me that a translator who wrote that badly would soon be relegated to turning out ad copy for church bulletins. No, only the writer could get away with such pedantic, 'he said - she said' stuff. I think there's a love story in Hard Times. It's hard to tell; de Havillard ain't much for passion. Her lovers don't even sound like dialogue from Ionescu. They sound like two theater critics discussing Ionescu. . . . By the way, she has also written at least one fantasy, The Mines of Craquen-Drou. About a big nasty who exploits the labor of sweet little pointy-eared, fuzzy-footed types in his evil mines. Sound familiar? I think it's for children, with lots of stuff about class consciousness. And a map. Do you recall the thing by the Brothers Hildebrand that bombed so completely a few years back -- Urshurak? This one is (if you can believe it) worse."

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK: "I do play some FRP games, but mostly the short ones. I used to play D&D and all the others, but I soon tired of the length. I also tired of the personalities, the over-use of magic and bashing (Kirk's article is dead-on, as far as I am concerned), and the way some players take the game too seriously. . . DIPLOMACY style games are not really of interest to me, again because of the ways personalities can come to the foreground. I guess at age 42 I am something of a fuddy-duddy. Well, Maybe I am, but I do have fun at the games I play. FUN. For newcomers to your zine, perhaps you might include an explanation of DIPLOMACY, and how far along the various games are."

[Good idea, Harry. To quote the Rules for Diplomacy (©1976 The Avalon Hill Game Co.), "DIPLOMACY is a game of skill and cunning negotiations. Chance plays no part. In DIPLOMACY each player guides the destinies of one European power through the intricacies of international politics. By negotiating alliances with other players and careful planning, each player seeks control of Europe. DIPLOMACY tests your ability not only to plan a campaign, but also to outwit your fellow players in diplomatic negotiations."

The games all start in the Spring of 1900, with each turn usually consisting of a Spring or a Fall move, although occasionally a Winter turn, just building or removing units, will be the only turn listed. The abbreviations (such as Nth, Mar, Bot, etc.) are of the provinces on the gameboard map, and show where a player/country's units moved, or tried to move, or helped other units. The Press releases following the turn results are public statements from the players to each other, to themselves, and to you, the readers of the press, and are often more fun to write and to read than playing the game itself!

CATHY OZOG: "It's funny to find out how many people actually play or played AD&D that you never knew did before! See - you're making us come out of the closet."

STEPHEN SIMKINS: "I wish that I had any talent at all artistically, because I would like to draw a large hand dipping a little Opus character into a bowl labeled PENGUIN DIP. On second thought this may be so obvious that somewhere in PD# 1-6 this cartoon may have already appeared." *[Hasn't appeared yet, but Artists, are you listening?]*

GARRET SCHENCK: "Gee, you seem to come down pretty hard on the New Agers, Stephen. Look, you want to work for peace? It's a nice idea, I'm all for it. But it can be a positively dangerous experience. Take Brian Wilson, for example. Now it wasn't enough that the U.S. Government sent this man to Vietnam, where he learned the vital necessity to never again allow such a war to happen. No, they also 'rewarded' his working for peace, in this instance trying to stop the U.S. aggression against the people of Nicaragua by sitting in front of a train bearing munitions for Central America. They chopped off both his feet, using a railroad locomotive as a guillotine. This grisly image has ensured that many will have heard of this action taken by our government. The message is clear -- fuck with the war machine and we will cut your legs off. Given this it is easy to understand (though perhaps not to sympathize with) those who gather to 'fondle their crystals' and 'wish' for peace. It's a whole lot safer than working for it."

CRAIG LEDBETTER: "I'm really going to miss FANTASY REVIEW. Nowhere else could I get such detailed information and reviews on the Dark Fantasy (or Horror) genre. I'd been buying and then subscribing to it since #70 and even though their frequency had a few rough spots I really liked what the new publisher was doing."

SHERYL BIRKHEAD: "You went to Herkimer!? Did you get any of the world famous Herkimer 'diamonds'? At 'our' annual gem and lapidary show most dealers have 'em for sale and the cheaper ones are very popular with the kids. I used to (still do - just don't know WHERE) have a fairly large one - a nun who was in graduate school when I was too (Penn State) asked me about it and I explained how crystals were formed and 'grow'. She then had a logical (I suppose) question - if you put the crystal BACK would it continue to 'grow'. Hmmm - the answer is clear, to me, but I can understand why the question was asked." *[Well, Hail to the Lion, another PSU grad! Class of 1977 here, picking up a more-or-less useless B.S. in Biology, followed by a year of non-degree graduate work in Biophysics, which wouldn't have been useless if I'd stuck with it and waited until the genetic engineering craze swept the business world. Oh well... at least I can cheer for the football team.]*



THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY: Roles Vs. Stereotyping in FRP

Editorial Reply by **John R. Kingsbury**

As Kirk M. Carroll observes in PD #7, most Fantasy Role Playing (FRP) games have elements of bigotry built in. I must point out that the most blatant example of this (Orc bashing) went without comment.

People notice prejudice easily when it happens to "good guy" races like Elves or Dwarves, but who stands up for the much maligned Orc? Going back to the original source material (The Lord of the Rings), we can see that Orcs (and Goblins) are just selectively bred Elves, and the victims of genocidal wars waged (mostly) by their unspecialized parent stock and their human dupes. "But Orcs are evil!" you say?

Don't be silly. Like any thinking being, Orcs must have free will. While the behavior of the Orcs in Lord of the Rings is rude and ill-mannered, one can hardly call them evil. The Orc armies were driven into combat with whips and Nazgul, once there, they were literally fighting for their lives. What Elf ever gave an Orc quarter? Except to save the hapless creature for torture? Most Orcs would probably rather be sitting around the cave, watching their children grow up.

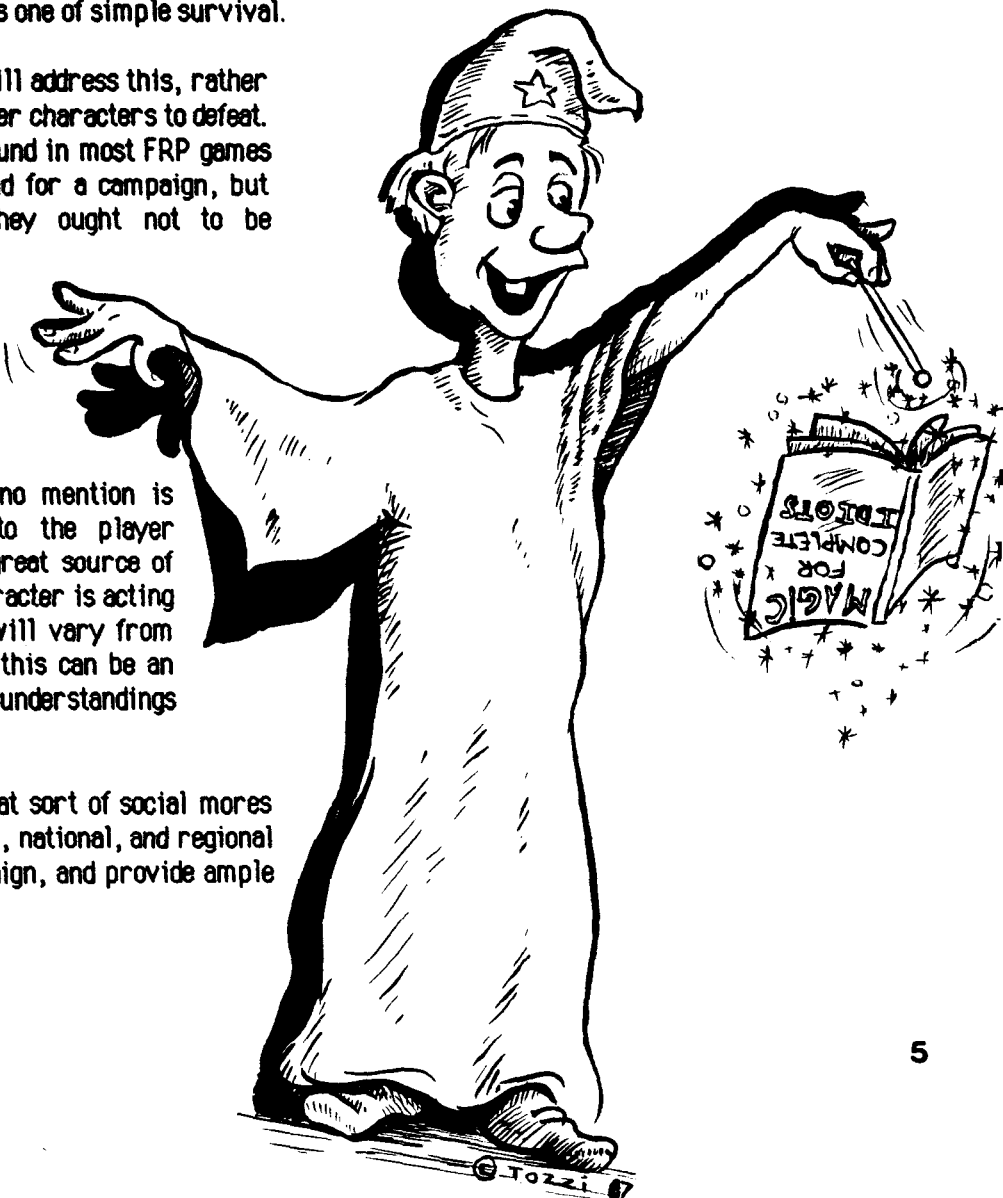
All individuals have the personal choice between Good and Evil. Societies can warp the perception of this. Just look at "proper" behavior in Nazi Germany or among the Yanamamo for examples. Individuals in such groups must bend their inclinations to their society's or suffer the consequences. This is not so much a matter of situational ethics, as it is one of simple survival.

A really good Role Playing game will address this, rather than set up straw men for the player characters to defeat. The standard racial stereotypes found in most FRP games may be a useful bit of background for a campaign, but like real world stereotypes, they ought not to be considered universal.

Sexual roles also have a place in FRP. They are another part of how a character fits into society or sticks out of it.

In many campaigns and games, no mention is made of this (as it relates to the player characters). Yet this can be a great source of challenges for a player whose character is acting outside the norm. As the norm will vary from society to society (race to race) this can be an additional reason for the misunderstandings between the races.

A Game Master must consider what sort of social mores each different group holds. Racial, national, and regional differences will enrich the campaign, and provide ample opportunities for role play.



HYBORIAN WAR/REALITY SIMULATIONS, INC.

PBM Game Review by Stephen H. Dorneman

There are plenty of PBM games where the player, acting as chieftain/jarl/baron/king/president/emperor of a tribe/clan/barony/kingdom/nation/planet, collects resources to raise armies to explore and conquer new lands. Military-economic simulations, often with each player starting in an identical power vacuum of non-player lands before they grow enough to come into contact with other players.

Then there are the fantasy role-playing PBMs, story generators where in response to a more-or-less limited set of commands you receive a more-or-less readable chapter in the (more-or-less) exciting life of your character or group of characters.

Then there is HYBORIAN WAR - which takes the best features of both of the above types of PBM games, combines them with a number of unique features, and puts it all together in a computer-moderated framework that gives you more value for your money than any other professionally-run PBM game that I've ever seen.

In HYBORIAN WAR you control the destiny of one of 36 different countrys during the Hyborian Age of Robert E. Howard's Conan stories. But you control not just the means of production for the fleets and armys of your land, but also the the great and powerful individual characters of your country's court. Send the heros of Cimmeria adventuring for fame and fortune, ask the agents of Zamora to spy your enemies' court, have the Set-worshipping wizards of Stygia cast the spell of Black Death upon any who dare invade your ancient land. The actions of your dozen-or-so characters can affect the game as much as any troop manuevers - an imminent enemy invasion can be stopped before it starts by a character's hastily negotiated peace treaty, and having Conan himself at the helm of your raiding fleet can make a weak naval attack nearly unstoppable.

Reality Simulations have done a marvelous job on this game, with plenty of extra attention to details such as a two-color wall map of Hyboria, individual names for each troop in each country's armies as well as consistent, country-dependent names for each character in your court, even the florid language used in the turn results as your councilors bring you up-to-date on the latest seasons' campaigns. They're not perfect - they starting accepting players before the game was quite ready (one year passed between my first and second turn results, as opposed to the clockwork three week turnaround now), spelling errors abound throughout the system and, far more serious, data entry errors are not uncommon, but these are all minor points, and the only thing that keeps me from whole-heartedly recommending this game is the cost.

Your first setup, including rules, the world map, and your kingdom report, is free - but every three weeks thereafter (four weeks in the Slow games), a new turn is in the mail, and RSI deducts \$5, \$7, or \$9 (depending on whether you're playing a Small, Medium, or Large Kingdom) from your account. \$150+ a year to play a Large Kingdom is not small potatoes, and I have no indication as to how long a given game of HYBOREAN WAR lasts. But if you can afford it (and a Small Kingdom in a Slow game would be only about \$50 a year), I know you're going to enjoy it.

Although completely computer adjudicated, there are over 50 different types of orders possible, from which you are choosing 20 or more on any given turn. There are 28 different troop types, six different character types with seven different characteristics each. Combining these with 36 different kingdoms means that I have only very rarely felt restricted in my options.

Some especially worthwhile features of note:

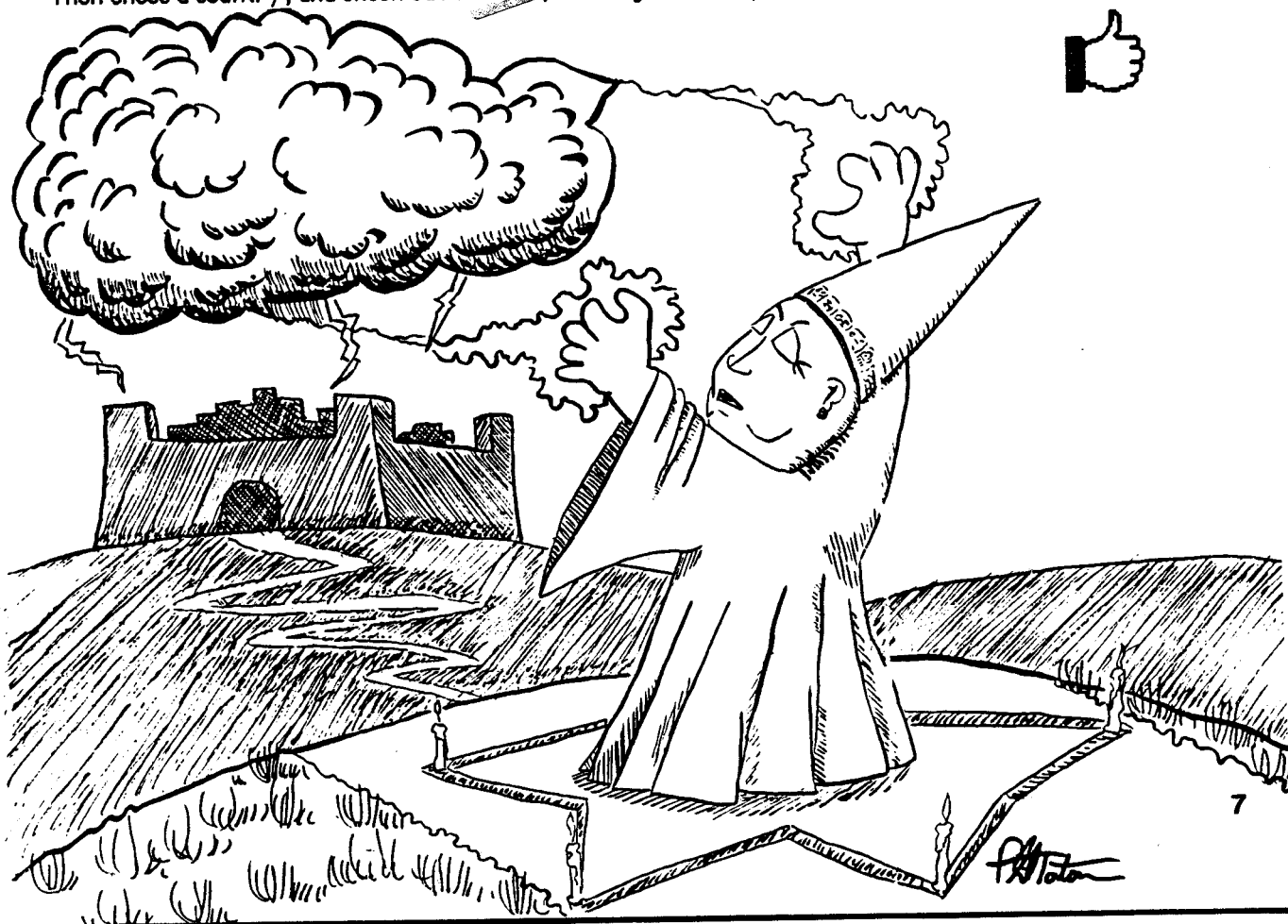
Every kingdom has its own unique advantages and disadvantages. Not only does each player have a unique set of characters and mix of troop types to work with, but each kingdom has a different set of Imperial goals to work towards (a sort of intermediate victory condition that, when achieved, allows you to raise still more new troop types), and there are different final Victory goals. For example, Pictland is a loosely organized kingdom of 12 very poor provinces that produce a large number of troops on a regular basis but must constantly use those troops to raid neighboring kingdoms to pay its debts, while Khauran starts with only two easily-lost provinces, two provinces that contain many trade routes and produce fantastic amounts of wealth to power Khauran's mercenary army. But both are Medium kingdoms. Some countrys are directly bordered by as many as seven other player kingdoms, while others start the game with no player-controlled neighbors.

Almost all capabilities (your character's characteristics, the chance for your troops to reach a particular terrain type, your treasury, your troop's morale) are measured on the same Standard Rating scale, from None to Superior. The computer worries about the nickels and dimes, but you still get a very good idea as to what kind of shape you're in.

Invasion battles are fought out in a manner reminiscent of ancient miniatures contests, with the terrain the battle takes place in determining how many troops can fight on a line, and the player placing his troops on those lines, with characters in various command spots, to allow his troops to maneuver for best advantage.

Magic has many different uses; Personal Magic is an aid to a character's combat characteristics, Province Magic helps or hinders production and loyalty, Strategic Magic helps in a battle's maneuver phase, and Battle Magic can change the tides of the actual fighting. But magic is balanced enough so that it doesn't overpower the game - and, again, what kingdom you control determines how much magic you'll get to use.

I could go on and on, and I'm putting my money where my mouth is every three weeks. Write to Reality Simulations, Inc. at P.O. Box 27576, Tempe, AZ 85282 and ask for information about HYBORIAN WAR. Then chose a country, and check out the free, no obligation setup and rules. Then have fun!



SPIRAL ARM/GRAAF SIMULATIONS

PBM Game Review by Bob Addison

Spiral Arm is a self-proclaimed "strategic science fiction game of galactic scale, involving warfare, economics and diplomacy". 50 player empires compete in a galaxy of 658 stars. Each player begins on a homeworld star and expands by colonization and combat. The game ends when an alliance of up to five players controls more than half of the industry in the galaxy.

Each colonized star produces an income proportional to its population and industry. The owner of a colony can spend that income building any of seven different kinds of ships for exploration and combat. Players also spend their income to build new colonies on stars they capture. Or they can invest in technological development.

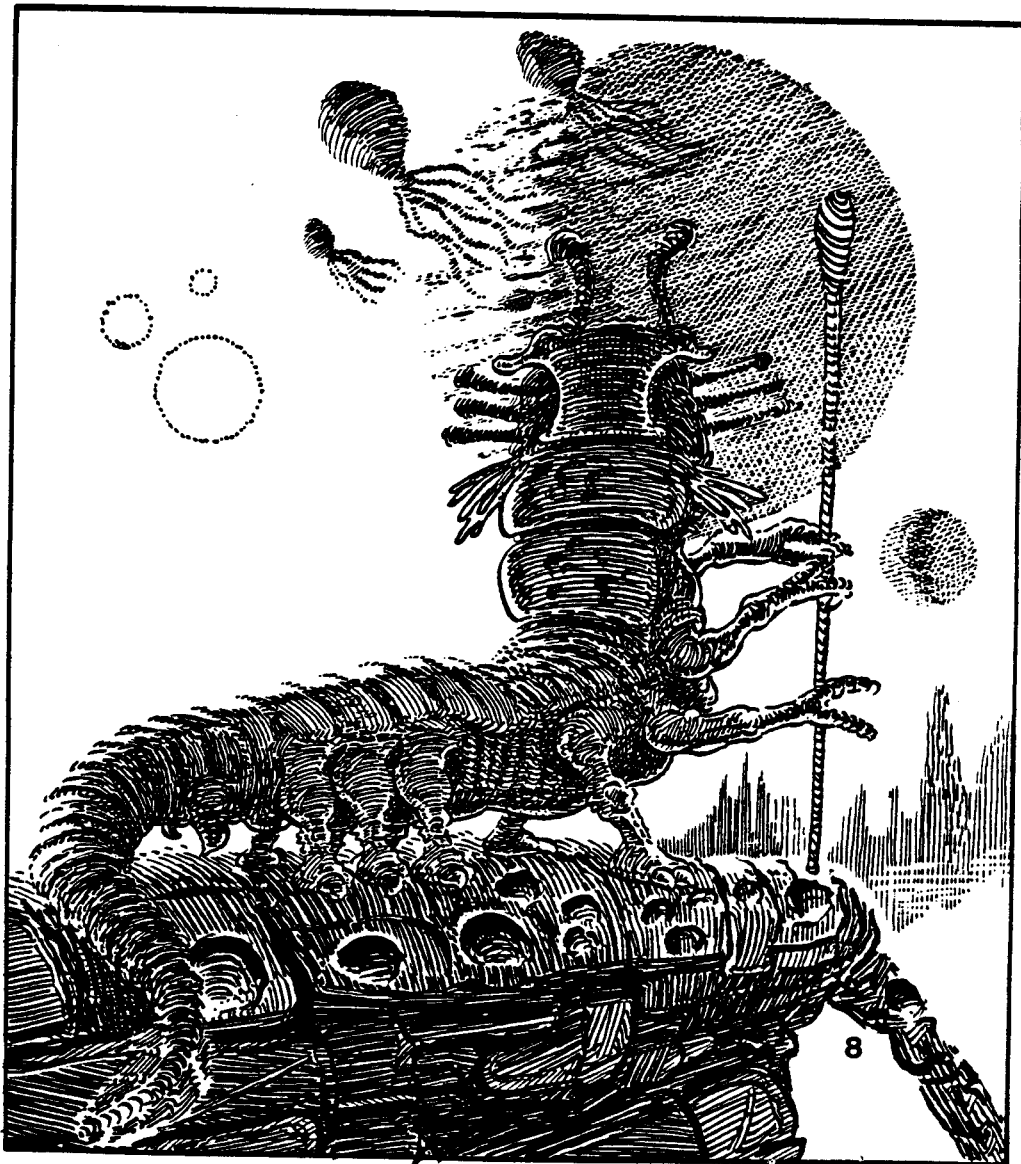
The allocation of funds can make for some interesting decisions early in the game, but it soon pales in comparison to the strategy of player interaction. Because Spiral Arm is, first and foremost, a game of alliances.

In addition to the obvious advantages, allies may combine their ships for greatly increased fleet sizes. But beware - the quirks in the rules allow for some nasty stabs!

I have found Spiral Arm to be a very interesting game. There's plenty of diplomacy, the mechanics are simple, the combat resolution is interesting, and some of the strategies are unique. My only gripe is about the cost; turns are \$4.50, but watch out for your phone bill! Two week deadlines don't allow for much postal correspondence in a game where communication is essential.

Spiral Arm is run by Graaf Simulations, 27530 Harper, St. Clair Shores, MI, 48081. \$13.50 buys rules, map, set-up, and two turns. Rulebooks are \$3.00 when purchased separately.

66



MIDGARD/TIME SPACE SIMULATIONS

PBM Game Review by Carol Smallets

In my duller moments of mundane life, some days are spent making little nit-picking decisions about microeconomics (is the Campbell's soup cheaper at Johnny Foodmaster or the A&P?), in petty office politics (should I go to lunch with Betty from Bookkeeping, or Don from Marketing?), and in finding out what your superiors *really* want done, and then doing it (should I backup the system like Terry asked, or finish the report for Terry's boss?). In my Play-By-Mail fantasies, however, I want to revel in the spending of treasures uncountable, to join in the epic struggle of good versus evil, and to formulate my own schemes for world conquest. This means that I don't want to play in MIDGARD anymore, Time Space Simulations' Paperwork and Paychecks game disguised to resemble a medieval role playing game.

Note that I didn't call it a fantasy role playing game. No, you won't find any magic in MIDGARD, not even any trolls, elves, dwarves, etc. You also won't find any exotic human cultures, romance, heroic deeds, or even, in my personal experience, any interesting (or at least interested) fellow players! What you will find are player characters slotted into the bottom of a stratified hierarchy. Player characters who wander the well-populated countryside (no wilderness here!), buying and selling their stock of trade goods, weapons and horses while waiting to be assigned "tasks" from their player and non-player higher ups in the chain. Tasks like wandering the well-populated countryside (at least this time from point A to point B) while buying and selling their stock of trade goods. If this is a game, GIVE ME REAL LIFE! At least I don't have to pay \$4 a turn to run in the rat race.

Getting down to specifics: your MIDGARD startup gets you the rulebook, a map of the area immediately surrounding your start position, and a three-page carbonless copy turnsheet. The rulebook is reasonably thick (Just how many pages? Who knows! It's numbered, but separately for each section.), and rather confusing, with no index and important sections about how to mark your turnsheet scattered throughout. The map is an amazingly unesthetic computer printout of a square grid, each square marked with its terrain type. The turnsheet lists your standing orders, movement results and movement points available, lists your goods and any transactions you made of those goods, treasury, troops and their unit divisions, provisions, and influence. One nice idea here, to give credit where credit is due, is the self-copying turnsheet - you automatically get a copy of the turn you sent in to keep for your records.

What do you do with all this? Well, you start with a bunch of retainers, and gain more of them each turn. You equip, order, and pay these people. You consume your provisions, and can turn your trade goods into more provisions as you get low. You buy and sell things. And you figure out what you can do with your movement points, and then you move. Great.

Interaction with other players comes about mostly through entering towns and reading the bulletin boards. Gee, if I wanted to cruise the BBSs I'd use my own computer, not someone else's. People can leave their names and addresses on these boards, but the messages can be quite old, and five of the players that I wrote did not respond at all - probably dropped out of the game. This out of six addresses . . . But if you do get ahold of another player, and it's a player senior in the system to you, they can give you "tasks" to do (take a herd of horses from Himont Forge to Irnan), and reward you with influence, gold, and/or retainers upon the task's completion. The computer doles out these tasks too. Gee, we're havin' some fun now.

The object of the game? Rise in influence in the organization of your choice (the Empire, one of three noble families or four religions, the Guilds, Barbarians, Mercenaries, Bandits, or Heretics), so that you can become one of the players who gives tasks to other players. You can win the game from one of the top positions in the organizations. You can win a whole lot easier by not playing.

TOYS WERE US

Observations by Penny Dorneman

Christmas is coming! Retailers across the country have been gearing up since the February trade shows for the biggest season of their year, television advertising will start up in earnest soon, and parents everywhere will start their annual search for acceptable toys. As the Head of Merchandising for the Museum of Science Store in Boston, I am pretty well finished with Christmas about the time most people start thinking about it.

Most of us fondly remember the toys of our youth. Remember Stinkies, Easy-Bake Ovens, 007 Attache Cases, Airfix Army sets, and Fisher-Price Popcorn Poppers? How about chemistry sets that you could actually do neat things with? Flexible Flyers and Barbie dolls? Games like OPERATION (Take out wrenched ankle!), MOUSETRAP, MYSTERY DATE (finding the loser date behind the door was my favorite), or GO TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS. What ever happened to the old classics?

Most of these items are still available out there in one form or another, along with a mind-boggling array of other toys. All at mind-boggling prices. The trend this year in the industry is "Classic Toys". To many of the smaller toy retailers, this is a welcome change from the past few years, when one or two "hot" properties dominated the marketplace, and shortages were commonplace. But even without the revival in classic toys things aren't as different today as they seem.

Walk down the aisles of Toys 'R Us today, and you'll find that many of the toys on the shelves relate to popular TV shows. You can buy ALF lunch boxes, Care Bears in the plush, Wheel of Fortune games, Smurf figures, and Masters of the Universe dolls. Muppet Babies are everywhere, and even Pro Wrestling has its products on the shelves. But it's really not that different from twenty years ago. We had Seaview models from Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea, Star Trek and Archie lunch boxes, James Bond and Secret Agent spy sets, Concentration and Password home games. Go even further back and you'll find Mickey Mouse ears, Davy Crockett coonskin caps, and Captain Midnight Secret Decoder Rings. The difference today is that years of practice have made the major toy companies experts at marketing of licensed products.

One trend that has emerged is for toy companies to create a licensed character, and then develop a movie or cartoon show featuring that character. Hello Kitty started as a greeting card character, and now has a sugar-coated Saturday morning cartoon show. Transformers, Pound Puppies, He-Man and the Masters of the Universe, My Little Pony, and Care Bears each started licensing life as a toy and now has a show to go along with it. Since most of the money in licensing comes from selling the license (the right to use a likeness of the character on stickers, lunch boxes, notebooks, etc.) and not from the actual show revenues, many of us in the industry view the shows as merely advertising for the product. And parents are beginning to feel the same way.

Even the most controversial trend in the market has its roots in our past. The interactive toys of Captain Power have stirred incredible furor from parents and media watch-dog groups. These toys actually enhance play value of the show while it is on, by reacting to signals on the television screen. The manufacturer claims that the show is enjoyable without the expensive toys, which start around \$40.00, and that watching the show is not necessary to play with the toys. But clearly the sale of these toys is so tied up to the fate of the show that cancellation of one will kill the other.

How different is this from a popular cartoon of my youth, The Adventures of Winky Dink? For the modest sum of several weeks allowance, you could send away for a piece of plastic to place over the TV screen. By drawing on the screen when directed to by the show, you could help Winky Dink escape some dire peril. I remember drawing a ladder to help the guy escape a tiger one day. What I didn't remember to do was to

purchase the screen for the set, and I just drew on the TV itself. Mom was not amused, and I had no spending money for a month (during which I probably had trouble sitting down, also.) The show was very dull without the product, and the product was useless without the show.

Every year, marketers try out new licenses. Less than 1 in 10 will catch on, and fewer still last for more than a year or two. Enduring characters are rare, indeed. But our children are playing with characters from our childhood. Barbie and Mickey Mouse continue to sell from year to year, long after other fads die. GI Joe has had new life in recent years, with a series and renewed interest in action figures. So when your child says she has to have the latest advertised product, have patience and smile. And remember how silly you must have seemed to your parents when you begged for a Genuine Batman Utility Belt or a Growing Up Skipper, the doll who developed breasts when you pulled her arms down.



MAKE YOUR OWN FOSSILS BY PHOSSIL PHANTASIES

The product: \$4.98 per box; each includes: "Fossil Goo" (special clay), instructions, and a neat cardboard container with the name "Fossil Goo" on it.

Make Your Own Fossils Instructions

1. Buy this product.
2. Go home.
3. Remove enclosed clay and form into two roughly equal sized glob.
4. Place expired life-form(s) (leaf, dead clam, etc.) onto surface of one glob.
5. Using second glob, completely enclose expired life form. Larger expired life-forms may require more than one package of clay.
6. Set final large glob in an out-of-the-way location (Tibet would be fine.)
7. Wait several million years.
8. Crack open to remove fossil.

Your descendants will be AMAZED!

REMEMBER: Buy only the original "Fossil Goo" -- Accept no substitutes!

Our guarantee: If, after several million years, a fossil has not properly formed, simply return product, in its original box and with your store receipt, to Phossil Phantasies for a full refund of your purchase price (no accrued interest given).

Not for use on humans except by permission of several legal agencies or other applicable organizations.

"Fossil Goo" is recommended for expired life-forms. Guarantee does not cover error caused by premature insertion of expiring life-forms. To accelerate expiring process, try our new product called "Guddy-Goo", which contains instructions and several different sized hammers.

(Submitted by Kathy Luzzi)

BAD DAY AT CLUB ROCK

FRP Observations by **Michael Hopcroft**

A few months ago I went back to a club I had not visited in years. I promptly found out why. The Western Oregon Wargamers had slipped a little bit in my absence. When I was a member of that club oh these many years ago it was crammed to the gills with miniatures people and game collectors. I have particularly fond memories of the monster PANZERBLITZ scenario they played (with a huge board and small forces), but I never was able to get into the games very much because I was never a very good player (some things, alas, never change . . .). Anyway, after several years absence I returned to the club to see that things were not as they had been.

The meeting I attended was on a Monday, and one could hardly call it a meeting. There were only a few people in the warehouse-type building they used. Of those people, a few were engaged in what looked like an on-going game of FEDERATION AND EMPIRE. There was only one other person besides me who wasn't engaged in some thing.

Luckily he had a copy of CALL OF CTHULHU with him. I had never played CALL before, so he let me roll up a character and proceeded to lead me on a hastily-adapted solo adventure. The idea was to find out who had been stealing some occult books from a friend of the family. The few clues I could dig up (and believe me, I was so dense that he had to shove the clues right in front of me) led to a graveyard. I saw this creature shambling around with an armful of books. I drew my trembling Wembley, fired point blank . . .

And should have died. Right there. Proof positive that an overindulgent Game Master (GM) encourages players to do stupid things. Shooting at a ghoul is not a good idea; face it, shooting at anything in CALL OF CTHULHU is not especially bright. The GM explained that to me very carefully when I was done. (Silly me, I thought you should use the weapons you are supposedly carrying.) Anyway, I survived that adventure with minor losses to Sanity (The trouble with CALL is that sooner or later you're going to run out of sanity. But that is also the trouble with life . . .), which probably proves very little except that I probably have the wrong sort of abilities to play CALL.

I can't help but wonder whether there are any GMs out there who take player stupidity seriously. Outlet for frustrated ambitions role-playing may be, stupid play is still stupid play. The advantage of stupid play in DIPLOMACY is that you don't really get away with it. Fantasy Role Playing Games are more subjective. There's no such thing as a winner in an FRPG, unless you count defeating the enemy (or apparent enemy) as a victory. As it was I failed in my primary task of defeating the ghoul. (I had a strange conversation with him, though. "What do you eat?" "Corpses." "Er . . . do you wait until they're dead?") I would think the ultimate goal is not conversing with the enemy, however; how do you get Cthulhu interested in your sparkling witticisms? Even in a one-player scenario, where you know you're not going to be battling against the big boys, you should know better than that.

Dead is dead. And dumb is dumb. A GM ought to know better than to let poor play go unpunished. As it is, I'll know better next time. Maybe some people are better off specializing in GMing . . .

Maybe somebody ought to be giving lessons, to GMs as well as players.



BLACK TIE AFFAIRS: THE GAME OF DIPLOMACY

INVITED ARE:

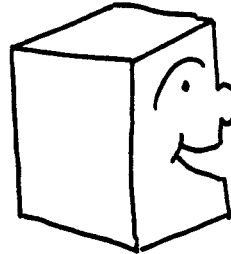
Mark Howorth 1808 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94703?
James Hall 4316 Ewing Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55410
Michael Quirk 3830 Chester Drive, Glenview, IL 60025
Rick Kohman 13517 Agua Dulce, Castroville, CA 95012
Cathy Ozog P.O. Box 5225, Munds Park, AZ 86017
Ernest S. Hakey 63 Medford St., Medford, MA 02155
Jim Nickel 429 E. Columbia Street, Falls Church, VA 22046
Michael J. Smith 4329 McPherson Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63108
Steve Rush 3499 Fairview Drive, Bettendorf, IA 52272
Bernie Oaklyn 13412 Brackley Terrace, Silver Spring, MD 20904
Robert Hauser 7 Mead Terrace, Glen Ridge, NJ 07028
John Sabol 6105 Witham Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23464-1933
Derwood Bowen 2140 East State Street, Salem, OHIO 44460
Jack Carli 4030 East 64th, Anchorage, AK 99507
Kathy Caruso 29-10 164th Street, Flushing, NY 11358
Michael Hopcroft 2190 W. Burnside #108, Portland, OR 97210
Mike Sargent P.O. Box 190286, Anchorage, AK 99519
Garret Schenck 40 3rd Place, Basement Apt., Brooklyn, NY 11231
Fred Anderson 78 Brightwood Lane, West Hartford, CT 06110
Melinda Holley P.O. Box 2793, Huntington, WV 25727
Eric Anderson 820 E. 21st St. #4, Oakland, CA 94606
Bob Addison P.O. Box 7393, Silver Spring, MD 20907
John Schlosser 107 Cottage Street Apt. 4-B, New Haven, CT 06511
John Rigley RD 1 Box 170, Richmondville, NY 12149
Steve Sabol 705 Oxbow Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Kirk Carroll 2800 July Street #46, Baton Rouge, LA 70808
Vincent Lutterbie 21 Paulina Drive, Hannibal, MO 63401
Vijit Sabnis 626 Heather Avenue, Placentia, CA 92670

ROCKHOPPER'S SOCKHOP FALL 02 1987AU

Austria (Howorth): A Tri SUPPORT GER A Mun-Tyl(nso), A Ser-Bul, A Bud
SUPPORT A Tri, A Vie SUPPORT GER A Mun-Tyl(nso), F Gre SUPPORT A Ser-Bul
England (Hall): A Stp SUPPORT GER A War-Mos(nso), A Edi-Nwy, F Bar SUPPORT A
Stp, F HoI HOLD, F Nth CONVOY A Edi-Nwy
France (Quirk): A Spa-Naf, A Bur SUPPORT A Pic-Bel, A Pic-Bel, F Lyo-Wme, F
MAO CONVOY A Spa-Naf
Germany (Kohman): A War SUPPORT TUR A Sev-Mos(cut), A Boh-Sil, A Mun HOLD,
A Den HOLD, F Swe HOLD
Italy (Ozog): A Ven-Tri, A Tyr SUPPORT A Ven-Tri, F Ion-Adr, F Nap-Ion
Russia (Hakey): A Ukr-War, A Mos SUPPORT A Ukr-War(cut), F Bot-Stp(sc)
Turkey (Nickel): A Bul-Ser(destroyed), A Sev-Mos, A Con-Bul, F Rum HOLD
Underlined moves do not succeed. Your actual mileage may vary.

Thanks, and an issue's sub credit, to **Mark Weseman** for unneeded standby orders.

AUSTRIA (VIE, BUD, TRI, SER, GRE, BUL) 6 BUILD 1
ENGLAND (LPL, EDI, LON, NWY, HOL, STP) 6 BUILD 1
FRANCE (MAR, PAR, BRE, SPA, POR, BEL) 6 BUILD 1
GERMANY (BER, KIE, MUN, SWE, WAR, DEN) 6 BUILD 1
ITALY (VEN, ROM, NAP, TUN) 4 EVEN
RUSSIA (MOS) 1 REMOVE 2
TURKEY (CON, SMY, ANK, RUM, SEV) 5 BUILD 1



*"WHEN HE SAID, 'LET'S LEAVE THE MED NEUTRAL',
I NATURALLY ASSUMED THE WESTERN MED!"*

SHOUTED OUT THE WINDOW (Press)

Dateline:London: "(A note from 'Her Majesties' Secret Service.) Prisoners caught during the recent sacking of St. Petersburg by Her Majesties' Imperial troops were said to be relieved that the English attacked and took over the province. The prisoners claimed that the Tsarist government was starving the people and overall, 'running a bloody bad defense of the country'. This must be what accounted for such little resistance to our lads as they attacked from Norway. One British field commander was quoted as saying; 'this was really bloody easy and the Russian women even made it fun.'

Now that the Russian capital is in English hands good times should be ahead for the Russians."

Dateline:Italy: "The Queen ran to the latest messenger who arrived. 'Word from Austria?' She cried. 'No my lady, it is another letter from France.'

'France! Frogs, Frogs, all I hear about is Frogs. Ask me if I trust him. No, better yet, don't ask.'

The Queen sat down and picked up the bundle of letters which had formed. England - warning her of France. France telling her that he just wants to be friends. Germany wanting to know what she was doing in Tyr and Turkey informing her of his plans for Mos. A hard look formed on her face.

'Alfred!' she called the Captain of her guard, 'Inform the men and fleets that we will march on Austria.'

'But my Queen, France . . .' 'Frogs, Frogs, Frogs, I don't want to hear it. No one ignores me and lives - we hit Austria.'

England-France & Germany: "You bleedin' frogs better make up your mind where you're going; and you Huns can stop your cryin' about support - we just took the Russian capital, the rest is soon to follow."

Overheard at a French Fort in North Africa: "Hey Moe, I'm hungry. Let's go to Tunis for some Tuna Sandwiches."

Russia-World: "Short 'n' sweet! I've got one whole unit left - what shall it be, and what shall it do for you?"

Austria-World: "Help me . . . I'm too busy to think."

Italy-Austria: "Sorry, this may be a mistake, but I couldn't trust your silence."

Austria-Italy: "Careful what you reach for."

England-France & Italy: "Are you two buddies now or what?"

Italy-England: "See, see - someone has now directed Press at you!"

England-Russia: "Sorry, someone had to be first, it might as well be you."

Russia-Germany: "If you'll look closely, this Russia is not that Russia. I hope you've got eyes in the back of your head."

THE MAGELLAN COTILLION WINTER 02 1987AV

(Seasons separated on 2+ requests)

Austria (Smith): BUILD A VIE. Has A Gal, A Rum, A Bud, A Ser, A Vie, F Gre

England (Rush): Has A Yor, F Den, F Hel, F Nwg

France (Oaklyn): BUILD F MAR. Has A Bur, A Por, A Par, F Bel, F MAO, F Mar

Germany (Hauser): (A Den retreats Off) BUILD A BER. Has A Ruh, A Ber, F Hol

Italy (Sabot): Has A Mun, A Tyl, A Ven, F Tun, F Ion

Russia (Bowen): BUILD A WAR. Has A Ukr, A Liv, A War, F Nwy, F Swe

Turkey (Carli): BUILD F SMY. Has A Sev, A Arm, F Aeg, F Bla, F Smy

Just some more of my favorite things in small print. Return defective media to point of purchase.

[PRESS HELD OVER - But feel free to add more if you like. I've also got one set of moves from all of you, but feel free to change them. After all, that's why you requested the break, isn't it?]

THE EMPEROR'S BALL SPRING 03 1987AK

Austria (Caruso): A Tri-Vie, F Alb SUPPORT ITA F Ion-Gre

England (Hopcroft): A Swe-Nwy, F Ska-Nth

France (Sargent): A Bur-Mun, A Spa-Mar, F Eng CONVOY GER A Bel-Lon, F MAO-Iri, F Bre-MAO

Germany (Schenck): A Hol-Kie, A Bel-Lon, A Sil-Gal, F Nth SUPPORT F Hel-Den (cut), F Hel-Den, F Den-Bal

Italy (F. Anderson): A Tyl SUPPORT AUS A Tri-Vie, A Ven-Tri, F Adr-Ion, F Ion-Gre (dislodged; retreat Apu, Nap, Tys, Tun, or OFF)

Russia (Holley): A Bud SUPPORT A Gal-Vie, A Gal-Vie, A War HOLD, A Stp-Nwy, F Bot-Bal, F Rum HOLD

Turkey (E. Anderson): A Ser SUPPORT AUS A Tri (attempting to move), A Bul SUPPORT F Gre, F Gre SUPPORT F Aeg-Ion, F Con-Aeg, F Smy-Eas, F Aeg-Ion

Underlined moves do not succeed. The Portfolio's 3% sales charge is not reflected in this figure.

Michael Hopcroft is the new English Prime Minister.

OVERHEARD AT THE BALL (Press):

Austria-Turkey: "Women always change their minds!"

Germany-England: "There is a place for you in the New Euro-German Economic Order. An England that returns to her roots, as it were, and becomes a two-center Scandinavian power, is an England I can work with easily. Drop me a line if you get a chance."

Austria-Turkey: "See, all it took was a postcard."

Turkey-Germany: "Soooo, kill my sister will you, my pretties? We'll see how far you get with those ruby slippers. You and your little Frog Toto!"

Germany-Turkey: "There's a place for you in the 'New Order' too, pal! Probably cleaning the latrines! How did you ever get Italy to attack Austria? Now it looks like you have gotten Austria to hold you against Italy and Russia (in a graphic example of the Return of the Repressed, or maybe Night of the Living Dead). Amazing! Hey, I am impressed. Seriously, though, thanks for your regular correspondence. It's not like everybody in this game bothers to write the other players."

Germany-Italy: "I wasn't talking about you! I swear to God I was not talking about you! No really! No, no, I mean it, I didn't mean by that last press item that you don't bother to write. Why heck, as short a time ago as July 24th you sent me a postcard that contained (including the date and designation 'Italy-Germany' but not including either of our addresses) as many as 11 words (this did include your signature, however). So I'm satisfied. Hell, my big ally writes me just about as frequently!"

Germany-France: "Cripes! Why is everybody so friggin' sensitive in this game? First Italy and now you. No, I did not in any way shape or form refer to you in that last press article. No way. For your information my 'big ally' is Austria!"

Austria-Germany: "Sure, I'll support Italy - I'll support Italy when Hell freezes over or when the Italian's brain shows some signs of life."

Russia-Germany: "You want me to attack Turkey! No way! I like Eric! Not to mention needing help against F/G!"

Germany-Russia: "How about we try peace? Sweden is yours, I've got no quarrel with you being there. If England keeps fighting me you should take Sweden without trouble this fall. Enjoy!"

Turkey-Italy: "Hello? Anybody home? (aside; 'No answer, Dear. Maybe we'd better go see if everything's OK over there.') Oh well. Click."

Austria-Russia: "Okay, Spider Eyes, I see you cast another spell! How could England be expected to do anything but NMR, with your witchcraft in the game."

Austria-Turkey: "I'm telling you, your only chance is to burn her at the stake!"

Germany-Austria: "Amazingly simple, my dear. (puff, puff) I use the powers granted me by my parents Ka-Lel and Lo-Ma to control the computerized flow of mail throughout the country. (puff, puff) Causing one player to NMR at a critical time is just as easy for me as, say, (puff, puff, [gak!]) setting up a spatial-temporal barrier preventing the delivery of junk mail. (puff, puff) Which I do. (puff, puff, cough, cough) I think your mistake was probably sending your game letter tucked inside a sample copy of KK/W. (puff, puff) If you stop that practice I think the problem will clear up. (puff, puff, [hack, {bork}])"

England-France: "I bet you're really pleased with yourself, aren't you? Beating up on a defenseless little island with no army and no navy! I mean, REALLY. . ."

Austria-Pasta Head: "This will be the first Thanksgiving where spaghetti is the main course!"

Russia-Austria: "Dugay is cute as a button! You want to talk nerd - let's consider Billy Smith!"

Austria-France: "Hello again!"

GERMAN FOURTH ESTATE: "Border Dispute With French Republic Settled! Franco-German Treaty For Mutual Defense Signed! English Channel Fleet Annihilated! Historic Victory In North Sea Battle! Adm. Scheer Greeted By Adoring Throngs! Fireworks Over Kaiser's Palace! Invasion Fleet Sails For England! (Der Weock en Revieuwe, BERLIN, 16 February, 1903): These were only a few of the headlines in the nation's newspapers in the past few weeks and months. Can anyone disbelieve that recent events have proven to be the most decisive in the entire history of the German people; the greatest triumph that our just and mighty God has ever bestowed upon His chosen people, and His chosen nation?"

The recent news of the landings in the English county of Kent has only recently reached this capital. Apparently two mornings ago German commando forces began to land from their French transports and peniches onto the beaches around the ancient port of Dover. There was little resistance. Larger German units began to come ashore that afternoon, and by yesterday evening the German 14th Corps held a perimeter stretching as far as twelve miles to the north of Dover. German troops were said to be encountering almost no resistance on the roads leading north, and the populace, while sullen, appeared ready to accept the demands of the occupying army.

London Falls To German Forces! Parade With Kaiser Planned! (Special Weock en Revieuwe edition, 19 February, 1903): 'A Glorious Day!' is how Kaiser Schtupidshitz greeted the news of the occupation of Picadilly Circus in the center of London, England, by reconnaissance forces of the German Second Army. While sporadic fighting is reported to the north of the former English capital, particularly in the Hampstead Heath area, it appears, as has been apparent since the beginning of serious hostilities with England several months ago, that there is no backbone, no will to the English effort.

Meanwhile, in Germany the Ministry of Hate was working overtime. 'The English are a Godless People, and by God we shall bring our German God to them,' thundered the Kaiser at a recent open air gathering in the Schtimplegoffbeganger Soccer Stadium. 'It is irrelevant what the English leader wants, what is relevant now is what does the German Kaiser want! I want Plachta's head!' screamed the Kaiser, referring to the last Prime Minister of England, now heading a government in exile in Norway. 'The English have dominated the world, but now the German nation dominates the hated English swine!' the Kaiser gloated, to the roar of hundreds of thousands of elated worshippers. 'We shall crush the spirit of the English, we shall enslave the English, we shall destroy the English! Death to the nation of shopkeepers!' the Kaiser's amplified voice boomed out over the exultant crowd.

Kaiser Reviews The Troops In Trafalgar Square! (*Der Weock en Revieuwe*, BERLIN, 2 March, 1903): The sun was shining in Trafalgar Square today as Kaiser Schtupshitz reviewed the 'men who worked the miracle,' the soldiers and sailors of the French and German armed forces. Standing with the French Prime Minister under Nelson's Column, the Kaiser watched bands and marching units swing past his reviewing stand. Resplendent in his bemedalled German Army greatcoat, the Kaiser smiled and frequently waved at his adoring troops. It was a glorious day to be a German.

After the parade the Kaiser watched the destruction of the monument to Britain's nineteenth century naval savior, Admiral Lord Nelson. The Kaiser has always hated Nelson, and the whole cult surrounding the man ('Kismet, or Kiss Me, who the hell cares?' Schtupidshitz was once heard to remark). German Army Engineers used precisely placed explosives to bring down the huge column. A broad grin spread over Kaiser Schtupidshitz's youthful face as the tall white marble column crumpled to the ground, a powerful blow to the arrogant English psyche. To rub salt in the wound the Kaiser has ordered a larger monument dedicated to himself constructed on the same spot as Nelson's column. 'It will be of a similar design, but of course much, much bigger,' said Herr Schnitzel, a spokesman for the Kaiser."

KING BASH

WINTER 01

1987CP

Austria (**Addison**): BUILD A BUD, A VIE, F TRI. Has A Ser, A Bul, A Bud, A Vie, F Gre, F Tri

England (**Schlosser**): BUILD A EDI, F LON. Has A Bel, A Edi, F Nwy, F Nth, F Lon

France (**Rigley**): BUILD A PAR, F MAR. Has A Spa, A Bur, A Par, F Por, F Mar

Germany (**S. Sabol**): BUILD A KIE, A MUN. Has A Hol, A Ruh, A Kie, A Mun, F Den

Italy (**Carroll**): BUILD F NAP. Has A Ven, A Tun, F Ion, F Nap

Russia (**Lutterbie**): BUILD A MOS, A WAR. Has A Ukr, A Sev, A Mos, A War, F Swe, F Rum

Turkey (**Sabnis**): (A Bul retreat Con) Has A Smy, A Con, F Bla

Underlined moves do not succeed. Liability for loss, delay or damage to checked baggage is limited.

NATTERINGS OF THE COURT (Press)

Austria: "The economy is doing 50% better than had been projected. The Archduke is spending the excess funds on a luxury liner. Maiden voyage is scheduled for 1902."

New French Empire-World: "It was all a big mistake!"

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Sub Ends #: 19

THE BACK PAGE

TIME magazine recently featured a special update on the Soviet space effort, particularly the Mir space station, and headlined the article with the question "are the Soviets ahead of us in space?" The way I read the news, that question already has a foregone conclusion of "YOU BET THEY ARE!" The question really should be, how many industrial nations aren't ahead of us in space exploration!

The European Arienne program is now the system of choice for commercial satellite launches, although the Soviets are pushing launch slots on their big new family of rockets, promising to launch sealed any satellites with sensitive technology. Japan and China both have active, well-funded space programs. The US is the only country that has cut back its space effort, both manned and unmanned, a sad situation that was started before the Challenger disaster but has only gotten worse with the soul-searching that has gone on both in and out of NASA since that fatal accident. The private launch firms touted so highly in the early years of the decade are still just gleams in the venture capitalists' eyes.

I don't know if it's because of our decentralized economy, because of the SDI effort draining off resources from the peaceful space program, because of putting all of our eggs in the Space Shuttle basket, or because of some other reason, or combination of reasons, but what I do know is that the New Frontier vision of Americans in space has become a vision of the glorious past, when it should be a vision of the future. When I was growing up, back around the late 1960s, I **knew**, for a **fact**, that when I was older I'd be able to board a rocket into space.

Now my fact has become fancy, and I don't know Russian.