

PLATYPUS PIE
NUMBER SIX
APRIL 11th, 1972

The Platypus has plomped in the Winner's game, and players are running amuk as a result. Soon, we will return to porno drawings of Platypusarums on the cover. This is dull.

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Welcome to issue #6 of the first friend of the Pie. This is, I sometimes think, a Journal of Postal Diplomacy. Diplomacy is a game created by Allan Calhamer, and published by Games Research, Inc. whose address is on page 6 after John Moot's brief name. The game itself is \$8.00 from them, and the revised, 1971 Rulebook, used in the play of PLATYPUS PIE, costs a dollar. But you'd better send a bit extra, or they'll send it third class.

HOUSE RULES: are included with this mailing to all players in my games. If you want a copy, send me an 8¢ stamp.

THE GAMESMASTER: Brenton Ver Ploeg; 520 Parker Ave., # 202; San Francisco, CA 94118. My phone number is (415) 668-9218, but I am very hard to reach on the phone. I shall always be in, however, on the night before the deadline from 6 to 10 pm Pacific Time. Tuesday Evening is another good time to catch me.

NEW MAILING LIST: See pages six and seven.

OPENINGS: Four positions in an Open game. Registered so far: Key, Strayer, Rocamora. Newcomers game is filled. Subscriptions are eight for a dollar, and games are \$5.50.

PLATYPUS PIE GAINS SOME CLASS--MOMENTARILY

John McCallum has consented to handle my games during the time that I am taking finals. Generally, these dates will be May 2d and May 23d, but John has complete freedom to set them back if he so desires. SEND ALL MOVES FOR NEXT ISSUE TO JOHN McCALLUM, PO Box 52, Ralston, Alberta, CANADA. AND USE AIRMAIL TOO! Subscribers will have John's issues counted toward their subscription, but people who subscribe to both magazines will not, and I will add two issues to their sub when I take the games back.

1971EH (Winner's Game) PLATYPUS PIE # 1 SPRING 1902
G A M E T U R N S I N T O S C R A M B L E D E G G S

BYTWERK & WARD STAB BIRSAN WHO STABS BYTWERK WHO
INDIRECTLY HELPS WARDEN WHO IS STABBED BY BUCHAN-
AN BUT IS SAVED BY BAD TACTICS BETWEEN GER & ENG

AUSTRIA (Ward): A Ser-Bul; F Gre S A Ser-Bul; A Vie-Boh; A Tri-Tyr;
A Bud-Vie.
ENGLAND (Buchanan): F Nwy S F Nth; F Nth S F Nwy; F Liv-Nat; F lon-
Eng; A Bel-Pic.
FRANCE: (Warden): F Spa(SC)-Wes; A Por-Spa; F Mar-Lyo; A Bur-Mar [dis-
lodged]; A Par-Bur.
GERMANY: (Birsan): A Ruh-Bur; A Mun S A Ruh-Bur; A Hol-Kie; F Kie-Bal;
F Den S F Kie-Bal.
ITALY: (von Metzke): A Tun H; A Pie-Mar; F Rom-Tus; F Tyr-Lyo.
RUSSIA: (Bytwerk): A Sev-Arm; F Ank S A Sev-Arm; A Rum S AUS A Ser-Bul;
A War-Sil; A Mos-War; A StP-Liv; F Swe-Den.
TURKEY (Tretick): F Aeg-Con; A Bul S F Aeg-Con [annihilated]; A Rum-
Sev [no A Rum]; A Arm unordered, holds [dislodged to Smyrna].

The French Army in Burgundy may retreat to Gas, Bel, or off the board. The Turkish Army Armenia, in spite of the Rumania mix-up, has orders to retreat to Smyrna, and it is thus ordred.

DEADLINE FOR SUMMER 1902 RETREAT & FALL 1902 MOVES IS TUESDAY, MAY 2d, 1972, to John McCallum. Vagts is stand-by, and Tretick has sent no change of address to me. Use your best judgment.

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STILL ANOTHER RATING LIST

There have been some additions since last issue's listing, and, although I ordinarily would not intend to redo the list every issue (every five issues seems about right) somewhere in this issue will be found a new and complete listing. This is to facilitate John's takeover of the magazine for the next couple of issues, as explained on page one. I shall wait until Monday or Tuesday to do the list, however, because I want all late-comers included. For some reason, I seem to be getting subscribers of late.

THE RATINGS I--THE REVISED O.D.D. LISTING

This is the rating list which I applauded so extravagantly last issue, and it is still as good. In fact, evidence is available that it is even more accurate than I had previously thought: my position is much lower (well, some) on this one than previous listings.

As a reminder, the O.D.D. Listing is the only rating list in Diplomacy today that incorporates the chess-characteristic of rating you against the quality of your opposition rather than straight-line performance in games. Although others have rated players in relation to the country they played (Dave Johnston's computerized list did this) a discrimination based on actual personnel is probably more sensible and more interesting. In the short term, of course, players may be penalized by their country acquisition, but even if you consider this as a penalty (rather than a challenge) the effect of this will eventually cancel itself out. For instance, I am, and have been, in only 11 games, but in those 11, I have played England twice, Turkey twice, Austria twice, Italy once, France once, Germany twice, and, alas, I have played my favorite country of Russia but once. If random selection isn't working out right, a player can simply join games in magazines which allow country choice.

The revisions this time in the O.D.D. system are partially concerned with additions (wins since last time, which finds Tom Eller the beneficiary) and corrections (which help several people, but Charlie Turner now leads the list as a result. McCallum has abolished the concept of 2d and 3d boards, wisely it seems, and now lists only the top board, as well as those people who have current scores of over 1000. Recall that 600 is the entry point for new players, and a win or draw is required to move above that score. This new method will result in an increasing number of players in the 1000 area as more players enter the game, and provide a larger pool for games against other players over 1000, as will be the eventual aim of this system.

TOP BOARD

1324 Charles Turner
1278 Tom Eller
1210 Peter Rosamalia
1209 Douglas Beyerlein
1201 Rodney C. Walker I
1205 John Beshara
1173 Brenton Ver Ploeg

Please note my error in this listing in positions five and six. While the scores are correct, I have inverted John Beshara and Rod Walker, doubtless much to their mutual dismay. John has completed the largest statistical sample of games--twelve. Turner has 11, and the rest are under ten games.

OTHERS CURRENTLY OVER 1000 POINTS

1172 Lewis Pulsipher	1082 Randy Bytwerk	1031 Mehran Thomson
1109 John Smythe	1081 Andy Phillips	1022 Jeff Key
1101 Gene Prosnitz	1041 John King	1012 Dick Miller

--All others are listed alphabetically. Recall that the O.D.D. system counts, by and large, only the ORIGINAL players in the game.

I can see that I have already made an error. Doug Beyerlein has completed thirteen games, making him senior by one to Beshara. Generally speaking, the larger number of games completed, the more accurate the listing. Thus, over ten games becomes quite impressive (I have completed only three) and John Smythe, who has managed to stay very high with almost 20 games to his credit, illustrates that his reputation is well-deserved.

It has always seemed to me that some attention should be called to the magazines and games in which large numbers of highly rated players are in conflict, and that's a worthwhile project for someone who has the records, as I do not. Walt Buchanan's HOOSIER ARCHIVES includes several of the over 1000 players, as well as a couple that are only temporarily out of the 1000 group.

THE RATINGS--II: GG POLL

Apparently conducted in a covert manner (I, for one, had not even known it started) Gamer's Guide, published by Ken Borecki, has joined the other two player polls. Ken does not say how many ballots he received, though the number of points seems to indicate that perhaps ten were received.

<u>First Board</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Second Board</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>N</u>
1. Birsan	98	8	8. Naus	38	6
2. Smythe	83	6	9. Pulsipher	37	6
3. Ver Ploeg	69	7	10. Phillips	32	5
4. Beyerlein	59	7	11. McCallum	31	5
5. Prosnitz	50	5	12. Brooks	29	4
6. Walker	49	7	13. Thomson	25	2
7. Bytwerk	40	8	14. Peery	24	5

The customary (bracketed figure) mentioning the number of first place ballots is not included here since Ken didn't print it. There is also a slight alteration in the score of one of the players, myself. The true score was 67, but, it seemed to me that since it wouldn't alter the order, and since I was SO close, nobody would mind if I managed to get a 69, which is clearly preferable to a non-imaginative 67.

HOUSE RULES REPRINT

Those of you who are players in my games, or are signed up to be, have received a copy of the PP house rules, which I finally managed to get out of the way on April 4th, a couple of days ago. At last--sigh. Few rules are different, although 20 & 21 were not included before. I have also deleted the set of qualifications for games, because they differed so. Technically, a winners game was limited to those that had received a win or a draw in any of their previous postal games. In the future, I suspect that I shall make entry into this sort of game contingent on a player's score in the O.D.D. system, though I am thinking about averaging several of the rating lists. Regardless, it shall be some time before one of these opens again, so it didn't seem important to mention it in the rules.

WON'T SOMEBODY PAY ATTENTION TO TOM?

Maybe its because I listed him somehwre deep in the magazine in issue #3, but I hereby officially ask gamesmasters to send Tom Williams, listed in my mailing list, samples of their magazines. Tom is new to postal play, and may be the first and last player I ever displayed the evil postal syndrome to. (Never end a sentence a preposition with).

--After reading this section of the test, go on to the next section

1971EH (The Winner's Game) PRESS:

AUSTRIA: Professor Earl Wendel Burger, Jr., Associate Professor of International Law and Distributive Justice at the Casa Nostra School of Law and Casino, Inc. has characterized the Austrian occupation of Greenland, Greece, and Bulgaria as "in the highest traditions of the family." Professor Burger, legal consultant to the Austrian government, noted that "Oliver Wendel Holmes, in his excellent work, The Common Law, states 'the felt necessities of the time, the prevalent moral and political theories, intuitions of public policy, avowed or unconscious, even the prejudices which judges share with their fellow men [sexist remark] have a good deal more to do than the syllogism in determining the rules by which men should be governed.'" Surely no intuition of public policy is so basic, no felt necessity more evident, no political theory more widely honored, than that each nation shall grab as much as they can grab, keep as much as they can keep, and royally stomp any power that has the temerity to object." [Well said, wail on, oh warrior]. Burger noted that the Division of Economic Analysis has determined that there are 34 supply centers or economic regions which control the economy of Europe; and "it is the long term goal of Austrian economic, political, and military strategy to acquire at least 18 of them."

SAN FRANCISCO: I don't know just how "Greenland" managed to get into the above release. Sigh. I better quit smoking this stuff before finals start--I wonder what sort of strange answers I would be spurting out? EVP

EDITown, GERMANY: LAST CHAPTER OF THE SQUARE ROOT CLUB!

The meeting was a mixture of hates and distrusts, combining to form a reasonable facsimile of a meeting for the Students for the Destruction of Society and Young Americans for Fascism. As the members filed into the great Hall without any seats, chairs, or other distracting furniture, they were greeted by a strange distortion of their arena.

It seems that the night before the meeting a quite normal occurrence to spectators of such phenomena had occurred. The previously level ground had been disrupted so that as you look down the hall from the entrance you were actually looking slightly upward. The sunken ground by the entrance was not the only malformation; apparently the natural development had caused the front of the hall to slant a little more up to the right and conversely there was a sharper decline in the depression on the left side of the hall by the entrance.

The officers had entered the hall first and immediately went to the upper part of the hall on the right side. As the members filed in Charlie Marks sat in the dead center of the hall, with Alex Dovecheck halfway between him and the officers. (This would plague Alex later in the meeting as he couldn't make up his mind whether to face the officers or the rest of the Club around Charlie). Mike Bakunen dragged his horse to the lowest part of the irregular hall putting him in the opposite corner from the officers and interposing Charlie between himself and them. "Shea" was a little puzzled by the hall but found a comfortable spot in the corner of the upper left part of the hall as you entered. The other members took up their places in clusters about the hall with Oh Chime Man and his friend Zap constantly moving about the hall on their knees, much to the displeasure of Tableman Mal whose massive frame couldn't always follow them. (The Tableman finally cornered them by 'Shea' and the three of them and 'Shea' formed an anxious cluster that constantly annoyed the Officers through their "peasant chanting.")

The first order of affairs was to have an open presentation on

Slivan, Bulgaria: People's Prosecutor Tirebiter gave the opening statement as the new Austrian State Court opened proceedings against Joe "Mudhead" Bergman, formerly rector of Communist Martyr High School. Bergman is accused of having sabotaged the "Shoes for Industry" campaign launched by the new Austrian government and illegally delivering anchovy pizza into sector R after curfew. No additional details were available as this issue went to press but the trial promises to be spectacular and you will be kept informed.

[That's fine, but how the hell am I supposed to get into the courtroom when they don't even HAVE a doorknocker. Perhaps, I should get a streetwalker instead? Well, follow that rubber yellow line to justice, me lad.]

VENICE: The fall of France is imminent! [Not unless England & Germany get their tactics together a bit better than they have thus far]. The word is out; Marshall Petain will get the chance to befoul his heritage nearly thirty years before his allotted time slot. The Wopies are a'trundle, guys, and it ain't a'gonna be long now. Today Marseilles; tomorrow Parais - er, Paree! Gay Paree! (It figures... the French always were a little odd). Oh, we shall etch dirty lim-ericks on the sidewalks of the Champs d'Elysses, we shall flog the captives with whips against the flying buttresses of Notre Dame, we shall dangle the government ministers by their accountrements from the Eiffel Tower, we shall drive the whole of France's army into the Seine.

UPDATED MAILING LIST

1. John Beshara; 155 W. 68th Street., #1021; NY, NY 10023 (C)
2. Doug Beyerlein; 3934 S.W. Southern, Seattle, Washington 98116 (S-10)
3. Edi Birsan; 48-20 39th St., Long Island City, NY 11104 (EH)
4. John Boardman; 234 E. 19th St., Brooklyn, NY 11226 (T)
5. Paul Bond; PO Box 6477, College Station, TX 77840 (S-9)
6. Ken Borecki; PO Box 255, Rockville Centre, NY 11571 (T)
7. John Boyer; 117 Garland Drive, Carlise, PA 17013 (T)
8. Walter Buchanan; RR #3, Lebanon, IN 46052 (T)
9. Randy Bytwerk; 1915 Maple Ave., #107; Evanston, IL 60201 (EH)
10. Allan Calhmer; 501 N. Stone; La Grange Pk, IL 60525 (C)
11. James Hall; 1300 30th St., #B2-32; Boulder, CO 80302 (G)
12. Tom Eller; 29 Winthrop St., Charleston, MA 02129 (S-16)
13. John Hendry; 17 Price Road, Peabody, MA 01960 (G+4)
14. David G. Johnson; 3603 Rainbow Place, Nashville, TN 37204 (S-13)
15. Eric Just; PO Box 131, Paoli, OK 73074 (T)
16. Jeff Key; 7918 Alpha Road, #1153; Dallas, TX 75240 (G)
17. Burt Labelle; 146 Elm St., Saco, ME 04072 (1972 ratings issues)
18. John McCallum; PO Box 52, Ralston, Alberta, CANADA (T)
19. John Moot; Games Research, Inc., 48 Wareham St., Boston, MA 02118(C)
20. Lt. W.L. Norris; 16 Sea Gull Road, Groton, CT 06340 (C)
21. Tony Pandin; 10406 Shaker Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44104 (T)
22. Andrew Phillips; 128 Oliver Street, Daly City, CA 94014 (T)
23. Jeff Power; 121 Gauss Hall, Princeton, NJ 08540 (T)
24. Lewis Pulsipher; 321A Twin Towers, Albion, MI 49224 (T)
25. Mike Rocamora; 3820 Locust, Box D-681; Philadelphia, PA 19104 (2G)
26. Bob Strayer; 207 E. Alice Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85020 (G)
27. George Schelz, Jr.; 9 Buffington Pl., Bronxville, NY 10708 (S-10)
28. Buddy Tretick; 3702 Wendy Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20906 (EH)
29. Arnold Vagts; 2824 Verano Pl., Irvine, CA 92664 (T)
30. Bob Van Andel; 749 Thomas St., SE; Grand Rapids, MI 49503 (T)
31. Conrad von Metzke; PO Box 8342, San Diego, CA 92102 (EH)
32. Eric Verheiden, Jr.; 3245 S.W. 185th; Aloha, OR 97005 (S-13)
33. Rod Walker; 4719 Felton St., San Diego, CA 92102 (T)

34. Bob Ward; 8665 Florin Rd., #176; Sacramento, CA 95828 (EH)
 35. Greg Warden; 4500 Walnut St., #106; Philadelphia, PA 19139 (EH)
 36. Tom Williams; 1305 Smalley Ave., Muscatine, IA 52761 (G)
 37. Fred Winter; 2625 El Rancho Dr., Brookfield, WI 53005 (G)
 38. Peter Weber; 417 E. Hatcher, #2; Phoenix, AZ 85020 (T)
 20a. Bro. Hugh O'Regan, O.S.B.; St. Meinrad Archabbey, St Meinrad, IN
 47577 (G)

Those of you who have paid attention will note that some of the names are out of alphabetical order. Primarily, this is due to faulty reading of my mailing list, and skipping over names--but does anyone care?

ADDRESS CODES: T=Trade; C=Complimentary; S=Subscription, followed by the last issue on your sub; G=Registered in a game, and thus receiving the magazine for free right now. If followed by a number, that is the number of issues left after the game ends. EH=You are a player in 1971EH, the "Winner's Game."

THE GENEALOGY OF A PLATYPUS PIE & ALL THAT

There are now a majority of the readers of PP that did not receive the first issue. Accordingly, I will re-quote ... well, no I won't. Suffice it to say that in game 1969C, played in BROBDINGNAG under Ed Halle's editorship, I used a press release character by the name of Glomphf the Magnificent, Eater of Frenchmen, and esteemed of life-loving peoples of the world. Glomphf was a 2000 ton Duck-Billed Platypus, with monstrous powers in his pads, and even more powerful weapons ingested, and then egressed, through various orifices of his body. A platypus Pie, needless to say, is of the same family as a cow pie, and except for the fact that its hard to step in a three-story tall platypus pile, they are one and the same in scope. It was once my intention to have a different press character for all my games. Accordingly, there was Sultan Yuk, a lascivious bastard who travelled in a most chauvinistic manner between the harems of Constantinople and the hash houses of his summer estate in Oh Phuc, Vietnam. The third game I started (Sultan Yuk was in 68CI, my first) was 1969V, and there was a character for that too--ObCur, an escapee from the London Society for the Criminally Insane that, by a matter of happenstance, managed to take over to government of England. ObCur was short for Obstreperous Curmudgeon.

This has all paled now, but its discouraging to me that so few players seem to enjoy a game. Games become personal to a player for a variety of reasons, and if press releases will help you, I remind you that PP prints them all. Other players, however, have no use for these monsters, and disdain them almost entirely. Hell, after all these plans fell through, I was left with primarily one character--Glomphf and his family of fun-loving platypusses, spelled differently most times. In my foolish endeavor of starting a magazine, PLATYPUS PIE seemed the most apt. Both for historical reasons, and aesthetic ones, since the term may well describe much of the contents, as Federal Law requires.

So, you see, the term was around long before I started to run a Diplomacy magazine. Some day, if I get around to it, I might run back through some of the releases for that game, to put a flavor of the pie in this magazine that it now lacks. Above all, I cannot have new players and subscribers thinking that there could be any sort of clean-minded basis for the name. Brother O'Regan, are you still with us?

RATING LISTS--WHATS IN THOSE NAMES FOR YOU?

Rating lists are a matter of some controversy in the Diplomacy by mail hobby. Some castigate them as destructive of certain elements of the game, though of course this does not apply to all the listings, because there is usually a rating list somewhere which will appeal to your particular philosophy of play, whether its win or nothing, or do as well as possible under the circumstances. This field has no right or wrong answers, but fortunately, the ratings do not force us to seek answers. It is entirely possible, of course, to merely look at rating lists as a matter of interest, and many of the player polls are designed with that in mind. But as long as they are with us, it seems decidedly feasible to know what they hold out as carrots and sticks, and how to use them in your Diplomacy.

Before discussing the uses to which lists may be put, it is important to understand their systems of reward and punishment, for, as most of you know, the uses to which they may be put are merely functions of what they include and exclude.

By and large, rating lists break down into three varieties: (a) The "Calhamer" lists, which count only first place and ties as being valuable, (b) the placing systems, of which the BROBDINGNAG list is the only and best example, and (c) what may be called "arbitrary" lists, which assign certain point values to different places, usually first and second, with some for survival, and penalties for other events. Note that here again I am excluding the three varieties of "Player Poll." I do not mean to imply that these polls are uninteresting, nor that they are necessarily unhelpful. After all, it might pay to understand in what esteem certain of your opponents are held in the hobby. For the most part, however, these are matters of interest above all else, and, in any case, they do not depend on the outcome of X game so its not possible to discuss them in this frame of reference.

Category A--The "Calhamer" listings. The name ascribed to these lists is of course that of the inventor of the game. John McCallum used the name when he first began to compile the Calhamer Point Count Listing, at, I believe, Allan's suggestion. This list, now brought up to date from time to time in HOOSIER ARCHIVES, merely lists the number of wins and partial wins (draws and ties) that a player has received, and in that way is not a strict rating list, because it does not take direct account of the total of games played. But the CPCL was only the starting point for this philosophy, and now we have the Averaged Calhamer System which I compile from time to time, which takes the simple arithmetic average of wins divided by number of games. There are problems with this listing, but thats not my point here. The issue is that this system rewards wins ONLY, and being 2d place with 15 units is as bad as being eliminated in 1902. The most recent addition to this category, as well as the most respected rating list, is of course a product of John McCallum--the O.D.D. Rating list. The ODD system rates players against the quality of their opposition, and it is therefore possible to win a game and gain 0 points, provided that your opponents were lowly rated, and you were rated highly. The issue is unchanged, however--the O.D.D. system rewards wins and draws only, and no player interested in this system can be appealed to on any other grounds.

Category B--The Place and Show system, the BROBDINGNAG rating list. This listing, while not taking opposition into account (that is, it gives you your rating on your overall game record, with no additional variants) still is my favorite listing. A win under the BROB system is really not that much more important than a 2d place, since a win gets you +6, and a 2d gets you +4. A two-way tie gets you each +5. In short, the BROB system is extremely helpful in discerning overall placement. A single bad game here will HURT!

Category C--the "Arbitrary" systems. Understand, please, that I do not mean arbitrary in the pejorative sense. ALL lists are somewhat arbitrary, because they all involve decisions about what is and what is not important. These lists, however, usually assign a certain number of points, say seven, to a win, and a certain number of points to other performances, with a win getting heavy (but not exclusive) weight. Perhaps a 2d would get 2 points, survival one, and being dropped from a game because you missed some moves would cost you a point. Examples of this type of listing are Rod Walker's NUMENOR system, and Burt Labelle's TERMINUS.

The question then becomes--aside from using these lists to gauge an opponent before I start to play them, what possible use are they in terms of usefulness in Diplomacy? Before getting too deeply into that, perhaps another preliminary comment is called for. There are a great number of reasons why people play Diplomacy, and I think that the only one which should be a common denominator should be enjoyment of the pastime. Perhaps press releases are your bag, or perhaps you prefer to meet people, or you enjoy trying out different tactics and strategies in each game. Whatever. My assumption from here in is that the rating list can be used against (or with) your enemy (or ally). That is: this assumes that the lists DO exist, and that nothing can change that set of facts. A game is complete unto itself, of course, but the lists reward or penalize it as a part of a greater whole. Now, since they are doing that, there is no reason in the world why you should not point out to X player (whom you are trying to influence at Y spot in the game) what the effect of his position (elimination, survival, fourth place, 2d place, etc.) will be on his overall rating in all games.

The problem is much complicated if the player is a replacement, because he will never be penalized under systems A & B above. The original player, by and large, takes the lumps that are administered, and the replacement can only benefit. THIS, BY THE WAY, IS AN EXCELLENT REASON FOR STAYING IN GAMES THROUGHOUT. Category C will often start to count a player as the [a] official player for a country after a certain minimum number of game years, usually two or three.

However, using rating lists as tools in Diplomacy is usually not too helpful, at least directly, early in the game anyway; so by the time the replacement player gets in, you may be able to offer him a smaller tidbit which is the best he can do at the time. Early in the game, alliances and agreements are made with the large-scale expectations, either for a win or draw, or maybe no worse than 2d or 3d. At that juncture, the fact that a win might help a player's rating is obvious, and it's foolish to bring it up, although you might want to use a player's relative position on the O.D.D. system (explained earlier in this issue) against them in considering initial alliance patterns.

Thus, early in the game, the ratings are a two-edged sword. You might claim that a player will do such and such in order to preserve his rating, or you may maintain that you cannot afford to keep another player around because he has nothing to lose, and might cause the game to go awry in a nonsensical manner.

After that early portion of the game, however, ratings become a tool for the leading countries. There are some obvious exceptions of course, but I am running out of space, and I want to finish this article in this issue. The fact that a country probably cannot win may influence that country to try for one of the lesser included benefits. These benefits may be valueless in and of themselves, and it's senseless to talk about what YOU think is useful in a game--suppose your negotiating target doesn't happen to agree? So, you must turn to the

ratings in an attempt to create dissension in the ranks of the countries who oppose you. Offering survival to a country about to go out may suffice to get that country fighting for you with nothing else in the deal. If you can convince the enemy that there is no real hope of stopping you, then discussion of the difference between 3d and 4th becomes germane, or 2d and 3d.

Above all, you must be creative, because the ratings may be used as a tool for either party at any time, even though they do have some built-in advantages for the leading powers in some ways. This is counteracted, naturally, by the ratings in Category A, which will grant nothing at all to a 3d place finisher. Do not make extravagant claims. Be clear that you can offer no succor vis a vis the ODD system--but, failing that, point out that there are other fruits to be gained. This, in effect, is what makes a large number of rating lists so helpful to the Diplomacy player--they can become Diplomatic tools. The more lists, predicated on different theories of "success," the more options will be open in the play of the game itself.

But do not misunderstand. You can't get someone to do what you want by telling them that they will do well on Joe Blow's rating list if they do what you want. The paragraph you include in your letter on ratings should be frosting, nothing more. The meat of the letter still has to (a) inspire confidence in your integrity--and make your opponent believe that you will do as you say in the long run and the short run, and (b) suggest coherent and sensible plans of attack, both tactically and (more importantly) strategically, in order that your correspondent (and hopefully, your eventual ally) may have a good basis of comparison. Not to mention a reason for choosing you as an ally. Unless those elements are present, you may as well forget all the B.S. about rating lists. I cannot count the number of one paragraph letters I have received in Diplomacy, simply asking me to ally and attack X player, using such and such tactics. No reason why I should, no suggestions of what will happen afterwards, and no reason why that player is better to attack than the person writing the letter.

Usually, you assume that such a player plans to attack YOU, and plan accordingly. All too often, however, it is simply laziness coming through. Well, nobody's immune. We have all been lazy at some time or another in this game. The really irritating part is that in order to play it well, it takes too much out of your time. Time that none of us can really afford.

THE ONCE AND FUTURE HAWGWASH SECTIONS--FUTURE TOPICS

The above abortion was my first real, honest to goodness attempt to place a Diplomacy commentary in PLATYPUS PIE. In the future, it might be better if I planned some first before simply sitting down at the good old Olympia and attacking. However, oblivious to the moans and screams of my readers, I plan to continue with some more of this sort of trash. Possibilities: What to do when you start your first game--who to trust and where to go in the Diplomatic (not tactical) sense; and maybe a commentary of the sort of people who play the game, perhaps to be entitled: Where is Gov Wallace now that Diplomacy needs him?

JUDICIAL PROTECTION FOR THE CONSUMER--VASQUEZ v SUPERIOR COURT

My article (well, note) in the Law Journal has been printed, and can be found by those of you who are true masocists in 23 Hastings Law Journal 513 (1972). Its probably too dull for the sane, however, and the next issue I publish, probably June 13th, might contain a simple thumbnail sketch on what was really a pretty interesting case to write about, in spite of the job I did on it. Farewell for a month or so.