

Slanted letter scandal exposed!
Gamesmastering Linseyclonism revealed!
Regularity judgment reprinted and analyzed!
All in one issue of...

MAGGLEMANIA

also known as

PRAXIS

#14
May 26, 1987

Circulation: 68
Editor's cigarettes: KOOL

Like all of you, I was much saddened to hear that Gary Coughlan is folding his super 'zine, Europa Express. The hobby's dominant 'zine for some years, it was a pioneer in promoting transAtlantic ties. Gary's gamesmastering was superb, his presentation of the games unique, the 'zine itself always long and entertaining. it's not fair that 'zines like this should fold. Its loss will leave a void that will never be filled.

To compound the blow, Dave Carter has announced that Sleepless Knights too is folding. SK was the flagship of the Canadian hobby, the Canadian Graustark it that it always had a game opening. The gamesmastering was always timely no matter how big the gameload got. I have to feel that 'zines that open a lot of games--what the hobby is all about--are underappreciated, and I dearly hope that this has not contributed to SK's demise. The hobby is much the poorer for SK's parting.

The Boardman Number custodian has issued his verdict. the Berch Continuation-of-campaign rule, at least in the form it was to be used in PRAXIS, is REGULAR! Hallelujah! Goodness and justice triumph over adversity. I herewith announce, right here, the opening of ELGIN, the first game (I believe) to begin using the sainted rule. \$5 game fee, your home currency, ordinances apply except that the Weidmark Senatorial Analogy rule will be used for separation-of-deadlines. I really didn't plan to open games for a couple of months, but I'm sure if I didn't the doubters of the rule would scoff, so here goes.... Now watch all the people who have been demanding game openings shrivel up and disappear.

A lot of complimentary remarks seemed to keep appearing about PRAXIS in various 'zines these last few months, for no reason that I can think of, but I wish to express my appreciation for all of them.

If you think this issue is late, look at it this way: as I said once, I envisage the average PRAXIS as eighteen pages. So the first eighteen pages of this may be two weeks late, but the second eighteen pages are actually three weeks early.

Time to get psyched up for Dipcon, I guess. I wonder what kind of clothes makes the best impression on prospective allies? A "Nuke the Whales" or "First Strike Now" T-Shirt might offend someone's sensibilities. Inconspicuousness and a balance between informality and seriousness seems to me the best approach. I see Morgan gurley has been nominated for the DWA for his article on last year's Dipcon. Didn't read it. Wonder if he dwelt much on the first round last year when **I** eliminated him? He came back strong after that.

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Struggle!

1986 L

BRANT - HALDIMAND

Fall '05

The nominated Liberal candidate for BRANT-HALDIMAND was held briefly by English police last week for passing counterfeit money.

GREAT POWERS GEAR FOR FINAL CONFLICT

The proposal for a concession to TURKEY was defeated 3-1, 3 not voting.

AUSTRIA (Cusack) NMR! A Ukr U (dis;ann)
ENGLAND (Holley) A Bre H, A Par-Gas, F StP(nc) H, F Lon-Wal, F Eng-Bel, F Lvp H.
FRANCE (Wiedemeyer) NMR! A Spa U, F NAO U, F Pic U, F Mar U.
GERMANY (Hurwitz) A Mos S A War, A War S A Mun-Sil, F GOB-Swe, A Bur-Bel, A Gas-Bur,
A Boh S ITA A Tyo-Vie, A Mun-Sil.
ITALY (Schmisser) F Adr S A Tri, F Tyr-Tun, A Tri S A Tyo-Vie, A Tyo-Vie, F Tus-Lyo.
RUSSIA (Greier) NMR! F Fin U.
TURKEY (Givan) A Gal-Sil, A Ser-Tri, A Bud S A Ser-Tri, A Sev-Ukr, A Rum S A Sev-Ukr,
A Arm-Sev, F Bla S A Arm-Sev, F Eas-Ion, F Gre S F Eas-Ion.

SUPPLY CENTRE CHART WINTER '05

AUSTRIA (Cusack) -Vie (0) ELIMINATED
ENGLAND (Holley) Home, Bel, Nwy, Par, +BRE, +STP (8) BUILD TWO
FRANCE (Wiedemeyer) Mar, Por, Spa, /-Bre (3) REMOVE ONE
GERMANY (Hurwitz) Home, Den, Hol, Swe, War, +MOS (8) BUILD ONE
ITALY (Schmisser) Home, Tri, Tun, +VIE (6) BUILD ONE
RUSSIA (Greier) -Mos, -StP (0) ELIMINATED
TURKEY (Home, Bud, Bul, Gre, Rum, Ser, Sev (9) EVEN
(Givan)

she?HeythatMiamiRicesurewasaHart-Stopperwasn'tshe?HeythatMiamiRicesurewasaHart-Stopperwasn'tshe?Hey

GM: The next deadline is MONDAY, JUNE 15, 1987. The phone deadline is 11:59 P.M. Sunday night.

Standby for FRANCE is Steve Clark, 5425 S. Woodlawn, Apt #3B, CHICAGO, IL. 60615.

BERLIN (DAMN): At his latest press release, Kaiser Wilhelm denounced the latest dispatch from the Sublime Porte. (It went "Turkey to Germany: Did you slip it in on me this time? I've been thinking you're not too trustworthy!").

"Who," the Kaiser asked, "does al-Givans think he is, implying I'm untrustworthy? Why, I'm every bit as trustworthy as he is, the two-faced double-dealing backstabbing consenseless toad!"

BERLIN (DAMN): Foreign Minister Shultz offered a clarification of the Kaiser's recent remarks. "What the Kaiser meant," explained Shultz, "is that he has never uttered anything but the absolute truth since the day he was born, whereas everything the Sultan says is a lie." A reporter from the University of Heidelberg student paper, who was also a major in logic & philosophy, questioned the rationality of the Minister's statement's second half. "Ach du lieber!" retorted the Minister. "This ist Germany. Ve haff no use for logic here!" The reporter was summarily executed.

SEIGEWITZ, PRUSSIA (DAMN): The traitorous Lt. Col. Oliver Nord of der Imperial Kreigsmarinetroopen was shot upon capture by the DBI (Deutschlund Bureau of Investigation). It was he.

and he alone, the government announced, who without any authority from der Kaiser arranged for arms shipments to Turkey- weapons which even now are being used against us from the Caspian to the Alps. The Reichstag has agreed with the Kaiser that there is no need to waste time investigating the affair.

VIENNA (DAMN): Oberlieutenant Zeigmun of the Valiant 5th gave the following description of the 6th month of the seige of Vienna.

The Austrian troops- both of them- fight on beyond hope. The faint chance that the Hapsburg Imperial Guard will break out of the Turkish cordon around Kiev and join the beleaguered garrison, still hoped for by us Germans, has been discounted by them.

The half-turkish bastards of the violated nuns of Sophia, Belgrad, Bucharest, and Athens crowd the streets, as their mothers; nuns no more, are supported by the noble and generous soldiers of the Valiant 5th, who hire them for, uh, laudering clothes, and uh, um... cooking and cleaning- yeah- that's the ticket.

5th Army HQ hopes the new Italian government will join the crusade against the Islamic menace and relieve the seige of Vienna.

Bordeaux (DAMN) Oberlieutenant Munzeig of 1st German Army ("The Fired First", aka "The Big Black One") gave the following account of 1905 from 1st Army perspective:

Well, und der Spriggen, ve sent der French vine to der units of der 6th Army, en tran den for der vienners from der Vaterland. Meanunvile, der French army en exilen en Spain failed to go to Marseilles, as der French fleet und der Italian fleet went bumpedy-bump en der see. So, dot means ve dun missed our chancen to take und hold der supply center ov Mar. Now, 1st der Fall season. First, vey getten ready to go to Burgundy as der 6th Army go to Belgium vich der British allien ver goen to give to der Kaiser. But der English, dey say- "keepen der mittens offa mein Belgium", und so now ve helpen der 6th army no more- dey helpen us, now, as vey try to taken Mar, which is probably hopeless und- less der French act like dumbkoffen!

But, it sure as hell beats Dein in der 5th army, vich is fightin der Turks & all over Vienna, as the Turks 1st full of fight und haff modern veapons, not liken der Frenchen which hardly shoot no more.

Berlin to London: On third thought, I'll take Belgium anyway!

GRANDE ARMEE ITALIA HEADQUARTERS

INNSBRUCK:

Excerpt from letter intercepted by Military censor...

My loving Sophia,

The move from Venice has been difficult for all of the men of my brigade. The snows in the Alps clogged the passes and made the movement of our trucks most difficult. If only I had my strong horses from the farm to carry our supplies instead of these worthless machines. I could not imagine replacing my team with one of these infernal contraptions.

The Tyrolians welcome us with open arms, gifts of bread and meat, and delirious shouts of joy at their rescue from oppression. While their manners and customs seem somewhat strange to this poor grape farmer, our officers proclaim that this land is Italia!! I cannot share my enthusiasm for their new revolutionary ideas. We are hundreds of miles from Rome, hear strange guttural voices from the natives, and have seen more snow than I could imagine in my lifetime. This war is a strange and mystifying creature.

We know that we are off to fight a great battle somewhere on the other side of these mountains. My thoughts are with you tonight as I prepare to steal one more hour sleep before my turn on duty. Bless me my darling Sophia that I may soon be in your arms once more.

Your loving husband,
Antonio

1986 J

A L G O M A

Fall '05

John M. Robb, Member for Algoma, was appointed Minister of Health on September 12, 1930.

No commentary received.

NEW FRENCH LEADER HOLDS LOSSES TO MINIMUM

ENGLAND	(Smyth)	A Lvp H, <u>A Lon-Bre</u> , F Eng C A Lon-Bre, A Nwy H, F Bar H, F Den H.
FRANCE	(Reges)	<u>F MAO-Spa (sc)</u> , <u>F Iri-Mao</u> , <u>A Bur-Mar</u> , <u>A Bel S GER A Hol</u> , <u>A Pic-Bre</u> , A Gas S A Bur-Mar.
GERMANY	(Swigger)	F Ber-Bal, <u>A Kie-Ber</u> , A Mun S A Kie-Ber, <u>A Hol-Kie</u> .
ITALY	(Bevis)	F Ion-Gre, A Ser S F Ion-Gre, <u>F Tyr-Wes</u> , <u>F Wes-Spa(sc)</u> , F Lyo S A Mar, F Tun-Naf, A Mar S F Wes-Spa(sc), A Vie-Tyr, A Bud H.
RUSSIA	(Bowen)	<u>A Sil-Ber</u> , <u>A War-Sil</u> , A Pru S A Sil-Ber, A Lvn S F StP(nc), F StP(nc) H, A Ukr-Gal, A Gal-Boh, A Bul-Rum, F Aeg H.

GM: **Craig Reges** has been rewarded for his sins and replaces Matt Fleming as FRANCE.

The deadline for Winter '05 orders and Spring '06 orders is **Monday, June 15, 1987.**

The telephone deadline is 11:59 P.M. Sunday night.

St. Petersburg: Why was our communication with Rome not delivered. Someone needs to be shot. Improve communications this time, or else.

St. Petersburg-Rome: Que pasa? What's happening, paisano?

Rom-Russia: Hope my apologies are accepted, or do I brace for the landslide? Your failure to mention Smy-Aeg speaks more than words.

Rom-GM: May I submit orders contingent on the commentary?

GM-Rom: Gee I hope that wasn't a serious question because I'm going to have to stop typing and pull out the old Ordinances if it is. Gosh, they're great ordinances, aren't they? My ruling is no, because the commentary, due at the deadline, is analogous to other players' orders of the same season, on which conditions cannot be based.

Winter '05 Supply Centre Chart

ENGLAND	(Smyth)	Home, Den, Nwy, Swe (6)	EVEN
FRANCE	(Reges)	Bre, Par, Bel, Spa, Por/-Mar (5)	REMOVE ONE
GERMANY	(Swigger)	Home, Hol (4)	EVEN
ITALY	(Bevis)	Home, Bud, Gre, Ser, Tun, Tri, Vie, + MAR (10)	BUILD ONE
RUSSIA	(Bowen)	Home, Ank, Bul, Con, Rum, Smy (9)	EVEN

TIME PASSES; SNOWS GRADUALLY MELT AWAY AS SPRING APPROACHES"THIS IS TOO COMPLEX FOR ME", HARRIED GENERALS EXCLAIM

The proposal for a France-Germany-Turkish draw has been defeated, 0 Yes, 5 No, 1 Not voting.
 The proposal for a concession to France has been defeated, 2 Yes, 3 No, 1 Not voting.
 A France-Turkey draw has been proposed.
 A concession to France has been proposed.

AUSTRIA (Weidmark) No adjustments. Has A Boh, A Vie, F Tri.
 FRANCE (Acheson) BUILD F Bre. Has F Bre, A Edi, F Nth, F Nwg, A Ruh, A Tyo, F Tyr, F Spa(sc), F Bel, A Bur.
 GERMANY (Brown) A Mun ret otb. REMOVE A War. Has A Lvn, F GOB, A Ukr, F Den.
 ITALY (Clark) BUILD A Rom. Has A Rom, A Mun, A Ven, F Tun, F Nap.
 RUSSIA (Coughlan) No adjustments. Has A Nwy, F Swe, A Fin, A StP.
 TURKEY (Easton) BUILD A Con. Has A Con, F Sev, A Ser, A Rum, A Alb, F Ion, F Gre, F Aeg.

WhatyouwantbabyIgotitwhataIwantisalittlerespect(justalittlebit,justalittlebit)RE-RE-RE-RE-
 GM: 1,2,3,4,...hmm, 34, allright. Spring '05 deadline is MONDAY,JUNE 15,1987. telephone
 deadline 11:59 P.M. Sunday night. Three players requested a separation of deadlines.
 Hey, what would have happened if I looked at one of the requests for a separation of
 seasons and said"What does this mean? We only have separations of deadlines around
 here? A mtiny, right? that would have been the last straw....

GM: Guess what? It's **SHOWTIME!**

Rom-World: Will you guys stop it with the draw proposals?

Russia to Italy and Austria: Regarding your joint Munich caper.....I LOVE IT!:

Russia to Italy: You're very wise to support the French navy instead of the Turkish
 navy. Look at my condition and you see how the Sultan treats his "allies"....

Russia to Austria: I'd beware of trusting this Turkey. My Russia offered him a dream
 opportunity....Sevastopol with my blessings and an alliance. I don't know what else I
 could have possibly done except fight his wars for him. Frank reminds me of that Aesop
 fable, the one where a man finds a snake in the snow, half frozen to death. The man
 places him in his bosom to warm him, to save his life. The snake revives and fatally
 bites the man who showed him kindness. But in Frank's case, he offered my bosom to
 the German asp's bite. Watch your back, y'heah, ole Frank can't change his spots.

Russia to GM: How's that for mixing metaphors!

GM-Russia: Didn't somebody write a song about that snake? Was it Tom Jones or Englebert?

Fra-Tur: Up to? Oh, about 8 inches.

GM-Tur: From where? Your bellybutton?

Italy-Turkey: I take personal offense at your suggestion that I am throwing the game to
 France--I don't throw games. Your rhetoric is not the way to make friends.

(Ankara:)

(NEW YORK TIMES, January 3, 1906):

"Reports coming out of the Russian hinterlands have indicated that an unspeakable horror
 has fallen over the once beautiful St. Petersburg. An inexplicable wave of xenophobia has
 swept the populace and the entire foreign diplomatic corps has been murdered, apparently
 with the blessing of the Tzar's dread secret police. Unconfirmed reports suggest that the
 embassies have been burned to the ground and that the heads of the murdered diplomats
 have been placed on pickets criss-crossing RED SQUARE. It appears no one was spared.
 This reporter was unable to get any response to his inquiry from the Russian embassy here
 in NEW YORK, it appears the Russian diplomats from all the capitals had been recalled several
 days ago 'for consultation'. It must be stressed at this time that the reports of the
 massacre have, as yet, been unconfirmed. details are sketchy."

Munich: "Who am I?" roared the disembodied voice as the roof ripped open. A huge hand reached through the gapping hole to grab our hero. "I am who I am!" "Oh my God!" he shrieked, struggling frantically in the giant's hand. "Not quite," said the voice, "But close. You and I are going to have a little talk."

Meanwhile, as the councillors scurried across the floor, one of them yelled, "It's the Gee EM, the Gee Em." "The Gee Em?" "Yes, it's him!" "My God" "No, Gee Em." Pandamonium reigned as the old men genuflected and prostrated themselves.

The giant sat upon a mountain in the Urals and placed our hero upon his knee. "Now," he said, "What's all this nonsense the Tsar has been writing to me about?"

"Nonsense?" he peeped, still terrified.

The giant threw back his head and roared with laughter. When he collected himself, "That's what I thought. Did you lie about me?" he asked seriously.

Our hero thought a while, then nodded, shamefacedly, saying, "But, it was unintentional. I thought it was true when I wrote it."

"And where was this lie contained," Gee Em asked.

"In a Diplomacy letter," he squeaked.

"A Diplomacy letter!" he boomed even louder than before. "But one can't lie in a Diplomacy letter. All Diplomacy letters are lies. How can you lie in a lie! Oh, you poor misguided mortals. Do you know nothing of the sublime history of our world. An unintentional lie in a letter! Good god, have you not heard of Shep Rose? You must, surely, have studied Richard Sharp's book? No? No Rod Walker, or Randolph Smyth? How did I let such unlettered, unprepared idiots into my game!"

And, with that, he drew back his arm, and flung our hero towards the far north.

"Now," he said, "I need to have a little talk with the Tsar about the ethics of letter passing and the boundaries between games and reality...."

Russia to Germany: Take it off, take it all off. Maybe now you'll start defending Germany instead of trying to take Russia down with you, but I doubt it. Your attitude reminds me of Rita Hayworth's line in Gilda: "Do you know how much I hate you((Russia))? I((Germany)) hate you so much that I would destroy my ownself if I knew that I would take you down with me."

Russia to Turkey: Dearest Frank, I see from your latest letter that you don't like reading the truth and your comment about me going to hell only shows the class that I have come to associate with you. Let me "paraphrase" a few things for you. I am not mad at everyone in this game as you assert. For instance, France, Austria and Italy and our GM have done nothing to me. I'm prepared to work with any of these players and Alan Stewart is getting a "10" from me as a GM and for Praxis in this year's Runestone Poll. (Just like last year, he's done an excellent job. Why don't you put your money where your mouth is and give him the same--you didn't even bother to vote last year).

That leaves 3 countries with whom I am mad. Let's examine them individually, shall we. England: you seem to make it out to be entirely my fault because I didn't ally with him and France conquered him. England NMRed twice and threatened to suicide out against me if I didn't do what he wanted. Not my type of ally. Maybe yours?

Germany: He attacked me, both in the game and personally. However, upon his request and promise of non-aggression, I removed my Fleet Gulf of Bothnia. He was, in return, to pull out of Russia. Instead Germany retreated to Ukraina, tried to take Sevastopol and convoyed into Livonia. I find it rather hard to ally with this type of individual. When he continued goading me in the press, I finally decided to hit back. This removal and Germany's invasion occurred in Autumn 1903 and Spring 1904 respectively, in Praxis #11.

There remains you, Turkey (who has just written me) who informs me that you resent my being bitter at you! Could it be that, even now, you are not fully conscious of what you did and truly cannot understand why I might be angry at a player who ruined my game position for no reason? Let me explain it then, again. From the game's beginning, I offered you Sevastopol and a Russian alliance. What more could any Turkey possibly want from Russia? I was a very good ally--I even let you have Rumania and allowed you to

Annihilate my southern fleet so Turkey wouldn't feel threatened at all. In return, you support Germany into Sevastopol--he couldn't have done anything to hurt me without your active aid. And you got absolutely zilch for it. Stupid, idiotic, unproductive stabs like yours against me are going to be very publicized by me so you can't do them to the other players in this game. You obviously didn't count the cost when you stabbed me. Bad move.

Russia to France: Cossacks available to serve Le Empereur! We have but one request...

Fra-Rus: Gary, my better judgement tells me to stay clear of this but, isn't it in the nature of the game to do or say whatever to achieve the desired results?

Fra-GM: Pretty hostile game, eh?

GM-Fra: What, you mean CARLETON? Or BEETHOVEN? Well no-one said war was a garden of roses.

GM -All: Sorry this is late. I've been a little ill. I managed to convince myself that I had some terrible disease, but the Doc says I'm all right. What a relief!

Reification

The great APBA Computer Baseball Challenge is under way--sort of. Only one entrant, Nhan Vu, but a paying one; I'm sending you back your \$5, and if you beat me, you can have another 5.

Just finished our "draft". It was a lotta fun, but somehow our strategies didn't work out too well. Here are the teams we would have if I followed the strict rules last time:

	Nhan Vus	Stewarts
C	No-one	Gary Carter Lance Parrish Carleton Fisk
SS	No-one	Cal Ripken Tony Fernandez Alan Trammell Ozzie Smith Keith Hernandez
1B	Don Mattingly Eddie Murray Bill Buckner	
2B	No-one	Ryne Sandberg Lou Whittaker Tommie Herr Mike Schmidt
3B	George Brett Wade Boggs	
LF	Jim Rice	Pedro Guerrero Tim Lincecum
CF	Dale Murphy Willie McGee	Rickey henderson
RF	Dave Parker Harold Baines Keith Moreland Kirk Gibson Tony Gwynn	Jesse Barfield Dave Winfield
P	Bert Blyleven Jeff Lahti Bob James Jeff Reardon Jack Morris Bret Saberhagen	Donnie Moore Oral Hershisher Danny Cox Willie Hernandez Fernando Valenzuela Ted Power
		Dwight Gooden Dan Quisenberry John Tudor Dave Steib Lee Smith Ron Guidry Dave Smith
		Rick Reuschel

((But I'm going to be sporting and remove your last 5 pitchers and bottom right fielder and give you the best players I can up the middle.))

((In just 30 minutes I have loaded our teams into the computer. Batter up.))

TORONTO:

A great air of excitement as the Stewarts take the field to meet the Nhan Vus in their best-of-seven showdown. The Stewarts are heavily favoured, but their coach expressed respect for the opposing nine before the game. "The Nhan Vus come to play", he exclaimed before spitting tobacco juice at the shoes of a foreign scribe. "They're kind of inscrutable-like."

Nhan Vu starter Bert Blyleven got into trouble in the bottom of the first when the Stewarts loaded the bases with no outs on a double by Henderson, a single by Sandberg and a walk to Hernandez. Henderson scored on Ripken's short fly ball but Blyleven fanned Schmidt on a curve ball to end the opening frame.

Blyleven ran into trouble again in the third. Ryne Sandberg lined a single and advanced to second on Keith Hernandez's infield out. Pedro Guerrero scored Sandberg with a triple blasted to the base of the wall in centre field. After walking Ripken, Blyleven staved off the bullpen by inducing Mike Schmidt to hit into a double play.

Nhan Vu centre fielder Dale Murphy was the star of the middle frames, blasting a Gooden smoker out in left field in the fourth and throwing Keith Hernandez out at the plate with a spectacular peg in the Stewart half of the fifth. Don Mattingly got the Nhan Vus even with an opposite-field shot in the top of the sixth.

Jeff Lahti came in for the Nhan Vus after Wade Boggs pinch-hit for Blyleven to open the eighth inning. With one out, Pedro Guerrero bounced a single to left. Tim Lincecum came in to pinch-run for him and stole second. One out later, Mike Schmidt made up for his previous strikeout and pair of double-play balls by orbiting a towering sputnik into the twelfth row in center field.

Dan Quisenberry came in to retire the Nhan Vus in the ninth, surrendering only a ground single to Dale Murphy.

Our Budweiser star of the game is MIKE SCHMIDT. Mike...this bud's for you!

TEAM	54 NHAN VUS	Last	NAME - Offense	Pos	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	TB	RBI	S	HP	BB	SO	SB	CS	PO	A	E	PB
NHAN VUS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 R H E		1 FRANCO	SS	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	5	0	0
STEWARTS	1 0 1 0 0 0 0 2 4 10 0		2 FRITT	3B	3	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
			3 MATTHEW	1B	4	1	1	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	2	0	0
			4 MURPHY	CF	4	1	2	0	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	0
			5 PANOR	RF	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
			6 RICE	LF	4	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
			7 GEDMAN	C	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	9	0	0	0
			8 OSTER	2B	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
			9 BLYLEVEN	P	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
			BOGGS	PH	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			LAHTI	P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			JAMES	P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	32 2 5 1 0 2 12 2 0 0 1 10 0 0																					

TEAM	55 STEWARTS	Last	NAME - Pitchers	IP	R	ER	H	2B	3B	HR	SO	BB	WP	HB	PK
			BLYLEVEN	7.0	2	2	8	2	1	0	4	4	0	0	0
			LAHTI	0.2	2	2	2	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0
			JAMES	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	8.0 4 4 10 2 1 1 6 6 0 0 0 0 24 11 0 0														

EJECTIOS:
INJURES :

TEAM	54 NHAN VUS	Last	NAME - Offense	Pos	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	TB	RBI	S	HP	BB	SO	SB	CS	PO	A	E	PB
			1 HENDERSON	CF	4	1	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	0	0	0
			2 SANDBERG	2B	4	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
			3 HERNANDEZ	1B	3	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	1	0	0
			4 GUERRERO	LF	2	0	2	0	1	0	4	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
			5 RYNE	SS	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
			6 SCHMIDT	P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			7 CARTER	C	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
			8 BARTFIELD	RF	4	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			9 GOODEN	P	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
			SMITH	PH	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	29 4 10 2 1 1 17 4 1 0 6 6 2 0																					

TEAM	55 STEWARTS	Last	NAME - Pitchers	IP	R	ER	H	2B	3B	HR	SO	BB	WP	HB	PK
			QUISENBERRY	8.0	2	2	4	1	0	2	10	1	0	0	0
			MURPHY	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			QUISENBERRY	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

WP -- GOODEN (100)
 IP -- LAHTI (2.0)
 PH -- RICE (1.0)
 PH -- BLYLEVEN (1.0)

The Party Line

Alan Stewart: We have regular letters and answers to my questions this time. I think I'll start with my regular letters and save the questions for the grand finale.

First, a couple fragments left over from last time.

Rod Walker:

Ah, another fine (#12) issue of PRAXIS. Not as much fireworks in the lettercol as I had expected, but not a great disappointment either. Curiously, I see nothing just

screaming for a reply. But I will add a little to the discussion.

It appears thus far that this whole thing about sex, prostitution, and so on has been going on without much reference to AIDS. I believe it's becoming increasingly clear that this disease is going to repeal the sexual revolution in large measure. The last decade of this century is likely to be as sexually restrained as the 70s were sexually abandoned. The interesting, and ironic, thing is that the people who are going to be most greatly affected are you heteros. Gay men, in particular, have plenty of ways of being promiscuous as the dickens with very little, if any, personal danger. AIDS is raging virtually unchecked in Africa (and it would probably still be virtually unnoticed as well, had it not broken out in the West), and its victims are almost always heterosexuals. You guys are just going to have to be a lot more careful and have a lot less fun, it seems to me-- and the people with various moral scruples can be all sorts of smug. Alas, there are still too many people refusing to play safe yet.

((Himm. The referee makes his call: NOT a prostitution letter so it doesn't get the shrinking treatment.))

((An AIDS-related question I thought of asking was recently treated with somewhat greater authority in the New York Times. If you, whoever you are out there, had the AIDS virus in you right now, floating around, biding its time, would you want to know about it? Never mind with the "I couldn't possibly have got it" stuff. Suppose you did, would you want to know? My answer is a clear and loud "No thanks". That's why I can't understand the agitation for mandatory testing. What's the point? All you could learn from it is whether you should be taking preventative measures to protect your partners, and all good little boys and girls are already supposed to be doing whatever Dr. Kook tells them to.))

Steve Clark:

Between the handwriting analysis I won, and your *Withering Away* attitudes test, I'll know myself so well that I won't need a mirror anymore.

I wish you continued success on your diet. Yes, your body does compensate to the reduced caloric intake, but only to a small extent. Your metabolic rate responds to a much greater degree to caloric *expenditures*. In other words, if you exercise during and after your diet, you won't have to worry about it.

The raunchier the press, the better.

I realised the day after I sent you that screed on genetics that it was too esoteric to interest *Praxis* readers. But I figured you would feel the same and leave it out, so I didn't worry about it. Then you go and print the damn thing. This is my attempt to bring things a little closer to home.

Genetic counselling is something many couples undertake. It can be done before or after pregnancy. Counselling before pregnancy is done for couples where his or her family has a history of a genetic disease (for example -- Huntington's chorea or sickle-cell anemia). The investigation consists of study the family's history of the disease or actually analyzing the potential parents' DNA. The parents are then told what the chances are that the child they were planning on having will be affected (have the disease) or will be a carrier. It is then up to the couple to decide if they want to go ahead with the pregnancy. I would think that no one would have any problem with this form of counselling.

Counselling after pregnancy, on the other hand, is not acceptable to everyone. It can take two forms. The first is done on many pregnant women. The fetus' DNA is examined to determine if the fetus has the correct number of chromosomes. Incorrect chromosome number results in severe problems (for example -- Down's syndrome otherwise known as mongolism). Parents are informed when problems are detected and almost all choose to terminate pregnancy. The second form is related to the pre-pregnancy test. If one of the parents is a suspected or known carrier of a genetic disease, then the fetus is tested to determine if it is affected. Again, the parents have the choice to terminate the pregnancy. What do you folks think? It only works if the woman has an abortion. But it also has the potential, if widely used, to eliminate certain genetic diseases in the United States. Should it be mandatory? Next issue I'll get out my Facist Handbook and talk about eugenics.

((I suppose that someday the parents will be able to test to determine whether the little brat is going to be smart or dumb, handsome or ugly, upstanding or delinquent, etc. If the parents don't like what they're going to get they can take certain preventative measures. Too bad the kid doesn't have the same right to have the same tests performed on the parents, have them scrambled into omelettes if he doesn't think much of the package, and opt for free agency to see which Stern-type family is willing to offer him the best deal.))

Robert Greier:

Hello again! Kind of disgusted with your Blue Jays, beating my Injuns 2 outta 3. Oh well, there's 159 games to go. How bout Mr. Snyder, 2 homers in 3 games! I disagree with your pick of the Injuns to win the division, unless the relief pitchin' picks up the pieces they'll finish 3rd. Toronto should win the division, unless Detroit can "get it rollin'"

((How did you like the return matches at Memorial Stadium? I've gotta tip my hat to Pat Corrales, who thoughtfully loaded the bases with an intentional walk so the pitcher could then walk the winning run home. I commend his strategy to all our opponents--don't make us swing the bat, make it easy for us!))

Kathy Caruso:

In the AL East would you care to try & explain the weird start of the Brewers! Like you, I expected them to fight for the cellar spot.

((Not only can't I explain it on last season's form, looking at their stats this year I still can't figure it out! Last time I looked they had starters with ERAs like 6.27 and 8.16 and Cecil Cooper was hitting .100. They'll wilt, they'll fold--trust me. Ignore the fact that my selection for first place in the AL East last year, the Orioles, finished last and that my selection this year, the Injuns, are in the same position. My selections are good--it's the players who botch it up.))

Jacques Belanger:

I was surprised at my results in the political attitudes quiz. I thought I would get a more average result because I'm conservative compared to other persons I know in Quebec City. This was quite interesting, as well as Prof Moriarity's appearance in the Trilynda series!

((I was surprised at my result too, comparatively. Why they had me as a conservative, when in fact I'm the very epitome of moderation! Them G--d----d, pointy-headed, ivory-tower social "scientists"! I'd bet they can't even park a bicycle straight.))

Bob Acheson:

I noted your weight loss. If you keep that up you're going to become anorexic. ((Your words stirred my conscience, Bob. I've taken a little break from dieting and am spending a little more time relaxing with a few Silver Bullets.))

What was the outcome of your press question? (great press)

((Four votes for raunchy press, none opposed. The Moral Majority better speak out fast!))

((I prepared the rest of the above page two weeks ago and now have a little space left over, I see. Just about to stick this one into the photocopier. Isn't the Indianapolis 500 neat? Never watched it much before, but turned it on this morning when I was looking for an excuse not to come down and work on PRAXIS. Mario Andretti was leading after 137 laps when I left for the PRAXIS-place. Hope he wins--apparently he was the victim of some kind of jinx. In the past. Since 1969. I'll check for the final results on the radio before this all-nighter is over. Maybe give you my playlist.))

Mark Weidmark:

You raised a couple of issues back in PRAXIS #12 that I postponed comment on. I felt at the time I had exhausted my welcome with four solid pages of press, but after your great opus "Reification" I now know you'll hold nothing back when it comes to publishing great gobs of super-chunky prose.

But before I talk about S-E-X and death (my most and least favourite subjects), let's talk about the economy.

Of your writing!

Look, Alan, the one thing you have to understand -- the readers of PRAXIS might look like browners when we dress up in our puffy white wigs and fancy gowns, but we aren't really learned, 'durn it!

I mean, c-o-m-e ON!

Reification?

Oh, I know, that's your STYLE, and everyone's entitled to their own style, right? But look, you can still use obscure words and not lose everyone's attention. Let's rewrite this a bit...

R E I F I C A T I O N

She was beautiful.

I just couldn't believe it -- a dream come true.

I was sitting at a little bar on Bloor West, OED's. Cute name, eh? It stands for Olde English Dump. The whole place is a take-off on a seedy medieval hotel, and all the waitresses are dressed like characters from Canterbury Tales.

"As ever mote I drinken wyn or ale, I shal seye sooth," the Wife of Bath whispered to me as she slopped another jug down, "I graunte it wel, wolde I suffre him do his nycetee, and reification?"

"Sounds cool," I said.

Then she came in through the door.

Yvette.

"Alan! Outside! You see who de bent 'ure car?"

She stopped cold.

I suppose there was something about the ecstatic look in my face that made her forget all about the Jag.

"A-l-a-n.... 'ave you beeeen naughty?"

"Uh-uh."

I pulled out the box from under the table.

"APBA Major League Computer Baseball?" she read in halting English.

I grabbed the software package and clutched it to my chest. "Yes, yes, isn't she beautiful, Yvette?" I trilled, lovingly carressing the vinyl wrapping.

"Computer baseball, a dream come true!"

"Oh Alan! \$59.95 U.S. You 'ave been naughty. But never mind that baseball. The Expos, pshhhht! I want you to take me away for a wild, wild weekend in Montreal, to see the Canadiens! And when they is not play'n, we can! Ooooooh, I can't wait for you to do that thing to me -- you know, that thing that is not a thing?"

"Reification?"

"Oui, oui, OUI!"

Some days later, as I crawled hung-over around my apartment, I slipped the computer baseball disk into the drive and picked up the manual...

Well, there you have it.

Snappy.

Catchy.

Suggestive.

And it still manages to beat around the bush (double-entendre intended) while using enough jargon to keep everyone moderately confused.

Okay, now on to matters less serious than style.

DEATH.

The death penalty is wrong. There is no justification for it except

vengeance, and when we stoop that low as a society, we bring ourselves down to the criminal level -- and reduce ourselves to the barbaric level of many nations of the world that use the execution of citizens as a solution to problems.

Will the death penalty return to Canada? Yes, because the average Tory will not allow his conscience to get in the way of political survival. I wrote to my own MP, Jennifer Cossitt, and she agreed (by implication) that the death penalty is not a deterrent, that it is wrong, immoral, and barbaric, BUT, she would vote in favour of it because she believes Canadians would be "comforted".

That's her word -- comforted!

So, that's it. Jennifer Cossitt, MP, is not interested in the truth -- she is interested in what pleases the majority of her constituents. Never mind that any comfort the death penalty offers people is wholly illusory (ie. a sick lie). Because recent university research in Canada has revealed that many Crown Attorneys feel they may not fight as vigorously for murder convictions if an irrevocable death penalty is in place. And jurists who sat on the trials of convicted murderers said they would not have agreed to a guilty verdict if it meant a death sentence -- and without a unanimous jury, no conviction. The point is, that the return of the death penalty may bring about the hanging of mass murderers like Clifford Olsen, but how comforting would it be for dozens of less known killers to get off with "innocent" verdicts because of the unwillingness of very human people in the legal system to dip their hands in blood?

On to the other question in PRAXIS #12.

I suppose you've been wondering about the indifference to the so-called "raunchy press" in PRAXIS, and how come there isn't a storm of controversy like there was in COSTAGUANA over Suzanne's porno-press? Because, unlike Suzanne, Trilynda is not just a horny co-ed. She's a courageous, high-spirited, intelligent girl with a strong sense of loyalty and the most fantastic tits this side of Istanbul. And whereas Suzanne fantasized about men, Trilynda is a man's fantasy... right there, the focus is much more acceptable.

But let me register my protest (on your behalf) over the ZINE REGISTER'S use of the adjective "raunchy". How inappropriate!

If PRAXIS were to stoop to printing raunchy press and risk censure (or possibly acclaim) from the hobby, then we'd be regularly reading poetry, like this...

Jolly Roger lived up a tree.
You climbed there by a rope.
I'd often go for a cup of tea,
Which he brewed up with soap.

Once I found a sock in mine.
It made me wince a bit.
But Roger told me, "Never mind,
The blamed thing doesn't fit."

Having settled that issue once and for all, I must take you to task for your totally outrageous score on the Wilson and Patterson "C-Scale".

I won't even touch upon all the truly disgusting attitudes you must hold in order to achieve that ultra-Conservative mark, but let me take up one point for re-evaluation.

Cousin marriage.

Now admit it -- you disagreed with that statement.

I've got a cousin quite like Trilynda, and damn it, I would have married her if she hadn't broke off our relationship to pick up with my best friend, which drove me I-N-S-A-N-E (I took to burning money, \$50 at a time). It was all for the best, I admit, because she's an Evangelical Christian and I'm not, and it would have been a terrible dilemma for our kids deciding whose example to follow, their liberal agnostic father or their mother, the saint.

Anyway, I was in love with her for the three weeks that we went out.

together, and no archaic taboo in the world can stand in the way of true love. (Which answers the question: what are best friends for, eh?)

So, cousin marriage. Agree or disagree? (Objective arguments acceptable -- no need to wallow in sentimental memories like myself).

((Cousin marriage--I am strongly and forthrightly against it. I have no idea why. Is it acceptable according to the Table of Consanguinity in the Book of Common Prayer? I bet it's not. What more does anyone need to know about it?))

((You call that "university research"? Calling up Crown Attorneys until you can find a couple against capital punishment? My view on capital punishment...will be withheld to let more people have their say first. Let a hundred flowers bloom, and all that.))

((The distinctive thing about your Trilynda press is not that it's dirty, but that it's good, and the filth erotica is merely a component of an interesting package. That Suzanne stuff sure was vile though. But Trilynda has kept me laughing at the photocopier and the collating table right from the beginning, which settles the issue for me.))

((Thanx for not counting all the truly disgusting attitudes I must hold--I was hoping nobody would do that!))

Chris Carrier:

I'd like to comment on PR 12-13, and to hand in my survey form (albeit a bit late) for PR 12. Since the results were printed in 13 I scored myself and it came out as 48; (please check my computations) more conservative than 11 of the 13 Praxis test takers. A question: the UK public schoolgirls who tested out at 37 -- does "public" mean the state-run school system or the schools where the upper crust send their brats?

By the by, it would be interesting to see what would have been the results if Bill "Death to the Pacifists!" Highfield had taken this survey, don't you think?

Although the answers are confidential, it would be interesting to see what each question tallied to: how many yes, no, and wimpout votes each question received.

I would also like to applaud your decision to print the Runestone Poll ballot, and also to put the ballot on a separate sheet of paper. (You will note that the attitudinal survey was on a separate sheet because I never found time to copy the original and didn't want to damage my copy.)

I found Fred Davis' comments on prostitution very stimulating. The idea of an older woman sexually initiating a teenage boy is something I find very arousing. I think that you may be right that any further comment on the subject in PRAXIS would probably be repetitive as (I think) every subscriber to the zine with an opinion has already written in.

Much as prostitution was the subject of legislation in Canada in 1985 and a PRAXIS debate in 1986, I think you may have touched off another Great Debate subject by mentioning the Canadian Parliament may be having a free vote on the death penalty.

I'd like to start the debate by saying that I strongly FAVOR the death penalty as the ultimate sanction for heinous violent offenses. Arguments about whether or not an execution deters others, in my opinion, are moot: I feel the purpose of an execution is to prevent further crimes by the person executed. The newspapers are full of stories about killers serving their time and then killing again. The

recidivism rate of an executed convict, however, is zero.

I might also point out that one of the reasons Canada should reinstitute capital punishment is because if you do not you may become a haven for killers from jurisdictions which do have the death penalty.

One good case in point is that of Charles-Chat Ng, currently serving 4.5 years in an Alberta prison doing time for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon for assaulting a security guard in Calgary in July '85. Ng is wanted in California, though, for something much more serious -- he is wanted in the gruesome torture-murders of at least nine women in Calaveras County, California.

Ng's Canadian attorney has been able to forestall extradition on the grounds that as Canada has no death penalty, Canada should not extradite on a capital case to a jurisdiction that does. So what's probably going to happen? Ng will do his time in Canada and one of these days very soon will walk out of prison a free man -- after gruesomely torturing and killing at least nine people, in a case which would call for the death penalty if nothing else did. Clearly something for Parliament to think about as they debate the issue.

((("Public" as I used it refers to what North Americans would consider public schools.))

((I sure hope Bill Highfield would have beaten me--it would have been mighty embarrassing if he hadn't. Where is Bill these days anyway? He wrote a letter to NFA once promising to keep an eye on us all and return one day. I'd like to think he would enjoy PRAXIS.))

((Your "haven-for-outsiders" argument reminds me of the time a few years ago when Governor Bill Janklow promised to parole a couple hundred petty crooks if they would agree to go live in California after their release! Whadda guy!))

((Interesting point about Chrale Ng, but amending the extradition laws would seem to be a simpler way of handling the problem. You'll just have to wait for my views on capital punishment.))

Randolph Smyth:

What's wrong with your bank, debiting your account without giving the details? Even mine isn't that bad.

((I can't bitch too loud because they cash my passle of U.S. cheques free--a rare perk.))

I greatly enjoyed Demystification. As a player, I will generally prefer to work at persuading the other guy to let me have more than my fair share; but if he simply won't budge, I see nothing wrong with your solution. I hope it doesn't become widespread, though, since it gives the reward to the lucky (or, to those using non-game skills). I prefer to see results tied to ability as closely as possible.

((If the deal involves predicting the outcome of the event, what you have done is convert a non-game skill into a game skill through negotiation. It becomes a "game" ability, just as, say, friendliness can become a game-related ability if you can make allies by it.))

So I'm a flaming arch-conservative, eh? Well, I knew that already....

Must admit I'm not at all interested in the sports stuff, especially since my schedule has prevented me from following any of it for the last two years. I only really heard the name Gooden in the last couple of months when he got in trouble, for instance. Just goes to show you, if you want real fame, get into trouble. If all you've got going for you is ability, recognition takes years and years.

Did you ever tell us how much you weighed on Jan. 3? (Maybe I don't want to know!) If I lost 26 lbs., I'd check myself into a hospital (I'm about 160); but my brother topped 300 at one time and his decline to 245 was a real achievement. It's hard to evaluate your 26-lb loss without more data.

((On January 3 I weighed 218 lbs. I'm about 6'1", so I'd like to get to 180 or 190, although those ridiculous charts tell me I should be at 170. Anything under 200 is OK.))

Re the Runestone poll--full supports for your comments on nomenclature. You may not know that, when the poll first gained a measure of acceptance, John Leeder explicitly discouraged the occasionally-applied tag of "the Leeder poll"--and I don't think he was entirely happy with the alternative "Runestone poll" either. He always labelled it the "North American zine poll" and left it at that. But some people will insist on personalizing everything....

Bruce Linsey:

I'd like to reply to your remarks about the Diplomacy Alliance Against Cancer. You ask, "can the first polemic denouncing ((Runestone Poll)) boycotters as being objectively pro-cancer be far away?" My answer: if anyone were to make such a disgusting claim, I'd trip over my own typewriter in my haste to dissociate myself personally, and the Runestone Poll formally, from that position. Look, I don't give to the Heart Fund, but woe betide the person stupid enough to claim I'm in favor of heart disease. I'd suggest that we worry about such an insensitive remark only if someone actually makes it, not just because someone might.

You comment that "If I were an opposition war chief, I wouldn't know what to do to counteract ((the cancer fund drive))." My question is, why would anyone WANT to counteract the drive? I can tell you how I personally would be pretty likely to react if I were an "opposition war chief". I'd say, "Well, my own personal feelings for Bruce Linsey notwithstanding, what we have here is an excellent idea, and I urge everyone to support it." I realize that the ACTUAL opposition war chiefs aren't likely to be this generous, but it would be the best move they could make at this point. What I expect is that most of them will ignore it -- and that is their right.

(If you doubt I'd react as I say, check out my reaction to MASTERS OF DECEIT when it was published. My personal feelings about the publisher aside, it's an excellent project, and I have been recommending it to people ever since. In fact, it's listed on the insert sheet to SUPERNOVA. I've never once felt any need to "counteract" it.)

((Way to go, Bruce. I was jesting a little in my remarks last time. For all I know nobody wants to counteract the drive. Indeed I referred to boycotters last time--check that, maybe I didn't but I might have--but in the most recent HOL I noticed a letter from John Caruso denying that there was a boycott at all. I hadn't really thought about the appropriateness of the word, but I guess there isn't one really this year as far as I know--just some people who individually prefer not to vote, as is, after all, their right. Why I opened an envelope containing the latest Retaliation and House of Lords and a Runestone Poll ballot fell out. I thought perhaps that I was hallucinating, and in fact the ballot didn't just fall out of the envelope. It seemed to jump at me. It tried to bite me. The little pile of 'zines around my living room chair seems to be incubating a whole nest or colony of Runestone Poll ballots. I seem to throw three or four out a day, but the next time I look there's always more.))

Alan Stewart:

And now for the three questions. 1. Do you agree with the recent decision of the judge in New Jersey in the surrogate parenting case to award custody of Baby M not to her natural mother but to her purchasers?

Randolph Smyth:

Re Baby M: you've really loaded the question, haven't you? If the decision had gone the other way, would you have concluded the question, "...not to her natural father but to her kidnappers?"

This way, you'll get quite a few responses opposed to "baby-buying".

My understanding, from a Maclean's report, is that the judge didn't base his decision on the <<purchase>> contract at all, but simply on what was best for the child. I don't think the outcome was (or should have been) any different than if the two natural parents had been married and went through the custody battle after separation. The surrogacy agreement per se shouldn't affect the outcome--which would mean that all the contractual protections are a waste of time.

The more interesting question is, if the contract is unenforceable, is the surrogate mother right out in the cold, without even the fee-for-services she was promised? Let me continue the debate by saying "it'd serve her right".

((The surrogate mother in this case refused the money she was to be paid, even after losing custody. It is being held in escrow for the time being.))

Robert Greier:

I agree with the ruling, a contract was signed, and unlike in sports, it should be honoured!

Bob Acheson:

No question about it. The lady signed a contract. Throw the emotion out the window and the case is quite simple. The baby was legally obtained and that's the law.

Ron (Canada) Brown:

Regarding the "Baby M" case, you have loaded the argument in the same manner as the sensationalizing press. Look at what you said: custody was awarded "not to her natural mother but to her purchasers." I had thought you were above that sort of thing.

((Nope, not me. There are few depths to which I will not stoop.))

The obvious, that many people chose to ignore, is that custody was awarded to the baby's father. The fact that the media found something rather sensational in this dispute between a child's mother and father, should not obscure that fact. Are you among those who believe that a mother's rights outweigh those of a father's and so that the mother's claim for custody (whether we're discussing divorce or surrogate situations) should automatically receive more consideration than the father's?

I don't know how the judge arrived at his decision, but I would have ignored the issues of the contract and money exchanging hands, etc., and focused on the fact that you have one child and two parents who do not, and do not intend to, live together. Therefore, which parent can give the better home? Judges make these sorts of decisions every day, but we don't try to second guess or mislead or sensationalize it.

Can you image headlines as follows: "Judge awards custody to divorced woman, natural father denied access!" "Bank president's lawyers take children from their natural mother!" "CAS Workers remove children from natural home!"

You get the point...

Jacques Belanger:

Yes for two reasons: the couple shows more emotional stability, and a contract is a contract.

Melinda Ann Holley:

Isn't this question phrased a bit slanted? "...award custody of Baby M not to her natural mother but to her purchasers?" As I understand it, William Stern is the baby's natural father. Therefore, to me, this falls into a category of whether the natural mother or the natural father can provide a better home for the infant. This is something that is decided everyday in both juvenile and divorce courts. The court has ruled that the natural father (and his wife) can provide a better environment for the child than the baby's natural mother (and her husband). As for the dispute about the contract (between the Sterns and Mrs. Whitehead), it comes down to a simple contract dispute. Was there a valid contract? My personal opinion is that the contract between the Sterns and Mrs. Whitehead is valid. "Purchasing" a child merely interjects more emotion into a highly-emotional

charged atmosphere. The court is there to settle matters of law. Surprisingly enough, the pro-surrogates may have allies (albiet perhaps unwilling) in the pro-abortion group. The pro-abortion group has always said that a woman's body is her own and she should be able to do whatever she wants with it (i.e. abortion on demand). Now a different group is taking that philosophy and saying if a woman has the right to do what she wants with her body then she has the right to use that body and bear a child for another woman.

Kathy Caruso:

Mary Beth Whitehead was portrayed as a paranoid basket case throughout the trial. The Sterns were the upstanding citizens who only wanted the contract enforced.

In reality, Mary Beth, who needed the money, felt she could rent out her womb for nine months and then hand over her baby. If anyone had really bothered to analyze this woman all of this would have been avoided. In spite of the way she was portrayed, she is just too much of a loving mother to abandon a child--even an implanted one.

The Sterns wanted a baby, but medical reasons prohibited Mrs. Stern from carrying one--at least that is what you are led to believe. Following this trial and reading the doctors' testimony led me to believe that the Sterns paid \$10,000 so Mrs. Stern could go about her normal routine and not be inconvenienced.

If you ask me, the question of surrogate motherhood should be on trial. Do I agree with the decision--no--but then I have carried a child for 9 months and know the bond created. The judge did no more than enforce the theory that money can buy anything.

Nhan Vu:

About the Baby M case; I feel the judge was correct in his ruling. This is mostly because Mary Beth Whitehead (the surrogate mother) willingly signed the contract and that she knew fully well what she was doing. Obviously, she has no right renegeing on a written contract she signed. This is true of any contract. If you sign a contract, then you must abide by its provisions. It would be unfair to let Mary Beth Whitehead break a contract when no one else can.

Another thing that bugs me is the lack of thought Mary Beth Whitehead put into the arrangement. After all, she's had two other children and she knows about the emotional attachment a mother develops for her baby. But she signed the contract anyway. She didn't even seem think about the consequences. If she had, she probably wouldn't have signed the contract. You really have to be dumb to think that giving away one of your kids is easy. I'm not sure Baby M would be so well off knowing her mother had planned on literally selling her.

The worst thing about the case is that Baby M has been damaged emotionally by the ordeal and no doubt will be further damaged by upcoming attempts by the Whiteheads to regain custody of her. I'm no longer sure the Whiteheads and Sterns wanted Baby M because they loved her (both families undoubtedly did love her, but I don't think that it was the main reason they wanted custody of her), but rather they wanted just to prove who was "right" and who was "wrong." I think that if one of the families really, truly loved her, they would have done everything in their power to make sure Baby M was not hurt emotionally. Instead, they opted for plan B: get as much media coverage as possible, show their animosity towards each other, show their willingness to fight this thing out to "the end," escalating the battle whenever possible, etc. Now its too late to stop the charade.

Bruce McIntyre:

I didn't hear about the decision in the Baby M case in much detail, but I cheered when I read it in your zine. On the basis of what the media offered us, I think the mother was a nut anyhow, but even without this prejudice I'd have to say a deal's a deal. The morality/immorality of the deal is to me quite irrelevant. If the law allows deals of this kind to be legally made, they ought to be kept.

Andy Lischett:

Do I agree with the New Jersey judge who gave Baby M to her purchasers rather than her natural mother? Yes. The 'purchaser' was also the natural father, who has as much claim as the mother...plus a contract.

Rod Walker:

Yes. The sanctity of contracts must be upheld.

On the other hand, surrogate motherhood and other methods of increasing the birth rate are very stupid ideas. There are plenty of unwanted children up for adoption. There are already too many babies coming into the world without using medical sleight-of-hand to create more of them. The people doing this sort of thing are selfish beyond belief.

Alan Stewart:

That question worked out pretty well. I was pleased that Kathy wrote in with the Mary Beth side of it for two reasons: (a) the debate would otherwise have been pretty one-sided (b) it seemed to me that we were getting pretty well a purely male perspective. One would guess that men would be more likely to be pro-surrogate parenting, as the benefits accrue mostly to them.

Yes the question was somewhat loaded, the better to provoke response, but the contract in this case had some features that make "purchasing" a not inappropriate verb. The Sterns had to be satisfied with the baby produced--no deformities, defects, serious illnesses etc.--or they could renounce custody and any support obligations and Mary Beth wouldn't even get paid. Mary Beth had to produce a satisfactory product or it was no deal. I think that "purchase" is quite an accurate description for such a transaction.

There are a number of problems with the "contract is a contract" theory. When one party fails to perform its obligations under a contract, the usual remedy is monetary damages. The offended party can ask the court to make the breaching party hand over the article that they wanted to buy--in this case, the child. This is called "specific performance" of the contract. But courts will not order "specific performance" of even a contract for labour services, on the theory that forcing a person to work for someone else when he doesn't want to isn't much different from slavery, even if the person who signed a contract promising to provide his services. Under traditional legal rules, the most the Sterns could hope for is that Mary Beth would be required to pay them some amount of monetary damages for failing to perform her contractual obligations but would get to keep the child--an outcome she would have been quite happy with.

True, the fact that Mr. Stern was the kid's natural father has often been obscured in this case. Yes I am one of those who believes that there should be a preference for the natural mother in custody cases, unfashionable as this may be. I believe the maternal bond tends to be stronger than the paternal. I realize that you aren't supposed to say this nowadays, but after all, it is true, and everybody knows it to be true.

Much of the evidence and reasoning supposedly showing that the child's best interests were in going with the Sterns bothered me. To we really want to consider the wealth and social status of the competing claimants in such a case? Is the fact that Mary Beth shouted "Yay, hooray!" instead of "pattycake!" when the kid clapped his hands together really a sign that Mary Beth is a bad mother because she doesn't know how to teach a kid, as proven by her failure to understand the connection between stimulus and response in learning? That's what the Sterns' hired shrink testified.

I don't know enough about the testimony in the case to be able to judge what would have been better for the kid. I just have my doubts....

Question # 2 asked people for their choice for President in 1988.

Kathy Caruso:

Too early for an opinion.

Jacques Belanger:

I don't know.

Melinda Ann Holley:

If I had to vote right now for someone for President, I wouldn't vote. I haven't seen anybody (Democrat/Republican/otherwise) who I felt was qualified for the job. I'm one of those people who rarely makes a decision on who to vote for until very close to the election.

Robert Greier:

I ain't real sure I like anyone just yet. Now if Lee Iacocca would run, he'd have my vote. I like guys who take charge, kick ass, and get the job done!

Gary Hart will probably win the whole thing, although I think he'd be overwhelmed by the job. He'd need good advisers; you can see how good advisers helped President Reagan!

Randolph Smyth:

You mean realistic choices? Otherwise, one might pick Mark Berch, or any one of 250-million-odd. I'll go with George Shulz, though he's probably not much more realistic than Mark. I don't know enough about the declared candidates to comment (ex: no TV evangelists!)

Alan Stewart:

I opt for Jeane Kirkpatrick. She's bright, tough, and has the kind of personality I like--abrasive, blunt, not-suffering-fools-lightly. A little too liberal on domestic policy but you can't have anything.

Of the people with a realistic chance, I'll settle for Bob Dole.

I rather like Gary Hart, personality-wise, but I don't think the American people have the same tastes in the matter as I do. I can't believe that the thing with the model can hurt him too much--do people really take this kind of thing seriously? Although I suppose one must ask actually what she was doing there if they weren't sleeping together--I wonder what would happen if they announced that he had propositioned her but she had turned him down. Would people mop their brow and emit a sigh of relief?

Hmm...a few late letters...

Rod Walker:

2. My choice for President is Jesse Jackson, who is the only probable candidate now who has a bold and unconventional vision and no ties to the political Old Guard. My second choice would be any qualified candidate who is (a) non-Caucasian or (b) female or (c) [preferably] both. It's essential to the growth of our democracy that the succession of male-caucasian presidents be broken--not just once, of course, but many times. ¶¶ I am disinclined to speculate about whom other people prefer as President -- especially people who (if you'll forgive my pointing this out) are unlikely to be casting ballots here in 1988.

((Does this mean that because I am unlikely to be casting a ballot, I am ineligible to speculate about the question? Or is this a challenge? Buffalo isn't that far away, you know, and registering in America isn't that difficult. Particularly if you show up at some community centre in the Madsen Avenue district and announce that you've been turned off by the political system in the past, but now have been energized by the atrocities in Nicaragua/genocide of American blacks/stupidity of Star Wars and don't really have a permanent address but wish to support the official Democratic candidate....))

Bruce McIntyre:

Don't get me wrong: I'm not at all interested in American politics. I learned far more about Watergate from a recently read collection of articles by Art Buchwald than I'd previously known; perhaps twelve years from now I'll learn the details of the Iran/Contra fiasco. But I can't see any of the presidential hopefuls coming near Ronald Reagan's overall (not current) popularity. Will Bush run? I'll settle for him, but I think history will smile upon Reagan's administration, more so than any administration since JFK. I rather enjoyed Steve Hutton's hopeful matchup of Robertson vs. Larouche. Isn't (and excuse my ignorance: don't worry, I don't have a vote) Pat Robertson a TV Evangelist type? If so, doesn't this clash with his recent support of capital punishment.

on the final bunker blow? As for Larouche, I'd love to see him run. I watched Charlie Rose interview him on CBS Nightwatch a while back. The man is simply hilarious! The interview could be entitled *Variations on the "I deny that charge" theme*. As for who Alan Stewart would like to see run: I haven't enough info, but I doubt there's any politician close to "76".

((Haven't read Art Buchwald in more than ten years. Is he still funny? Most TV evangelists support capital punishment, as they are fundamentalists, most of whom support capital punishment. Lyndon Larouche is a fascinating character. In my extensive study of loonies--right, left, and centre--he is without doubt the most dangerous--perhaps the only truly dangerous--one I've ever seen.))

Andy Lischett:

For Prez in '88? I don't pay enough attention. Maybe Paul Simon, who is too liberal, but may have more integrity than all other candidates combined. Your choice? Probably a moderate Republican who won't scare people into voting for a Democrat, yet won't give-away-the-store if elected. (Jerry Ford? Naah, he smokes a pipe.) Bob Dole?

((Bingo. Congratulations. I despised Jerry Ford, however. Would have supported Jimmy Carter in '76--or better still, Gene McCarthy, in those states where he was on the ballot.))

And now to #3, one of the great questions of our time:

3. You are a gamesmaster. A player sends you orders special delivery--or by some similar mode whereby the thing is taken directly to your door. But if you aren't in, they take it back to the post office and send you a postcard indicating that a letter is waiting for you at the post office and you have to go to pick it up.
- (i) three days before the deadline you get a postcard stating that you should pick up a letter from Player X. You don't have the opportunity to pick it up until after the deadline, so you do the adjudication and NHR him. Does he have a rightful complaint?
 - (ii) what if you had an opportunity to pick it up but just don't want to be bothered, even though you suspect the letter contains orders. Rightful complaint?
 - (iii) as a GM, you adhere to strict deadline policy. The mail deadline is Thursday. You receive the card Thursday, and pick up the letter containing orders on Friday, before you have begun adjudicating. Do you accept the orders?

Melinda Ann Holley:

- (i) - The player has a rightful complaint. The GM knew the orders were available and would otherwise have had them before the deadline.
- (ii) - Here, the player has an even better rightful complaint. The GM is under the obligation to accept orders. If the GM even remotely suspected the letter in question contained orders, he/she has the obligation to get that letter and use the orders.
- (iii) - I would accept the orders because I received notification the day of the deadline that the post office was holding mail for me. It would be different if the postcard had been received the day after the deadline.

Rod Walker:

3. Tricky. When I was GMing, I had a HR which specifically forbade the use of Special Delivery--that is, I would refuse to accept any orders sent by that method. My argument is that any postal sending which requires special handling is more likely to delay a letter than not, and will certainly not speed it up (unless one uses Overnight Mail). I would, were I GMing today, also have a HR against Registered mail, for the same reason. But let's say you accept the silly things, what about the 3 situations?

(i) Assuming no HR to cover the situation, yes he has a legit complaint. If the P.O. has the orders, and has notified you of that fact, this must count as "receipt" of the orders, even though you must still go down and pick them up. You are obligated to get them and use them.

- (ii) Same answer.
- (iii) Same answer.

Randolph Smyth:

I wouldn't be that hard-ass about the deadline in such cases; but accepting the hypothetical, I don't think the player can complain about an NMR in any of your scenarios. It would depend somewhat on what your houserules and past policies had indicated, but the player must accept the drawbacks of the special-delivery mode of communications just as he must if phoning or mailing a "normal" letter.

Robert Greier:

(i) He sure does! You've had 3 days to get to his orders, as a Gamesmaster I would figure the "notice" would be important, so I'd get it ASAP!

(ii) Yes, same as above.

(iii) This one is a bit touchy. If I received a card notice on Thursday, I'd still have no orders. If possible I get the orders, if not an NMR is in order....

Nhan Vu:

The player has no right to complain. If he sends it by this special delivery system, he agrees to take the risk that you won't be home, that the letter will be delivered back to the post office and that you won't have time to pick it up. He has no right to expect you to change your plans to go get his letter. If he really needs to make sure his orders get to you pronto, then he should call you. Offhand, I can't think of any GMs who absolutely discourage being given orders by phone.

ii. My response to this one is about the same as the last one except that I would have to agree with the player if he were to be mad at you. Obviously, if you have the time, then you should go pick up the letter. It's not exactly the hardest task in the world to drive to the post office (unless the post office is 30+ miles away). The job of the GM is to make sure the the game runs smoothly. An NMR obviously disrupts a game. I think a GM should do anything he can to keep the game running smoothly as long as it doesn't constitute a major hassle to him.

iii. Personally, I would accept the orders. Since the card arrived Thursday, that means the letter arrived either Thursday or earlier. Therefore, the letter arrived on time, but was I was unable to receive it one time. Since it wasn't the player's fault that I wasn't there to receive the letter, it would be unfair to penalize the player. If on the other hand, I had already done the adjudication, I would have left the NMR as it was. That's just the risk the player takes when he uses the special delivery system. I'm willing to keep the game running smoothly, but only if it isn't a major hassle (i.e. re-doing the whole adjudication).

Kathy Caruso:

I had to think about this. Because of my work schedule, I probably won't be able to get to the P.O. However, being a woman of power and influence--I'd make one of my kids go. However if it happened this week, two kids are out of town & Francine has the chicken pox--I'd have to NMR the guy. Does he have a complaint, I don't think so--my players should know better.

(ii) If I had the opportunity, I'd pick it up. I'd bitch, complain and warn everyone--this method of sending orders can just about assure you an NMR. If I didn't go out of my way to pick it up, I'd still say he has no complaint.

(iii) Since I accept orders right up until I adjudicate the game, the Friday arrival would be no problem. On the other hand, if I was strict, the postcard on Thursday means the orders were in on time, so I think even the strict GM would have to allow the orders.

Jacques Belanger:

- (i) I feel the player is right to complain.
- (ii) The player is right again.
- (iii) I would accept the orders, as I have an indication that the player wants to go on with the game. A waiting letter at the post office is the same as "orders on file" for me.

These responses are influenced by the facts that I live within a 10-minute walking distance of Ste-Foy's main post office, and that I don't have any GMing experience so far.

Bruce Linsey:

PRAXIS #13 was as provocative as always. Your "Demystification" article was the single best article you've printed yet -- a downright delightful bit of writing. I hadn't really considered till now the potential ramifications of your house rule on non-game events prior to the deadline, but you raise some difficult questions. What if the GM is actually on a team on whose fortunes the player is basing his orders?!

To give you my input on your GMing question (regarding the special delivery orders), the GM is under no obligation to go to the Post Office to pick up a player's orders, nor does the player have a valid complaint if he is NMRed. And no, you don't use the orders picked up the day after the deadline, even though you knew they were in. A deadline is a deadline. If you accept those orders, you have no business calling yourself a strict GM (and indeed, you'd be a disgrace to the breed if you did).

To be a bit more serious about it, you wouldn't (if you're strict about deadlines) accept late orders just because the player phoned and told you they were in the mail, would you?

Robert Greier:

- (i) He sure does! You've had 3 days to get to his orders. As a gamesmaster I would figure the "notice" would be important, so I'd get it ASAP!
(Any other errands you want me to run for the player while I'm out? Maybe pick up some milk at the convenience store? Maybe stand in line and pick up some stamps for him?))
- (ii) Yes, same as above.
- (iii) This one is a bit touchy. If I'd received a card notice on Thursday, I'd still have no orders. If possible I get the orders, if not, an NMR is in order....

Jack McHugh:

The third ones were interesting. The first one...no I don't believe the player has a legitimate complaint. Most GMs, in my opinion, are doing you a favour GMing since they lose money. Given this & the fact it is a hobby I really can't say I expect the GM to take time away from his job or family--beyond what he normally gives--unless the GM wants to. Technically, the player has a complaint, but I would consider, realistically, that no player should complain.

As to the second one--I would say the GM's a jerk (depending on how much of an opportunity like if you were in the post office but were too lazy to ask for it) for not doing it. But again, unless the GM has agreed to go & pick things up at the post office--there really is no grounds for the complaint. As a player it is my job to get the orders to you, the GM. You have no responsibility except to be available to me--that's to pick up and read your mail at home! Beyond that the GM owes the players nothing but what the GM decides to give.

The third point is up to the GM. (How strict is your GMing on deadlines?) If you're super strict I wouldn't, but again to me that's a judgment call on the part of the GM. After all, have you screwed anyone who's called late with orders? If you did I would say no to the letter, even though it came early--to me it is like calling in orders if you aren't home. I don't see any difference.

Andy Lischett:

You asked about special letters which need to be picked up at the post office if the mail carrier is unable to deliver them directly into your hand.

In all three cases I would not NMR the player if I was able to pick up the letter before mailing the results, AND if it was the first time he'd sent orders that way. I would warn him not to do it again.

If it was a second offense, or if I could not pick up his letter before mailing results, the player would not have a valid complaint when I NMRed

I did, once, warn players against sending orders by registered mail after one of them did so. Besides being inconvenient and slowing down delivery, the notification to pick up the letter had no clue as to who sent it, and it arrived on a Saturday. I had all of Saturday afternoon, all Sunday, and Monday morning to worry about who was suing me for what.

(I've also warned players against sending orders in insurance company envelopes. They get thrown out without being opened.)

Bruce McIntyre:

The first two situations are, in my view, rightful complaints. What I don't think was mentioned clearly here was that the postcard is not sent to you, they leave it at the door. As a matter of fact, I believe SD delivers whether you're there or not: it's just registered and insured mail that gets the blue slip. (You might remember that when Nan and I agreed to meet in Winnipeg to go to MinnCon in '85, she sent me the air tickets registered mail. They got here while nobody was home, and I got the blue card from Canada Post with about 10 issues of the Dutch zine **Brutus**. I thought that the blue card was with the package from Holland: customs, weigh-in, etc. Thus, I almost left it too late, and nearly didn't get the tickets, which was the first of many times I've driven Nan nuts with stupidity.) I can't really see anyone sending it registered or insured: it's cheaper to phone up and ask if you have the orders.

What it comes down to is that house rules have to be explicit in this regard: does the post office have to get it to my door (therefore, registered/insured mail is as risky as a phone call), or does there simply have to be evidence that orders would have reached me in time, except for unforeseen circumstances? Without specific HRs, you have to accept orders in examples (i) and (ii).

(iii) might seem different, but upon reflection I think that if you make a habit of not scheduling things for the last few hours before the phone deadline (and I know that you have done this!), you ought to do the same for the postal deadline. Thus if orders are not delivered on Thursday because you are not there, you owe it to the player to get them. No offense intended, but there is a difference between strict GMing and being a bit of an asshole. But I don't think the players have cause for complaint if the situation is spelled out for them in the HRs.

While writing this, I've been trying to figure why a player would want to send orders registered/insured mail. It makes no sense at all--SD is probably cheaper, perhaps faster, and certainly, as these questions have spelled out, safer.

Let me sidetrack. Without meaning to cast judgement on the matter, look at Gary Coughlan's problem on page 7. Here Gary left a message at your office, as the post office does with their little blue cards. (i) If the message was taken before the deadline, but received after the deadline (perhaps you went home early or something), would you call? (ii) If you were phoned at home and told that "some chap with a Southern accent called from Memphis while you were out and wants you to call back," but you didn't feel like it, even though you knew full well it had to be Gary with orders, would you call? (iii) Would you go so far as to call after the deadline, having gotten the message before the deadline, then NMR poor Gary just because your strict deadline had passed?

Come on, Alan. I think you're reading a hell of a lot into the concept of "strict deadlines."

I think a GM should honor at least an honest attempt by a player to get his orders in under the deadline, no matter how he does it.

((Ho, ho, McBruce, sometimes you make me laugh. The answers to your questions are (i) yes (or at least I should call) (ii) yes (iii) yes.))

((Although the length of my ordinances has subjected me to some good-natured ridicule the strictness of deadlines is nowhere mentioned. Nor do I think it need be. "Deadline", n., "line beyond which it is not permitted or possible to go", COD.))

Alan Stewart:

A nice division of opinions here.

I got a chuckle out of BRUX's letter--I didn't know that "Strict GM" was a badge of honour that people are supposed to be proud of! But...the fact of the matter is that I agree with him entirely, and in fact he said all that needs to be said on the subject.

To elaborate a bit, it ain't necessarily just a matter of trotting over to the post office any old time. My local post office is open 9:00-5:30 Mondays through Fridays. No Saturday opening. (Somebody told me that Americans have Saturday delivery and I was amazed--we haven't had that for twenty years.) As it happens, my post office is close to my home and my home is close to my work so I could pick something up no problem. But if my post office were a little further away, or my workplace further away from my home, I'd have to get permission to leave work early to pick up the damn letter. In practice I would, like Kathy Caruso suggested, go bitching and screaming to the post office to pick up the letter, but the question is whether a GM would be under an obligation to do something he might not be able to do depending on the rules at work and a host of other things so the answer is clearly **NO**.

Another point. The player's obligation is to get his orders into my hands. He does not have the power to set little errands for me. The questions asked here are the same as if someone left a message with Dr. Zhu saying that he'd been in Toronto and left his orders with Dave Carter--all I have to do is trot over to Willowdale and pick them up like a good little errand boy. Do I have a responsibility to do this? Forget it.

(iii) is quite simple. After the deadline passes, I open my file folder. does the player have orders therein? No. I check my list wherein I check off orders received as they come in just in case I have misplaced them. Is there a check mark beside the player's name? No there is not. Conclusion: the player has NMRed. The situation is the same as a player having orders "in the mail" on deadline day. Inspiring, but not quite the same as my having received orders in time.

A few practical points. "Special delivery" mail is delivered here whether the recipient is home or not, so there's no problem with that. "Certified" or "registered" mail is not delivered if the recipient is not home. When th at happens, a card is left at the recipient's door telling him that a letter is being held at the post office for him. The name of the sender is not on the card. The recipient must go, in person, to the post office and pick the thing up. They will not come back, they will not even put the thing back into the regular mail--you pick it up, or it is returned to sender.

((Back to some late or missed letters and talk about the Presidency:))

Nhan Vu:

...the Presidency in 1988, I'd not...
...a pitifully uninformative...
...I'd pretty sure it...
...to the right...
...is really working...
...popular...
...social programs...
...over...
...taken out of them...
...the decrease program...
...paying \$500...
...signs of the...
...hardly...
...you're...
...hardly...
...highly...
...system...
...highways...
...department...
...I think I'll be...
...for...
...for...
...for...

((If the Americans elect a Democrat in '88--you'll be bak, wait and see.))

((I suppose my views about President Reagan can be summarized by saying that I am unsure about him. To be specific, I am unsure whether he is the greatest President only of this century, or of the last two centuries....))

Jack McHugh:

Hi, it's me again, Jack McHugh. ((Hi, Jack)). Just writing cause I haven't in a while & I thought you had some interesting subber questions. As to the first question--first of all I thought it was slanted in favour of the "natural" mother as opposed to her "natural" father (or, as you call him, the "purchaser"). My own opinion is that surrogate parenting should be allowed--not because I favour it, I don't, I think it's baby selling--because if it is not it we'll be done anyway, without regulation. Better to do it legally than illegally. As for the court decision, I don't know, it's a hard question. I think the judge did the best he could under the strange circumstances. I do feel that the mother should have gotten some visitation rights unless it was proven, beyond a reasonable doubt, that this would harm the baby in some way.

((I once had a professor who was, or pretended, to be in favour of legalizing baby selling and challenged his students to compose an argument against it.))

As for the second question, my choice for President in 1988 is Gephardt or Biden. I like Gephardt's protectionist stance--lower consumer prices don't mean a damn if you're out of work! However, I doubt he'll get past the Iowa/NH stage. Biden is much more viable, plus he's from the Northeast. The latter may be a handicap everywhere but the Northeast. He's a little too interventionist in foreign policy but overall I like him. I'd be pro-gary Hart, he & I agree on most issues, except the guy leaves me as excited as a eunich politically. He wants to conduct his nomination campaign like a graguate oral examination--he totally rejects any emotion, he's a Goddamn Vulcan. Unfortunately this merely demonstrates how little he's learned in 15 years since running McGovern's disastrous 1972 presidential bid.

((Interesting point, that last one. McGovern ran an extremely passionate campaign, and caught up by inadequate thinking about policy (e.g. his disastrous \$1000 "demogrant" proposal. I wonder if Hart was reacting to this by going to the other extreme. As we now know, austere characters like Hart usually have their passionate side, even if concealed....))

By the way--I would guess your choice is Jack Kemp. Why? Conservative, but not reactionary. Also somewhat of a mainstream social conservative. Second choice--Al Haig Nuff said.

((Nope. Jack Kemp has just never appealed to me--perhaps living so close to Buffalo I can't stop thinking of him as the interception-prone loser he was when I first started following football. Maybe I should give him another look. He strikes me as a lightweight. Al Haig? His megalomania is admittedly appealing, but underneath the hardline military veneer he's just another moderate countryclub Republican.))

Saw the hearings on Iran-contra last night. Yesterday was the first day & Secord sung like a canary. I was intrigued by his revelation that G. Bush called North after the story went public and congratulated him. Hmmm--the longer these hearings go on the less & less chance Bush has of getting the nomination. About the only thing that can save him is a full-scale endorsement of ((by?)) Reagan (assuming he recovers). I wouldn't mind seeing Dole get the nomination. I'd even consider voting Republican then.

((Reagan's line on the congressional hearings should be that he will make no comment whatsoever until they have concluded, because no matter how bad the eventual judgment about the propriety of his actions, there's a country to run in the meantime.))

Andy Lischett:

I enjoyed Demystification a lot.

I enjoyed Synthesis too, but I can't figure out why saying yes to horoscopes is conservative.

Don't you think your score of 78 would have been lower if you hadn't known which phrases expected a yes from a conservative? If you view yourself as conservative and realize that you've answered yes to the first five even-numbered phrases (before you scrambled them), you might lean toward saying yes on phrases that otherwise could be a toss-up.

((I don't think so. I have pretty strong emotional reactions to--not necessarily rational judgments about--most of the items.))

Bruce McIntyre:

Bear with me while I curse this word processor. Bought a new-fangled one as part of the package that allows me to bit-map Diplomacy maps, and it takes a bit of getting used to. Got **Praxis** today, and read it cover-to-cover. Loved the Demystification article, but let's start at the beginning.

First off, 26 pounds of mass is missing since January 3rd? What are you trying to do, smash the accepted status quo? The average Canadian publisher is supposed to weigh 196 lbs. If you've gone and lost 26 since the beginning of the year, you might ruin all our collective vibes for the Runestone this year. (What an excuse, eh?) I can help a bit though, I've gained at least 10 since January.

Was your first game the one in **SK**, with Chris Greaves as Italy and Grant Fraser as England? Grant was telling me early on there were some pretty weird letters coming from Chris: course Grant is pretty weird himself.

Hope you'll remember to print or send me my score in the C-scale test. I can't remember what I wrote, and I've not had the time to get the last issue out and retake it, so let me guess that I'm somewhere in the mid-forties, perhaps somewhat higher. I suspect that your score is influenced by pre-knowledge of the way the test was put together. Perhaps a certain low score should be given to those who repeatedly complain about the ambiguities: isn't the ability to make a bottom line (yes/no) of anything one of the time-honoured traits of conservatism?

I sent Dave Carter a copy of Micro-League Baseball for the C-64. Trot out to Willowdale some day and see if he'll show it to you. You didn't mention anything about graphics in the APBA game, but the reviews I've seen for the C-64 version look pretty boring in comparison. I don't think having an objective listing of player strengths and weaknesses (Throwing Ratings and such) is as close to what Jimmy Williams does as is deciding what these ratings might be from raw stats. In short, the problem with games like APBA is that there's too much emphasis on a game mechanism which approximates baseball and not enough emphasis on the stats with which managers make decisions. If you're deciding to go for another base, you can usually figure your percentages before you decide, or, with experience, know them well enough to make a mathematically sound decision. In Micro League ball, your decisions are based on the stats the machine can provide you with at any time during the game. The actual mechanism of the game is completely unknown, but I'd suspect it's more complicated than APBA or any table top game on the market, with the machine able to make calculation and dice-rolls and chart consultation at lightning speed. (Too bad they can't get a reasonably good computer manager programmed in.)

Anyhow, if I've time in the next few weeks, I'll try to get a draft list in. I hope you'll give us a hint as to strategies that seem to work more often than normal, and, if you can find one, the way the normal APBA game works, if the computer game is heavily based on it. If the game goes fast enough to play the final (if we get that far) by phone, I might be interested in doing so. Care to try your skills at play-by-play, Alan?

If you're working with the '85 season, that's convenient, as the only Abstract I own is the '86 Abstract. It's April 11 now, and I've not yet found the '87 one in bookstores around here. When is it usually out in the East?

I'd like a good basketball table game, but I'm sorry to say that I've found both S-O-M baseball and S-O-M hockey to be poor. I simply couldn't understand the plethora of codes in the baseball game: I like to be able to see player charts that make it obvious where a player's strength lies, and I had problems with the S-O-M charts. The worst thing, however, is this bullshit where they give you four teams to play with, all below

550 and out of the pennant race, and two or three years old. I can't be bothered to send in for new teams when I'm not real excited about what I've got. The hockey game is not even worth mentioning. The puck goes up and down the ice maybe 20 times a period, instead of a more realistic 90. The whole period goes by under the following schedule: Start with line 1, defense pair 1. Change line one after 7 minutes, change defense after 10. Line three comes on in the last 5 minutes of the period. What goddamn excitement. Down a goal in the last minute and you pull the goalie so your third line can get that clutch goal. Wow.

When we play the game, we use dice, making charts from the Fast Action cards. Why? It's faster. S-O-M hockey has about eight different things on one FA card. We went through these three-five times per period until I fixed it up.

Runestone: please, rate me on what I've produced. If you rate me on what I haven't produced, things could get ugly. Is there an award for biggest drop?

((No, the SK GAME WAS MY SECOND. (I TOLD YOU TO SHIFT, MACHINE!) Still going on, with me still alive, although it's been nip and tuck. My first game start was in Graustark. I was AUSTRIA, and couldn't control myself from opening with an unauthorized Key Lepanto. I managed to get eliminated by someone I consider the dumbest player I've ever met up with-- a quick lesson in humility. I'm waiting for my first "round" of games to end so I can get into some new ones and give it my full effort. Tough to find an American 'zine to play in, though. Retaliation would be fun, but I gotta have those five-week deadlines. I'll take Cheesecake, although my first game there was my most inglorious ever.))

((Your score: Bruce McIntyre, 38. Remember that Rokeach invented a trait called dogmatism, and many think it correlates with conservatism, so yes, complaining about ambiguities is probably an un-conservative tendency in itself.))

((I don't think managers make their decisions on stats at all I'd be very surprised if Micro League Ball was more complex than APBA or Strat-O-Matic. The simpler the calculations, the more likely you are to get "lightning speed". You're too late with the draft list: Nhan Vu and I am going to fight it out. Maybe you can challenge the winner--do you think you can put together a "dreg" team that can win with your inspired field generalship? I agree that S-O-M hockey is a poor show. I own, but have never played, National pro hockey, which I'll play and review some day. S-O-M Baseball is worth learning, and it doesn't take long if you start with the elementary game and move up step-by-step. I like the fact that they don't beat you over the head to show you where a player's strengths are--you can figure it out and have an advantage over players who are too lazy to do so.))

Rod Walker:

Well, I finally have my elektronischetyphenmachinemitworterprocessenundtextrememberung back from its annual physical and bath. Now I can write people. I have a stone-age backup for it, but I hate to use the thing. I hope this is in time for PRAXIS 14.

I have a brief follow-on to the discussion about your quiz. My basic objection to it is that it forces people to have knee-jerk reactions to complex subjects. I object to such a test on principle. I suppose there are people who have such a simplistic mind-set that they do in fact have knee-jerk reactions to all those topics (although I think it fair to say that such people would fail to comprehend the meaning of about half the terms). What purpose could possibly be served by testing such people? What purpose could possibly be served by eliciting phoney knee-jerk reactions from the rest of us? This is a test, therefore, of nonexistent qualities. I'll bet the person who thought this travesty up thinks that "IQ" tests are just dandy, too.

((I think W & P would argue that people have instinctive (bad word) or emotional reactions to these concepts that do not necessarily mean that they haven't thought them through or are incapable of holding complex opinions about them. In fact, one's emotional reaction may differ from one's reasoned opinions, as mine might do about some of the items.))

((W & P are liberal types so I wouldn't be at all sure they would approve of IQ tests. I certainly do, though. They measure intelligence. Too bad some people don't like some of the patterns of the results, but that's life.))

Claude Gautron:

My subscription to "Praxis" is about to run out, I believe? Therefore, I'm sending you a cheque for seven dollars....Would you also add my name to your STANDBY LIST? i'd like to join a game in your zine, and being a standby is a good way to get in. I did the Wilson and Patterson C_Scale in your last issue, and I calculated my score by following the instructions you gave last issue. Luckily, I never sent in the questionnaire, because my score came out to 70! can you believe it! I'm only 8 points lower than you! And I'm not even your typical conservative (I marked YES to nudist camps, for example)!

((Way to go Claude! I fell much better about my score, now. Well, no, actually I'm proud of my score and don't care what anyone thinks about it, but it's still nice to have compatriots. To complete the additional scores in this issue, Dick Martin reported in Retaliation that he scored a 12 (and doesn't consider himself a liberal) while Julie Martin scored in the high-fifties (and doesn't consider herself a conservative)! I'll call Julie 57 unless I hear otherwise, if I ever compile a final master chart or work out the PRAXIS average.))

Michael Hopcroft:

Well, here's the sample, late but hear. I am learning more unpleasant things every day, about the postal system and about my own typing. The latter might be correctable, but the former is beginning to get on my nerves. Why didn't somebody TELL me that you can't send a zine to Canada without an envelope?

Well, on with it. This is a sample of my new zine, NOT UP TO MODERN GRAPHICS STANDARDS. If you find it agreeable perhaps we can arrange a trade, because I would certainly like to get PRAXIS Strat-O-Matic or no Strat-O-Matic. (Perhaps there are some interested people I can trade letters with on your sublist). But I need to find a decent way to get the zine to you. As it is, my sublist is starting small but hopefully with the right sort of publicity it will grow. (Of course, the fact that 40% of any print run is likely to be samples and that I'll hear from maybe 20% of the sample people is likely to haunt me for the rest of my publishing days.)

I would also like to know what topics are current in your lettercol. I'm trying to remember what you might be interested in at the moment, but all that springs to mind is the Blue Jays. They have had a pretty nondescript season so far. Of course, the Brewers and their rokkie manager Tom Treblehorn have attracted all the attention in the AL East. Treb was one of my teachers at Jefferson High School in Portland, so I have every reason to wish the Brewers well. (I'm the sort of person who remembers his teachers) But I don't know which team to root for, because so many of them have some command on my interest and my loyalty. The team whose games I'll probably see the most of this year is the Cubs, because I happen to have cable access during the day when they play at home. But the Cubs this year are, to be honest, dreadful.

But it seems that every time I watch a game it turns out to be embarrassing. I must be bad luck. I went to four Portland Beaver games in April, and the Beavers lost all four. So to change my luck I went to a playoff game with the Portland Winter Hawks junior hockey team, and they get creamed 7-1 by Medicine Hat, at home yet! So it seems that, if I want my teams to do well, I'd best keep my distance! (It was an ugly game too, the one the Hawks lost so badly. The fans seemed more interested in the body count than in the

results, and there were a lot of simultaneous penalties, so the Hawks never did get a decent power play going. They simply didn't play very well, and Medicine Hat play good defense.) That hurts, because I like a good game of just about anything. Well, I'd better go. I look forward to hearing from you, and hope to remain [... Yours, ...]

((And a fine 'zine it was, too. I'm not accepting more trades at the moment for reasons I prefer to have remain dark and mysterious but I intend to sub to NUTMGS and will send you a few Praxes until we work something out. To join a draft S-O-M league, consult the "League Forming" column in Strat-O-Matic Review, P. O. Box 27, Otsego, MI, U.S.A. 49078 (3 months, \$3, 1 year \$7.25), a zine devoted to S-O-M games. Independent from the game company, but maintains good relations with it. Its agitation helped persuade the company to abandon its disastrous hits-in-pitchers'-4-column-only policy a few years ago.))

((And now, to prove I'm not completely disorganized, the letter from Bruce Geryk that I couldn't locate but answered anyway last time.))

Bruce Geryk:

Thanks for the sub. I was quite surprised to see that your first postal Diplomacy game ~~was~~ had just finished. Started in December of 1985, you say? Could this mean that I beat the editor of my very favorite 'zine in the free world into the hobby by over a year and a half? I guess so. My first game (1984AT) began in May of 1984. Since then, I've completed only one other game. My first one was a survival, my second was a two-way draw (!), my third looks like an elimination, and my fourth is too young for me to be making any predictions, yet. I also guess that this puts me a full one-sixth of a Calhamer point ahead of you. Let that serve as a lesson to you before you go making any more unjustified remarks concerning my obviously flawless arguments.

About this NMR/conditional business: let me straighten out a few things. You are correct in calling my writing imprecise, just as yours was in the previous issue. You didn't paraphrase Bruce, that is true. However, you did attempt to equate his argument with the statement that "orders conditional upon whether or not the standby is a replacement are functionally equivalent to orders conditional upon whether the player of record does or does not NMR." You then go on to ask, "How is it ... that a player may send orders conditional on another player's NMR in one season, when he couldn't in the last -- or next?!" What I tried to point out was the fact that the orders were not exactly conditional upon the NMR; rather, they are conditional upon the change (or lack of change) of the player of record. This means that orders of the same sort could have been submitted in the previous season, or even for the next season. The point is that they would have made no difference since the identity of the player of record was not (or will not be, in the latter case) subject to change. It is sort of analogous to a player sending Fall orders conditional on Summer builds. Since no one can build in the Summer, the conditionals are useless.

I guess I should have made the emphasis of my argument clearer, but in the haste and impetuosity of my youth I got carried away, and my argumentation suffered. I hope this clarifies what I was trying to say.

I liked the continuation of the Will Hertmann story. Keep it up, and you just might get a 1988 RWA nomination. Just don't get carried away. The Bloc's security apparatus has longer arms than you think....

((Question time. Joe is a GM. He is in a game elsewhere with one of his players (not this again!) His relations with that player "A" are really really bad in that game-- think of the worst situation you can imagine or have heard of and double it. Joe doesn't let this relationship interfere with his GMing, but.... Monday at 3:00 he sends out the adjudication in Player A's game. Wednesday he receives a letter from Player A. Player A lives on the other side of the country. The GM has long since stopped reading game letters from Player A because they annoy him; he is sure the letter is about their game together, the last adjudication about which was received a week ago. He throws the letter out unopened. The GM receives no orders from A and NMRs him. But the letter the GM threw out did contain orders; by some incredible fluke, A's adjudication was delivered Tuesday, he sent orders in immediately and they got back to the GM on Wednesday. Totally unheard of in the GM's experience with the mail, but after being NMRed, Player A sends in a copy of his orders, dated the Tuesday, explains (by way of conversation) the quick receipt and return of his orders ~~and the readjudication~~. The readjudication ~~is~~ be redone, using the orders on his copy... What should the GM do? If he does nothing, how mad is the player entitled to get? Comment on the GM's behaviour. Sure, this is a bad question, but use your imagination....))

Superstructure

Steve Langley:

Thanks for PRAXIS. I know I subbed, but thanks anyway.

Thanks also for your nice words about Magus.

Now, to our debate. Well, you have me. ((Are you sure you don't want to stop there?)) You are quite right, I would create a houserule to influence a player's strategy if that strategy were one of attempting to so anger another player that the second player would want to leave the game.

For that matter, I wouldn't want the first player in my games, so, if I discovered that he was using such a strategy, I might even rescind his sub and bar him from further play.

It's so easy to see that if I can be so arbitrary about a player's chosen strategy then the H.R. in question is certainly a good one.

((Well, there we are. Rule IV. 2 states that "diplomatic converstaions...may include such things as...denouncing, threatening, spreading rumors, and so forth." You feel free to write houserules intentionally contravening the rules of Diplomacy, but presumably you do not think that your games should be declared irregular as a result. Proving not that the H.R. in question is a good one (which was not the subject of our debate; it was about regularity)but that your argument that anything which can be interpreted as being "against the rules" should render a game irregular is not something you apply consistently but something you apply against rules or people you dislike. A good reason for ignoring it.))

One point. If you had to invent truly extreme cases in support of your position, isn't it time to reexamine the position you've taken?

((What are you talking about? The wisdom of the rule is apparent. "Extreme cases" entered the debate only in order to deal with the problem with regularity, by comparing the effects of the rule to effects that would be considered regular under extreme applications of already-accepted practices. Thank goodness they were, because it was this argument (as we shall shortly see) the BNC accepted.))

Actually, I still stand by my statement in KK. Any GM who chooses to use the rule deserves what he gets.

((A dire prediction. Of course, you could be right. Stranger things have happened-- although not recently.))

Bruce McIntyre:

You know, it really, really, irritates me to hear arguments based on the application of the face-to-face rulebook to postal play. It angered me to see the argument applied to Bill Quinn's essay on the British system of combining seasons (which also appears to have an uncomplimentary name used in adverse propoganda: the Prophetic Retreat Rule), and it angered me to see it used on the C-D-C rule. The problem is, there's only one way to shut the people who argue this way up for good: Write a rulebook for the postal game. This, of course, will never be done, but at least a guide to what will be considered irregular and what won't would be helpful. This "crossing bridges when we come to them" attitude: ask the BNC if you're in doubt, he'll make the decision, is really ludicrous. Having said all that, let me say that I don't really like the C-D-C rule, but I think it's not sufficient to make a game irregular.

((English hobbyists may be surprised to know that Bill Quinn thought, before beginning his inquiry, that prophetic retreats were so abhorrent as to make a game using them irregular. He retreated from that position only grudgingly, after hearing much advice. Derek Caws should indeed be quite happy to know that the mother country has an independent system in these matters.))

((Recent BNCs have been very reluctant to establish any general principles or guidelines. Bill Quinn once wrote and told me I was "ignorant" for suggesting that the current guidelines were inadequate. And on thinking it over, I have to agree in part....Anyone recommending that the BNC be responsible for establishing a kind of postal rulebook would be ~~quite~~

HEINOWSKI, BNC:

I was approached by Bruce Geryk to look at the regularity of his adaptation of Mark Berch's "War by Automatic Pilot", to wit, "Missed Spring or Fall Moves. All units repeat their moves of the previous season...Should a unit have changed positions since that time, the unit will hold...Support for a unit which has changed positions in this manner will no longer be valid, and the supporting unit will hold...Missed Winter Builds. A country's build(s) of the previous Winter season will be repeated..." Bruce would have employed the standard practice of replacing a player who NMRs consecutively. He will not allow a SOI turn to be processed without 7 orders on file. He had no provision ((that I could see)) for WOI.

I want to take a few minutes here to explain to the uninitiated just how these things work, at least with me. For any major decision I shall always secure at least one second opinion, (1) just on the outside chance that I have not seen things in their proper perspective; or several opinions if (2) I am having a tough time making a decision in the first place. Any replies I get are kept in confidence for no other reason that I am NOT here to start hobby feuds. When I do finally make a decision, I am afraid you can rant, rave, and blow all the wind you want to; but you'll have to do so at me alone, and quite frankly I don't give a rat's behind-. If you are the type who must resort to this type of childish behavior, take it out to the playground where it belongs.

I will try to acquire both sides of any "story", and this may take a lot of time as people who can competently state opposing views may be few and far between. I do appreciate those people who responded to my inquiries, and just because I do not follow verbatim what you've written doesn't mean I don't respect your opinion. On the whole, I will lean to past-BNCs before others, although if I am soliciting a large number of comments, I will lean towards general hobby opinions.

Some interesting sidenotes to this investigation/situation...I wondered at those who said WAP should be allowed because it's innovative then cite past practice as evidence. I have been threatened that an adverse decision will cause that person to quit GMing forever. I have been told certain hobby members want to use this as a platform to oust support for the current BNC (me), I presume replacing me with one of their own choosing. One of the staunchest supporters of WAP states, "...the security offered by the rule is minimal at best." All this makes me realize why no one has stuck around in this job for any length of time; however...

Our topic, WAP, comes under the heading of "GM interference", and I find there is a lot of confusion as to what this means. Generally when I said "GM interference", people automatically thought of "GM tampering". For the uninitiated, tampering means the physical insertion of the GM into a game. There are, however, other ways in which a GM can interfere without physically moving the pieces. For example, interference can also be the setting up or the creation of a situation that is unfair to a specific person or group of players. A GM could also interfere by violating the rulebook in a way not necessitated by the postal aspect of play. These latter two are examples of a GM interfering with -a- game of Diplomacy as opposed to interfering with -the- ((or one particular)) game of Diplomacy.

I would like to thank Bruce for bringing this up, albeit quite reluctantly. It has been a rather quiet term as BNC to date, and this has stirred up quite some controversy. However, this is the preferred way to go, as it is a lot easier to handle problems before they occur rather than after. So let's get on with the meat of the matter.

We are dealing with Rule XIV-3, "Civil Disorder"; and this is one of the most poorly written rules in the book. It is ambiguous. The last sentence, "Players should decide what policies they will follow in this regard in advance of starting the game.", leaves one wondering whether it applies strictly to the sentence above it or the whole paragraph. Both could legitimately be interpretations. The key word here is "policies" as opposed to the singular "policy". Of course, what is legit, is a damn good question. The bad thing here is that a more liberal interpretation could go as far as to say a GM could write an NMRing player's orders himself to avoid a missed move. Hey, what the hell, "if everyone agrees to it before the game starts..." This, of course, we know to be pure cow manure! The key then becomes where to draw the line; and, once drawn, has WAP gone over it?

Let us then analyze WAP; first by determining what it is not. It is not GM tampering. The GM is not making the moves, period. He is following a prescribed set of orders made by the player. He has not influenced or prejudiced these orders.

It is not an employment of general orders. ((General orders is/are a statement left by the player to attack/ally with player A, B, C...with the GM either making the actual moves himself or employing a "local" person to make the moves for the player. In "general orders" the person making the actual moves is unknown to the remaining players in the game, enemies and allies alike. Anonymous players, whether by general orders, anonymous SBs, gunboat, or whatever, were not consistent with the concepts of a regular game of Diplomacy.)) In the case of WAP, though, the players do know who is submitting orders, even if it is by default; and they have, albeit limited, an opportunity to communicate with the player/position who is making the actual moves.

It is not, in this case, an employment of perpetual orders. ((Perpetual orders is/are a single set of orders that a player submits to be used from this time forward, forever. The employment of "general orders" is a perversion of the concept of a game of Diplomacy having to have "players" (though borderline passable). A regular game of Diplomacy employs seven players. Of course, as the game progresses, the "7" portion of this changes, but the concept of "player" does not. A player is someone who is playing the game. For God's sake, be honest people. Someone

who is employing perpetual orders is no longer playing that particular game, period.)
In our version of WAP, however, the GM is not permitting the use of perpetuals as
the BRRing player will be replaced in what has become to be accepted as normal pro-
cedure for handling dropping players.

It is not NMR prevention as employment of a "collect call" list would be. The for-
mer seeks to prevent an NMR by having the player of record submit a new order. WAP,
on the other hand, is a reaction to an NMR: nothing more, nothing less.

A finer line must be drawn in the next area: whether WAP represents a legitimate
adaptation of the game to postal play, as neutral 1901 orders are. This is a touchy
situation. (Neutral 01 orders are a series of preordained moves/builds that each
country will make in the event the controlling player misses his move. They are
made known in advance to all people in the game, and are good only in 1901.) In a
ftf game, for which these rules were devised, one should be able to count on the
fact that if Player A agrees to play a game, he is there (physically), a real per-
son, and is actually playing the game. In PBM, however, since there can be quite a
time differential between signing up for a game and the actual commencement thereof,
this may not be so. So, begrudgingly BNCs concede that at least in 1901, the drop-
ping of a player from a postal game represents a unique circumstance allowing for some
adaptation. After 1901...Some people seem to believe that a "drop" is not a legiti-
mate part of the postal hobby. Well, for those of you who believe thusly, I have
bad news. Looking at E70, which I have before me, only two game finishes did not
have a drop. One was a very fast E-mail game; and the other, while lacking a drop,
had a resignation. Drops are a part of the postal hobby. (But) Drops are also a
part of the ftf hobby which was why we have the CD rule in the first place. I have
been told that WAP's virtue is that it's non-disruptive, that it preserves the in-
tegrity of the game. Well, folks, a missed move is just as much a part of the game
as A WAR-GAL. I can just see the holy terror that would be raised if some GM deci-
ded that A WAR-GAL destroyed the integrity of the game and wouldn't allow it. An
NMR is as much a part of our game as A WAR-GAL is. Avoiding the NMR is one thing,
reacting to it is another. To some degree WAP falls into this category, but as a
convenience--not a virtue.

A good point is made, and I see nothing wrong with a player stating to the GM, "Use
these orders as preliminaries for the next season," any more that I can judge against
him saying "Call me collect if you don't get any orders by the deadline." They are
conveniences. So, WAP under this guideline squeaks by as OK, since the GM is just
presuming this (legal) statement for all players in the game.

Another consideration is, is it fair? Is it? Well, let's look at some hypos. Two
sets of orders (A GAL-BUD w/S VIE, RUM) and (A SER-BUD w/S TRI). Both players miss
in the Fall. Who gets BUD? What is fair? Oh, you say, a bit farfetched. Perhaps,
but you'd best have a "reason" why your system was unfair to give to the player.
Sure, that is a bit farfetched. The odds of even having two missed moves by coun-
tries that could conflict are remote; that they should conflict like the above is
much further remote (sic). Let's take a more realistic example: Turkey and Italy
build 1 in '01, both gain 1 SC and both miss Winter '02. Turkey builds by WAP, Italy
cannot - his area is already occupied. What is fair? Or perhaps: Germany built
-0- in 1902, France built 2; both gain 2 SCs in 1903 and both miss Winter 1903. Is
it fair?

What about builds in general? Builds are supposed to be the rewards for good play.
Good play. Missing a move is not something that should be rewarded. That is not
fair to the players who did play well.

In summation, then:

- (1) If you consider WAP to be nothing more than a statement that this season's orders
are to be considered to be preliminaries for the next season, you are OK. ((Due
note that by definition this excludes all Winter seasons.))
- (2) If you try to squeeze that extra mile out of WAP to interfere in or create an
unfair situation in the game, you are not. Games will be noted to that effect.
- (3) If you employ WAP without some consideration for S1901, you are ridiculous.

For those who have helped by responding when called on, I want to say things. To
that person who said that he would support my decision even if it went against him,

my special thanks

Analysis

by Alan Stewart

Heinowski B.N.C. opens by describing the nature of the procedure in question and
his approach to resolving regularity questions. In the last two sentences of the second
paragraph he launches into a kind of pre-emptive strike against anyone who would presume
to disagree with any of his decisions, now or in the future. I suspect that he may have
felt himself to be responding to provocation but the result is nevertheless out of place
and an unfortunate departure from the reasoned tone of the body of the decision.

He notes that acquiring opinions on both sides of an issue may take a lot of time--
a valid point, deserving of respect. Delay in rendering an opinion will be annoying at the
time, but people who feel that they have not been consulted adequately before a decision
is rendered will be resentful forever. Robert Sacks claims in the latest House of Lords
that a game of his was declared irregular on grounds not stated in the original complaint
against him and indeed unknown to him until the BNC of the day (not the current incumbent)
rendered his decision! If this complaint is true it represents the type of procedural
impropriety a BNC must avoid at all costs and shows why a little delay is sometimes

In the fourth paragraph Heinowski B.N.C. wanders off into a series of gratuitous observations about the dispute in general, the purpose of which remains obscure. He states "I wondered at those who said WAP should be allowed because it's innovative then cite past practice as evidence." One should never lose one's capacity for innocent wonderment, but presumably every question of regularity involves a practice that is innovative in some way and about which past BNC decisions in analogous cases will be relevant. The next observation, "I have been threatened that an adverse decision will cause that person to quit GMing forever", refers to a comment I made in a letter to the BNC, although I did not quite say what was reported, nor do I consider what I said a threat. But we'll let that one pass. My favourite is the next sentence, "I have been told certain hobby members want to use this as a platform to oust support for the current BNC (me), I presume replacing me with one of their own choosing." One does not need much of an imagination to conjure up the probable circumstances in which this dark, delicious rumour was passed on to Heinowski B.N.C. and I would be the last to deny anyone the pleasures of contemplating their persecution by sinister cabals. But what is the point of repeating such a story? It is obviously fanciful. If this is the best plot that the conspirators could hatch, their ineptitude should guarantee that they don't need to be worried about: only two, relatively unimportant GMs want to use this practice, making it a poor issue to begin a campaign on; the majority of hobby members who know or care about this rule are probably against it, making it a poor issue to campaign on; I know of no-one who does not respect Steve Heinowski's ability and fairness, an ill omen for such a campaign; people instinctively rally around a BNC who is attacked anyway.

Why this strange paragraph in the middle of a generally level-headed judgment? I can think of two possible explanations. The first is that it was included as a sop to those who have opposed the practice, a way of saying "Well I guess they're right but they sure are jerks, aren't they?" The second is that Heinowski B.N.C. was upset enough about some of the argumentation in this dispute (probably some of it mine) that he had to let off a little steam. Yet the whole paragraph is out of place in a judgment such as this, and the sentiments within would better be expressed in private communications, or in Steve's own Dip'zine, or at least in some other part of Everything, clearly separated from the reasoned part of the judgment.

Having finished with taking shots against people he doesn't like, Heinowski B.N.C. happily gets down to business. His methodology is sensible, beginning by considering the arguments against the rule and by dismissing the more frivolous ones before proceeding to the more serious ones. The apposite Rule, XIV 3 "Civil Disorder", is adverted to. His discussion of it is quite good, noting its ambiguity. The last sentence of this Rule states "Players should decide what policies they will follow in this regard in advance of starting the game." In what regard? It is uncertain whether this sentence refers only to the matter covered by the previous sentence (replacing players who leave perhaps with players whose first countries have been eliminated) or to the whole paragraph. I personally ignored

this sentence in framing my arguments about regularity because I would construe it as applying only to the question of whether eliminated players can pick up the positions of players who leave. Heinowski B.N.C. discusses the extent of the rule without coming to a decision. This is thoroughly sound practice. In any kind of jurisprudence only those issues that must be resolved to reach a decision should be resolved. Future BNCs should not be bound unnecessarily. Some future dispute may shed more light on the issue, the proper interpretation of the sentence may be decisive of the dispute (as it is not here), and fuller and better argument may thus be available.

The "GM interference" arguments are rightly dismissed out of hand. The comparison with general and perpetual orders is discussed. Heinowski B.N.C. rightly notes that it is not sufficient for supporters of the Rule to call it a form of "NMR prevention" like a collect call to players and justify it on that basis as the similarities with other categories of NMR prevention are not great.

As we turn into the stretch, Heinowski B.N.C. frames the question in the right way, namely, is the rule a "legitimate adaption of the game to postal play"? He compares a number of adaptations and seems to be leaning in favour of regularity at the end of the paragraph without breaking the suspense.

Suddenly the denouement. The argument comparing the practice with preliminary orders for the next season etc., previously made in PRAXIS, is counted "a good point" and the presumption of automatic preliminary orders through a houserule OK, just "squeaking by". I confess delight as the argument is the one made by me in a letter

to be BNC and later in PRAXIS. Mark Berch later made a similar argument in the Kathy's Korner/Whitestonia forum, but I had framed my argument before receiving that issue (maybe before it was published, I don't remember). Steve Langley made a comment in the last issue of PRAXIS thought seemed to imply that I was merely parroting Berch's analysis, but it ain't so, folks. I can think up my own arguments!

Heinowski B.N.C. then considers the fairness of the Rule and adopts a line of reasoning also advanced in the KK/W forum. What if somebody has two builds in W '01 and someone else zero. The next year both have two builds and NBR. If the Berch rule is used the player with two builds in W '01 gets two more while the other gets zero. Is this fair? I think it perfectly fair, no less unfair than the situation under existing practice whereby if a player with one build NBRs he only loses one unit, while if a player with three builds NBRs he loses all three. How unfair, one player losing one and one losing three! The GM is "interfering". Of course he is not, as all would recognize immediately, because the most to be asked of a rule is that it be applied evenly, not that it distribute costs and benefits equally to all players in all situations. People apply this rule instinctively to optional practices they are familiar with but seem to be unable to recognize the principle's application to other optional practices. I find this sad.

But although I doubt the correctness of Heinowski B.N.C.'s reasoning, I can't say that he has acted unreasonably in accepting the argument, nor that a logical line could not be drawn between moves and builds. The tie between two successive main seasons is close enough to allow orders for one to be used as preliminary orders for the next, but two winter seasons are too far apart, too discontinuous, for this argument to be applied to them. That is what I would say to justify arriving at the final decision, if I agreed with the argument, which I don't.

The three-point summation is unsatisfactory in one crucial respect: it is unclear from the face of it just what decision Heinowski B.N.C. has come to. "If you try to squeeze that extra mile out of WAP to interfere in or create an unfair situation in the game, you are not /OK/." What does this ominous warning portend? I suppose that Heinowski B.N.C. may simply be trying to retain jurisdiction over the matter in case new and more bizarre variations of the rule are dreamed up--perhaps the sinister conspirators won't be satisfied and will seek new platforms on which to campaign. In any case I called Steve and got his determination that my proposed PRAXIS ordinance is 100% regular as I had never had the rule applying to builds.

The final point, "If you employ WAP without some consideration for S 1901, you are ridiculous." is an interesting opinion but not properly within the BNC's jurisdiction in my view. However tempting it may be, it is unwise in my view to use one's official responsibilities separate from one's private opinions about other matters, even if related. We want the BNC to tell us what he is going to condemn as irregular and what he is not, not what he thinks about the world in general. Sure, the job is frustrating and free-lance commentary offers some enjoyment in compensation but I think the occupants of the office of BNC are prone to forget how much power they have over the hobby and what little recourse anyone has against them. Much trouble could be avoided if BNCs would keep that in mind when executing their duties as they would not feel that every disagreement with them or every intemperate remark directed at them was a personal slight requiring satisfaction.

Despite my criticisms of some parts of the decision, I feel it to be in general quite sound and encouraging. Its faults are mostly stylistic or tangential and in context not very important. The approach was sound, the central arguments thoroughly canvassed, the reasoning evidencing an open mind on the subject. Perhaps my approval may be thought to be tainted by my leisurely comfort at being on the winning side, but in reading the decision I already knew by the top of the third page that the decision was going to be an acceptable one and at that point it was not clear which way it was going to turn out. Heinowski B.N.C.'s decision is a fine contribution to regularity jurisprudence and we may hope that many more will follow.

I plan to analyze every regularity ruling in the future in PRAXIS. The more I come to know about this business, the more I come to believe that these BNCs merit watching.

Thanx to Derek Caws for reprinting an edited text of my argument respecting regularity in the last War and Peace, and for his kind words about the argument.))

Realism

Some Dames Do It

a Will Hertmann Story

by Alan Stewart

Part Three

It seemed like I'd been dreaming for a long time. My feet were dangling in a crystal cool pond while comely maidens were nibbling my ear lobes. The logical part of my mind eventually began to ask provocative questions: why did these comely maidens have long whiskers? When I opened the baby blues I was lying in the gutter. Didn't bother me much; it was a classy gutter from what I could see and I didn't believe in standing upon appearances. Eventually a couple hoods dropped by and evinced an interest in taking an inventory of my personal belongings. I kicked one where it hurts and he sprawled backwards into a pile of garbage bags lying outside the Chinaman's restaurant. One bag went flying and a few neatly severed cats' heads rolled out, eventually settling in a spot convenient to the dazed hood's face. He started to cross himself something fierce and began repeating a lot of mumbo-jumbo. "Sainted Maria" were the only words I thought I could pick out. They took a powder, heading for the nearest church, I guess. If I was looking for a Roman priest I'd start in the nearest bar myself.

I tried to take a quick count of the places where it ached, but I was never too good at the advanced arithmetic. The back of my skull told me that the last sound I had heard was me being sapped but good by one of Geryk's pals. But my wallet was still in place. And something else--pinned to my shirt like I was a lost kid. It was an envelope, containing a bus ticket to California and a little note. "Stay out of Chicago. It ain't good for your health. At the end of your ride call"--and it gave a name and number--"and stay outa my hair." It was unsigned.

Sure I took the bus ride. It was the only lead I had left, and I felt I could handle anything that might happen out on the coast. Hell, I even had a connection there. A coupla years ago a client had told me a wild tale about a Red spy ring and paid me to investigate. I gave my info to the D.A. down there, the only decent example of the species I ever met. He took personal charge of the case. Funny thing--I had the wrong angle on it. The guys I had tagged as the good joes were the real agents, while the guys I had thought were the scum were OK. I guess that's why I hadn't killed Geryk right on the spot. The guys I would have pegged as bad news were now prominent in California politics, while my original suspects began having a lot of strange accidents. The D.A. was grateful and now he was a bigwig too. Funny thing.

Yes, Earl Warren was always an OK guy in my books.

I picked up the phone when I got to the San Diego bus terminal and dialed the number. The guy went on and on giving me directions to the bar where he agreed to meet me at 9:00 P.M. The directions could have been shorter. He could have told me to find the grimmest part of town and follow the piss smell. I went by early to check it out.

I began to wonder what I was walking into. Low class dump with a few out-of-work longshormen as honoured regulars. A guy would come in with a radio and talk to the big guy at the back table. The two would go outside for a moment. When the big guy came back he wasn't carrying the radio but somehow I thought that title may have changed hands. This little scenario was re-enacted every half-hour or so. I followed the guy out the next time he left,

flashed a fake badge and told his customer to get lost. "Police. We've been watching your salesmanship with interest." His hair wasn't too greasy to bristle with menace. "Keep cool. We could close this place down and you with it but we're not interested in the penny-ante stuff. Do a little something for me and we'll leave you alone."

"Whaddis you want?"

"A guy's coming in here tonight looking for a contact, Will Hertmann. You're him for tonight. You find out what he wants. That's it. He fancies himself a tough guy, but we're betting you're tougher." No look of false humility crossed his face. "He may give you a little abuse, test you a little. Let it roll off your back. Your friends in there can take care of him if there's any trouble, but wait till I give the High Sign. And stay away from your pals when he comes in--he thinks you're alone."

I positioned myself where I could watch the action and waited. About 8:30 a group of three people came in. The leader was an enormous guy who looked like he could give Gorgeous George a run for his money at the Garden. Another was a tall thin drink of water with an intellectual air. The third was a skinny little runt with a supercilious air. They looked around the dive in evident distaste, like they was wondering where the grand piano was. They sat down at a side table, ordered a couple of drinks nobody had ever heard of.

A few minutes after nine the big guy got up and sauntered over to my new friend's table. I had forgotten to ask his name so let's call him Joe. The big guy's companions followed. The big guy pulled out a stogie, made a pretense of looking through his pockets for a match, and turned towards Joe with a smile.

"Got a match, friend?"

"Yeah. Your face and my ass." Joe was loud enough that a few of his ten or twenty usual companions began to hoot at that one. I shot Joe a dirty look.

"You Hertmann?", big guy asks.

"Maybe. What's your name?"

"My friends call me Larry. Sir's fine for right now."

"Friends, huh. What's your mother call you?"

The claque at the other end of the room liked this one too. They were an easy audience.

Larry grinned at this line himself, and let his crony light his cigar for him. He held it out with his left hand as if to examine it and then his right hand whipped out viciously and gave Joe a hard slap across the face. Larry's ring cut a little chunk of flesh off Joe. It fell right into his beer. Added a little colour to it. Some of Joe's friends made moves to get out of their seat but Joe motioned them back.

"I heard you had a smart mouth.", Larry said. "Let me set you straight. You want to talk to Dip Hobby, you talk to me. If Dip Hobby has a message for you or anybody else, it'll be communicated through me. I am the mouthpiece of Dip Hobby. I know everything Dip Hobby does. My friends are Dip Hobby's friends, and my enemies are Dip Hobby's enemies. I'm not holding your smart mouth against you yet. All you need is"--he turned his head sideways--"a little friendly persuasion." The skinny runt put his hand into his pocket and when he pulled it out there was a metallic gleam where his knuckles should have been.

I couldn't resist. I flashed Joe the high sign. "Let's shake hands.", Joe said. As Joe got up he charged the big guy, smashing his belly with the end of the table. Joe's friends whipped into action. They dragged the three guys out into the alley about fifteen minutes later. I didn't stay to watch.