



OH WHAT A LOVELY, LOVELY WAR!

73-4 (1973DG) Spring 1907

Austria-Hungary (Keith Thompson)

FAegCASny-Gre, AArm-Ank, AUkr-War, ASev-Mos, ABoh-Sil, AVie-Boh, ARumS AGal, AGalsAUkr-War

England (John Stevens)

FNwg-NAt, Fric-Bre, AStSAmos, Firi-Mid, FEngSFiri-Mid

Germany (Jonathan Jacobs)

FBal-Den, ABurSABre-Tar (elim), AiruSAWar, ASil-Mun, AMun-Boh, ABerSASil-Mun, ABre-Tar, FBel-Tic, AKie-Ruh

Italy (Ronald Kelly)

ASny-Gre, AMar-Bur, AGasSAMar-Bur, FMidSFric-Bre, FTun-WMed, ATyr-Mun, FtorsFMid, AVen-Tie, FNap-Tyr

Russia (Paul Neumann)

AMosSAWar, AWarSASil

Turkey (Eric Robinson)

\* \* \*

More moves on page four.

\* \* \*

NEXT DEADLINES:

73-4: May 18; 73-6: May 11; 73-7: May 18; 73-8: May 11; 73-9: May 4; 73-10: May 18; 73-11: May 11; 73-12: May 4; 73-13: May 4; 74-1: May 11; 74-2: May 4; 73-D: May 11; 73-E: May 11; 73-F: May 4

GERMANY WINS!

73-3 (1973BY) Spring 1906

Austria-Hungary (David Lagerson)

FAPu-Nap, ATyr-Vie, ATriSATyr-Vie, FGre-Bul (-Alb, elim), AVenSFNap-Rom

England (Nicholas Ulanov)

FLon

France (Leo Plotkin)

FWMed-Tun, FTyrSFMed-Tun, FGLyo-WMed, ASpa-Gas, ALiv-Wal

Germany (Duncan Smith)

ATar-Gas, AEdi-Liv, AKie-Ruh, ABer-Mun, AMun-Tyr, FDen-Nth, FNth-Eng, FNwy-Nwg, FSka-Nwy, ABohSAMun-Tyr

Italy (Wayne Gildroy)

ALie-Mar, FNap-Rom

Russia (Gil Neiger)

AStP-Mos, AWar-Gal

Turkey (Ronald Kelly)

AGal-Bud, ARumSAGal-Bud, ACon-Bul, Fion-Gre, FAegSFion-Gre, FSny-EMed, FAnk-Con

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# THE TOUCH

c/o Nicholas A. Ulanov  
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New York, N.Y. 10003

send letters, comments, and press releases to the above address.

guest articles are welcome. we pay five free issues for every article.

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If anyone has not yet received their Anniversary Issue (assuming that you were subbing with issue 54), write us and we'll send you another. You should have received them some time ago.

Meanwhile, plugs for the issue are beginning to come in. To those traders who have not yet plugged us as incredibly generously as some: please do so, we badly need it. And we ask all our subscribers to get at least one person to buy a copy. We think in its own way it's as good or better than the IDA Handbook, and we need to sell just about as many copies. So please, we are still roughly \$100 in debt. HELP!

This issue is late by a week. It's because April 27 was Nicholas Ulanov's birthday and on Sunday, he walked in the Walkathon for eight hours. It was impossible to get it out during the week and so it had to wait for one week. The moves though, were sent out to those who had games in this issue, so no game delays should result because of our delay. We apologize for our problems. It's amazing that in over a year this hasn't happened more often.

Game 73-9 (1973GK) correction: Italy had ATun; The French move to Tunis failed; Italy removes ATun, not FAdr.

Effective May 6th, Ken Muszynski is at 5537 Chenault Ave., Orlando, Florida 32809, and Ernie Melchior is at 209 South Elmwood, Oak Park, Illinois 60302.

The next article-issue will be edited by the current editors and Gil Neiger. The article-issue after that (in four weeks) will be edited solely by Gil and will be his first solo issue. Thereafter The TOUCH will appear on a tri-weekly basis. Since this is the last issue edited only by the three of us, we want to wish Gil and Raymond one more time all the good luck they don't need and the success they will have. Since old editors never fade away, but simply die, there will be a farewell special coming up.

subscriptions are 10/\$2.00

page two



## A DIPLOMACY PLAYER'S LAMENT

by Evan Jones

This is my story; this is my song;  
I've been in this hobby fer too fucking long;  
My mind, it is swirling with armies and fleets,  
With glorious victory, crushing defeats.

Is it reality; is it a dream?  
Tell me true, how realistic these fantasies seem,  
For this pathological violence and strife  
In your mind can become far more real than life.

Backstab your allies; lie to your friends;  
In life do such means justify selfish ends?  
You carry your grudges, but when will you learn  
That if you live life like this, your ass will burn?

Here's to von Metzke; here's to Reinsel,  
Rod Walker, John Boardman, may they roast in Hell  
For founding this hobby which paranoids makes;  
I hope every publisher Beelzebub bakes.

This is my warning; these are my gripes  
Don't get suckered, like me, by Diplomacy types,  
For I'll spend all my life with an ape on my back,  
For if I quit Diplomacy, my mind will crack.

When I kick the bucket, when I am dead,  
The angels of God will throw crap on my head  
And drag me to Hell, ah, but maybe it's best,  
For at least I'll be down there with all of the rest!

## RUSSIANS AND ENGLISH TO BUY HOTELS IN SWITZERLAND

73-7 (1973EI) Fall 1906

Austria-Hungary (Ronald Kelly, 1) AMun-Bur, ASil-Mun, ABohSASil-Mun, Arur-Ber, FVen, ATyrSFVen, AWar-Mos. owns: Bud, Tri, Vie, Mos, Mun, Ser, Ven, War (8) builds:  $\Delta$ Tri

England (Leo Plotkin, 1) FBreSFMid (-Pic). owns: ~~Bre~~ (0) removes: Fric

France (Don Pitsch) FGas-Bre, FEngSFGas-Bre, FTor-Mid, ABurSAMar, AMarSASpa (-Gas), ASpaSAMar, AYor-Wal. owns: Bre, ~~Mar~~, Par, Edi, Liv, Lon, Tor, Spa (7) no builds

Germany (Mike Ritter, 1) AFin-StE, FNwySAFin-StE, ADen, AKieSABoh-Mun, FBalsABer, ABerSASil-Mun, ARuhSATyr-Mun. owns: Ber, Kie, Bel, Den, Hol, Nwy, StE, Swe (8) no builds possible. owed one.

Italy (Jamie Adams) no moves received. ARom, AApu. owns: Nap, Rom (2) no builds

Russia (Duncan Smith) AMosSASTE (elim), ASTISAMos (elim). owns: ~~Mos~~, ~~StE~~ (0) no builds

Turkey (John Stevens, 1) AUkrSAWar-Mos, ASevSAWar-Mos, FMidSFBre, FWMed-Spa(SC), Frie-Mar, FGLyoSFTie-Mar, FAeg-Ion, FSmy-Aeg. owns: Ank, Con, Smy, Bul, Gre, Mar, Rum, Sev, Tun (9) builds: AAank

Gary Peterson is asked to **take over** Italy.

73-E (1973CNbu) 1902 BUILDS

Austria-Hungary (Alex Katzoff) removes: FAlb

China (Scott Rosenberg) builds: Apek

England (Mike Honig) builds: FJoh

France (Matthew Diller) builds: FSai

Germany (Jerry Paulson) retreats AGal to Sil. builds: APos

India (Cary Fulbright) no builds

Italy (Bruce Wachtler) builds: FMog

Japan (Eric Robinson) builds: FTok

Russia (Leo Plotkin) eliminates ANwy. builds: AOms, FStE(NC)

Turkey (Duncan Smith) builds: FSmy

73-10 (1973GR) has been postponed because of the Canadian postal strike.

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We've filled our last game for some time. We have absolutely no more places open, so don't send in any money for one. GM is Jerry Paulson (63-60 98th St., Rego Park, N.Y. 11374). First moves due June 15.

Austria-Hungary: Keith Thompson, Rt. 5 Box 848-A, Bremerton, Wash. 98310

England: James Garzillo, 175<sup>a</sup> 72nd St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11204

France: David Blemings, 26 Broadview Ave., Port Credit, Ontario, Canada  
L5H 2S9

Germany: Francis Bero, Route 4, Box 2085, Bremerton, Wash. 98310

Italy: Wayne Gildroy, 1005 East 60th St., 623 B Matthews, Chicago,  
Ill. 60637

Russia: Anthony Tinson, 17 Stuyvesant Oval, New York, N.Y. 10009

Turkey: Jack Stewart, 5488 Laurie Lane, Memphis, Tenn. 38117

## HOW TO GO IN STYLE

By Penelope Naughton Dickens

Okay, let's face it. If you got to go, you got to go in style. Gil Neiger's article, Getting Under Foot, was fine if you wanted to stick around half dead, but if you really want to shake up the remaining players, there are more direct methods.

From what I've heard, even the most cold blooded Diplomacy player feels some tinge of guilt when he drives the knife into his ally's back. If he stabs you well enough, and you know you're gonna go, use guilt method number one.

Write him letters telling him how you knew he was going to stab you because everyone hates you. Even your dog leaves the room when you enter. There are other lines. Tell him that you're a hopeless alcoholic and that this game was the only thing keeping off the juice. Or tell him that your wife thinks you're a failure and was using this game to measure you up. Or else get some stationary from your local Funny Farm and tell him that for some reason you had a nervous breakdown when you read his last moves but now you cannot seem to remember why. Take my word for it, your stabber will drown in guilt. He may even kill himself! And if you're real lucky, he may even give you all his centers rather than face his conscience. That's one way to go, but there are others, some much more drastic methods.

If you're really willing to make some sacrifices in order to upset your stabber, you can kill yourself! Now don't just rush to the nearest window and jump, or get your gun and blow your brains out because this has to be carefully planned. First write your stabber and tell him of your intentions. He'll probably just scoff it off as a bit of melodramatics but we know better don't we! Now get in touch with your lawyer and tell him that if by some odd chance you happened to fall out of a window, blow out your brains, or fall off a bridge and just happen to pass away, could he mail a copy of the obit to this certain friend? Then get in touch with your local paper and tell them that if they want some good pictures, they should go to this place where this person is about to kill himself. My advice is that you pick a very high buil-

ding (~~the~~ pictures will be all the more dramatic). Can you imagine your stabber's face when he gets a copy of the New York Daily News and finds a picture of you after you hit the sidewalk at upwards of a hundred miles per hour? Take my word for it, he'll be mildly upset.

Now don't you think that that's going in style?

\* \* \*

73-F (Ottoman Press International) November 2, 1722

Today the Sultan announced that peaceful attempts to make the Russians (accursed devils!) depart from the port of the Caucasus had failed. At the end of his speech, he announced that, with the help of any power, he is going to the offensive and mounting a Jihad. As you will recall gentle readers, through incredible ~~stupidity~~ finesse our Sultan and Caliph yielded the fortress of the Caucasus to the infidel Russians. As part of the massive plan to drum up popular support 2 main things have been done; 1) Millions of copies of the national anthem "Forward Moslem Soldiers" have been distributed and, 2) A bounty of 1,000,000,000,000,000 piastres has been announced for the Czar, dead or alive, (preferably dead). This ~~stupid~~ amazing PR campaign has had ~~disappointing~~ fantastic results.

73-F (GPI) November 7, 1722, A secret agent recently smuggled out of Russia has this to say about the education of the Czar, "Just as I was about to leave Moscow on my 'Business Trip' the Czar's mother asked me to pick up a book to assist in his enlightenment in other words to help her teach him to be more civil; "Toilet Training in less than a day".

73-13 TTP (Tepid Turkish Press) Due to the most incredible oversight, our Sultan's advisor (the Sultan is on vacation) had misplaced the address of the industries and was unable to equip any more troops of our glorious armed forces.

Currently, the advisor is being held on probation. And is truly repentant, "I hope you will accept my humble apologies. It won't happen again.", he said as he was being led away.

73-13 Statement from standby for Turkey: Unfortunately I was unable to locate the address of the gamemaster of 73-13 among the copies of The POUCH I have accumulated. I wish to apologize for this incredibly stupid oversight. I wrote to ask for this information but apparently my letter was not received in time. I now have found the info, this will not happen again. My sincerest apologies.



A BLOODY BORE  
The American Civil War; A review

Civil War is SPI's latest creation, a monster no less. It's a game, as the name implies, dealing with the bloody American Civil War, in which half a million men died. Unfortunately the game is in my opinion unrealistic in that the CSA always wins and realistic in that the game is very boring and very little ever happens.

The game is almost on the scale of World War Two and covers the entire war in the East and West. The counters are a lot like the counters provided in American Revolution. Most of the action, as in the actual war, occurs in the West. The game system, although

Rating:		totally new, is relatively easy to
Map.....	8	learn. The rules are extremely well
Rules.....	8	done and very easy to comprehend.
Complexity.....	6	The victory conditions accurately
Counters.....	7	reflect the historical objectives
Balance.....	3	of both sides. The North must des-
Scenarios.....	6	troy the South as a viable country.
Realism.....	4	This they can do by destroying the
Length.....	2.5-3.5 hrs.	Confederate RR net and cutting the
Overall.....	4+	South into small useless parts. This
		is where the game's lousiness really
		comes out.

While the North has the material advantage, the greater navy, transportation potential, the South even with its smaller army has no problem holding the vastly superior Northern army off. For one thing the North's terrible command control takes away most of his advantage, and then there are the forts. The forts have the ability of tripling its inhabitants. The only player that uses them is the South. This means in effect that the South will be defending at three times its natural strength and no matter how many more troops the North has, it isn't three times as many as the South. So in the long run the South has the real advantage in troops. Even the worse there is no way that the North can ever take the Mississippi River and thus split the CSA in half. There is another way for the North to split the South: They can take Charleston and Knoxville, but that's extremely hard.

I got into a fight at SPI discussing this with one of its developers. He says the North can always win. He's the only one who thinks so. Most of the developers say that the South always wins because the

game is realistic. I believe the opposite; the game is unrealistic because the South always wins. All the playtesters though agree with me that the game is greatly unbalanced.

As usual SPI has bent backwards to make the game beautiful, and they succeed. The graphics are marvelous. The board is attractive with all the charts conveniently situated on the board. Unfortunately this does not solve the game's problem. It's a crashing bore.

It's very rare when I can honestly say that one of SPI's games is a bomb, but there is no other word to describe this game. In all true sincerity, I cannot recommend this game. It stinks.

The game was an issue game and I have to admit that the articles on the civil war, and the one on the Soldier Kings 1550-1770 were both excellent. So if you want to read some excellent articles, this issue may not be a total loss.

\* \* \*

73-7 (PARIS) Admiral Le Rire gleefully announced the destruction of the last of the perfidious English forces. Thousands of joyful Frenchmen jeered the razing of the last English vessel. "Da blokes jus' oint got wot it toiks", Le Rire mockingly sneered.

73-7 (BREAST) Sir John Bull Scapegrace steadfastly maintained that England's position in world affairs was indeterminate at this time. Frothing at the mouth, he ranted about the brilliant victories in ages past. His volume increased as he spoke of the glorious future of his Imperial Navy. Several of his sane relatives, descendants of the Duke of York, have arranged with other kin for a plot in America. Bon voyage.

74-2 "The Smyrna Smiler News" today quoted the Sultan as being too busy watching his harem girls dance, to even consider the rumored hostilities that other nations are worried about. In fact the Sultan is willing to share his well (stacked) stocked harem in order to maintain peace.

73-7 (MOSCOW) Today, for some unknown reason, the whole royal family, the Prime Minister's family, and everyone involved with the government have staged a mass immigration to the Zurich Hilton in Switzerland, recently bought by the Russians. What is this mass immigration all about? From what Col. Melvin Slobovich of the KGB has said it all involves a secret message received from Emperor Kelly of Austria. It seems he's bought Moscow for 600,000,000,000 roubles!



## 73-E (THE FROG OF BAGHDAD. A KIMBALL DREK ADVENTURE)

"Okay Said, give me the lowdown." Kimball said to Said down at the office.

"It's this way. Two days ago we found the Frog dead in a phone booth with six bullets in his head. We also found an Albrecht IV Swiss tank standing outside the booth. That means that the killer had to be a Swiss. Also three days ago, Alexis von Katzsoup, the hit-man from Zurich was seen in Baghdad. We think that he's the Swiss killer. We also think that Katzsoup has been hired by some hidden party to disrupt the world conference to be held in Baghdad to make Turkey look bad in the eyes of the world. Your job, Kimball, is to find Katzsoup and find out who's behind him."

"Thanks a lot Said. Still seems a lot of trouble over a dead frog though, if you ask me!" Kimball remarked as Dracula and him left the office.

Count Alexis von Katzsoup was once again talking to the big man in the shadows.

"Well boss, it turned out that Frog was a spy for the Turks."

"Why that's impossible. Just because he was born in Ankara and lived half his life in Turkey!"

"Just goes to show you that you can't trust anyone these days."

"Did you cover your tracks after you killed the Frog?"

"Yeah Boss. As soon as I shot him, I figured they'd suspect something so I left my Albrecht IV Swiss tank just outside the booth."

"Good thinking Katzsoup. You go on with your original assignment. The Black Kows will take care of Kimball Drek! Good Luck!"

The Count picked up his Albrecht VI Halftrack in the suburbs of Baghdad. He didn't know that Kimball Drek and Baroness Dracula von Neumann were just at that moment stepping onto the platform of the Baghdad train station. All he knew was that there were three days to the World Conference.

Meanwhile halfway across town a man everyone thought dead, but now head of the Black Kows was receiving his orders. Kimball Drek must die.

But who was this man, and who was the man in the shadows? Only the shadows knows!

to be continued....

This issue's column is primarily for the Youngstown players. Two weeks ago, Gil, Nick and I were all at the Lunacon. Because The POUCH had been out late that week, Leo Plotkin did not know that Gil wouldn't be home. The Youngstown game is a phone game and therefore Leo tried to reach Gil. Finally he gave his moves to Nick's mother at a time that nobody is sure about. Gil refused to allow the moves because he could not be sure that Leo did not give his moves past twelve even though there was definite proof that Leo had tried to reach Gil well before twelve. This in my opinion was what is called "terrible" gamemastering. Gil Neiger is rarely guilty of that but when he makes a mistake it's a bad one. Personally I feel that the reason the moves were not allowed is because one of Gil's close friends threatened to resign if they were. I hope Gil no longer makes mistake like that!

In the last issue of Grustark, John Boardman claimed that he had been the only one supporting Richard Nixon but now that John Boyer and some other publishers had published "America" he knew that other zines agreed with him. Wouldn't he be surprised to know that The POUCH would have printed it if it had more space? And we all know what we think of our president!

\* \* \*

### 73-E (EXODUS TO SIBERIA; A LATTER DAY ODYSSEY)

Special Russian undercover agent Cstokian listened as his boss, Leo Plotsky, outlined his next mission.

"You will be posing as just another Mongolian peasant. We want you to get as much information as possible on these people. As you know, since our occupation of their land, there has been a tremendous immigration of Mongols to Siberia. We have absolutely no idea as to why this is occurring; ostensibly, your primary mission is to discover the reason.

"However, the most important thing is for you to get information for our project MUTT, that is, Mongols Under Tsarist Training. Since we're being pressed on all fronts by -- let's see, who was it at last count? -- Perfidious Albion and the Chinese Hordes (sounds like a musical group), we need all the soldiers we can find. If these Mongols nomads are really as tough and gutsy as they act, we could have a nice fierce new army for ourselves. It might just turn the tide in...

"Agent Cstokian, are you listening?"

Plotsky received a snore in reply.

to be continued...

ERNIE MELCHIOR I will see you at the DipCon won't I? ((Current plans are for all three editors, Raymond Heuer, Stephen Tihor, and one or two others of The POUCH crowd to be at the DipCon in August. We are all looking forward to seeing as many of you there as can make it.))

You might note a gross imbalance in scenario M+2 of STRONGPOINT W4!. The rules state that the Italians move first.(8.1) After the Italians move, the game ends.(4.2) Then, by the victory conditions, the Italians win!(9.0) If that is really the case, I don't see the point of playing that particular scenario at all. However I congratulate StouchUninc on creating the first truly even, easily understood and quickly played game I've yet seen, involving the M+1 scenario.

((The following additional letter from Ernie was addressed to POUCH editors other than Penelope Dickens.))

I was very, very pleased to hear that Penelope wants to marry me (see The POUCH, Vol. I Issue 51, p. 12). I have avoided responding publicly until now because my advisors have said I should not appear too excited about this great event. However, before I respond to Penelope, I wish to clear up the question of my worthiness to marry your co-editor.

In her last letter she suggested that I might be, as I recall, sick, ludicrous, shabby, inane, overwrought, and paranoid. Believe me I was very upset and hurt by these pre-marriage criticisms. Penelope is the epitome of the nagging fiancée. Anyway I was very worried by these criticisms, and am doing my best to insure that these faults do not exist, and/or are corrected as they would deter our long and happy marriage.

I am not sick. My temperature is not 98.4, which is normal for me. People are beginning to wonder why it is that I walk around with a thermometer in my mouth all the time, but I tell them it's because I don't smoke. I am able to state that I have not been sick for more than 59 consecutive seconds in the last month.

I have my fashion designer come over at twelve randomly selected intervals per day. Cost: 12 x 30 days x \$50.00 per trip = \$18,000 per month. Only Penelope could be worth this expense. I have not been shabby in three weeks.

I am not ludicrous. I have asked my people and advisors, and they who should know have constantly assured me that I am neither ludicrous nor inane. One aide disagreed at the start of the month, but he was clearly insane. This is proven by the fact that he shot himself 200 times in the back, then jumped off a cliff and was accidentally run over by a car. Unfortunately he died. However it is fair to say that these two criticisms do not apply to me any more.

Overwrought was very troublesome (Excuse me, that was my fashion advisor. I'm not shabby.) since I didn't know what Penelope meant by this. Finally I discovered the existence of a Jane Wrought on this campus. Penelope suspected I had another lover! Well not true. Further, I have taken to calling her up at all times of the day and night to make sure she isn't on the first floor of this Hall. Thus I can categorically say that she is not under me, nor I over her.



Excuse me. There. My aides unanimously concur that I am not ludicrous or inane. Excuse me again. I called Jane -- she's over in Branscomb Girl's residence, I'm in Currey Hall-Boy's residence. I'm not overwrought. Excuse me. HELP!! I don't know what to do! My temperature is now 98.5 degrees. I may be becoming sick! I cannot let that happen. I guess I best go over to student health and have a thorough check-up. They'll scream about it -- it's now midnight Sunday, and they'll put me in one of those robes -- definitely shabby -- but I can't let myself get sick. In the mean time, how in the world do I tell if I'm paranoid?

best, THE MASTER OF WEST CURREY HALL

((The Mstress of Wherewith Hall has a proposition: Since we're both modern people, why don't I move in for a month and give myself a chance to determine for myself whether you are indeed sick, ludicrous, shabby, inane, overwrought, or paranoid, particularly overwrought. How about it? Your place or mine?))

((And now for those letters we received on our April Fools' Joke.))

NAME WITHHELD I regarded your announcement of a retroactive price hike on your games with the utmost incredulity -- GM doesn't sell cars at \$4000 and then when prices go up after you have had the car for one year charge you an additional \$1000!!! It's ridiculous! I don't know if there is a law against actions such as this but, at least -- if you have any ethics -- you would regard this as wrong. I consider this bordering upon fraud and I refuse to pay the extra charge.

Also please stop my sub at issue #59. I would like to retract the renewal money I sent you -- as a protest -- for these actions.

Please remove me from game 73-X and refund my \$2.00 in full. I paid that \$2.00 for a game -- not three moves.

In short I send this letter in protest of actions that I consider practically criminal. Please refund the total of \$4.00 that has been mentioned in this letter (or at least the \$1.00 deposit on the game). Now Mr. Ulanov please publish this letter if you wish to be impartial!! I consider your acts almost dishonest.

I asked you to refund my renewal money on the basis that I was paying to be able to continue playing in your zine and since this is now impossible I no longer wish to sub.

KEVIN GALLAGHER Nice April Fools joke. I must admit I did not get it right away and I was astounded at the amount you were asking for: from \$600 to \$700. However, just in case I'm wrong and it's not an April Fools joke, I must inform you that I cannot afford the \$7 fee and the continuing price of a sub at the same time. So if your \$8 game fee is the real thing, I hereby resign from 73-10.

NAME WITHHELD

About the rise in game fees. I may be a novice to the field of postal Diplomacy, well, I am, so possibly an eight dollar game fee isn't as outrageous as it sounds. Still, I think you could have lessened the shock by first raising the fee to four or five dollars now and then raising it again later on. And you absolutely should have given warning. I've talked to a couple of my friends who aren't going to pay, and I will probably only pay to remain in one of my three games. I expect many people will not pay at all, will expect to be kicked out of their games, and will then not bother re-subscribing. Then where will you be?

Finally, who are you people, there? I had assumed that you were all much older than high school. But anyway, which colleges are you interested in, and what have you heard from them?

((Well, we are high school seniors, as our juvenile sense of humor should indicate. We're all eighteen. Current plans are for Duncan to go to Bennington; Nicholas to Princeton; and Penelope undecided.))

ERNIE MELCHIOR

Your extremely amusing April fool prank (I hope?!) took me a heck of a long time to figure out, and I think I believed it when I wrote to Buchanan on something else, but I don't think I mentioned it. Geek!

It set me thinking, in the 24 hours between receipt and recognition (face it; I just wasn't looking for an April fool on April 5th!) about ways in which you could cheapen and/or improve your empire. In spite of my wry anger at you \*\*\*\*\* for this trickery, I shall put out an idea for a revised empire which may inspire some thought and maybe some changes:

MELCHIOR'S APRIL FOOL REVISION OF The TOUCH TO CUT EXPENSES WITHOUT CUTTING QUALITY:

- 1) The TOUCH will appear bimonthly, on the second and fourth Monday of each month.
- 2) It will not contain game moves at all. (This is the crux of matters. I don't think enough people read game reports to have them worth anything.) Game moves will appear on dittoed or carboned sheets, sent to the two archivists and game players only.
- 3) Recognizing that games and dipzines are inseparable, The TOUCH will print summaries, in paragraph form, of all games every second game year. Said summaries will not be analytical, just factual statements to describe the course of the war. Supply center charts will appear with these summaries, so that all readers will have a clear idea of who is doing what to whom in a way they can only get by carefully analyzing games for long periods of time under the current set-up.
- 4) Subs will be \$2.00 for 7 issues. All issues will be king-sized, 18 pagers of the type that ordinarily costs 29 cents from every one else. Because we're nice, we will only charge 28 and 4/7 cents per issue. Game fees will be the same as they are now, \$1.00 plus a sub per game.

As you see, I would have you take a big step somewhere (forward?) by eliminating the universal game reports. I think these waste space and your time, and I hope you'll publish this to see if your readers agree. I, for one, routinely skip over the game reports, and I'm sure



I don't understand a lot of game-based press that I would understand if someone summarized the game in a nice clean paragraph that I could understand! You'd cut your cost -- currently you spend 12 cents on these worthless game report issues (I file them unread) which means you charge me 40 cents for the big issues. If they weren't worth it I wouldn't subscribe, but I think the above would make a better deal for both of us. And even if you don't like the idea, you might publish it for other editors to think over. I am enclosing your April Fool joke. I don't want to see it ever again.

DONALD HOV            Concerning the covering page attached to The TOUCH,  
Volume II Issue 5; No. 57:

- 1) a copy has been furnished to the Wage and Price Control Board, and an immediate investigation has been promised,
- 2) concerning such investigation, one Frederick Munch, Attorney at Law, has been assigned to handle the case. You may no doubt expect a subpoena of your financial records and operating expenses within a few days,
- 3) flagrant violations of Executive directives make the above-mentioned actions necessary,
- 4) your New York Public Library card has been revoked. In addition, under the McCarran Act, an investigation has been ordered concerning your political affiliations and you will no longer be allowed to purchase spinach from retail outlets.

I know we can count on you for continued help in our efforts to protect you.

JONATHAN JACOBS        I received The TOUCH #57, along with the Anniversary Issue, today, only four days after publication, remarkably quick considering the mail service. This is without a doubt the best TOUCH I've read, especially the article on Strongpoint W-41, but I think it only goes to point out the problems of relying on the USIS. You see, until I wrote the first sentence of this letter, originally ending "four days after publication, April 1," I actually believed you were serious about raising game fees \$7, and I was going to write a panicky letter about how illegal it is, and how much space can be saved by not devoting half your issue to your pet peeve (DW) or by not printing my press (though it seems you don't anyway) and how anybody who makes \$100 bets about Tricky Dicks has lots more to spend than me, etc. Instead, I'll just compliment you on your April Fool's issue, and its wasted first page, and ask: 1) Are the moves for real? 2) Do you intend to keep on printing press, or just Duncan Smith's "fillers" about Kimball Dreck (accepted spelling)? I.E., should I keep sending it in? 3) Are you serious about the Walkathon?

((We did not waste the cover page. It was an extra cover; there were eighteen regular pages. Of course the moves are for real. Aren't they? We print all press we are sent. In fact press and moves are the only things guaranteed to be printed as soon as they arrive. Duncan's press is filler only in that it fills out odd spaces; it is serious. I was serious about the Walkathon. 20 miles serious.))



((All of the above letters arrived before we announced that the joke was a joke. It is interesting that quite a large number of people sent in checks for the additional seven dollars. Unfortunately we returned them. Happily, an even larger group figured out it was a joke.))

\* \* \*

WHAT DO YOU MEAN: AMERICA CAN'T WIN?

by Robert E. Sacks

Let me preface my remarks by noting that practically all the Origins games I have played in have been face-to-face, historical, sequential. Let me begin by noting that in this situation I have won as the American player. As the American player I usually place rather well. Therefore I feel I can competently comment on this drivel by Evan Jones on the back of #57.

Besides taking longer, the principal effect of simultaneity in Origins is that the advantages enjoyed by the non-American players in knowing what the earlier players have done are eliminated. (This I can verify from some slight experience.) This means, if anything, that the American player has a more substantial advantage in postal play than in face-to-face play.

The strategy in playing Origins (for most of the game) is to play audaciously, as if, say, Churchill was your Prime Minister. (This has frightening results on the other players if you're Germany.) The only country which this is not clearly the best strategy is, surprisingly, England, which can win by going for all its objectives except Poland in a rather cautious manner.

The role of the American player in Origins is, surprisingly, that of the architect of the western alliance. On the first move the American player handles the Baltic, England Poland, and one other area, and France moves for Alsace-Lorraine and one other area. Thereafter America moves to block controls, England for understandings, first in Germany and then in Russia, and France the same but in opposite order. Pretty quickly, unless Germany and Russia get extraordinary luck -- DE on one-to-one rolls -- they quickly despair of winning by direct approach -- they start negotiations on who they throw the game to.

I hold, of course, a minority opinion, but I delight on drawing the American player. Indeed, I am disappointed when I draw a different position. I remember one humorous incident when a group of us played three face-to-face games in succession. In the first two games I drew America, and proceeded to hold the Baltic against all comers, especially the Russians. The third game I drew Russia and the Russian player drew America, and everybody chortled about how I was going to have my come-uppance. Everybody except me -- my comment was that having played America so frequently, I knew how to play against America. That was, needless to say, true -- the Baltic fell almost immediately, quickly followed by other objectives.

Of course the classic case is the time we played a four-player game with America changing sides each turn. America came in second, which says something about the general nature of the role of players.



## IN SPITE OF SPITE

by Evan Jones

In Diplomacy, you can make your own friends and enemies. However, in Origins, this is not true at all. The arbitrary national objectives almost entirely mold the alliances. Only in very few cases, can a country logically play both sides: Russia might try to stop Germany in Czechoslovakia. Britain (in Aggressive British-U.S. scenario, only) may screw his allies by seizing control of Germany, he may share control of the Baltic States with Germany and/or Russia or share control of the Rhineland with Germany and the U.S. France (in aggressive French scenario only) may take control of Germany or (but it almost never occurs) share control of the Baltic States with Russia and/or Germany (almost never). These are the only cases I can think of offhand. Some Diplomacy!

In the Historical and Aggressive French-British scenarios, there is virtually no playing both sides at all. The "teams" are respectively: Britain, France, and the U.S. vs. Russia and Germany, and Britain and France vs. Germany, Russia, and the U.S. In the Aggressive British-U.S. or the Aggressive French scenario, there is a lot of dissention among the Allies to the ultimate advantage Russia and Germany. There is a lot of hassle in the former owing to an old truth in the game: If Britain can't get a "U" on "C", the fascist powers will win. But if Britain does control Germany; the U.S., France, (and Russia) are helpless to German attacks for the remainder of the game. But if Germany does resist the control, it should have little trouble clearing the allies out of Germany. i.e., it should work out somewhat like the Aggressive British-French scenario. The Aggressive French usually results in a German or British win because everyone gangs up on France and the old tricks in the Historical scenario should be observed by those two countries. France does not have much of a chance in this one.

The anti-Bolshevik Crusade is somewhat different in that the scenario name is poor and most inexperienced players tend to jump on Russia who is, more or less, helpless to resist. Germany or Britain (usually Germany) emerges as the victor out of the resulting confusion. In this scenario, as usual, it's Britain, France and the U.S. vs. Germany and Russia -- if the players are not fooled by the title and are rational. The Russian-German Alliance can be shaky owing to the willingness of Germany to stab Russia in the border countries. Germany depends much less on controls than in the other scenarios.

Enough about the scenarios and backstabbing. There are few ways to do it without ruining yourself. Germany can stab Russia in the border countries quite easily, but will not always get away with it. Aside from destroying the "U's" of other countries to which you guaranteed impunity, there is nothing much more in the way of treachery. Britain can't stab anyone early in the game (except in the Aggressive British-U.S. version). He needs France for an ally and lacks the power to stab Germany. France can almost never stab without committing suicide. The U.S. can stab only on rare occasions, and has virtually no chance of winning anyway.

And if the players "choose" their own objectives, experience shows that the game becomes quite boring. Feel treacherous? Join a Dippy game.

((This is the last article in the series.))



## IF YOU LOVE HARPO, HONK YOUR HORN

Our beloved nation, the United States of America, is a nation divided against itself politically. Half of the people want President Nixon impeached, half believe him to be the latest incarnation of God, and half don't know what to think. What we need is some means of healing our wounded political body.

We need, to use a perhaps overworn phrase, someone to bring us together again. What are the characteristics of a man who would be ideal for such a difficult assignment?

We would need someone who can appeal to as many groups as possible. We would need someone who appeals to the intellectuals, but so as not to upset the anti-intellectuals, he would have to be on non-speaking terms with them. His not being on speaking terms with them would not upset the intellectuals. After all, didn't most of them vote for Johnson in 1964?

Since we want to appeal to the anti-intellectuals, we should appeal to the actively stupid. If we could run an idiot, it would only appeal to these two groups, but the mothers of America would be touched by a figure that needs mothering. The intellectuals would support the candidate, an obviously underprivileged group.

We want to get the votes of the young unmarried, the woman chasers and the woman chased. But to assuage the conscience of the highly moral, he should chase girls, but never catch them.

He should appeal to the nostalgic, those who remember the joyous '30's, when eggs were a dime a dozen and nobody had a dime. He should appeal to the forward-looking, the visionaries, who foresee a day when communication will no longer depend on the spoken word.

He should appeal to the rich, dress well, be the sort who wears a top hat. He should appeal to the poor, those who cannot afford a new coat.

He should appeal to the stylistic trend-setters, appear in something different, like a wig. He should appeal to those who do not think about their appearance, and never bathe nor comb their hair.

He should appeal to as many minority groups as possible. He should have one brother that's Jewish, one that's Italian, and one that no one can be sure of.

There are, of course, many other attributes that the candidate that can bring us together again should possess, but I have not the time to discuss them all. There are two important qualifications he should possess.

1: He should never have said anything with which anyone could disagree. This is very important. Eisenhower was swept into office without anyone knowing or caring what he stood for, only that he was against killing. McKinley won two elections by sitting on his front porch, not saying a word (I think it was McKinley, but he never told anyone his name.). Coolidge succeeded very nicely by keeping his mouth shut. Our candidate should do the same.



2: He should be dead. Think of how despised politicians become noble statesmen as soon as they're in their graves. Didn't you despise the Kennedy Brothers until they were killed? Wasn't Martin Luther King a pushy nigger until 1968? Didn't the New York Times, which hated Johnson while he lived, give him a beautiful obituary? Wasn't Lincoln, who couldn't control his Congress, and told jokes at the worst possible time, elected to godhood?

Nor does being dead disqualify one from running for political office. Millard Fillmore was a candidate for president in 1972.

Now who fits all of these qualities? There is only one man:

HARPO MARX

So that he may be elected, I have formed the Marxist Party of America, Unlimited, Unincorporated, and Unsane. If you support me in my goal to see the perfect candidate elected, help, by signing petitions, writing your Congressman, and holding rallies. To help the cause, any part of, or all of this editorial may be reprinted by a supporter. I would appreciate notification and a copy of such an appearance.

Robert Bryan Lipton

((At long last, the report on the Marxist Party of America. The above originally appeared in Mixumaxu Gazette, number eight. The campaign is going along smoothly, and we are looking for coordinators of any and all areas of the United States. If you want to be a coordinator contact Bob Lipton. My name is Nicholas Ulanov, and I'm proud to serve as New York Metropolitan Coordinator for the Marxist Party.))

The FOUCH  
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address correction requested

