

THE POCKET ARMENIAN

FEBRUARY 21, 1976

(1) THE SCOOP OF THE YEAR: Remember, you read it HERE first! According to unconfirmed reports from Jim Dunnigan, by way of Greg Costikyan, GRI HAS SOLD DIPLOMACY TO AVALON HILL. What ramifications this may have on the postal hobby are debatable, but it is sure that they could be very major. I have no other details; I'm sorry. I'm going to call Walt Buchanan and see whether he knows anything about it. Next issue, if this is true, more on it next ish.

(2) Received in the mail today OVER THE BOARD, Diplomacy Rating Service's magazine. We thought for a while that DRS had given up--we hadn't heard for months. But they've rated all Dipcon and Origins games from last year, and put together four ratings list--their own system, Calhamer points, 'X points', and Gold Star (1 for each 18-center win). It's good to see DRS at work; and guess who was at the top of 2 of their four systems? Well, his name begins with a Bi, and ends with an rs.

(3) Less cheery news arriving today was another issue of Gordon Anderson's scandal sheet, the "Viking Systems Newsletter." In it he has a headline "The IDA Has Another Crooked Election," under which he repeats his recent charges, which are discussed in pages within; he also entitles another disgusting piece "GRI's Rape of the Diplomacy Hobby," in which he claims that if the horrible Diplomacy World/John Moot/Walter Buchanan conspiracy is not stopped, free enterprise in Diplomacy will be dead. Basically Gordon is upset because he could not produce a magazine 1/looth as good as DW, and everybody knows it, so he resorts to things like this to try to raise some support. Anderson advertises Citex 76 as DppCon IX--but we know better. Scattered through his newsletter are the little words "North American Diplomacy Association." Does Anderson intend to start his own Dip. organization? Will its Constitution read "Whatever G.A. says goes?" Or will it be misspelled? Or will it have nine members, the same people who voted for him in the IDA Elections? Come on, G.A., give us a break.

Get this (from Viking Systems Newsletter #7): "Because of the fact that GRI is a johnny-come-lately to the Diplomacy publishing field and because GRI is trying to MONOPOLIZE the field, the Board of Directors of Viking Systems Inc is investigating the feasibility of entering into a class-action, anti-trust suit against John Moot, Walter Buchanan, and Games Research Inc."

I'm sorry--no matter how you look at it, this man is a nut.

(4) I spent the last few days putting out DIPLOMACY REVIEW Vol. V #1. I now have Dritis. Two magazines in one week is a pain. Oh well.

(5) I ALMOST FORGOT TO MENTION...that there was no TPA published at the last deadline because I had a term paper to write. I mailed out game reports on a flyer. Thank you for your forbearance.

THE POCKET ARMENIAN
Scott Rosenberg
182-31 Radnor Rd
Jamaica NY 11432

MEMBER IDA, DNYMPA
Circulation 90 or so
CHOAM publ. #@\$%¢

EDITORS: Scott Rosenberg
Matthew Diller
Greg Costikyan
Adam Kasanof
David Barlow

THE POCKET ARMENIAN is a journal of postal Diplomacy and other matters. Subs are 8/\$2, 9/\$2 to IDA members. TPA is published tri-weekly and normally runs 12 pages an issue. There are no game openings. We welcome contributions, paying four free issues for more than a page and two free issues for a page or less. Back issues are available; inquire for details. Permission is hereby granted to everyone except John Beshara and Gordon Anderson to reprint anything so long as (1) credit is given; (2) a copy sent to us; and (3) if it is by someone who isn't an editor, get his permission. TPA is a division of CHOAM Publications, of which scott rosenberg is boss.

WITHIN: Peter Swanson's account of a strange weekend; Lew Pulsipher blasts Robert Sacks; Robert Sacks blasts Scott Rosenberg; Scott Rosenberg blasts Gordon Anderson; S.R. jumps back into the world of D&D GMing; games; and, if there's space, a personal note to Gil Neiger.

VERHANDELN

By Lew Pulsipher

#5

I have never had a living shadow before, let alone one so clearly bent on an adversary stance. It is easier to criticize than to advocate or defend, but I will answer as I can. Of course, I told Sacks before Verhandeln ever saw print that one installment would concern his wrongful condemnation of IDA. I suppose he prepared Ablehnen as a column in order to give an air of greater respectability to his reply, and in order to help discredit my comments on DVC by discrediting me generally.

In Ablehnen #1 Sacks exhibits his penchant for thinking in legal (and thus not always practically applicable) terms. IF the organization I proposed had some overt means of enforcement, then indeed, to permit a majority to establish any standard would be disastrous. But it might be recalled that such an organization would depend on peer pressure, on very broad support, in order to accomplish anything. Any standard would be enforceable only because a large portion of the hobby's influential publishers, certainly more than a bare majority, supported the standard. 5% of the IDA (the Council) or 55% can impose its will quite effectively on the rest of the IDA, and in some cases on the hobby as a whole; while 55% of the members of the GM/PG might vote in favor of some absurd standard, they could not effectively impose it on the hobby. In fact, they would probably destroy the influence of the organization if they tried anything which was strongly opposed. What good would its "seal of approval" be if only 55% of the GM/PG supported it--and presumably the more foolish half, if such indiscriminate rules having little to do with reliability as a requirement for mimeo reproduction were established? Any move to establish an absurd standard would destroy the org. But any move to avoid any standard to which one or two exceptions can be found would render it useless as well. Mr. Sacks' rule of thumb mentioning John Boardman itself is absurd. Boardman is obviously a very exceptional GM/P. But for every Boardman there are a dozen would-be Boardmans who burn out. A limitation on the number of games would reduce the number of such burnouts, while not harming the established people such as Boardman and Boyer, who can find players no matter what else is going on. If there were some means of overtly enforcing the standards, then the exceptional publishers might be "decimated"; but the only means available is public opinion, and public opinion strongly favors people like Boardman and Boyer. It is obvious that if you avoid any standard to which there is an exception, your standards--if you can find any at all--will accomplish nothing.

I must emphasize that there is no overt means of enforcing these standards. Some people seem to have nightmares about "big brother" plucking them out of their beds for the torture chamber. THINK! There is no way anything like this could occur. Does anyone believe that such an organization could, in this hobby, become so unified on every question that any overt ((you seem to like that word)) means of enforcement could be agreed on--even if one were conceivable? I think not. At any rate, it is clear that many people would rather let players walk down the burnout trail than try to do anything positive to prevent it.

Turning to Sacks' comments on the IDA Evaluation Commission, I might note that he is incorrect--the standards were determined by experienced GM/Ps. Also, before the strike several people privately offered recommendations for some change in the lateness criterion, and this was accomplished.

Ablehen (2): It is strange to find someone whose column is titled "refuse" to condemn another for failing to be constructive. It is particularly difficult to understand in this case, since I have in other places contributed constructively to many of the areas Sacks mentions specifically. Since Sacks seems more interested in personally attacking me than in addressing himself to what I said, I will digress to reply. Variant Handbook: in lieu of one, I have contributed variant material to each IDA Handbook, and I have published the SF&F Variant Package. No one else has done anything having to do with a handbook as yet, except for the questions asked on Dave K dlecek's variant survey, which I initially drafted (the questions, not the entire survey). Bibliography: in fact, as Mr. Sacks well knows, I am the person who suggested this to DVC. I asked for help; no one volunteered, and in fact the only immediate comment was criticism of the DW staff for being uncooperative (from Ray Heuer). Ratings: my suggestions and proposals are in DIPLOMACY WORLD vol 2 #2.

(continued on page seven)

STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND or "How I learned to Say 'Dud' with 104 different intonations"

By Peter Swanson

As a Yank living in Limey-land (I really consider myself Mid-Atlantic--sort of like an ocean-liner's deck chairs) I couldn't wait to meet American Dip players, especially those privileged enough to live in the city of sTabs, New York. So when Edi Birsan invited me to stay a weekend in New York, to meet the NY crowd, I eagerly and gratefully accepted. Rash fool!!

Edi was about what one expects, which says a lot, and was probably the sanest person I met all weekend, which doesn't say much. All this despite a strange fungus-like growth which seems to have imbedded itself into his jowls. I'm told Nicky Ulanov is now suffering under a similar affliction since I met him in the summer of 1974.

In the chariot on the way to Barad-Jackson, IDA matters and Diplomacy dominated the conversation, which drifted, I later found inevitably, to D&D. I had heard of the game, but hadn't played, and was in fact considering hocking my tricycle to buy the rules. I wasn't a fantasy freak at the time having only experimented with the soft stuff. Ghod, I haven't even read any Moorcock, the British fantasy deity. ((I have--and he's not that good. Sort of produces fantasy to a formula; it's not healthy.)) But I knew what a sword and sorcerer was, so I said that I would have a go playing (true British spirit). Edi was slaving at the idea of new characters to kill off in his over-sized mouse trap, and so he arranged an expedition for that very afternoon, a Friday.

The journey was interrupted by a stop to buy a dartboard, ostensibly for use in Edi's dungeon. I was now worried; I had neglected to bring my bullet-proof vest. Now I wondered how life-like this 'simulation' was. Small wonder that I didn't take particular notice when Edi wondered if I minded animals...

After offering praise to Allah for finding a parking space within a mile of Barad-Jackson, we entered the citadel. I supposed all the doors on the way to BirSauron's living quarters belonged to minions and servants. I guess my first fantasy was shattered when I realized that the famed stronghold of BirSauron was an apartment house. Oh well.

At this stage I met the Concubine and The Menagerie, although since these were inseparable, they might be termed the Inhabitants. We exchanged greetings and I pried my hand from betwixt the jaws of one of The Inhabitants. To my relief, I discovered it wasn't Carol, but to my chagrin, I saw that it was Pogo, BirSauron's stunted mastiff. Luckily for the remote parts of my limbs, I was able to lull the beast into an amazed stupor by making noises like a bone in heat every time it approached.

Memorable events of the expedition, my first ever, were numerous. Gil Neiger refused to come, or even talk to me on the phone--"It would spoil the effect." I was cast as Gomez the Dwarf, Mithril freak. Sighing in disgust, I threw my three inch heels into the corner. Talk about dedication! Bob Komada rang the bell, which was the cause of slight consternation to the rest of the party, not the least in Howard Huge, who was just plain tickled. Howard Mahler took this quite nobly, considering that he had just spent considerable time expounding Huge's many admirable facets to me before the start of the game. I received what is known in the trade as a "plus three war hammer," which is an inexact description of one hell of a boomerang, from a wizened old crone we saved. She disappeared, which just shows the amicability of our party. Stephen Tihor was suitably wise for a cleric. And we came away with lots of lovely lolly (British for 'dough') so now I can't wait until parties reach the bargain basement.

Friday night passed uneventfully and undisturbed except for what seemed like 34 ferocious felines racing across my stomach--more of the Menagerie. It's a good thing I have some vague affection for animals.

Saturday morning dawned with the prospect of a bagel breakfast and then the highlight of the weekend--a visit to the House of Games, which supposedly serves as a sort of club house for the New York Conspiracy. Sure enough, after a quick giggle at the Saturday morning kiddie cartoons (some of these are appalling examples of SF--what a massacre of comics!) we set out on our journey. Much of this was spent on what held remarkable resemblance to a psychedelic string of sausages, which Edi assured me was the subway. My doubts were reinforced as we took in the panoramic view afforded from the fifty foot height at

(continued page 4)

Stranger in a Strange Land (Continued)

which the 'subway' traveled in the initial stages. However, we soon descended into the usual dank depths one associates more with a D&D dungeon, and from there emerged onto...

"Broadway!" I breathed in awe, stepping out onto the street renowned all over the civilized countries as the showbusiness haven of New York. Well, although there was no ticker-tape parade in progress, it was broad. We walked along its length for about five minutes, stopping in front of a small shabby storefront, proudly displaying a sign saying "The House of Games." Inside resembled a saloon the morning after the night before in a John Wayne western, but with subtle differences. The tables all had checkerboard designs on them, and an 'oldtimer'-type was setting chess men on these, studiously leaving off all rooks. I guess there aren't any castles in NYC. Other chess paraphernalia littered the place. Because of our enthusiasm, we were met only by Arnold Proujansky, who set about killing off Kull the Cannibal in a remote part of BirSauron's dungeon, which Edi had packed with the foresight of a Boy Scout in his pseudo-executive briefcase. My only feeling was one of remorse for my now impossible grand entrance.

Little by little, the crowd wandered in--Rosenberg, Diller, a string of Beshpuppets, Neiger, Tihor, Mahler, Klein, Rocamora, Heuer and a host of others. Loud boing greeted Robert Sacks whose mouth is as physically large as his writings indicate; I often wonder why he does something so totally out of character as sign his name 'Robt.'

The first item on the agenda was the counting of the votes of the IDA election, very exciting since a pool had been organized on the number of votes a certain candidate was to receive. Knowing how dear this person was to everyone's heart, I guessed that he would scrape up about nine votes. Of course, I won. Never let it be said that New Yorkers are tightwads, but after that I felt like a tax collector.

Next I had great pleasure in drawing Austria in a Diplomacy game. Of course I was stabbed by Russia in Spring 1901, and by Italy in Autumn ((you don't call it "fall"?) 1901. I guess they were both duds. Luckily Joel Klein was playing Turkey, and we managed to string together a few moves, and mainly through Joel's tactical ability, held the game to a 4-way draw in 1908, Austria still with the four units I had in 1901. Needless to say, Russia and Italy were excluded from the draw.

The rest of the day was spent in interesting and lively hobby discussion, mostly between other games. Most of the New Yorkers are duds at Mastermind, so I amazed them with my 'skill.' All this happened in the upstairs room, which had a small door near the back. This led of course to the back room, a seedy little place where some dregs of humanity played poker. Sporadically through the day, furtive figures crept past us to knock at the door, be surveyed by some person peeking through the peek hole, and then to slip quietly through the door. Over here, we play at Diplomacy conventions, some of us being quite serious and heavy gamblers.

Later that day we played D&D, this time in Stephen Tihor's dungeon, which seemed to be made upon exclusively of die rolls. Matt Diller played a king sprawled across a ping-pong table wearing a cap and not wearing any shoes, which gave us, his subjects, little confidence in his good breeding and royal blood. However, the expedition was still a success with little bloodshed.

I was escorted back to Barad Jackson by a gallant Howard Mahler, Edi having already left to spend some time with The Concubine, this being their anniversary or something. Edi seemed to think that this improbable event had more importance than games, though only by a small margin. Carol was of course suitably jubilant. We went out at about midnight for a bite to eat, and had a very stimulating conversation about mugging and rapes, and then about schools and education. There may be a connection there somewhere. Here endeth my second day at Barad Jackson.

I was joined that night by various members of the Menagerie, who must have decided that lying on my legs and cutting off the blood supply to my feet was preferable to running the Derby over my intestinal track. Thank god.

Sunday morning saw Edi and I preparing for the last D&D expedition, stocking up on supplies, and bracing Carol for the experience. Soon the heroes arrived: Neiger and Rosenberg, Rocamora, Proujansky, and Komada, and set out into BirSauron's fiendish maze. Of course we were soon in danger, but Scott's hunger got him in trouble and us out of it--he is now known as Hot Stuff ((that's Ersalesi Flammifer the Manorch to you!)).

(continued page five)

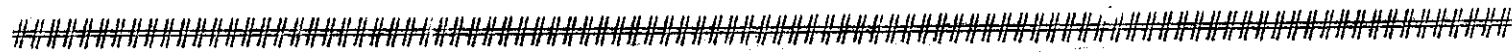
'Stranger in a Strange Land (Continued)

The expedition as a whole was easily the best from my point of view, marked by Arnold's brilliant characterization of The Grey Mouser, a hobbit thief, Gil's continuing patter and an entertaining dungeon. However, soon the cowards among us had had enough, so Scott and I, dragging all the booty we could manage, and trailed by the wounded, left, leaving a number of the blindly brave members of the party to fend without any fighters. Gil's cleric got killed; serves him right for playing with the remote control for the TV. Scott and I went out for pizza, and witnessed a car-chase in the streets. Well, I thought it was a car-chase --Scott was only mildly interested. Calloused.

Soon it was time for me to bid farewell to Barad Jackson. Amid a few tears (of relief) I said my goodbyes, stopping to stroke the various members of the Menagerie who weren't hiding. Suddenly--"SNAP"! Damn, I was stabbed by the mastiff! What a dud.

Gil escorted me to the bus terminal, a large and grossly impersonal building. We sat and talked for about forty-five minutes, waiting for my bus, getting all choked up (it's badly ventilated as well). Then I left him, and headed for my bus. Standing in line, I felt someone tap my shoulder. Whirling around, expecting someone pointing a gun at my midriff at least, I saw...Neiger. "Please don't think I'm bothering you, but I haven't got any money to get home." As I watched my dollar walk away, I saw one green sock and one red sock. Typical.

(By the way, many thanks to all the New York crowd for their friendship and hospitality --it must have been very hard for you guys! All that goes at least double to the Birsans, for putting me up and putting up with me. Thanks, Peter Swanson.



THE GORDON ANDERSON MATTER ONCE AGAIN . . .

Gordon Anderson, the well-known hobby personage, now sufficiently notorious to be called a menace, is launching one of his sporadic crusades again. He claims that the 1975 IDA Elections were rigged against him--when in fact there was a deliberate effort made to help him by accepting his nomination late; that he gave Allan Calhamer the prize money for the DipCon and he, Anderson, is not responsible for it any more--when Calhamer denies this, and stated at the start of the tourney that he was in no way connected with the financial end of the affair; that I am not qualified to be IDA Editor--when if he had checked the recently passed Amendment to the Constitution he would note that, under these circumstances, I AM eligible; that Viking Systems did not give Mike Rocamora a bounced check for his 1974 DipCon winnings--when either VS or Anderson did indeed; that Edi Birsan refuses to provide him with copies of Council Courier--when in fact Anderson has not renewed his supply of stamped self-addressed envelopes that he must have to get it; and so forth.

In short, Gordon Anderson is a liar. I would not make such an accusation without being pretty certain of the ground I stand on. But no matter how hard I try to sympathize with him and try to look at things from his point of view, I can reach no other conclusion.

Anderson's recent outburst is nothing new; Rod Walker recently wrote the following in EREHWON, before Anderson's recent rumblings.

"Although our hobby is composed primarily of independent players and publishers (we can ignore Besh's little squad of flunkies), cooperation is the name of the game if we are to accomplish anything worthwhile. That is why I have been so down on Besh; he requires subservience and unquestioning accolades, absolutely contrarily to the spirit, traditions, and best interest of the hobby.

But Besh is not the oily fly in the ointment. Gordon Anderson, is, if anything, even worse. Over the past year, he has:

1. Attempted to silence critics by threatening bogus lawsuits.
2. Attempted to make himself Editor of the IDA illegally using threats and lies to undermine the vote of 75% of the membership.

3. Attempted (with partial success, alas) to create a personal and private power empire within the IDA without standing election (which he knew he could not win) by bullying himself into several appointive positions.

(continued on page six)

This is the second edition of this stencil; the first was eaten by my mimeo. Forgive the typing and printing problems. I guess my office machines voted for Gordon Anderson.

The Gordon Anderson Matter Once Again... (continued)

"4. Defaulted on any number of obligations, financial and otherwise, in connection with Dipcons VII and VIII.

"5. Spread lies and false accusations against many prominent and hard-working hobby members--especially Edi Birsan and John Boyer.

"6. Falsely claimed he had trademarked a hobby institution, "DipCon" (or was about to trademark it), in an attempt to foil legitimate and widely supported plans to begin moving the Cons around to other locations.

"Fred Davis, whose common sense and perception are uncanny in matters of determining who in the hobby are basically bad news, has cancelled his trade agreement with Anderson because of his ugly behavior within the hobby. I have now followed suit. It seems to me that Anderson has been given more than sufficient opportunity to cease his orgy of self-seeking, anti-social, hatemongering behavior. There is no cause to encourage him further. I urge all publishers to cease trading with EL CONQUISTADOR. This protest may evoke a response in which he will begin contributing more positively to the hobby. If so, well and good; if not, --well, what reason is there to continue to give any sort of support to someone who combines all the worst features of John Beshara and Charlie Reinsel? Why feed the hand that bites you?"

Rod is right; and Anderson has simply further convinced me of his extreme odity.

Anderson's case will probably be reviewed by the IDA Judicial committee, where Anderson himself has said he wants his case tried. I think it will be interesting to note how soon he will forget the fact that he brought the case there, if the JudComm renders a decision unfavorable to him.

A LETTER FROM ROBERT SACKS

Dear Pocket Armenian,

I must protest certain of your comments last week.

According to references I consult, a rump group is one with a fragment of its former membership. As the new IDAVC has few (if any) of its former members and an upper bound on its membership smaller than the size of the old group, it is clearly a rump group. In contrast, DVC has maintained the practice of the old IDAVC of recruiting new members (for instance, we are now voting on electing Rosenberg & Costikyan to membership) and expanding our representative base (we are now voting on seating representatives of the American Wargaming Association and the IDA/British Region).

Dave Kadlecik promised that I would receive copies of IDAVC deliberations. Since I have received nothing, and since he is not a liar, I conclude that IDAVC has never come into being. Therefore, nothing is under consideration by IDAVC, and action by IDA Council referring matters to a non-functioning group like IDAVC (as it now 'exists') is blatant pigeonholing. In any case, it is rather pointless to refer recommendations from a hobby-wide group to a rump committee which deliberately excludes large numbers of qualified individuals and officers.

It is impossible to separate procedure from issues. (Consider the seating of the PLO at the Security Council discussions this month.) I suggest that your attack on my attention to procedure is merely a statement that you disagree with the policies which underlie or follow from my attention to procedure. It is strange you don't consider TIDA and the GAs funny, since you told me they were hilarious until you found out I was serious.

Attention to rules is the only way to make room for people. "Thou shalt not kill" is a rule. So is DVC's I.6: "The Secretary shall refer questions pertaining solely to a particular region, function, or organization to the members of the Commission therein, reserving to the full Commission the right to advise and the right to determine relations with any region, function, or organization." Where do you suggest I start abandoning rules? Where would you suggest I stop abandoning them? (!)

So I will stick to my attention to rules and detail, procedures, policies and ideology, individual performance and individual rights. You wouldn't want me to give up my "integrity and honesty," now would you?

(continued on page seven)

Robert Sacks Letter (continued)

((I view DVC as a rump organization since it at one time had the backing of IDA and now does not; thus it is rump insofar as IDA is concerned. But this is a trivial question.

((IDAVC's inaction is a disappointing and distressing development, I agree; but when the Council referred DVC's advice to IDAVC, it did not know that IDAVC was going to become inactive. The Council had to give Kadlecěk a few month's grace. But now IDAVC is clearly not performing its function, and I think it will be discontinued. The point of IDAVC was not to consider broad aspects of hobby-wide Variant policy, as DVC does, but to work as a small, quickly functioning group that would consider IDA's role in regard to variants. We felt that only an intra-IDA group could properly accomplish this. It is unfortunate that Kadlecěk's IDAVC has not.

((My attack on your bureaucratic methods can hardly be, as you suggest, a statement of my disagreement with your politics; most of the time, and certainly much of the time, I have agreed with your policies. Why do you think I am currently working with DVC? I find it nearly unbearable, though, that you should waste all your time and effort constructing a bureaucracy when you could be doing something good for the hobby.))

Verhandeln (continued)

Orphan Rescue Service: I was the first person to run a rescue service for variant orphans only; I hope that is sufficient. Playtesting Service: this is another activity I recommended to DVC; only one person volunteered to help. MN Recategorization: I gave my recommendations to Sacks and others when this was first suggested. Awards: I opened a design competition in the latest DW. And among other things, I am the person who proposed the Miller Number subsidy, which Sacks has said is so important, after I passed on the MN Custodianship in 1973. I generally choose to put my constructive variant efforts into DW or private activity; Verhandeln #2 had to do with wrongly-made accusations, not variants per se.

Even if you can get through the "by right"s, "matter of equity"s, and "exofficio"s, and legal this and that, you may wonder what Mr. Sacks is saying. For example, how can something be "ignored" when it is "(defeated)"? Try these substitutions: for "declined consideration" or "ignored" read "disagreed with Sacks" and you will have a much better understanding of what he means. If your opening premise is that IDA is obligated to aid Robert Sacks in every way he desires, at least in variant activity, then Sacks is correct in many ways. I doubt, however, that nay will accept the premise.

The disagreement between IDA and Sacks began with his change in the character of the IDA Variant Committee. IDA objected to Sacks' definition of "principal variant officers" including, as it did, people unknown on the variant scene even though they held variant offices (generally in TDA--not a legitimate organization at all in the eyes of many council men). Some may have objected to the "practical application" Sacks mentions whereby anyone he wanted on DVC could be created Associate MNC for something-or-other and thereby would be seated without consideration by DVC members. IDA also was not interested in pouring out funds to an organization not under its control--a reasonable stand, it seems to me--and which was doing nothing to aid IDA and had done nothing for several months. For some reason Sacks feels IDA is obligated to support his efforts unquestioningly. He apparently believes that whatever he decides is good for the hobby. But the IDA Council disagreed with these peculiar perceptions. The new IDA Variant Committee is intended to be what the old one was before Sacks took over. It is not an "advisory rump" nor is it a rival to DVC. IDA wants advice to come from people who are concerned with IDA's welfare as well as the hobby's, with more than milking IDA of all their money they can get. It had no reason to believe that DVC would be such. In Sacks' long list of IDA sins, remember the necessary substitutions I mentioned before, and you will see what he means.

Lest Mr. Sacks' penchant for bureaucratese confuse, I must point out that DVC does not have the membership, let alone the support, of all active variant people, not in any of the three regions (NA, Britain, Europe), especially not the latter. Also, "MNC staff" sounds imposing, but really means Sacks and Heuer. And VORS is a new operation which has yet to rescue an orphan, so far as I have heard.

(continued on page eight)

Verhandeln (continued)

My so-called "filibuster" was not such at all. Disregarding the debate vote ("filibuster"), the bill would have not passed; when another vote was taken it failed dismally. My debate vote stemmed not from opposition to the bill but from a desire to know what Heuer preferred.

Members of IDA know that no one has been more disenchanted with its hypocritical stand viz democracy than I. Last year I seriously considered doing a reverse VERITAS VINCIT such as Sacks mentions. Nonetheless, condemnation of IDA for failing to do such-and-such in Europe or Britain ignores the relative lack of IDA people in those areas willing to do anything. Mr. Sacks may wish to split legal hairs about the subsidy, but the fact is that any MNC who assigns a Miller designation to a variant being played postally will get a subsidy if he wants it, the same as for the BNC (though not the same amount). Mr. Sacks assumes that there clearly is a British Variant Bank; in fact, there are claims and counter-claims, and it is only because Sacks supports one claimant that he is so sure a bank with legitimate demands for IDA Funds exists. In fact, the bank Sacks supported at last notice has sold copies of variants without the permission of the designers, something I doubt IDA wishes to condone or support, and most Britons seem opposed to the person who is attempting to establish this bank.

I cannot speak for other Council members, but I know my purpose on the Council was not to discipline Sacks, nor did anyone else mention this. In fact, a much more effective discipline would be to cut off the subsidy altogether, something no one I know of has suggested. (I might digress a moment--that someone told Sacks he was being disciplined is plausible, because he does do some very peculiar things: the latest was to assign a Miller Number to a game which does not (and obviously does not) exist. This is a section of a joke variant called TRADER--with five island center countries with one fleet each and ONE sea space, so that no center can ever be captured barring a foolish move and NO Retreat Received. The names of five persons were listed as playing in a postal game, but no such game exists--I know, since I am one of those listed, and Sacks knows, since he is another. The players were listed without permission and were never contacted in any way aside from the joke notice. Why did Sacks give this Joke a Miller Number? Does he expect subsidy money for this?

Of course, I never made any such statements as Sacks imputes me--that since he "would not conduct business as MNC and the Chairman of the then IDAVC as" I "directed" I "would make a public campaign of it." That is a lie. Mr. Sacks is a liar--unless he has deluded himself so thoroughly that he truly believes that anyone who disagrees with him must, by definition, be trying to dominate and control him and the variant hobby. Whether he willfully lies or not, his accusations are untrue.

The crowning stupidity of Mr. Sacks' presentation is his accusation that I am trying to "preserve my monopoly over IDA North American variant policy." At present, I am not a member of the IDA Variant Committee, nor do I intend to become one, nor do I know who the members are except for Chairman Kadlecek; nor am I a member of the IDA Council, nor will I become one in the next two years. As is well known, I will almost certainly be doing dissertation research for an extended period, perhaps a year, in Britain, beginning sometime in the middle of this year. Under the circumstances only a fool could believe that I am trying to preserve a monopoly over IDA NA variant policy, even if I ever had one--which I have not. If I had wanted such a monopoly, assuming such is possible, I would have volunteered for chairmanship of the old IDA Variant Committee (and as an original member of the committee, I would have received it before Sacks); or I might have taken the chairmanship of the present IDA Variant Committee when I had the chance. Under the circumstances it is ludicrous as well as idiotic, if not malicious, for Mr. Sacks to accuse me "and a few others"--whoever they might be--of attempting to somehow "control"--whatever that is and however that would be accomplished--"the variant portion of the hobby." If Mr. Sacks would worry about doing some good instead of gaining "power", if he would spend more time working for the variant hobby and all the projects he has in mind, and less time condemning and accusing all who disagree with him, we would all be much better off.

((We would also all be much better off if Sacks does not write a 4-page reply to this, as I know he will, and then Lew will write 5 pages responding to that. Lord help us all!))

D & D & ME

Almost exactly one year ago, I began GMing Dungeons and Dragons. Adam Kasanof had picked up the game at some science fiction convention or other, and it looked intriguing. Adam and some friends wanted to play, and he asked me to GM. I have never held a very low opinion of myself, and liked the thought of my holding the fate of these characters in my therefore-powerful hands. So I accepted.

Our first games were quite strange, and would probably be considered unbearable these days. We didn't know anything about the game aside from the rulebooks--and they were not much help. There were so many minor problems and difficulties--GMing was quite a trial. After two or three expeditions I gave up. We had had fun, but had not really been playing D&D.

A few months later, Stephen Tihor is GMing D&D games, so I go to play and to find out the answers to all those hundreds of rules problems. Stephen did know what he was doing, and under his GMing we played for months, through last summer. He still GMs on vacations, when he comes back from Princeton, but his campaign has become a sort of Matthew Diller Fan Club, since almost all of the characters have sworn fealty to, or owe favors to, or are in some other way connected to, Matt. His 9th or 10th level Fighter, Faramir, is a King and has recently married into some bigshot's family.

Around June or July, I decided I would have a go at GMing again. After months of playing with 6th, 7th, and 8th level characters in Tihor's campaign, I couldn't bear the thought of starting over from 1st level again--so Tihor and I agreed that I could set up an island in his world, and characters could transfer freely back and forth.

My second D&D world, then, the island-continent of Salinger with its dungeon Salinhalle and metropolis Jaracosta, was tied in, and to, Tihor's characters and systems. I ran expeditions for a while, especially at Origins I and Citex/DipCon VIII, where I introduced Walt Buchanan to the game, something which I may never be forgiven for. Then September, and school, hit, and I found I didn't have the time or the interest to continue GMing. Near the end my GMing was becoming sloppy; I sort of left everything up to the random die roll. So I swore off D&D, promising I would never GM it again (to myself).

I'm back at it again. Once a GM, always a GM, I guess--but I simply can't help myself. After a long hiatus of complete abstention, Edi Birsan convinced me to begin playing in his dungeon, which happens, in my humble opinion, to be the finest I have ever played in. Now whenever I can squeeze a few hours out of a tight school schedule I'm off to Birsan's for a game. As I got back into the swing of playing D&D, I felt this nagging voice in my head..."wouldn't it be kind of fun to be running this damn game again? You could do it well, you know..." and so forth. My resolve gradually weakened until I found myself, for the third time in my life, beginning to draft plans for a D&D world.

I have made some resolutions about this one. I'm going to take every pain to insure its total organization--I will not start in with expeditions for at least a couple of months of planning. It's going to be my own dungeon this time, not connected with anyone else's, so I can always use my own judgment and ideas. I'm going to try to run it using some of the systems Birsan has used so successfully--like having the GM handle character sheets, experience, gold, and so forth, and no resurrection, and wounds by body area (Edi has a system much simpler than the 5-page BLACKMOOR system (by the way, BLACKMOOR is the worst piece of garbage): he has a little picture of a man, with different areas assigned numbers one through 20, and he throws a dart to pick the number. It's very dramatic--when Edi throws a dart, players tremble).

Starting with the next TPA, I will probably be printing a page or two of information about this D&D Campaign in each issue, unless the amount of Diplomacy material submitted increases dramatically. I'm sorry for those of you who don't give a damn about D&D, but there are a lot who do, and I'd rather give them D&D than blank pages.

Who knows? Maybe someday someone will come up with a decent postal D&D game. And then....

1974GH (PA2)

GM: Barlow

Fall 1907

AUSTRIA (Birsan): A PIE s f spa(sc)-MAR; A VIE & A BUD s a gal; A GAL \notin turkish a ukr-war /nso/; A TYO \notin a vie.
 ENGLAND (McMullin): NMR. f mid (-SPA, NAT, BRE, OTB), A FOR, A GAS, F ENG, F IRI /h/
 GERMANY (Gillespie): ret a tyo-mun. F HEL h; A BUR s a mar; a mar (-OTB) \notin english a por-spa /nso/; A LVA s russian a war; A BOH s A SIL-gal; A MUN-tyo.
 RUSSIA (Zimmermann): f bal-BOT; A STP-mos; A MOS-ukr; A WAR s german a sil-gal.
 TURKEY (Penn): A SEV s A UKR; F BLA, A TRI, A TUS all h; f trn-ION; F LYO s austrian f spa(sc)-mar; F NAF s f wes-MID.

Supply Centers:

AUSTRIA: bud, gre, rum, ser, ven, vie, MAR, SPA???	no room for (7 or 8) build 1 or 2
ENGLAND: edi, lpl, lon, nwy, bre, FOR, SPA???	(6 Or 7) build 1 or 2
GERMANY: mun, kie, ber, den, hol, bel, par	(7) build 1
RUSSIA: war, mos, stp, swe	(4) even
TURKEY: ank, con, smy, bul, sev, nap, rom, tun, tri	(9) even
FRANCE: mar , lpl	(0) dead

Here's what we'll do: the 5-way draw vote this turn failed, but barely. Next turn will not be combined; it will only be Winter 1907. But we have calls for three more draw votes: a 5-way, a 4-way excluding Russia, and a 4-way excluding England. Please vote on these, and PLEASE VOTE even if you don't have any builds to mail in. Thanks. Will Russell Fox (5160 Donna Avenue, Tarzana CA 91356) standby for England, please.

1974ID (PA4)

GM: Barlow

Fall 1905

AUSTRIA (Bennett): a tyo-MUN; F ION c & F EAS c & A VEN \notin russian a syr-apu; A ROM-tus; A TRI s a ven; A ALB h; f aeg-GRE.
 ENGLAND (Denhart): f nth-EDI; A KIE-mun; F BAL-ber; f nrg-BAR; F HEL-den.
 FRANCE (Reif): ret. a bur-otb. A PIC h; F LYO-trn; A PIE s A TUS-ven.
 GERMANY (c.d.): A RUH, A BUR /h/
 ITALY (Birsan): F TRN \notin a apu-NAP.
 RUSSIA (Malmquist): F NWY h; F SWE-den; a stp-FIN; a rum-UKR; a syr-APU; A SIL s & A BER \notin austrian a tyo-mun; f cly-LPL; f con-BUL(sc); f smy-AEG; A PRU s a ber.

Supply Centers:

AUSTRIA: vie, bud, tri, gre, smy, ser, ven, rom, MUN	(9) build 1
ENGLAND: lon, den, bel, kie, lpl , EDI	(5) even
FRANCE: mar, par, bre, spa, por	(5) build one
GERMANY: hol, lpl	(1) remove 1
ITALY: nap, tun	(2) even
RUSSIA: war, sev, stp, mos, rum, swe, nwy, ank, con, bul, ber, lpl , LPL	(12) build 1

1973FC (PA5)

GM: Rosenberg

Spring 1911

FRANCE (Cusack): ret a ven-pie. F BAL & F BOT s A STP-lva; F BAR-stp(nc); F HEL, F NAF, & A TUN h; A KIE & A BUR s a mun; a bel-RUH; A MUN s a tyo-boh(-OTB); A PIE-ven; A TUS s F TRN-rom; f mid-WES; f spa(sc)-LYO. Sorry about the indention.
 GERMANY (Kovalcik): A BER h.
 ITALY (Zimmermann): A ROM \notin turkish a ven; F NAP s a rom; a tri-TYO.
 RUSSIA (Leeder): A MOS & A WAR s A LVA; A SIL & A PRU s german a ber; A VIE s turkish a boh; F RUM h;
 TURKEY (Swies): A BOH s & A VEN \notin italian a tri-TYO; F ADR & A APU s a ven; F AEG s F ION.

The three way draw was clearly defeated; the five way draw I'm pretty certain was too, but it was close. There has been another 5-way draw vote called for; please vote.

It is now 12:45 (midnightish). I am sitting down to do the dill games. he just brought them over. The Youngstown game will be distributed separately by carbon or xerxo by Matt.

1974FM (PA1)

GM: Diller

Winter 1909 & Spring 1910

AUSTRIA (Blank): Build a vie. F gre-AEG; a ser-GRE; A VEN s f apu; F APU s & A TRI s a ven; A VIE-tyo; A SIL s russian a war-pru/nso/; A BOH s french a tyo-mun.

FRANCE (Gruen): Build F mar, f bre, a par, retreat a mun-ruh. f mar-SPA(sc); F TUN-ion; F TRN s A TUS-rom; a tyo-MUN; a ruh-HOL; f SWE h; f nwy-NTH; A PIE-tyo; a par-BUR; f bre-ENG.

GERMANY (Kovalcik): A BER s a mun; A MUN s a ber; A PRU s a ber; A LVA s a stp; A STP s a lva; F DEN h.

ITALY (Kelly): F ION-apu; F NAP s a rom; A ROM s french a pie-ven/nso/.

RUSSIA (gildroy): Build a war. A GAL, A UKR, & A MOS s a war; A WAR & A SEV s a mos.

A five-way draw (all countries) has been proposed. Please vote on this with your next moves.

1975B (PA6)

GM: Diller

BACK AFTER THREE MONTHS OR SO

Fall 1905

AUSTRIA (c.d.): A BUD h.

ENGLAND (Gruen): F mid-POR; A BRE h; F ENG s a bre; F Nwy s german f bot-stp(sc); F SWE-den; F NTH s f eng.

FRANCE (Grossman): NMR. Moves by General Orders: A GAS & A MAR s a bur; A BUR s a par-PIC.

GERMANY (Ditter): F BAL-den; F bot-STP(sc); a mun-TYO; a ruh-MUN; A BEL-bur; A sil-BOH; A WAR-mos.

ITALY (~~by/eng~~): A TRI s A GRE-ser (-ALB, OTB); f tun-WES; f ion-TUN; a rom-NAP; A GAL s turkish a ser-rum/nso/.

RUSSIA (Scott Rosenberg): A RUM s a sev-UKR; A MOS s f stp(sc); f stp(sc) h (-FIN, OTB).

TURKEY (Torrey): F trn-ROM; f eas-ION; A CON h; A BUL & F AEG s A ser-GRE.

SUPPLY CENTERS

AUSTRIA: Bud

ENGLAND: lpl, lon, edi, nwy, bre, swe, POR

FRANCE: par, mar, spa, ~~par~~

GERMANY: mun, ber, kie, hol, den, bel, war, STP

ITALY: ~~ion~~, nap, ven, tun, vie, tri

RUSSIA: sev, mos, rum, ~~rum~~

TURKEY: ank, con, smy, bul, gre, ser, ROM

(1) even

(7) build one

(3) remove one

(8) build one

(5) remove one

(3) remove one

(7) build one

NEXT SEASONS WILL BE COMBINED unless someone can prove a major objection.

THIS IS KNOWN AS A WHOLE,
IT IS EMPTY. BOB LIPTON:
ARE YOU HAPPY? THERE IS NO
ABLENNEN INSTEAD OF THE WHOLE
TO BORE MY READERS.

1974GU (PA3)

GM: Rosenberg

Spring 1909

AUSTRIA (Bennett): a nwy-HOL; F SWE /h/; A PRU s a GAL-war; A BUD-gal; A BOH s a TYO-mun; A VIE h; a tri-VEN; A MOS s a rum-SEV; A BUL h; F CON s a smy-ANK.

FRANCE: (Malmquist): A stp-LVA; F NRG c & F BAR c & A FIN s a edi-STP; F NTH c & A BEL s Austrian a nwy-hol; A BUR h; F iri-ENG; F AEG s f eas-SMY.

GERMANY (Diller): f hol-nth (-KIE, HEL, OTB); F DEN-nth; A BER s a mun; A MUN s a sil; A SIL s A WAR-gal.

TURKEY (Rosenzweig): remove a lva, f bla. a sev h(-UKR, ARM, OTB); a ank h (-ARM, OTB).

NEXT DEADLINE FOR ALL GAMES IS March 11, thursday, 1976.

press; PA3: PARIS: The Government of France sorrowfully admits that it can no longer guarantee the integrity of outlying German territories. However, we will do whatever is possible to insure the survival of the German state itself.

PA4: St. Petersburg: The Czar announced yesterday that he has great respect for his English adversary and does not underestimate his skill as a military strategist and tactician. "The present state of war between our two countries was an unavoidable consequence of the collision course that we have been on since 1900," the Czar said. The Czar reiterated his belief that his own admirals and generals would ultimately emerge triumphant.

COAs: Richard Kovalcik, Room 101, Bexley Hall, 52 Mass. Ave, Cambridge MA 02139
Robert Correll; PO Box 642, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M4T 2N4

gms: Scott Rosenberg, 182-31 Radnor Rd, Jamaica NY 11432 212-969-3555
Matthew Diller, 8507 Avon Street, Jamaica NY 11432 212-AX7-8446
David Barlow, 107 Gladwin Avenue, Leonia NJ 07605 201-947-8840

it is now 11:00. I am waiting for matt diller to give me his games which are over 9 weeks late (at least one of them is). I am ~~am~~ in no mood for this. there is no ~~xxxxxx~~ salutatory goodbye this issue. I'm terribly sorry.



THE POCKET ARMENIAN #27
Scott Rosenberg
182-31 Radnor Rd
Jamaica NY 11432

FIRST
CLASS
MAIL
PLEASE

Rod Walker
1273 Crest Dr
Encinitas CA 92024

YOUR SUB EXPIRES THIS ISSUE