

Politesse

August 1983

 The Lawrence Durrell Journal of Dale City Diplomacy serving the East Coast and points west, including many MaryConers, assorted Martin clones, a transplanted Wisconsin brewmaster, a DIJAGH-less tailor, our Alexandrian Deity, one genuine Southerner, a LousyAlly, the honorary Dr. Myers, several renowned New Yorkers, Italians north and south, Fredburgers galore, a few Pincers, the Institute for Diplomatic Verbosity and last, but never least...Baltimore!!!

KKon Quote

"Oh!...I was wrong..." -Bruce "Brux" Linsey

Greetings

A great weakness of many DipZines is the proliferation of allegedly humorous material requiring special information, i.e., the "in-joke." An example is the Bruxian quote above. How many of you know who this Linsey is? How many understand why this quote might be humorous? Who actually chuckled, chortled or smirked? Let us know- we would hate to be over your head.

EW

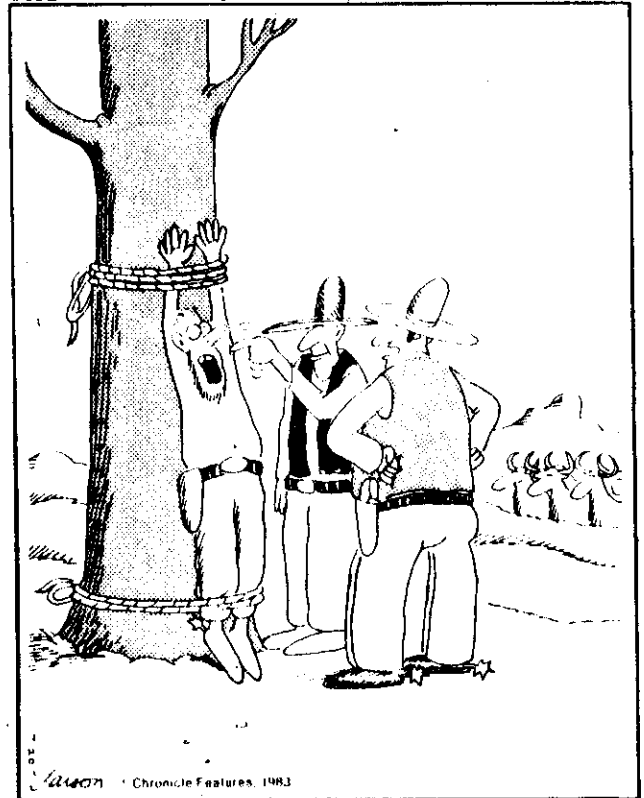
HavaGame

Your editor will host a game of Civilization, Saturday, Sept 17, beginning at noon. Call or write soon for a reservation. We have a North Carolinian signed up and a couple other probables.

We will also host a costume Dip game to celebrate Halloween on Saturday, October 29, beginning at noon. You must wear a costume of some kind. Make reservations!

And do not neglect the TeleDip game, now with 5 signed: Brown, McMahon, Myers, Sagrams and Vessey. You must have access to a local phone line to D.C. How about it Anderson, Ansoff, Larsen, Long, Lousy, Newman???

THE FAR SIDE GARY LARSON



"Sorry, mister, but this is what we do to barristers in these parts."

 Send some money to fund this service to gaming enthusiasts to Ed Wrobel, 3932 N. Forestdale Ave., Dale City, VA 22193, 670-3489

HadaGame

Fnord. On August 13, 1983, (in Oakton, VA?), six peaceful, fanatic, weird individuals competed for world conquest, not by deploying theater nuclear weapons or burning Afghans, but in subtle, secret ways. Have you had a recent significant change of heart over data bases? Do you want to confess all to your bank's automatic teller? Not surprising- for on that fateful day, The Network, directed by whiz kid Sean Vessey (not his real name), seized the reigns of power. The Discordians (headed by novice weirdo Lanny Myers- not his real alignment) remained on the edge of victory throughout the afternoon, but the Parent-Teacher Agglo-Network's spell. The Gnomes were demoralized well before having themselves failed due to simple bad luck. (pleborw) and the UFOs spent themselves competing finally resigned themselves alignment, only to fall an Illuminati (Herr Byrnes) attacks and did not build a large power structure.

ORBITAL MIND CONTROL LASERS
Once per turn, owner can add, remove, or reverse an alignment of any other card in play; change lasts for that turn only.

Power: 4 / 2
Resistance: 5
Income: 0



Communist

NEW YORK

Power: 7
Resistance: 8
Income: 3

Violent
Criminal
Government

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SEMICONSCIOUS LIBERATION ARMY
+1 on any attempt to destroy any group.

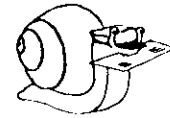


Resistance: 8
Income: 0

Criminal
Violent
Liberal
Weird
Communist

The tone of the competition was set early by the contentious UFOs. There was much secret and public discussion, a bit of illegal (?) espionage and determined vigilance to the balance of power. That

POST OFFICE



Power: 4 / 3
Resistance: 3
Income: negative 1

Government

The Network's coup success of attention on the is a mysterious irony. stomachs? There is no sweet corn, salad and power-hungry to dwell luxury and satisfaction-precise calculation.

CALIFORNIA

Power: 5
Resistance: 4
Income: 5

Liberal
Weird
Government

ceeded through a scattering part of the other Illuminati. Were minds dulled by full doubt that beef ka-bob, malt can induce the most lovingly on notions of tion, to the exclusion of

WARGAMERS



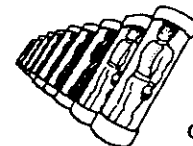
Resistance: 5
Income: 1

Weird

Thus do the new servants of The Network curse and revere the culinary skill of Ms. Goesling and her assistants...our birth-right for a lox and cream cheese on toast!

CLONE ARRANGERS
+3 on any attempt to destroy any group.

Power: 6 / 2
Resistance: 6
Income: 1



Violent
Communist
Criminal

80 Let P=Pol
90 Go to 40
100 Print "Fnord"
110 End

Woody wants to know..... How to Win at Diplomacy

Certain readers may consider this column a bit presumptuous. "Who," they ask, "Is this guy to tell me how to win at Diplomacy??" Dear readers, the author is a man who has not once won a game of face-to-face or postal Diplomacy. "What?!" these skeptical readers exclaim. "Is this some kind of joke?"

Consider this: Would a successful gamer give away his trade secrets? Would Mark Berch, probably the shortest, baldest player of modern times, really tell you how he won the last Diplomacy World demonstration game? Or would he publish a clever but misleading account of his tactical and negotiational stratagems? You know the answer to that. Players like Mark Berch are not going to tell average-to-poor players like yourselves how to win. Why should they? No, you must look to other mediocre Diplomats for advice. That is where Politesse comes in. Players of our ilk have nothing to lose but the next game. Why not engage in a little idle speculation between losses?

Thus, this column is dedicated to those of us who must struggle along in twilight, stumbling and erring, living as prey to Dippers with more experience and greater wit. Non-extraordinary individuals in the PoliReadership are cordially invited to submit articles for publication.

To the topic at hand...how, indeed, does one win at Diplomacy? How grow from a mere 3 or 4 centers to that magical 18? Such a long and treacherous path! Let us look to literature for guidance.

What a price the career diplomat had to pay for the fruits of power! His dreams must forever be awash with the memories of fatuities endured- deliberately endured in the name of what was most holy in the profession, namely the desire to please, the determination to captivate in order to influence.

-Lawrence Durrell
Mountolive

Endure fatuities? "Captivate in order to influence"? How unpleasant! Must we be nice? Will our neighbors not clamor to do our bidding no matter how rude our behavior or odious our suggestions? Will force of arms not serve to persuade...

"In diplomacy one can only propose, never dispose. That is up to God, don't you think?" Granier was one of those worldly Catholics who regard God as a congenial club member whose motives are above question. -LD

It is true that there are no hexagons in the game, no dice...perhaps the will to power is insufficient after all. But need we resort to--

• toadality (n.)—A word, action or other means by which a toady expresses his or her toadiness.



Surely not! We must, then, project the proper balance of sniveling sycophancy and subdued self-esteem. How to determine the proper balance? That, of course, is for the successful player to know and for the unsuccessful player to discover. Some general comments may be in order, however. Beware of appearing too weak to the experienced player and/or the macho type. The experienced player is most likely to ignore an unpleasant personality but will also be the first to take advantage of doubt and indecision. A macho player will despise the weakling and attack out of disgust. On the other hand, do not come on too strong with Mr. Macho; he may take umbrage if you assert your territoriality too overtly. Seek out inexperienced and friendless gamers. They will be most susceptible to influence. Once you have gained a measure of success, you may wish to lie blatantly to such players and expropriate their centers early in the game. You might also occasionally indulge yourself by attacking neighbors you find obnoxious rather than seeking the most direct route to victory. For now, though, before that first big win is under your belt, deny yourself. Do not allow your emotions to guide your hand. One day your patience will be rewarded.

You must coolly assess each opponent. Is there a weakness? Try to predict individual reactions. Watch for body language that might tip off deception. Does your ally look you in the eye? Do his pupils change size? Are his palms sweaty? Hairy? Beware!

Keeping a calm demeanor and maintaining alertness are the first skills you must master. If you fail in these elementary tasks, you will be putty in the hands of a Mark Berch or a Dick Warner.

Next issue: "Advanced Toilet Training: Keeping Those Pit Stops to a Minimum."

KKon Quotes (Guaranteed Authentic)

Dan Palter (Italy): 3 French vs. 2 Italian fleets. You'll get it eventually.

Ed Wrobel (France): Yeah, you know what they say about a 100 monkeys typing on a 100 machines for a 100 years...

Kevin Stone: But do you know what you get when one monkey types on one machine for one month? Diplomacy Digest!

Bruce Linsey: I wish I had said that.

ooo

(After Saturday's supper, in the game room)

Bruce Linsey: Hey, you know what this is? It's a Dip Digest. And pretty soon it'll be a Dipshit.

ooo

Kevin Stone (Austria): This game would've been a lot better if Russia hadn't moved to Galicia in Spring '01.

Ed Wrobel (France): It would have been even better if Italy hadn't moved to the Mid-Atlantic in F '02.

Eric Kane (England): It would've been great if France hadn't moved to the English Channel!

The Hobby Column

A controversy that refuses to die is the Neptune affair of 1982 (Boardman #1982X), gamesmastered by Bruce "Brux" Linsey. In that game, your PoliEditor played Turkey and ordered his armies in Greece and Bulgaria to remain in place, or hold, and support one another. Mr. Linsey ruled the orders ambiguous and disallowed them. Turkey lost Greece to Italy and never regained momentum. Several prominent hobbyists, including Rod Walker of Diplomacy World, Allan Calhamer, inventor of the game, and Eric Kane, the hobby's youngest pubber (of the widely-read Anduin), have opined against Linsey's action. The writer resigned from the game in protest after Linsey publicly asserted that his actions in the dispute demonstrated his fairness. (Linsey submitted the question to ombudsman Mark Berch, who ruled in Linsey's favor. Berch has denied that his friendship with Linsey influenced his decision and has defended his ruling with eloquence in various forums.)

We have no wish to allow personal invective to color the dispute. In fact, we have recently re-subscribed to Linsey's zine and enjoyed competing with him at KKon. Nevertheless, we find the topic a source of unending amusement and, for your edification and entertainment, herein print Rod Walker's analysis and... a little something on a relented subject. (Thanks to Kevin Stone for pointing this Sunday Times out to us at KKon.)

It was

'Just plain English'

By NICK BREMIGAN

TO my recollection, no single regular-season incident in baseball history has captured so much attention as did that of George Brett and his pine-tarred bat. Popular sentiment was certainly on Brett's side. It rubbed the American spirit of common sense and fair play the wrong way when four umpires ruled that one of America's favorite players should be deprived of a pivotal home run in a crucial game situation.

To understand why this whole incident happened the way it did, it is necessary to consider several points of history, law and common sense.

Whenever a group of men is charged with the responsibility of producing a legal document, some imperfections are likely to result. Witness the Magna Carta, the United States Constitution and, certainly, the official playing rules of professional baseball. None of these documents is inherently perfect or absolutely infallible.

There is no perfect rule book. The Constitution requires amendments, as well as constant interpretation from legal minds, in order to make the day-to-day business of American society operational.

The baseball rule book is also an imperfect instrument. It is constantly being amended, usually at baseball's annual winter meetings. It, too, requires constant interpretation from baseball's version of those entrusted with legal enforcement — its umpires.

Unfortunately, the parallel ends here. In the case of the Constitution, most amendments improve the overall document, at least when considered in view of the popular sentiment in effect at the time in question. In the case of the professional baseball rule book, however, most of the amendments (rule changes) have historically made the overall document more imperfect.

The reason for this is that many rules concepts are mentioned in more than one place in the rule book. The Rules Committee is empowered with formulating rule changes. When the committee sees fit to amend a rule, it often does not make certain that corresponding sections of the rule book are also amended to be made compatible with the change intended. As a result, inconsistencies and ambiguities are created, which often put

Most amendments to the rule book made it more imperfect.

one rule in diametric opposition to another and/or put the intent and spirit of a rule in conflict with the letter of the rule.

This was the problem that confronted us around 4:45 P.M. on that muggy Sunday afternoon in Yankee Stadium and led to our ruling on the incident in question.

"A NICE DILEMMA"

...Trial By Jury

by Rod Walker

((This article is being simultaneously...more or less...submitted to WHITESTONIA, VOICE OF DCOM, DIPLOMACY DIGEST, and several other 'zines.))

It's a simple question with a not-so-simple answer: "Can you order a unit to do two things at once?" Most GMs, I imagine, would instantly answer, "No". In a ruling in 1982X last year, that's what Bruce Linsey answered. And the ombudsman selected for the subsequent appeal, Mark Berch, agreed. My answer is, "It depends."

The specific case involves these orders, given first in the normal Rulebook notation, then in the standard notation used in DIPLOMACY WORLD, and then in the notation used in VOICE OF DCOM (and in which the original orders were written):

1. A Ser H
A Gre S A Ser
A Gre H
A Ser S A Gre
2. A Ser H S by A Gre
A Gre H S by A Ser
3. A Ser H (A Gre S)
A Gre H (A Ser S)

Any of these notation systems makes it clear that each unit has been given two orders: one to hold and another to support the other unit in holding. The very extensive Houserules for VoD provide that if a unit is double-ordered, it is shown as unordered (but the question as to whether this is really double-ordering will arise momentarily). This HR is to some extent redundant: the Rules provide that an order which admits of two meanings is not followed, and most GMs subsume double-ordering under that provision.

Accordingly, Bruce Linsey ruled that the units were double-ordered, and recorded them as unordered. The player, Ed Wrobel (Turkey), protested this ruling, but the selected ombudsman, Mark Berch, upheld it. Ultimately, although not immediately, this led to Ed's resignation from the game. He felt he had been shafted by a too-precise application of Houserules without proper appreciation for his intent. This latter was, he said, to issue a single order to each unit: to hold and support the other.

It should not be necessary to point out that the most correct way to submit the orders Ed wanted would have been A Ser S A Gre, A Gre S A Ser. That is the way most players would submit those orders and the way most GMs would expect to see them. Nor is it necessary to point out that the GM cannot really consider what a player intended by his orders; that's pure guesswork. He can only consider what the orders mean (not what the player may have meant by them, but what they actually mean when viewed by the GM).

To show the pitfalls of this business of intent, let's take a look at the possible intents of a player who submits the orders in notation #1 (a couple of these would not apply in cases 2 &/or 3 because of their different construction).

- a. The player remembers that a unit must be holding in order to receive support, so writes the H order as well as the S order in order to be sure.
- b. The player is deliberately double-ordering his units in an attempt to blame the HRs for his failure to deliver a promised support. In other words, it's a ploy.
- c. The player wanted to hold, then decided to support and forgot to cross off the superceded order.
- d. Ditto, support orders changed to holds.
- e. Player is testing GM.
- f. Player wants an excuse to resign from the game.
- g. Who knows? It's a screwy hobby.

No, you can't base a decision on intent; the GM can't read minds and shouldn't have to. However, I hope you will keep these possible intents in mind, since we will return to them later.

The real question here is, is this a double order? The knee-jerk answer is, as I've indicated, "yes". But there is far more to it than that. We must first consider what the Rulebook has to say.

Rule VII.4, last sentence: "A badly written order, which nevertheless can have only one meaning, must be followed."

Rule IX.6, first sentence: "A unit not ordered to move (i.e., one that is ordered to hold, ordered to convoy, ordered to support, or not ordered at all) may receive support in holding." (Emphasis added.) The pre-1971 Rules contained similar language.

The first and most important thing we must note is that a unit which is not ordered to move is in fact holding, regardless of whatever else it may be ordered to do. This statement, and concept, has from the earliest days of the hobby led to some confusion. There were players who thought a unit had to be ordered to hold (as well as support or convoy, if desired) in order to be eligible to be supported in its turn. In the late 1960s it was not uncommon for me, as a GM, to receive an order such as "A Ser H and S A Gre". I printed it as "A Ser S A Gre", and the redundancy soon dawned on the player, who then stopped doing the unnecessary writing. But it was no big deal; the meaning of the order as sent was crystal clear.

It is equally clear, from both his orders and from his subsequent letters, that Ed Wrobel was doing the same thing, under the same misconstruction of what the Rules actually require. He made a mistake. He was punished for it (one of his units was dislodged and annihilated, which would not have happened had his supports been ruled valid). We're coming back to that point, too.

In the context of Rule IX.6, and of this little snippet of hobby history, we now turn to Rule VII.4. Can there be any real doubt that if a unit is ordered to hold and also to support, the meaning (and I don't mean intent) of this apparent double order is clear? No; the order to hold is redundant...the unit is already doing that. The hold order must be regarded as unnecessary, not as a second, contradictory order. There is no possible contradiction between hold and support (or convoy) in terms of meaning (although the player may have intended it otherwise). My own ruling in this case, therefore, is that the hold order is redundant and disregarded, and the support (or convoy) order is valid.

This brings us back to the list of possible intents. If we ignore the more arcane motives e-g, where do the rewards and penalties fall? The ruling which voids the support order rewards the ploy (b) and a careless error (d). The ruling I recommend, which regards the hold order as redundant, rewards the honest mistake (a) and another careless error (c). Well, the careless errors cancel each other out. That leaves us with making a GM decision which will reward either the Sneaky Pete tactic or the honest player who's just trying his best. Which one is more deserving? Of course the latter player is...after all, the guy with the ploy can just figure out another way to miswrite his orders. But the guy who's just trying to do the best job he can of writing his orders will otherwise get the shaft every time. (Besides, you can call the redundancy to his attention, and he won't repeat it.)

I suppose it comes down to this: are we, as GMs, running a game or are we running a reformatory for bad kids who can't write their orders correctly? Are we really in the business of punishing those who can't turn in perfect orders time after time? I don't think so; GMs can be human too, or should be. Insofar as a ruling can be applied consistently and without favoritism, it should allow for the occasional human error (and if it voids out a popular deceptive ploy, well, aw shucks). The rule is simple, and in accordance with the Rulebook: in a dual order to hold and support (or convoy), the hold order is redundant and the convoy (or support) order is valid. What could be simpler? What could be fairer? Oh, ye rigid taskmasters, it's time to get a little flexibility. Let those badly-written orders fly when possible (the Rulebook says you must). After all, when it comes right down to it, fellow GMs, are we here to hinder... or to help?

TANK McNAMARA MILLAR & HINDS



Reagan's Gunboat Diplomacy

We are extremely pleased to announce that Politesse has been chosen by the White House to GM and report the president's Gunboat Diplomacy game. Gunboat, of course, is a DipVariant which permits no overt negotiation. Tacit co-operation may arise during the game the players' moves but no communication may take place.

Willie Highfield's The Modern Patriot entered a bid for this game. Apparently the president did not wish to be associated with Highfield's extreme right-wing views and preferred a moderate publication with a substantial readership in the D.C. area. Thank you, Mr. President, for your confidence.

Some gamers feel that Gunboat is not real Diplomacy at all, since there is no real diplomacy in it. Others look upon it as something to do when there is insufficient time for normal Dip. A player in normal Dip who has no allies may feel that he is playing Gunboat all by himself. Perhaps the president prefers Gunboat, or more likely, his pressing schedule does permit a normal Dip game. We do understand that he allows Mark Berch, winner of this year's DipCon Gunboat Journey, to write the orders (which the president is careful to initial each month).

SPRING 1901

Reagan F Far East - Central Pacific Ocean
F Norfolk - Bermuda Triangle (Fleet lost)
F San Diego - Mexico (wc)

Democrats NoMoveReceived!!

Kissinger Press Conference H
Token U.S. Hispanic mayor permitted to criticize Reagan

Cuba F Carribean C arms - Nicaragua

Honduras Hosts wargames

Sandinistas Conscripts middle-aged women
Convoys orphaned children - U.S.

Will Alan Cranston please submit standby orders for the Democrats?

PEERICON III: THE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUTT! (DATELINE SAN DIEGO)

PIII began more or less on schedule on Friday evening, July 29th, at 1900. A Beginners' Game was held that included Gregg Fritz (Austria), Larry Peery (England), Carolyn Meyers (France), Mike Maston (Germany), Sid Jolly (Italy), Mike Meyers (Russia), and Paul Rosenzweig (Turkey). Since neither Carolyn or Mike had played before it was strictly a learning game. Both learned quickly. Carolyn stabbed two people in 1902 (including me!) and Mike gained three supply centers in 1901! The game was only played for two years, just enough to wet everyone's appetite. Afterwards the serious game of the evening started. It was a Pinochle game that included Fritz, Meyers, Maston, and Peery. So much for the evening of the 29th.

Two regular games of DIPLOMACY were played on Saturday. Game #1 included: James Woodson (Austria), Ken Hager (England), Ed Menders (France), Jim Finley (Germany), Bruce Roberson (Italy), Jay Walker (Russia), and Tom O'Mary (Turkey). The game continued throughout the day and into the evening until it ended in 1912. Austria had 18 units, England 2, France 12, Turkey 2. Austria's win was the only win at PIII.

Game #2 included: Robert Butland (Austria), Robert von Bergman (England), Jim Grady (France), Paul Rosenzweig (Germany), Freeman Butland (Italy), Don Williams (Russia), and Jim Winsor (Turkey). The game continued until 1909 and ended in a five way draw with Austria at 4 units, England at 6, France at 7, Italy at 9, and Russia at 8. Germany and Turkey were eliminated.

Sunday included two DIPLOMACY games. The first was a regular game and included: Ken Hager (Austria), James Woodson (England), Bruce Roberson (France), Freeman Butland (Germany), Robert von Bergman (Italy), Robert Butland (Russia), and Gregg Fritz (Turkey). The game continued through 1908 and ended with a Russian (11 units) and Turkish (14 units) draw. England (6 units) was third, Germany (2 units) and Austria (1 unit) were fourth and fifth. France and Italy were eliminated.

Game #4 was slightly modified and England in 1901 was played using a pool of player generated orders in which one set was drawn from a chamber pot. The moves used were traditional English orders. In addition, instead of Diplomacy throughout the turns, each player was limited to a single 15 minute Diplomacy period at the beginning of each year. Fall and Winter orders were written without any Diplomacy. This variant of "gunboat Diplomacy" was dubbed "tugboat Diplomacy" and Ed Menders gets the credit.

GAME RESULTS

	<u>Game #1</u>	<u>Game #2</u>	<u>Game #3</u>	<u>Game #4</u>
AUSTRIA	Woodson/18	R. Butland/4	Hager/1	Finley/6
ENGLAND	Hager/2	v. Bergman/6	Woodson/6	Winsor/0
FRANCE	Menders/12	Grady/7	Roberson/0	Menders/11
GERMANY	Finley/0	Rosenzweig/0	F. Butland/2	Rosenzweig/0
ITALY	Roberson/0	F. Butland/9	v. Bergman/0	Jolly/0
RUSSIA	J. Walker/0	Williams/8	R. Butland/11	Peery/11
TURKEY	O'Mary/2	Winsor/0	Fritz/14	Maston/6
	Austrian Win	DIAS Draw Includes All Survivors	Russian Turkish Draw	French Russian Draw

GOTALETTER

My infant daughters always think that something called Polly-Tess must be for them. Now that quality is improving, I am fighting harder to get it away from them. Tell PoliWife I enjoyed the Alexandria Quartet in toto at 16 and prefer not to be tempted back to it, at the expense of time that could be spent on Starweb. Please, more pix of lookers, e.g. PoliWife, more relevant quotes, more playtest news. -B. Salvatore

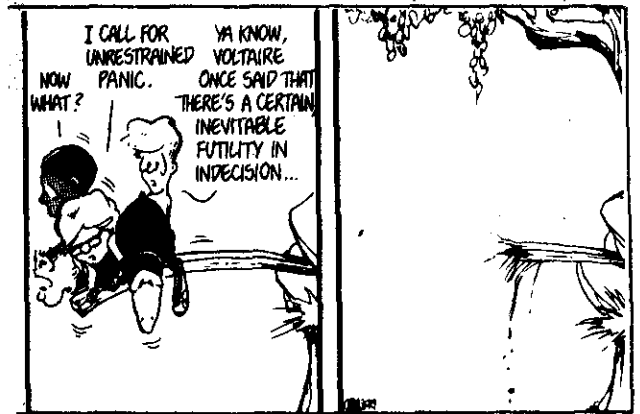
And we thought you loved us for our mind. - EW

Along the lines of the plug for KaneKon, you should publicize ftf's happening everywhere. I'd try to keep you abreast of the Midwest action, but there are better sources, namely the Madison people. I guess I qualify as a Ribtickler with aspirations of being a Barrister. How 'bout yourself??? -Mark Luedi, Bloomington, IN

Why aspire downward? My own affiliation is being revealed exclusively in the next Xenogogic, but I suspect you can guess. How about it PoliSubbers, should we go national??? (NoVoteReceived=Don'tCare) We will need stringers for such a project. -EW

I liked your Voltaire match-up but my favorite Voltaire quote is: "My prayer to God is a very short one- 'O Lord, make my enemies most ridiculous!' God has granted it." -Gary Coughlan, Memphis, TN

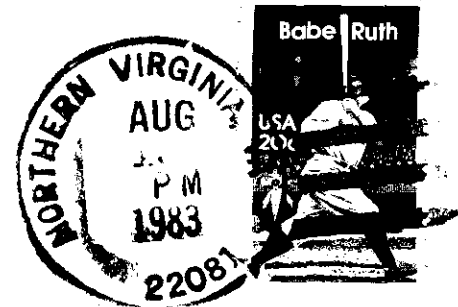
We decline to touch that one with a four-foot feud. Voltaire was a very funny guy. -EW



Hungry for power?

Then get the October Xenogogic from Larry Peery, PO Box 8416, San Diego, CA 92102. Featured will be the results of the controversial power poll as well as an anonymous expose of DipPower relationships in the Politesse service area. Also suggested is Mike Cannon's upcoming Embassy Row. Get the first two issues free from 13801 Wisteria Dr., Germantown, MD 20767.

Politesse
c/o Ed Wrobel
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*Rod Walker
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Encinitas, CA 92024*

KaneKon (KKon) report next issue!