

Bye, bye Bobby! See pg 27...

PRAXIS

#17

Circulation: 63

November 2, 1987

God bless Jesse Helms and Edwin Meese

I delayed this originally because I did not think that much mail would move during the postal strike--the first, rotating part of it. Much did, so I got ready to go, but then the Government announced its intention to legislate the posties back to work, and from past experience I didn't want to put anything valuable (let's say costly) in the mail while replacement posties were handling it, as the public prints indicated that a lot of mail was being misdirected and in the past mail in post boxes and stations has been vandalized during such episodes. Nothing much in that way happened during the strike, which made me feel somewhat paranoid and foolish until the last day before the posties were forced to go back to work. Then a huge tractor-trailer full of outgoing mail from Toronto was firebombed. According to the press it included primarily "magazines and publications". By that time (two weeks ago) I had accumulated enough material to go above the 20-page limit so to get value for my postage dollar I had to go up to 38, 40 pgs. You don't want to read just game reports, do you? Anyway, here it is.

I know nothing about Judge Douglas Ginsburg; we'll have to see. The liberals' campaign against Bork has had some predictable effects--now Presidents who look for judges will look for people who have written little and have some extra added political tag, like being Jewish in this case, that makes them easier to confirm. More on this matter in the future.

Had a good time at BRUXCON/TOMATOCON, although I don't remember much about it at this late date. I prepared for the Con by purchasing a copy of Civilization and teaching myself the game by playing it solitaire in the week before the con. Worked, too: I played and won a game as Africa, watched/GMed another, and played a third, being on the top end of a "60-40 draw", whatever that is, with Steve Hutton, ~~in a third~~. I was Egypt this time. I guess I'm just the "Master of Civ" now whether I want the publicity or not. Next year Ill learn how to play Titan, having played and lost a quick game with Bruce Geryk this con when we were trying to be cool by staying up all night gaming. After the con I took off on a bus trip and saw baseball games in Busch stadium, County stadium, the Metrodome and Tiger Stadium. Toronto...ah, it says something about Toronto that the responsible officials were assuring everybody this week that our dome, under construction, had been designed so it wouldn't be nearly so noisy as that bad old Metrodome. These people know nothing about baseball and it would never occur to them that loud crowds, in addition to giving somewhat of an advantage to the home team, make a game more enjoyable to attend. If you want quiet, go to Municipal Stadium in Cleveland.

Had another near thing with a foul ball at Milwaukee's County stadium, but this time I acquitted myself well. I followed it all the way, moved in as close as I could and got a good angle, and fought hard for it, getting an elbow in the chops during the struggle. Didn't come down with it but was proud of my effort. I wonder why the things never seem to come near me in Toronto?

Two games still open, presumably because they will use the hated Berch Continuation-of-campaign rule. \$5 game fee. Better sign up: when games run out, no new gamestarts means no more game'zine, and Bob Acheson's up to 15 centes in CARLETON! (Report one issue behind)

PRAXIS is a journal of postal Diplomacy published approximately every five weeks by Alan Stewart, 702-25 St. Mary St., Toronto, Ontario, CANADA M4Y 1R2, (416) 961-8095.

Subscription rates: 80¢ Canadian the issue, ten for seven dollars; 60¢ American the issue, ten for five dollars. Diplomacy was invented by Allan B. Calhamer, A Great Canadian.

2 Struggle!

ALGOMA

(1986 J)

End-game statements

	01	02	03	04	05	
AUSTRIA	5	4	2	0	0	
ENGLAND	5	6	6	6	6	
FRANCE	5	6	6	6	5	
GERMANY	5	3	3	4	4	
ITALY	4	5	7	9	10	DRAW
RUSSIA	6	8	9	9	9	DRAW
TURKEY	4	2	1	0	0	

AUSTRIA: Conrad von Metzke (resigned S'04); Dave Carter (eliminated W'04)
ENGLAND: Randolph Smyth (survived)
FRANCE: Jim Finley (drop S'04); Matt Fleming (drop F'05); Craig Reges (survived)
GERMANY: Chris Greaves (drop S'02); Steve Swigger (survived)
ITALY: Jeff Bevis (draw S '06)
RUSSIA: Derwood Bowen (draw S '06)
TURKEY: Mark Weidmark (eliminated W'04)

Randolph Smyth (England):

A disappointing game for me, not so much because of the final result as because a position with a lot of promise "fell flat". As a rule, I do quite well if I can avoid being attacked in 1901, but this game was an exception.

I formed a quick alliance with Jim Finley (France) as the game began--we seemed "sympatico", and although the original German (Chris Greaves) made a decent effort after S '01, he never really caught up diplomatically after an early silence. I also had a good relationship with Derwood in Russia whereby we agreed to demilitarize Scandinavia and concentrate on the south.

Both Jim and I had 6 units after 1902 while Germany had dropped to 3. An excellent start, except that A/T had done a collapsing act in the east to the benefit of Russia and Italy. Steve Swigger had recently taken over as Germany, though, and negotiated very aggressively--proposing to become a quasi-puppet for E/F. This suited me fine, as I had a suitable target in Russia while Jim could have sent most of his forces south while still keeping Steve under his thumb. A/T remained viable enough to have given us a winning advantage by as early as 1904.

But Jim, with whom I'd gotten along famously for two game years, began playing quite illogically. Initially, he insisted on continuing after Germany, which was inevitably a slow grind while R/I gained a critical period of freedom in the southeast in 1903. Then at the end of 1903, Jim attacked me...and dropped out the following Spring.

By this time Russia was at 9 centres and clearly the guy to stop, but France was the more immediate danger. Luckily I had a solid relationship with Steve's Germany that lasted to game end, and I hadn't actually attacked Russia yet. Derwood was surprisingly accommodating, agreeing to be "bottled up" in StP while he continued to push further south. If I could have convinced France to turn south against Italy, we could still have easily given R/I a run for their money.

Matt Fleming turned out to be a complete bust, however, showing little interest in the game: I don't believe I ever got a letter from him. We fought inconclusively until the end of 1905 when he, too, dropped out. By that time, A/T were long gone, and it was clear that R/I would not be fighting each other as I'd hoped.

Craig Reges, the third France, was a considerable improvement but by then I had lost a lot of interest myself, disgusted over what we could have accomplished. Even at game end, we had possession of a stalemate line which could have forced R/I to fight each other or cut us into part of the draw. But--it needed everyone's interest to pull it off, and I saw no point in holding up the R/I draw if neither Craig nor Steve was prepared to veto it. Apparently, they weren't. At any rate, I was still on pretty good terms with Derwood, although our correspondence had gone in fits and starts, and I wasn't gung-ho about fighting him without solid commitments elsewhere.

I'd be especially interested in hearing whether anyone "got to" Jim, and how. At first, I thought we had one of the best relationships I've ever had in 14 years of postal Diplomacy; then, he went bizarre with no explanation that made sense to me. Was it me, was it him, or was it someone else?

Congrats to Derwood and Jeff for a solid and "friendly" game, kudos to Steve for hanging in with an always-tough position and to Mark/Conrad for terrific press; and thanks to Alan for a flawlessly (?-I think) GMed game.

Derwood Bowen (Russia):

This game created a measure of frustration for me. I think I am the only surviving country to get moves in every season, yet this is the best I could manage. I don't like to see England do well when I play Russia, so I decided on a German alliance. I tried to get France to go along, but he seemed to find the situation impossible. Nonetheless, I felt confident of German help, simply because he needed me. So I built my fleet Stp. (nc) and counted on some German help. So Germany NBR's, and his replacement cannot afford to help me, owing to French pressure. As a result, England was all over me in Scandinavia.

In the south, I was set to ally with Turkey, until I got this incredible letter from him prior to Fall '01. The result of this letter was to change me over to an Austrian alliance (much to our commentators consternation). Anyway, the south saw me make gains with no problems. Italy joined me as an ally early in '02, and decided to stab the Austrian. The Austrian saw it coming, but didn't seem to care. Not seeming to care seemed to be a part of this game for its duration.

In the north, meanwhile, I came up with a (seemingly) brilliant idea. I would suck England into Scandinavia completely, while keeping pressure on Germany. This would allow France to stab England, knowing that Germany couldn't take advantage of the stab. With England out of position, it was a cinch. The moment came in Spring '03. France can build a Fleet Brest, and move to the Channel, while his Fleet Mid moves to the Irish. Fall sees France take an unprotected Liverpool, while he also convoys into Wales. England is dead in the water, Russia and France divide up Germany and Russia takes Scandinavia. So, of course, France misorders and then NMR's. The moment is gone forever. A new France cannot ignore a growing Italy. There will be no attack on England now.

Some missed coordination in the south allows Turkey to survive longer than he should, but so what? I extend my condolences to Mark Weidmark. He stuck in there for the duration. I certainly wouldn't mind being his ally somewhere in the future. Except for that one letter, he and I would probably have allied, which would certainly have made a difference in the final outcome. The German replacement played well. Had he been the original player, I feel this game would have been much better. Ah, well.

Jeff Bevis is a good ally. I thank him for joining me in this. I also believe that a RI two-way is the most just result for this game. Certainly no one else deserved to be a party in the final result. Jeff kept in touch. He wrote me a couple of memorable lines. (If I see one more NMR, I think I'll scream! -- Let's vote the draw in before we stab one another out of boredom.) Randolph Smyth is supposed to be a good player, but he NMR'd twice in this game. He made efforts to get me to stab Italy, but I just wouldn't bite. And, he left himself wide open for the French stab (which turned out to be botched). No one else was even in this one.

I thank Alan for GM'ing this game. I had hoped for an entertaining first game for Praxis readers, but NMR city fixed that. I had even entertained hopes of winning this one, but Germany's NBR and Frances subsequent screwup ruined that. I can say that I would willingly play in another game here in Praxis. (Are you offering a gamestart, Alan?)

As an aside, congratulations on your second successful year of pubbing. I will join the others who sing your praises, I guess. I enjoy reading Praxis, though I would wish it to be a bit more regular. You did a good job of keeping the game moving along, though, using flyers as necessary. Good job. And, congrats on your Runestone Poll finish. Of course, you have gotten lots of those already. I hope you don't mind one more.

Take care and keep on rolling.

Craig Reges:

As the third Napoleon, I'm sure this is the reason I was in such bad shape. Seems to me they would have been serving spaghetti in Paris before long the way this game was going. Congratulations to the two "B's".

Alan Stewart (Gamesmaster)

I looked forward to this game with great expectation given the cast of characters involved, and made it the A-game, assigning Blair Cusack to commentate on it. These high hopes were fulfilled as far as press is concerned, but the course of the game itself was comparatively disappointing.

Jim Finley's disappearance was wholly mysterious to me. He is still a subscriber at his last known address at Quantico. Perhaps he was sent off on some sort of secret mission that required him to cut his worldly ties? Withn regard to his relationship with ENGLAND, the only light I can shed is that Jim attempted to change his last set of orders from ambiguous (F Bre-Iri) to outright hostile to ENGLAND (F bre-Eng) but his change of orders arrived too late. Could this have had something to do with his disappearance? In any case, his change-of-orders mailing wasn't close to making it; if the deadline was a Friday, as I remember, his letter was postmarked on the Tuesday or Wednesday thryree or two days before and very few letters are going to make it from the United States in such short time.

Jeff Bevis takes a ppointed jab at randolph Smyth for NMRing twice; I think it fair to point out that Randolph was screwed by the postal system. On two occasions, including the last turn of the game, his orders arrived one day late, the first time without a stamp and (probably; I couldn't read the postmark) having spent a LOT OF TIME IN THE SYSTEM.

Capitals by way of error in shifting rather than emphasis.

There was an interpretation-of-telephone-orders dipute right at the end of the game that would have made for some interesting controversy and filled up the letter column for a while, but the player in question hasn't chosen to make it public as of yet although he is welcome to do so.

I enjoyed GMing this game tremendously, and regret, like the players, the varying circumstances that prevented us seeing what would have happened to the R-I combo had the game been fought out to the end. I am going to offer NMR Insurance in the form of up to two collect calls from the GM in my next game opening as a result of what I've seen here.

1986N

CARLETON

Winter -06; Spring '07

The results of the September 10 election in CARLETON: Norm Sterling (PC) 14,034; Roly Armitage (Lib) 13,590; Elaine Gibson (NDP) 4,613. I consider Sterling's retention of the district a mild upset based on the overall provincial form.

SOUTHERN REVERSES FOR WOULD-BE CONQUEROR

The proposal for a concession to FRANCE was defeated 3 Yes, 3 No.
The proposal for a concession to ITALY was defeated 1 Yes, 5 No.
The proposal for an AUSTRIA-TURKEY draw has been defeated 2 Yes, 4 No.
The revised separation-of-deadline ordinance has been approved, 3 Yes, 0 No. 3 Not voting.
A concession to FRANCE has been proposed. A FRANCE-GERMANY-TURKEY draw has been proposed.
VOTE for next deadline. **NVR=YES.**

- AUSTRIA (Weidmark) A Tyo ret Vie. F Adr-Tri, A Boh-Tyo, A Vie S A Boh-Tyo.
- FRANCE (Acheson) BUILD A Par, A Mar, F Bre. A Par-Bur, A Mar-Pie, F Bre-MAO, F Bar-StP(nc), F Nwg S A Nwy, F Den S RUS F Ber-Bal, F Wes-Tyr, F Eng-Nth, A Ruh-Kie, A Nwy S F bar-StP(nc), A Tyo S ITA A Apu-Ven (nso; dis, ret Mun, otb), F Tyr-Ion(dis; ret Lvo, Tus, otb), A Mun-Boh.
- GERMANY (Brown) F Swe S ITA A Kie-Den (nso), F Fin S F Swe, A StP H, A Mos S A StP
- ITALY (Clark) REMOVE A Apu. A Kie-Hol, F Nap-Tyr, F Tun S F nap-Tyr, A Rom-Ven.
- RUSSIA (Coughlan) F Ber-Bal.
- TURKEY (Easton) BUILD A Con and A Ank. A Con-Apu, F Aeg C A Con-Apu, F Ion C A Con-Apu, F Gre S F Ion, A Ven-Pie, A Ank-Sev, F Bla C A Ank-Sev, A Ukr-Gal, A Sev-Ukr.

GM: The next deadline is FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1987 with the phone deadline 11:59 P.M. Thursday night.

RUSSIA TO GM: What's the latest on the possible September Canadian postal strike?
GM-Russia: Very little about it in the papers, although negotiations are still continuing. I really don't know what the situation is. John Diefenbaker always used to claim that as a child, he met Sir Wilfrid Laurier while selling newspapers in Winnipeg as a boy. (Don't anybody else try to figure out what THIS REFERENCE MEANS).
Italy-Russia: Gary, will you shut up?

RUSSIA to FRANCE: Well you've certainly helped simplify my strategy! Here is Berlin and, if you've helped me into the Baltic Sea, I'll help you get Sweden in Fall 1907. After that you are on your own, just a hunch I have, but you should remember to vote for the concession to yourself. I was the only one who voted for it last season!

RUSSIA to GERMANY: Ah, Gilda, congratulations on your fish-in-the-barrel Scandinavian victories, although since you completely abandoned the German homeland, there was no rejoicing here in Berlin. Question: Now that your raison d'être in this game, i.e. kamikaze attacks against the weakest power on the board, has ended, along with your ability to build any new units, can your fellow players expect to see some rational strategy on your part?

RUSSIA to TURKEY: I agree with you--there is a lot you don't know but, yes, Frank, I'll be around at least two more turns(I'm including this one) to veto any draws concerning you. That's more than time enough to show everyone's true colors, I expect. And of course I'll be around to write my comprehensive endgame statement.....

RUSSIA to ITALY: Turkey takes Venice and he wants to be friends with you. How typical.

RUSSIA to GERMANY: "Imagine"? I don't have to "imagine" the non-game insults you wrote about me personally and about one of my friends, who has nothing whatsoever to do with this game---I can see those "remarks" of yours in cold black and white, typed by you. Such comments had no place in this Diplomacy game. Why not drop this particular tactic from your "repertoire" in future games? Finally, I have made no insulting remarks about your sons. However, you did write insulting remarks about my friend who is not in this game. It says a lot if you can't seem to tell the difference.

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Germany: A great lumbering cow slowly ambled across the meadow as the Russian soldiers mysteriously began disappearing. Our hero still held the amazing shrinking Tsar in his hand. "You've had your say," he said. "Now it's my turn. You have voiced your objections to my policies since 1901, yet never have you acknowledged that I sought out your co-operation at risk to my own country. My defensive moves early in the game were tentative and hardly what one would call aggressive, but they did nothing but to spur you to more attacks, on the field and in the press. At no point did you have the honesty to proclaim a state of war. Rather, you harped on imaginary grievances. My country came under attack from two other powers: namely France and Italy. Yes, I could have defended against them. But you were moving your forces towards me and I knew from your past record that you had the intention of joining in the attack. Realizing that I could not defend against three attackers I chose to do what I should have done in 1901: attack Russia. If the only satisfaction I get is seeing you annihilated, then I accept that. Realize that my course is quickening France's victory, but you left me no choice in the matter. I don't sit still and whine while losing my centres. If I'm going down, at least I can do it with some style." Our hero then drew back his arm and flung the Tsar at the cow who deftly caught the maggot-sized squawling cipher on its lip. It then tossed back its head and began chewing thoughtfully.

Turkey - World : Honest folks, I really did think that Carlton was only a game - you know, give it your best shot, GOOD sportsmanship and, above all, FUN ! I must say that I'm still having fun in what I consider to be the most important part of the game. As for the ^{other} 'side of the coin' - I've received several communications from other Hobby members with words of encouragement and advice to ignore this "tempest in a teapot". I find this difficult to do - especially since Gary's hard feelings have spilled over into another game he has entered in recently as a standby. Be that as it may, I will do my best to swallow my pride and continue to play the game as I believe it should be played. I wish to thank those of you who cared enough to write, it's a good feeling to know that I'm not alone in all of this (eh, Ron ?)

B R A N T - H A L D I N A N D

1986 L

Fall '06 continued

As players in this game know, winter '06 and Spring '07 have been delayed until Friday, November 27, 1987 because of postal failure--one player did not receive last adjudication ~~or~~ or re-mailing of it.

E L G I N

Game opening. Berch continuation-of-campaign rule used. NMR Insurance in from of collect call to players at deadline or day after \$5 (U.S. for Americans, Canadian for us).

F O R T Y O R K

Game opening. Terms and conditions as above.

G R E Y

Game opening. NO Berch rule. BUT will not open until above two fill. Hahaha you bastards, no more Dips here until these games fill whether you like it or not.

H A L T O N C E N T R E

Different sort of game. Look in old New York Times AND FIND LIST OF Senators who voted against Judge Bork. Find your friendly neighbourhood 24-hour gun store and apply for a licence. Further rules on request in brown unmarked envelope--no return address.

Big cash prizes.

(AUSTRIA):

IRONTURD, ONTARIO (July 26, 1987) -- The McBarfy twins skidded down the embankment to the creek bottom, their fists full of ill-begotten mail. Once a week they skipped school, hiding in a culvert by Highway 503 until the postman filled the SuperMailBox. They had devised many simple methods for breaking into it, but the favoured method called for Timmy McBarfy to lower his pants, wriggle the cheeks of his ass against the metal, and then blow open the master lock with a well-aimed fart.

"Holy shit!" cried Jimmy as he flopped into the muddy crater at the base of an uprooted tree. It was their favourite hidey hole. "Look what I got! Reverend Stewart's copy of Penthouse... poor old rev's go'in to be short of read'n material this month, ha, ha."

"That's nothing," boasted Timmy, ripping open a letter. "Another one from Mrs. Robertson to that lawyer fella in T.O. -- whew, is she hot. Look Jim, a lock of pussy hair taped on, 'stead of X's and O's!"

"Go on! For real? Timmy, one night we ought to pay a visit to Mrs. Robertson... be something else to screw a 87-year-old puss, eh?"

"Yeah, I always got a hard-on for older women," Timmy mused. "'Course, when you'se in Grade 5 like we is, there ain't much choice -- if you want tits and ass, best to screw a lady teacher, right?"

"That's the only reason I go to school 'tall," said Jimmy, ramming a mud-encrusted pinkie up his nose as far as it would go.

Timmy had been absentmindedly sorting their loot into piles -- baby bonus cheques in one, women's magazines in another -- when he it upon a plain brown envelope. He tore it open. "Beauty, eh?" he asked, holding up the contents.

"Alright, PRAXIS #13!"

"Yeah, can you believe it? I thought for sure we'd seen the last of PRAXIS... 'specially when Mr. Jercough ripped off that copy of number 13 from my desk, and said he would be talking to his MPP about stopp'n this trash."

"Right Timmy, and now thanks to the post office holding up this copy for four months, we can review where Trilynda left off last and be ready for the next installment!"

"Hell yes, I ne'er thot o' that!" shouted Timmy, jumping up and cracking his skull on a large root.

Penthouse and Mrs. Steven's letter lay forgotten at their feet as the McBarfy twins hunched over the ripped-off copy of PRAXIS. Oh yeah, remember Commander Trio on the bridge of the Amazon spaceship, barking orders -- but her real name is Cassandra, and somehow she seems to know Trilynda. Ha, ha, there's Dr. Watson, performing stunts with his prick for the benefit of the St. Dunstain School for Wayward Girls... and Miss Jean Brodie, who turns out to be Professor Moriarity in disguise! Oh, oh, Watson gets caught in the teleporter stream and is beamed aboard the Amazon ship, right into the arms of a warrior! Wheee, there goes those guys trying to get it on with Agent 069 as they fall to certain deaths from the CN Tower. In the Loading Bay of the spaceship My Lady's Arse is being held with Holmes and Uncle Bob aboard... will Cassandra arrive before Uncle Bob is sedated to death? Finally, finally, Trilynda is back in action -- beating off a horde of Amazon warriors and demanding she be taken to Trio!

"Geez, I wish the girl next door to our place looked like that," Jimmy said, drooling over the provocative illustration that ended the text.

"What's wrong?" asked Timmy. "Get'n tired of Charolais heifers?"

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CBC NATIONAL NEWS (July 26, 1987) -- A freak storm that passed through the northern Ontario community of Ironturd this morning had a surprising beneficial effect -- it uprighted all the trees that had been blown down in a previous storm.

"This is the best thing to happen to Ironturd since we got a Special Occasion Permit for 1959 -- the whole year, that is," said Mayor Ruckus Porkerson in a taped interview.

CORRIDOR B-38, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- Trilynda and her guide had picked up an escort of about 50 curious Amazons. It had been 10 years since the last time this happened... yes, a decade since the child Trilynda was apparently orphaned, her mother disappearing into a starry night. For it was decreed, in "The Amazonian Statutes of Biorgazon 13" that...

On a cycle of 10 Earth years, the Amazons shall descend upon Earth and recruit new thousands of young women to repopulate our race, and that also, a new commander be sought to lead our space army. She will be of the rare breed whose sexual aura is thrice the strength of typical women, even greater than any Amazons, for be it known that for three centuries Amazons have been without their inherant ability to achieve triple orgasm. Our engineers of eons past made space travel possible by harnessing the great triple-0 -- without it, we should perish, doomed to extinction.

"That explains one hell of a lot," Trilynda muttered, crumpling up the page and wiping her bum. Although no one has ever realized it, even super-heroines have to go to the bathroom. In this case, it provided the opportunity for a neat little bit of exposition -- it turns out that toilet paper is not used on Amazon ships, but stiff volumes of The Amazonian Statutes of Biorgazon 13 are provided to harden the warriors to the rigours of warfare. Trilynda stepped out of the cubicle. "Back off, back off!" she shouted to the 50 warriors who had followed her in to THE VOID, as restrooms were called on the ship.

Alas, that tired and overworked literary trick of having the heroine examine herself in the mirror was almost useless in THE VOID -- the reflective glass on the wall was just 5 centimetres wide, set beside a coin operated dispenser of bone sliver toothpicks. But because Trilynda stood an average 20 centimetres taller than the Amazonians, the tiny mirror reflected a fraction of her cleavage, a tiny window on the full melon-sized tits straining at the criss-cross cords of her iron-studded leather jerkin. Oh, how she ached to set them free! To carress the dark nipples into tasty acorns, to capture a staff as hard and strong as an oak mast between her breasts and taste droplets of desire like dew upon her tongue... but it would never be again if she allowed herself to be taken to the Amazon planet.

BELOW THE CN TOWER, ALTITUDE 502 FEET (AND FALLING) -- In the few seconds before their imminent deaths, Alan and Agent 069 experienced the full breadth and depth of true love between a man and a woman.

"What kind of beer do you drink?" Alan asked.

"IPA," said Agent 069 breathlessly, the howling winds of their descent tearing the letters from between soft, full lips.

"So do I!" Alan lied, and at that moment they were as one being.

Mark let go of Agent 069's toe and curled into a fetus-like ball, preparing to cannonball at terrific velocity into the cold, watery grave of Lake Ontario. After all, let's not get too kinky.

TELEPORTER ROOM, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- At the end of his flying leap Dr. Watson had expected to lay his hands around the neck of Professor Moriarity.

Instead he found his hands clutching the grizbot hide of an Amazonian battlebra. Rather than reacting angrily to the assault, the woman staggering under him smiled brightly and greeted the doctor by firmly taking his cucumber-sized hard-on into her own hands.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" cheered the mostly naked Wayward Girls of St. Dunstain's as they saw that Dr. Watson had joined them on their great adventure.

ORGASMADRIVE POD, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- Trilynda stood before the burnished metal crescents that blocked the circular passage to the Orgasmadrive Pod. Expecting a prod at any moment for the massed warrior escort behind her, she was surprised to find them all kneeling down, heads bowed.

"What gives?" she asked, once again showing that modern English dialect is rooted in speech patterns of teenage girls brought up by Newfoundlanders in Turkey at the turn of the century.

"Only you have the lock that turns the key," murmured Lt. Cream, the young officer who had served as a guide through the ship.

"The lock that turns the key?"

LOADING BAY 7, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- Although accustomed to many cramped and interminable stretches in the wardrobe of his Baker Street flat, Sherlock Holmes sinewy muscles ached in the confines of the rum barrel.

Five Amazons had boarded My Lady's Arse in a bid to sedate the men on board -- they only found Uncle Bob. When the five sets of grizbot battle bras and panties flopped to the deck, Holmes figured the old sailor wouldn't have a chance.

It was the first time he'd ever been wrong.

"Aye, that's it girls, have a 'nuther swig," Uncle Bob croaked, thrusting a bottle of Screech at the two surviving warriors who lay sprawled up against the wheelhouse. The grizzled old seaman was naked from the waist down. While his cock lay as flacid as a three-day dead cod, he expertly diddled between the two pairs of wide-open legs, using his big toes.

Presently the two warriors slipped into unconsciousness on a wave of drunken and sexual euphoria.

"BONES, YOU SLIMY BASTARD!"

ORGASMADRIVE POD, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- Trilynda looked where Lt. Cream had gestured... not another one! A copy of the Maltese Prick was mounted on a knob near the door, and if that was the key...?

"Only you have the lock -- "

"Yeah, yeah, I know," muttered Trilynda, loosening the threads that weakly held together the torn seam in her white cotton breeches. She mounted the prick, the ebony shaft slipping deep inside her, and wondered if any object on Earth had so strong a duality of purpose, both erotic and practical? There was something... Trilynda's first night in London included her introduction to the back seat of the automobiles. The English gentleman she had met was so romantic, even quoted her Shakespeare... act two, scene four from Hamlet, wasn't it? "Yea, tis better to screw in the back than crank in the front." Wonderful. Trilynda started to ride the Maltese Prick at the thought of it.

"No commander," Lt. Cream cautioned. "You must grip the Prick with all your strength and rotate."

"Up yours!" Trilynda bellowed, causing a number of bowed heads to look up at the spectacle. "And I'm not your commander yet!" For the love of Mike, what the hell was this? The most beautiful woman in all of Turkey goes to the bathroom. The most beautiful woman in all of Turkey f--s a

doorknob. The most beautiful woman in all of Turkey is going to put up with this shit? What is this, a penny dreadful? Get on with it! Let's see a bit of action!

Okay!

Trilynda clamped her pussy with the boner crushing strength of a jungle cat... and with a mighty chorus line kick she spun herself like a crown & anchor wheel. The huge stainless steel plates of the door folded back upon themselves. Dismounting, she dizzily stepped into the Orgasmadrive Pod.

"Hi honey," said her mother. "Close the door behind you dear."

TELEPORTER ROOM, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- "Dr. John H. Watson, at your service, uh... miss."

"I wish!" said the Amazon, reverently stroking Watson's member. The rest of the teleporter crew were huddled around now, jostling for a close-up look. "But I've got orders from the commander to escort these recruits to Loading Bay 7, and I expect you'll be wanted to. Follow me!"

Dr. Watson and the St. Dunstain girls were lead through a passage marked T & A Grizbot Size-o-Meter, and when they emerged on the farther side the girls were dressed in the natural grizbot hide battle bras and panties. Watson struggled along, his boxer shorts still about his ankles, while the mechanical arms of the Size-o-Meter assessed his unusual dimensions -- he ended up with a battle bra slung tightly over his cock and balls, his eyes peering out of grizbot panty legholes.

LOADING BAY 7, AMAZON SPACESHIP -- "Yes, Uncle Bob?" Holmes asked meekly, peering over the rim of the rum barrel.

"YOU SCUMFACED COWARD, BONES! Garrrrrr... why'd yah abandon me to these hot-blooded women warriors? I almost had a heart-failure trying to keep ahead of them, you bucket of cod guts!"

"Data, Uncle Bob," said Holmes, clambering out of the barrel. "We needed more observational data on our enemies. We now know one important weakness... these women are as horny as a Peruvian Blue-nosed Monkey... in heat!"

"Ahhh, blow off, Bones... I could'a told yah that without having you watch me do it to 'em."

"Yes, but if I had been preoccupied, I might not have seen what you did with your big toes. That was quite amazing, Uncle Bob. Do you mind if I include an account of it in the revised edition of my book, The Joy of Chiropody?"

"Garrrrrr, it's nothing, Bones," Uncle Bob slurred, his voice like the sound of a chest being dragged over a pebbly beach. "After me brother was killed by a codfaced Austrian bastard, I used to take cares of me sister-in-law that way. She'd come to me, horny as one of those Peruvian beasties, and say 'Bobby, I want you real bad, but with Terry looking down on us from Heaven I don't feel quite right about it... so you can fuck me with your toe, if you want to.' It was a bit strange, Bones, if you want 'ta know, cause I used have my cock in her all the time before Terry died. You figure it, Bones, I can't. I don'ts even knows what e'er happen'd to the poor girl... one night she's gone like fish through a torn net, leaving me with Trilynda..."

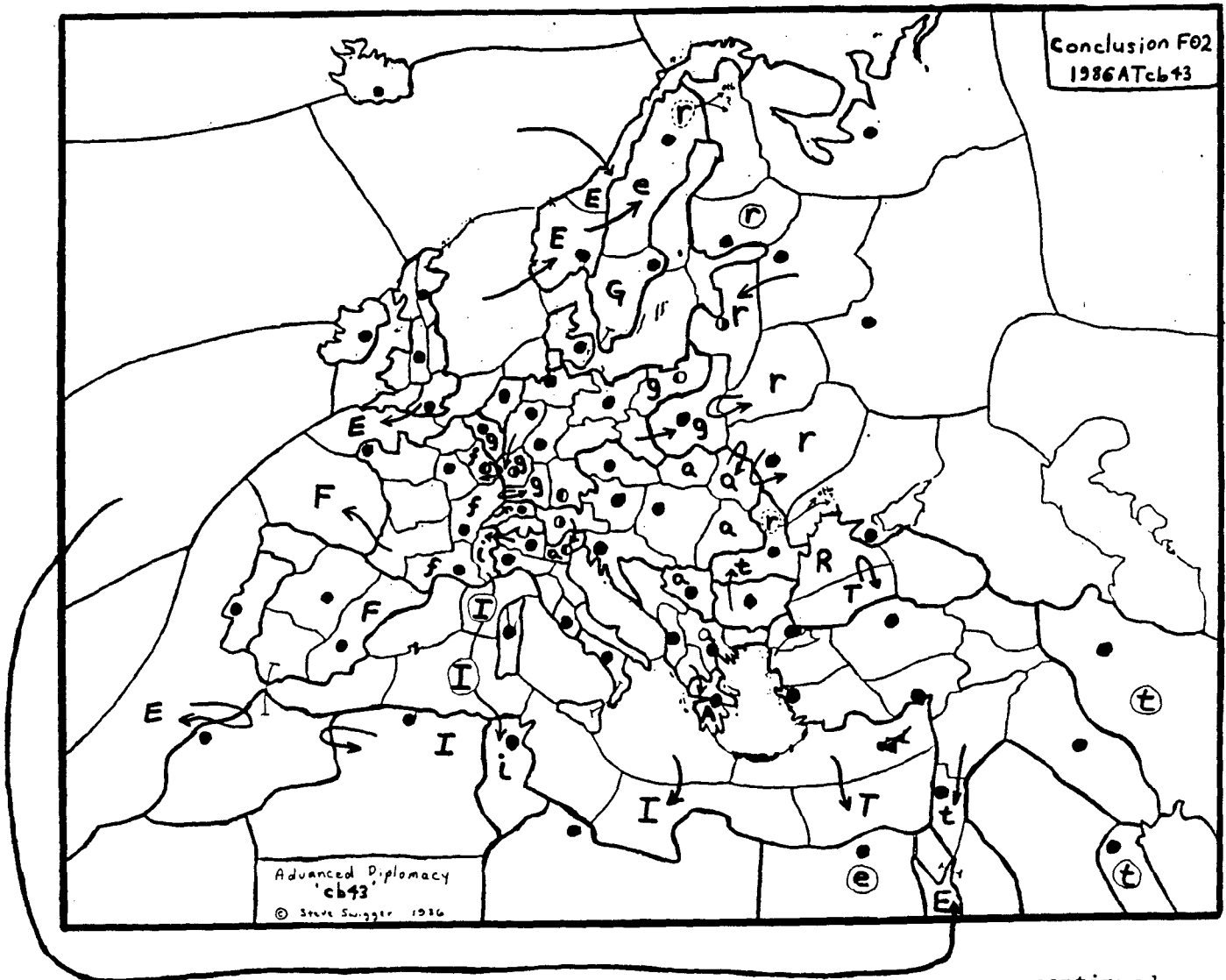
Uncle Bob slumped to the deck, the dregs of the Screech bottle dribbling down his stubbly chin as he fell asleep, exhausted.

Advanced Diplomacy¹¹

DURHAM EAST (1986ATcb43)

FALL 1902 ... Victorious Sultan unleashes dervish hordes against embattled Czar ... Warsaw falls to German troops ... Austrian forces thrust into Italian territory ... Britannia reacts to Middle East threat while driving Russians from Scandinavia and clashing with Italians ... French square off against Kaiser's armies as Italian threat fades and British threat looms ...

- AUSTRIA (Marc Peters): A tyl-VEN, A WGA s (Ger A sil-war), A EGA-kie, A TRA s (A ser), A SER s (Tur A bul-rum), F epi-GRE, A MAC s (F epi-gre)
- ENGLAND (Bruce Geryk): F nwg-KIO, A chr-GAL, F nth-CHR, F lon-ENG, F mao-RED, F CAD-mor, A EGY hold
- FRANCE (Steve Clark): F BRC s (A mar), A MAR hold, F gas-BIS, A ZUR s (A lyo), A LYO s (A zur), A LOR-saa
- GERMANY (Paul Clarry): A sil-WAR, A PRU s (A sil-war), A ess-SAA, A BEL s (A ess-saa), A WUR-lyo, F STO s (Eng A chr-gal)
- ITALY (Kenn Potter): A sav-TUN, F LIG c (A sav-tun), F WMS c (A sav-tun), F ALG-mor, A mil-SAV, F ion-CMS
- RUSSIA (Alan Stewart): A gal hold (dis/ret:LAP, otb), A BYE-war, A KIE-ega, A HLS hold, A stp-LAT, A rum s (A kie-ega) (dis/ret:SEV, otb), F NBS s (A rum)
- TURKEY (Marc Hurwitz): A syr-PAL, F cyp-EMS, A GUL hold, A PER hold, A bul-RUM, F SBS-nbs



... continued ...

Supply Centre Ownership Chart

	<u>HAD</u>	<u>GNS</u>	<u>LSS</u>	<u>NET</u>	<u>TTL</u>	
A: VIE, BUD, PRA, TRI, ALB, MAC, SER, (½ TYL) +GRE, + (½ VEN)	7	2	0	+2	9	build 2
E: LON, EDI, LIV, DUB, ICE, (Ecf*) +EGY, +CHR, +GAL, -PAL	7	3	1	+2	9	build 2
F: PAR, LYO, BRE, BRC, MAD, ZUR, (½ LOR) +MAR	6	1	0	+1	7	build 1
G: BER, ESS, HAM, FRA, HOL, STO, (½ SAA, PRU, BAV) +BEL, +WAR	6	2	0	+2	8	build 2
I: ROM, TUR, MIL, NAP, SAR, TUN +ALG, -MAR, - (½ VEN)	7	1	1	0	7	build 1 (ANN)
R: MOS, STP, KIE, SEV, ARK +HLS, + (½ LAT), -GAL, -RUM	7	1	2	-1	6	remove 0/1 (retreat?)
T: CON, ANK, SMY, ADA, BUL, MES +RUM, +PAL, +GUL, +PER	6	4	0	+4	10	build 4

* Ecf - English Colonial Force

Potential Units remaining: Neutrals - 4, ½ Supply Centre pairs - 2 = 6

Press:

VENICE: The wealthy Medecini Banking Family announced what amounted to the "fire sale" of their Russian Banking Interests to undisclosed German and British principals.

TUNIS: The Italian Colonial Administration refused to pay reparations to Turkish Pirates and Cutthroats over what it termed to be minor little border insurrections.

SUBLIME PORTE TO rome: kenny, thou art mis-informed. In thy latest babblings, We heard a reference to "curish attacks (sic) on the Italian leader found of late in the Turkish Press." First, We assume that "curish" means "churlish". Second, We, in Our Press, have never insulted the Italian leader (one of many secondary titles of Our Supremacy's), why - to insult the italian leader would be to insult Ourselves!

Turkish Marc - Austrian Marc: OK - no more "lowly slug"ing - just low blows as I slug the Ruskies.

GLORIOUS SULTAN OF ALL THE RUSSIAS to lowly pretender: alan, it pleased Our sense of humour to indulge your rabid delusion that you rule russia, whilst simultaneously having Our german and austrian auxillary colonial troops contain your futile rebellion. Now We in Our Wisdom have decided to administer the killing blows with Our Imperial Jannisaries.

ROME: The Italian Government Press moved to scotch rumours of impending peace discussions with the French. Officials refused to attach any significance to the Duke of Milan's departure from Paris last week. Members of the Royal Family have been hinting that the discussions are taking place.

SUBLIME PORTE TO paris: stevie, thou hath destroyed a loyal italian auxillary unit of Ours. We hereby transfer Our municipality of marseilles to Our italian province from Our french province. Remove Our auxillary french forces from marseilles north immediately, stevie!

SUBLIME PORTE TO london: brucie, WE am glad that you, brucie, have finally admitted the wisdom of submitting to Our Imperial orders. We therefore appoint you, lowly one, to the title of Our Man in Cairo. Henceforth, lowly brucie, you are to be known as Pasha Bruce.

ATHENS: The Pope arrived in Athens today aboard the Austrian Cruiser "ArchDuke Ferdinand" for top level discussions with Balkan and Cypriot Orthodox Princes.

Pre-Fall 1902 Commentary - Randolph Smyth:

We can now speak definitely about a central triple (G/A/I) attacking Russia and France. This Fall, WAR will surely be lost to Alan, and Steve is still on the strategic defensive despite his recapture of MAR. ZUR, for instance, is vulnerable to a combined assault,

... continued ...

Pre-Fall 1902 Commentary - Randolph Smyth (continued):

and a successful German A ESS-SAA will leave France facing a solid line of hostile armies next year.

Clearly the central triple has the advantage everywhere on the continent; but their opponents are well dug-in now, and progress will be slow on both fronts. Whether they succeed or not depends on what happens to the north and south; and here, the Spring developments were rather disappointing for them.

Sure, Bruce took advantage of German support into CHR. He "owes Paul one" now, especially since Alan tried for CHR himself. The move of A STP-HLS rather than -LAT suggests that Russia foresees a fight in the north as well as the center - so Alan's relationship with Bruce may have been derailed. The English orders weren't anti-Russian per se, but Alan seems to be resigned to future hostilities; and that's bad news for him.

So, Germany is fairly happy about Scandinavia, though he must beware of a flexible England demanding most of the Russian spoils. In this limited theatre, my predictions of an E/G/A/I alliance seems to be falling into place. But what of the rest of the board?

The big surprise was England's disengagement from Turkey. Naturally this increases Marc (Hurwitz)'s stock tremendously: he should build at least two this year, perhaps even three if he rejects the implied offer of friendship and takes a shot at PAL. Some of the extra units might go north, but Austria has his own designs on RUM and there may not be enough profit there (with three powers already carving up the Russian centers among them). More likely, a whole shitload of fleets will destabilize the Mediterranean situation, to Italy's great discomfort.

Since this was England's doing, however indirectly, one must view him as opposed to further Italian expansion. Is he trying to grab most of the French centers himself instead? Nice if he can get away with it, but he'd be giving an awful lot of people a reason to get back at him: Turkey (from before); Italy; Russia; and France (from the stab). That kind of play is likely to catch up with him somehow, unless he's sure that he's mended some fences as he goes.

More likely, I think he'll be consistently anti-Italian and prop up France for a while yet. F LON-BRE was a bit too obvious to be anything but deliberate. France's mis-cue with A ZUR is more believable since it's not part of the regular map and confusion over the variant is a possibility; but Bruce doesn't have the same "excuse". I discount that "mis-order". England's strategy seems to be annexation of the north while keeping a rough stalemate going elsewhere - a good objective, and apparently a successful one so far.

Predictions for Fall 1902:

AUSTRIA: A tyl-ZUR, A WGA s (Ger A sil-war), A EGA s (A tra-rum), A TRA-rum,
A SER s (A tra-rum), F epi-GRE, A MAC s (A epi-gre)

ENGLAND: F nwg-KIO, A chr-GAL, F nth-CHR, F lon-NTH, F MAO-cad, F CAD-gib(or mor),
A egypt-TRP

FRANCE: F BRC-lio, A MAR hold, F gas-BIS, A zur s (A lyo) (dis/ret:ALP, otb),
A LYO s (A mar), A LOR hold

GERMANY: A sil-WAR, A PRU s (A sil-war), A ess-SAA, A BEL s (A ess-saa),
A WUR s (Aust A tyl-zur), F STO s (Eng A chr-gal)

ITALY: A SAV s (Aust A tyl-zur), F LIG-lio, F WMS-gib, F alg-MOR, A MIL s (A sav),
F ION-cyp

RUSSIA: A gal hold (dis/ret:~~LAP~~, otb), A BYE-war, A KIE s (A bye-war), A hls-LAP,
A stp-LAT, A RUM s (Turk A bul), F NBS s (A rum)

TURKEY: A SYR hold, F CYP-ion, A GUL hold, A PER hold, A BUL s (Rus A rum), F SBS s (A bul)

... continued ...

GM's Commentary Comment:

A: tyl, WGA, ega, tra, ser, EPI, MAC ... 3 / 7
 E: NWG, CHR, NTH, lon, mao, cAd, egy ... 3½ / 7
 F: brc, MAR, GAS, ZUR, lyo, lor 3 / 6
 G: SIL, PRU, ESS, BEL, wur, STO 5 / 6
 I: sav, lig, wms, ALG, mil, ion 1 / 6
 R: GAL, BYE, kie, hls, STP, rum, NBS ... 4 / 7
 T: syr, cyp, GUL, PER, bul, sbs 2 / 6

Total Score: 21½/45
 Hit percentage: 47.8%

I'm still not convinced of the meaningfulness of what we're measuring here. Orders like those for GAS, GUL & PER can be pretty obvious, but carry the same weight as those for CHR & BUL which

require a high degree of insight into the thinking behind the moves. Comments, suggestions anyone? Regarding the ½ point for the CAD order; last time I suggested ~~that in~~ the case of a fielder's choice between which piece attacked and which supported. I didn't feel that the alternatives for CAD fit the bill since it was a choice of direction for attack, not which piece to use. Feel free to adjust as you see fit, Randolph, if I was previously unclear. Your interpretation of the Turkish move to RUM and the ramifications it has around the board should make interesting reading next season. Best of luck to all!

Game Notes:

1. Late again!!
2. Upcoming season - Winter Only.
3. In the event of the threatened mail strike I'll advise you all of any change to the deadline.
4. Tardy GM's address:
 Stephen Swigger
 35 Sharrowbay Court,
 Scarborough, Ontario,
 Canada M1W 3T1
 (416) 499-8706

DEADLINE: Winter 1902 - Thursday,
 October 15th, 1987
 (no phone calls after 10:00pm EST)

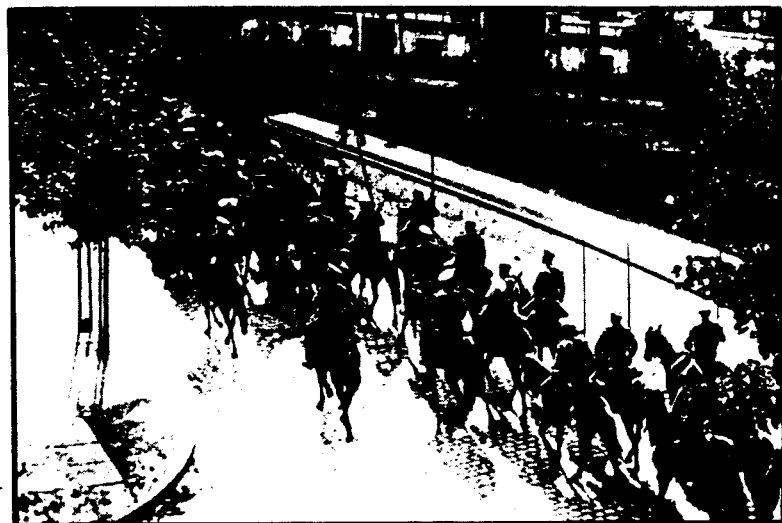


conquest: German cavalry troops pass through the streets of Brussels. The arrogance of



Le martyr

Russia faces the foe!?!



Russian cavalry passing through Tilsit on its way to the front in East Prussia

The Party Line

Alan Stewart: Your enjoyment of these letters may be enhanced if I remind you that many otherwise strange-seeming references to such things as nuclear annihilation are in context quite sensible when you consider the three questions that I posed last time:
1. You are attending a Diplomacy tournament. At lunch, you see, one table away, a player in one of your postal Diplomacy games sitting with the Gamesmaster in that game. You hear...

the player say "Here's my orders for 85FG"(your game), and hand the GM a blue envelope. The upcoming season is crucial and you'd desperately like to know what those orders are.

Fade to evening, where you find that you and the GM have been allotted the same room at the college where the tourney is being held. GM takes off his clothes, heads for the shower, blue envelope falls out of his clothes onto the floor. If you pick it up you will find it unsealed. Do you open and read the orders?

(b) You are the GM in (a) above, and leave the shower to get your shampoo, and find the player reading the orders. What is the penalty, or what do you do?

(c) same as (b), except the blue envelope the player opened didn't contain any orders at all. It was a different blue envelope, the real order envelope being safely locked away. What is the penalty, or what do you do, if you catch the player reading your hydro bill? You may assume that he breaks down and confesses that he thought it was orders.

2. You are President of the United States. Naturally you aren't as good at it as Ronnie but you just do your best. You are informed that the Soviet Union has launched an all-out nuclear attack, and that there is no doubt they have. You now have the choice of launching an all-out retaliatory strike with all that implies for the world, refusing to do so and leaving the Soviet union to dominate what's left of the world, or some half-way measure. You have a few minutes to decide. What do you do? Think fast.

Chris Carrier:

In PRAXIS #14 you asked a question to which I believe I have a possible answer...where is William "Death" Highfield?

According to some information I got in the hobby during its glory days (1985) Highfield had quit the PBM Diplomacy hobby to join the PBEM Diplomacy hobby -- and I found his name and account number on CompuServe, (based on the reasonable assumption that there is only one William Highfield on CompuServe in Rochester, NY) and wrote him a couple of friendly letters which he never replied to. Then, he wrote his letter of 1985 May 14 (printed by Steve Hutton in NFA 34 that October) in which he stated he would be leaving the hobby but coming back, under another name and from out of town, in a few years.

That was the end of the matter for me until PRAXIS 14 got here, so I got onto CompuServe and checked the userdirectory to see who was there. There is no William Highfield in Rochester, NY anymore, but there is one in Orlando, FL. Could this be the same person?

This letter is for print.

((Always up to mischief, aren't you? One of these days I'll have to go over to the reference library and see if they have a copy of the Orlando telephone directory so I can send Bill a free sample. Just to see if he likes it.))

((Warning: I somehow got an adhesive address library stuck backwards in my machine and although I got it out, some adhesive seems to have stuck to the roller and I can't get it off, meaning that the spacing of the lines in this issue may be a bit irregular.))

16

Randolph Smyth:

Another interesting issue, though perhaps too "heavy" with Carrier's personal (and often, quixotic) reasons behind his poll votes. I suppose I could drivel on the same way about my votes, but I don't think the rest of the hobby is (or should be) that interested in my reasons. What if we had to read through this kind of thing for each of 441 voters?!

((I'd find that very interesting, particularly if they were all as candid as Chris.))

Re p.13 ((interpretation of Berch Continuation-of-campaign rule)): I thought Bruce's answer to my question was the "party line". I don't think the substance of the answer makes much difference one way or the other, but if the GMs aren't consistent, where does that leave the poor confused players? I think the rule is workable with either your answer or Bruce's, but as with any new rule, it will be more controversial than necessary if these things can't be decided and publicized before it comes up in practice.

((Quite coincidentally, the issue came up in Blunt Instruments #4, wherein Mike Barno and Mark Berch wrote in, both taking the same position I espoused here last time. I think Bruce Geryk was convinced, although it's somewhat academic because the regularity ruling came too late for Bruce to use the Rule in his games.))

The Fashoda article was excellent--I only demur over your comment that F Kie-Hol is anti-English. The fleet in Hol is no more of a threat to Nth than it would be in Den. Even with F Hol-Bel in Fall 1901, I would not be too excited about the 1902 potential of F Bel-Eng.

Certainly F Kie-Hol is not anti-Russian, but if England is contemplating alliance with Germany, I'd normally prefer to take France out first: an early G/R clash isn't in English interests, I don't think, unless Russia is being hostile. In the unsettled pre-Spring '01 negotiations, I'd be among the "one in five" Englands with no particular objections to F Kie-Hol...though I'd put out feelers to discover why Germany trusts Russia.

Re the questions on p.1: #1(a) No, I don't read the orders. The envelope is his personal stuff. I wouldn't use his toothbrush either, even if my mouth felt slimy. (b) The game is delayed while all players have an opportunity to re-negotiate and resubmit. Naturally I have to say why, and the other players may fashion their own revenge. The idea isn't to punish the player, though--that's just the way the chips fall. (c) Nothing happened, so nothing will happen. I'm not interested in judging the morality of my players, only in preventing any unfair advantage.

I suppose you've gotten this question from the sharp division of opinion in the British hobby, as reprinted in Diplomacy DigestU a couple of years back. Everyone seems to have a different opinion.

Given my answers, I'm more torn by an extension to your hypothetical: suppose you didn't catch the player reading the orders, and he only confessed (or boasted) a few seasons later, or at the end of the game? Would it matter whether that season did turn out to be a critical turning point, or whether the "cheating" player had won as a result? In that case, I think all I could do as the GM would be apologize to the other players and notify the BNC for a possible ruling of irregularity. ((my answers to all questions at end.))

#2: No answer to the Armageddon scenario, just more questions. Did "we" provoke "them", or did they just do it to break up the midweek monotony? Is the entire Western world going to be toasted no matter what I do, or is an "all-out strike" targeted only at our military facilities? (or, do I have Star Wars working?) You haven't given us enough data for me to base a decision on.

I would certainly not rule out the prospect of retaliation--but if I were to do so, it would probably be a limited response. Enough to "punish" the aggressor, but not enough to wipe out all mankind (assuming I could predict the results: who knows what data the President has on the long-term effects of a nuclear war?) one thing to consider: I might very well put a higher priority on leveling Tehran and Tripoli than on blowing up Moscow. If we're gonna be taken over by another type of society, I think I'd rather live under Communism than under religious nutcases, regardless of who started the war.

(That last comment may be influenced by some preliminary readings I've been doing for an upcoming course in Comparative Law. From what I've seen, I still prefer the Western version of social/legal systems, but the Soviet methods are just as attractive "on paper" and the system seems to be maturing relatively quickly in practice as well. From the textbook descriptions at least, I wouldn't find it intolerable to live in a Communist society.)

((Well, with ronnie going soon, I wouldn't be surprised if you got your wish one day. Your whole comments on #2 were interesting as usual....I can't go along with wasting the wogs as you recommend. First, nuclear destruction is a little harsh a penalty for innocent bystanders, however defective their systems may be. Second, I don't think they'd have much success in "taking over" western-type societies, no matter how devastated. My most significant disagreement is with your choice-of-evils prefernce, simple because I don't believe that authoritarian regimes of the Libyan/Irabanian type are stable over time, as generally totaliatrian regimes may be. Gorbachev aside, I'd like to see more evidence that residents of Communist societies can ever get themselves out from under their masters before I would take any risk at all of surrendering to them.))

((When I was watching clips of the trial of the west german kid who buzzed the Kremlin it occurred to me that i really know little about Soviet law and its success or otherwiase. Any texts to recommend?))

Larry Peery:

You are right, I don't mention zines unless I've seen them (at least for review purposes). And I don't trade DW for anything because it is too expensive. And I don't trade XENO anymore because I don't have it. But if you want to trade DW News for PRAXIS that would be fine by me. Nor do I usually sub to zines because I usually end up getting them in Archives donations. I prefer to pour my money into useless things, like mass DW mailings....

I enjoyed your Demystification article. It's almost vintage Peeribleah.

Have you noticed that there is a direct relationship between the amount of space a given Dippy zine devotes to Chris Carrier and how well it does in his voting?

Have you ever read any of the old Canadian Dip zines, like BROB when John McCallum published it? The Canadians have always had a class act. I'm glad to see it(continuing.

-- ((No, never saw any old Canadian dip'zines, and with the zillions of would-be Archivists around, I stioll have no idea how to get ahold of any. For a reasonable price, of course.Pleae, please, don't make me think of myself as having to trade PRAXIS for DW News. I know pride is a sin, but I still have some left. I'll just send you PRAXIS because it pleases me, and if you want to send me DW News, for whatever reason, by all means do so--but don't call it a trade.))

Jacques Belanger:

Congratulations on your third place in the R.P! I guessed you would come in first place. ((Pretty dumb guess, if you don't mind me saying so.))

Answers:

- 1a) I'd read the orders. The temptation is too great.
- 1b) I've been careless. I'd reprimand the player, but there would be no penalty.
- 1c) Same as b).

2. I would retaliate full scale. I have nothing more to lose, and would rather die than be forced to live without being able to express my views under a soviet regime.

Bob Acheson:

Answers (Allan your questions suck!)

- 1a) No (but, if you really disliked the player in question...)
- b) No penalty--but, advise thew other player.
- c) Laugh like hell.
- 2) Let her rip.

Ernst Zundel:

Congratulaton, Alan, on da vunderful job you iz doing, courageouzly printing the real trufth about dose faith-killers da Christians, dose vhining drunks, and dose vimpering snivlers. Dey is almost az bad az da Jews, of which dere is zo many on account of dere being no Holocaust. Zank you also for your very kind vords about zat truly nice guy, Adolf Hitler... I know zat confronted with da trufth, dis Conrad would never publish it -- he would probably "lose" it in da trash, or cut da important parts. He would not even face the trufth. But you, you are committed to da trufth. I like zat.

Mark Weidmark:

I found Chris Carrier's comments about COSTAGUANA to be somewhat amusing. Conrad von Metzke is accused of being too nice, but it seems that Mr. Carrier suffers from a similar but diametrically opposed malady.

He's too mean.

The symptom common to both cases is an unbalanced view of the world. If Conrad were to say "Alan Stewart is the nicest human being on the planet," most people would be overcome with mirth.

It is equally outrageous when Chris calls COSTAGUANA a "turkey" and rates it a 0. Chris' supporting arguments were worth a chuckle -- to think that fairness, objectivity and humanity are failings to be despised. Ho, ho, ho.

But what are we really talking about here?

People.

Different people.

And that's pretty stupid, isn't it? After all, the discussion was about zines -- little printed things that people publish as a hobby for fun and relaxation. It's very nearly a silly proposition that these things should be subjected to criticism at all. I ask you, who among us (except me) has the skills and qualifications to write reviews? It is one thing to publish a zine, but quite another to sanctimoniously and self-righteously attack the efforts of another!

If judge you must, judge a zine on it's own merits. And if anyone should ever doubt the validity of this precept, I offer you this hitherto unpublished true-to-life portrait of our very own Alan Stewart...

(("It's own merits"?))



Doug Williams:

First, how many PRAXIS points are in answering your questions? If there are points in it, I'll answer honestly, if there are no points in it for me - then pblat to you!

Question #1(a):

as a denizen of that nebulous area bounding Bollevare St., re Realism - A Will Heartman Story, Praxis ?.

A. Stewart, I find myself incapable of cheating, especially if caught by your subscriber list, a reputation as impeccable whoops! what happened here? Try again. I bring to your subscriber list, a reputation as impeccable and clean as driven snow (that is snow found outside of 100 km of Toronto). I would personally pick up the envelope and put it away in a safe place, ie my coat pocket, for reading later away from any chance of getting caught.

#1(b):

As the GM, I would, of course, be struck dumb-founded at such a scene BUT would, of course, recover quickly to heap coals and fire upon his useless head and immediately dispatch his name to the sub list of one said Alan Stewart. He would, of course, be struck from the game, forfeiting all monies forwarded as game fees. 19

#1(c):

Still the same as 1(b), except to call him a whining, -snivelling wimp. To even think of confessing to me! What am I - a priest?! NO, I'm the GM!!

Question #2:

Why let the world suffer over a protracted period of time with radiation sickness and starvation. Be a man. Snuff it while it's still kicking. Push the button. They might make a 'B' movie out of it starring Ronnie as pres.

Hoy. What's this I read in Praxis. Stewart considering end to publishing career (nice title to The Examiner). Due to TCD receiving more '10's & 9's' than Praxis. This looks like stuff a great Canadian feud can be made of - if fanned correctly.

Let's see. Bob Acheson calls Alan Stewart a wimp at a CON. Alan Stewart publishes statement to 'Bobby' Acheson. Etc. I should save this stuff for my subzine column "Manure pile", Backstretch. I can never remember if you underline or put quote marks around titles. THE BUCK STOPS HERE-

((I don't have any comment about the Barrie Examiner, but I thought you might be interested to know that I know the Barrie TV Station's beauteous evening news anchorperson, Jan Sims, from University. A great Canadian, I assure you.))

((Bobby assured me that he was going to further inflame our feud in the most recent Canadian Diplomat, but as usual he wimped out.))

Steve Langley:

I'm just back from PUDGECON where I met those madcap Bad Boys of Dip, Jeff Zarse, Steve Clark and Bruce Geryk, A good time was had by all (except for an occasional whimper from Don Scheifler or Puppy Frueh as their titans died).

During a late night bull session with (among others) Bruce, the topic of WAP came up. It turns out that he is not using the rule. Both of his games filled before the BNC came out with his indecision, and so Bruce elected the conservative choice.

That leaves you as the wave of the future, the cutting edge of Dip houserules. How are you bearing up? Any NMRs yet? By the by, although I did propose a scenario to explain how I thought Berch (who is supposedly intelligent) might have come up with what I thought was a poor idea, I am more than ready to accept his word that he spent a lot of time thinking before he came up with what I thought was a poor idea.

I still think WAP or the Berch rule or whatever is a poor idea. And I'm still interested in hearing your opinion, as a GM who has used it.

((Well, I never intended to apply the Berch rule to my existing games, as I explained way back when (about a year ago, I think) when I announced my intention of using it. It isn't the type of rule that I think it fair to switch to in mid-stream. Since I announced my game openings with it, I confess to having had a capphony of uninterest, even though it seemed I had zillions of people wanting me to open games before I decided to use the rule. In a controversy with a Berch rule opponent, I breezily predicted that I would have no problem filling up these games, a prediction which looks pretty foolish now. However I don't intend to give up, and now that the postal strikes up here are finally over for another couple years, I intend to aggressively promote my game openings to innocent novices (explaining exactly what the rule involves before they get involved). I'm finally sending out unsolicited samples, something I haven't used since Issue #1. Promote these game openings--after all, will the Berch rule opponents really be able to enjoy the good laugh they are hoping for until the rule's many grievous drawbacks (none of which, by the way, I yet understand) have been fully exposed in practice for all to ridicule?))

Chris Carrier:

Well, I wonder if I'll get any hate mail or threats from Orlando, Florida. It should be interesting.

As far as the constitution goes, an amendment to balance the budget would be nice...but as for another constitutional convention, NO WAY.

A second convention to re-write the constitution would put the liberties Americans won during the Revolution and over the last 200 years since then at risk. Consider: while people sharing your conservative views would be at the convention, remember that the far left would also be at the convention and the document that would come out of it might not be to ANYONE's liking. A convention is simply too dangerous. Amendment by the existing process has worked for 200 years and I don't see why it can't work for 200, 400, or more years into the future. After all, our Constitution, which has survived longer than any other document of its type anywhere in the world, is one of the cornerstones of this country and I do not want to see it disrupted.

I greatly enjoyed the article about the Ontario election and I'd be interested to know how the results of the September 10 vote went. The slogan, "Ontario -- isn't there anywhere else you'd rather be?" I thought was very interesting as it epitomizes what most Americans like about Canada...a peaceful place with few of the problems of home...

((Hey, if you don't want any hassles from Mr. Highfield, why not try leaving him alone?))

((An amendment to balance the budget really isn't an ideal solution. The original Keynesian ideal was not that budgets should be unbalanced for the Hell of it, but that they should be balanced over the appropriate unit of time--over "the economic cycle", not in every calendar year. The problem with that is when you have Democratic congresses, they are quite good at running deficits in recessionary times to get things moving again, but aren't quite up to balancing the budget or running surpluses in inflationary times.))

((You're right about the constitutional convention, of course. Having done some reading recently on the process of constructing the U.S. constitution, it is hard to think of more than two or three currently sitting legislators, of either party, of the quality of those who did the original writing. And with Richard Viguerie and Norman Lear sitting in the true backrooms ready to launch their advertising campaigns? Vellllllly scelly.))

((The Tories got bopped more bad than I had predicted--the results were --actually I've blotted them out of my mind, but it was Lib 95, NDP 19, PC 16, or something close to that. The only interesting feature of the campaign was that Tory leader Larry Grossman, a pragmatist with historic ties to the left wing of the party, leaned sharply to the right in the campaign in an unsuccessful attempt to at least hold the party's rural right-wing base. It didn't work--or maybe it did, in that the party did a couple percentage points better than it looked like it was going to at the low point of the campaign, and without that gain the party could easily have been down to 6 or 8 seats. 16 is bad enough, but "6" looks like the verge of extinction whereas "16" appears merely disastrous.))

((Mark Weidmark predicted L 87, NDP 28, PC 15, much closer than me although he overestimated his New Democrats there a bit. Mark predicts a Liberal dynasty in Ontario until 2004. I predict that Party President Tom Long will win the upcoming leadership convention (Larry resigned on election night) and will become Premier of Ontario in 1998. His first Cabinet will contain at least five people who know how to play Diplomacy. Bob Runciman will not run for the party leadership. Rosemary Speiers of the Toronto Star will be screeching and screaming for the next six years about how the party lost because it is too right-wing and not friendly enough to young feminists and such like. No one will pay the slightest bit of attention to her, and the people she is now promoting for the leadership will be as unknown ten years from now as they are today. These are my predictions.))

Rod Walker:

I regret neglecting you and PRAXIS. I've written a few hobby letters in the past few months, but for some reason never got to you before the time ran out and I had to return to A Death in Jerusalem. Part of the problem may have been that for whatever reason, I didn't see much in previous issues about which I felt anxious to comment. You did at one point make the comment (if I may be excused a paraphrase here) that "intelligence tests measure intelligence". Indeed they do not. The notion that "intelligence" is a quantifiable "object" which can be "measured" is one of the great superstitions of this century. Arguing this point would take me a book, and such a book has already been written anyway. Read Stephen Jay Gould, The Mismeasure of Man. Frankly, if homo sapiens can be regarded as an "intelligent" species at all, then "intelligence" must be defined as that quality of mind which allows an individual to fuck up his/her own happiness, the happiness of her/his own friends/neighbors/relatives, and the happiness and well-being of other species as well. For a scathing fictional attack on the whole notion of "intelligence", read also Vonnegut's Galapagos Islands (if I recall the title correctly). For an inherently stupid species to give itself tests to measure its own "intelligence" has got to be the greatest irony in the universe.

((OK, I'm making my way through Gould's book, something I was planning to do sometime because...well, I'll tell you next time. Anyway, I have quite coincidentally read enough other stuff on the subject in the last year (Eynsenck versus that phony Leon Kamin, or whatever his name is) to tell you that I will be defending the value and utility of intelligence tests, although I may retreat on my implied assertion that they measure one "thing" which can be accurately quantified.))

((But not until I've done my homework assignment. Hope your novel is going well, by the way. Perhaps you could fill us in on the process. When you're "hot", how many first draft words do you write in an hour? Was the whole thing plotted in advance, or are your characters taking on lives of their own as the thing goes along? What style guide do you use? Do you plan to publish under a pseudonym? Will you send John Boardman a free copy?))

On to your questions:

1 (a). I do not read the orders. I still have some self-respect left.

1 (b). Alas, I have been careless. I can hardly "punish" the player, since he's behaved within the known ethic of the game and hasn't deceived the GM. (Well, I could say his intent was to deceive the GM by reading the orders and then not telling me he did, and kick him out of the game.) Frankly, if I had gone with a guy to my room to take a shower, we'd both be in it, so this question would presumably not arise. However, assuming it did: I would delay the game in the next issue, and tell all the players what had happened and give them all a chance to renegotiate and resubmit orders based on that knowledge.

1 (c). In that case, I would do nothing except make the guy feel as guilty as possible.

2. I would specifically order our armed forces not to retaliate. I would of course do what I could to see that the national defenses held back the attack. Since our bluff had been called, I would also take steps to dismantle our entire nuclear arsenal (now useless), since the USSR would afterward demand it be done anyway. Whatever else could be done afterward to repair the damage and to defend the country from actual invasion would be done. This would be the only way to avoid the worst sort of nuclear winter, although any deterioration of the weather that happened anyway would be harder on the USSR than on the US. I presume that by "all-out attack", you mean the sort which all analysts agree the USSR would undertake as a "first strike"; namely, attacks on our military installations. With any luck at all, the US could come out of such an attack with minimal damage. We would then eliminate our own nuclear arsenal, withdraw all military forces from the rest of the world and reduce our conventional arms to a defense force, repudiate all military treaties, and proclaim our complete neutrality -- and forgive the Russians for an attack which almost certainly was a mistake. We can then watch Russia and China square off as the world's new pair of bipolar superpowers, and pray they don't get down to a nuclear exchange.

Indeed, we need to start pulling back from military confrontation now. The nuclear bluff's utility is about over. As the USSR particularly, and China secondarily, become more aware of the growing Islamic threat to the south, Russia's interest in confrontation with us will rapidly diminish. A secret, but operative alliance between the Northern Powers will be a reality within a generation -- it will be interesting to see which side of that line China falls on. Your question is unduly paranoid and probably 10 years out of date. The USSR is coming increasingly to recognize that it is a Power on the defensive (which it's always known), but not against the West. Gorbachev is now desperately trying to reorient his nation's entire foreign policy.

((Rod Walker for Jesse Jackson's Secretary of Defense! Hey, Rod, my question wasn't paranoid. As you point out, it's possible to assume that such an attack would be launched only by mistake, important that the President of the United States to know in his own mind what he would do in such a contingency, a legitimate concern for the nation's electorate as a result, and besides the answers to the questions reveal that a lot of people just haven't thought about such a contingency and it is interesting to see what they come up within such a contingency.))

((Don't spend any time worrying about nuclear winter, though. It's a farce, a mere hypothesis at first, taken up then by some scientific popularizers who wished to use the idea for propagandistic purposes. Only a small fraction of the legitimate scientists in the field take it seriously, and then only as a hypothesis worthy of more study; about as many scientists as are worried about nuclear winter are also scared that the results of a nuclear war would be a "nuclear summer"--atmosphere disturbed so that more of the sun's rays get through, clouds of smoke not keeping rays out but preventing heat from escaping, etc. These guys just forgot to send Carl Sagan a press release when they formed their hypothesis.))

Andy Lischett:

1-a: As a player I wouldn't open the mysterious blue envelope. Not because it's against any Diplomacy rule, but because it's against a real-life rule. I would get down on my hands and knees and try to read through the envelope, then I'd pick it up off the floor (the courteous thing to do) and set it on a table so that I could try to read through the other side... but I wouldn't open it.

1-b: I get mad at him and never trust him again, but I don't penalize him. I would tell the player who submitted the orders that my roomy saw them, and tell my roomy that I told the submitter.

1-c: Same as above except that I wouldn't tell anyone anything.

I once had a player in a game I was GMing stay at my house, and after I'd gone on an errand for a couple of hours, he told me that he'd looked through my files for enemy orders, but couldn't find any. The orders were in the trunk of my car, but I still don't know if he was kidding.

2. Think fast, eh? If a significant number of our missiles would survive the Ruski attack, I would fire a lot (say, half) but save the rest to hold over the reds' heads during negotiations. If not enough of our missiles would survive to threaten Russia... I don't know what I'd do. It's been a couple of days since I read the question and I still don't know, so the admonition to 'think fast' kind of disqualifies my answer anyway.

((Hmm, now I have to come up with my own answers, which I foolishly hadn't decided before I prepared the questions. OK.))

((!a. No, I don't open and read the orders, because once they are in the GM's possession I consider them sacrosanct.))

((!b. Delay, opportunity for all players to renegotiate and resubmit. Penalty would be greater (offending player's units not allowed to move in upcoming season) except that my negligence as GM has contributed to the whole thing. What the GM might have done, although I'm sure everybody will consider this absurdly technical, is tell the player who submitted the orders that he would accept them only if the player was willing to accept the risks consequent upon his submitting them at a tournament where their security could not be guaranteed as well as if they had been mailed. I accepted orders at a Toronto game get-together only upon getting this stipulation in a situation where I had to leave the orders in the pocket of my coat in an unlocked closet once the game got going.))

((If the above looks silly, consider that the player whose orders were read is quite likely to be extremely mad, probably at the GM more than the player.))

((!c. Tell the guy not to do it again. If he's a non-smoker, smoke like a chimney the rest of the week-end and blow it in his face. I don't know--what can you do?))

((Randolph's variant question is much more challenging, of course. As far as I'm concerned, if he's found out after the game, he's home free, cause the game is, like, over. If he's found out during the game, I guess I'd have to agree with Randolph's suggestion. I don't think the importance of the season can make any difference, on Borkian neutral principle.

I would like to call a reality check on the entire hobby. I've seen entirely too many examples of people taking themselves and their games way too seriously.

I would like to call a reality check on Gary "Mouth of the South" Coughlan. Gary has been whining every season in 1986N with two pages of press about how everyone in the game has been unfair to him. Gary, shut up. We don't care if Frank Easton didn't take you up on your offer of an alliance. *It's just a game.* Gary suggested last season that stupid people are the first to claim that "it's only a game." Think about that one, Gary. Gary, believe it or not, seems to take the Runestone Poll more seriously than Linsey. Gary is extremely upset and now refuses to answer Linsey's letters simply because Bruce made the mistake of rating Gary's folded zine. Gary, consider yourself the "featured artist" of *Reality Check*.

I would like to call a reality check on Conrad von Metzke, who spent so much money on his zine that he actually wiped out his childrens' trust fund, and then told everyone on his sub list about his personal problems in graphic, self-indulgent detail. He is easily able to afford to send everyone an original Bolivian stamp, yet can't seem to find the grocery money. Apparently, Conrad is so emotionally tied to the hobby that every letter he receives which contains any kind words whatsoever causes him to stop typing in order to get a handkerchief to wipe his eyes with.

I would like to call a reality check on Bob Sacks, who accuses a mild-mannered old man like Fred Davis of sending death threats to people. Come on Bob. Bob's terribly upset because he doesn't have a monopoly on giving numbers to games. It's good that little things don't bother Bob.

I would like to call down a reality check on Bruce Linsey, who has to put out 80 pages of analysis about a poll on game newsletters. Is there really a need for a "Hobby Health Index," or "Longevity Points," or hopelessly corny Carly Simon lyrics? Only to people who believe that all of this has a profound impact on the world. Bruce got terribly upset when someone asked his readers to make him lose in the poll. Bruce, if Dick wants to lose, who cares?

I would like to call down a major reality check on Robert Smith. Bob Smith mailed out a separate mailing of his subzine just so he could stroke his own ego over his winning of the "Rookie Subzine of the Year" Runestone award, complete with a front-page reproduction of the dime-store certificate he got. Bob, congratulations. Yes, thirty-nine people out of the millions in the United States decided that you have the eleventh-best package of five photocopied pages of game reports, out of a total of twenty-one contestants. I'm sure it's nice to be so widely acclaimed. Bob then went on to rave about how someone dared to give him a zero as a vote. Bruce Geryk, who also accepts Bob's "challenge" of a duel with pistols at thirty paces, brought to my attention the fact that he gave Bob this vote. Bruce then showed me a copy of Bob's subzine. Good call, Bruce.

I would like to call a reality check on Melinda Holley. Melinda, I am told, plays in something like seventy games. Melinda, don't you have anything better to do? Do you have time to cook, or are you reduced to ordering pizza every night while you write Dip letters?

I would like to call down a reality check on the WAP rule discussion. Everybody has flipped out because the rule "violates the integrity of Diplomacy." The integrity of a game. This means that someone might not get credit in the game ratings, because their game has been declared irregular. I think that representing all the armed forces of Europe with 22 pieces of plastic is irregular. Mark Berch, you win the prize for this one. Congratulations.

I would like to call a reality check on Dave Berk. "I don't care about much, but when it comes to games, I get pretty pissed." Glad to see you have your priorities straight, Dave.

I would like to call a general reality check on anyone who gets mad about folds. Someone who decides that living a real life is more important than running games should really have his head examined, huh guys? Publishers finally decide that spending all of their free time and disposable income on a newsletter isn't right, and subbers get pissed off. I can't believe that people actually write nasty letters demanding their \$5 or \$10 or whatever back from a publisher who might lose ten times that much each issue. If you can't afford the \$5 or \$10, you have no business spending what little money you have on postage -- get a real job instead.

I would like to call a reality check on anyone who is so hard up for a social life that once he receives one or two letters or a telephone call from a person, he considers him a "good friend." It's really weird to read about people who call others "friends" because they correspond about games, and then wonder what those "friends" look like

because they've never met in person. It's nice to know a few letters can mean so much. Tell me, would you get married after a Federal Express delivery?

I would like to call a reality check in a big way on Michael Hopcroft. The first issue of his zine, after describing how he didn't have a job and that his college "didn't want him," proceeded to relate all his personal problems and failings, and then Michael topped this off by mailing it all to a bunch of people he didn't know. Glad to see that your life is an open book, Michael. Michael has stated on several occasions that he "lives for the mail." Michael, if your life comes to you only through a little metal box, do yourself a favor and don't admit it to anyone.

If the postal hobby were to disappear tomorrow, and the quality of your life would drop significantly, you are a freak.

Now that I've thoroughly offended everyone who takes the hobby too seriously, anyone who cares to have some fun might like to get my subzine to **Random Thought**. I run *United*. Steve Clark, 5425 S Woodlawn #3B, Chicago, IL 60637. (*Reality Check* gets the *Bad Boys of Dip* seal of approval.)

((Well aren't you a bad, bad, baaaaaad little bad ~~you~~ boy now! I won't deny that you've scored some big hits, at easy targets, but it seems to me you've missed wiyth a lot of shots as well.))

((What it comes down to is what it means to "take the hobby too seriously", as opposed to the opposite trait, praiseworthy in the scheme of the world according to Steve Clark, of "having fun". Is it "too serious", first, to play a game intensely and want to win? Not in my books. The structure of a game demands that you set your abilities etc against everyone else, and thus in most games maximization of "fun" is only achieved when you have a set of competitors who intensely want to win. Is a Dip game "fun" when the players don't give a damn about it? When the GM doesn't take it "seriously" because "it's only a game?"))

((("Is there really a need for a "Hobby Health Index", or "Longevity points", or hopelessly corny Carly Simon lyrics?" No, of course not. Any more than there's a need for baseball magazines (what a waste of paper!) or football pre-game shows or publications discussing the value of use 1 postage stamps, or Private Eye magazine or many other things in this world including games themselves. The common denominator between these things is that they are sources of pleasure, pleasures which could not be enjoyed unless some aspects of them were taken "seriously".))

((Your comment about "friends" made a point. I've always been suspicious of people who regard everyone they've ever got a letter from as "a good friend". Reminds me of Jimmy Carter, who eventually came to be ridiculed for calling people "close, very close personal friends" who he had never met other than officially and who plainly didn't even like him. But why shouldn't people meet friends through the postal hobby? They correspond about matters of mutual interest, find they like each other, and get together maybe a couple times a year because they enjoy the person's company. Let me assure you, once you leave university, grow up, and cease being bratty, you will find that this model of friendship corresponds much more closely to reality than the picture you seem to have: many of your current friends will be dispersed all over the country, you will be consumed timewise with family and career, and will regard as "good friends" many people with whom you correspond with much less (if at all) than you will with friends met through postal diplomacy (if any), and indeed will regard as friends people whom you see personally less regularly than you see postal diplomacy acquaintances if you attend a lot of cons.))

((The substantial thrust of your letter is to try to make people who spend too much time and energy on the hobby into objects of ridicule. There is no doubt that it is easy to be sucked into the hobby to such a degree that you spend way, way too much time on it. Dip literature is filled with warnings about this from its earliest days. People can easily be induced to feel guilty about it. My question is, what would you have people do with their leisure time that is so superior? If you have given up your chances at writing a classic piece of literature or getting a job or becoming President of the United States because of involvement in the hobby, then I agree there is a problem. But if you are treating the hobby as a source of pleasure--however "serious" your pursuits within it might be--and giving up only time that would otherwise (let's be realistic) be spent watching television or sewing or drinking or doing nothing in particular or talking to boring people whom you have nothing in common with anyway or drinking then you have lost nothing and have nothing to be embarrassed about and have no need to apologize to anyone and particularly not^{to} you.))

((I always wondered why Liberal Republicans had an undeserved reputation as "nice guys".))

((Have a nice day.))

The Good People of PRAXIS Assembled

I've never done a mailing list. Not because I think them dull, as some have claimed-- I always read mailing lists in 'zines, to see who's getting what. Maybe not in those 'zines that print them every three issues, but once in a while it's all right. Some of your sub balances are either (a) not listed--I'm behind in my bookkeeping (b) wrong--let me know--or (c) highly flattering, in that I never got around to cashing your cheques so you're getting th this stuff free.

Bob Acheson (quite a while) P.O. Box 4622, Station SE, EDMONTON, Alta T6E 2A0
Edward Ainsworth (26 or thereabouts) 58 Easlea Avenue, Watford, Herts., WD2 4RH, England
Mike Barno (23) 2811 Robins St. Endwell, N.Y. U.S.A. 13760-3314
Jacques Belanger (20) 9851/2 MainGuy, Ste-Foy, QUEBEC GLV 3S5
Mark Berch (25) 11713 Stonington Place, Silver Spring, MD, U.S.A. 20902
Jeff Bevis (21) 7074 Holton Duck Lake Road, Holton, MI, U.S.A. 49425
Simon Billenness (T), 630 Victory Blvd (wonder when this subdivision was constructed), #6F, Staten island, N.Y. U.S.A. 10301
Derwood Bowen (31) 2140 E. State St., Salem, OH, U.S.A. 44460
Ron Brown (21), 44 Carmichael Court, KANATA, ontario K2K 1K2
Jim-Bob Burgess (T), (a big tall guy if you haven't met him), 100 Holden St., Providence Rhode Island, U.S.A. 02908
Kathy Byrne (quite a while yet), 29-10 164th St., Flushing, N.Y., U.S.A. 11358
Chris Carrier, 1215 P Street 12, Sacramento, CA, U.S.A. 95815
Dave Carter, a Great Canadian even if burned out, 118 Horsham Dr., WILLOWDALE, Ont., M2N 1Z9
Derek Caws (T), The Old Kitchen, Bere Farm House, North Boarhunt, nr Fareham, Hants, ENGLAND P017 6JL
Hugh Christie (T), 43 East Houston Avenue, Montgomery, PA, U.S.A. 17752
Steve Clark (21), 5425 S. Woodlawn, Apt. 3B, Chicago, IL, U.S.A. 60615
Gary Coughlan, 4614 Martha Cole Lane, memphis, TN, U.S.A. 38118. Soon to become a Cards fan?
Paul Clarry (22) 10 Banda Square, REXDALE, Ont., M9V 1Z5
Frank Easton, 2-73 Keele St., TORONTO, ontario M6P 2J8
Greg ellis (17?), 710 Rio Grange, Austin TX, U.S.A. 78701
Jim Finley aka "Lt. Finley, J.R.", P.O. Box 502, MCDEC, Quantico, VA., U.S.A. 22134
Matt Fleming (29), 514 E. Washington #1, Madison, WI., U.S.A. 53703
Claude Gautron, 150 rue Masson, WINNIPEG, Man., R2H 0H2
Paul Gardner (21), Rt 1, Box 2238, Newfane, VT, U.S.A. 05345
Bruce "Bad Boy #2" Geryk, 5528 S. Everett, Apt. 3D, Chicago, IL, U.S.A. 60637
Evans "Mean Man" Givan, (21) 8066 Camstock St., Citrus Heights, CA., U.S.A. 95610-4606
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W. Elmer Hinton Jr (T I guess), 20 Almont St., Nashua, N.H. U.S.A. 03060
Jeff Hoffman (32), 3 Canoe Brook Drive, Princeton Junction, N.J. U.S.A. 08550
Melinda Ann Holley (21), P.O. box 2703, Huntington, W.V., U.S.A. 25727
Marc Hurwitz (25), P.O. Box 191, Owi9ng Mills, MD., U.S.A. 21117
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Steve Langley (21), 2296 Edenroc Lane #1, Sacramento, CA., U.S.A. 95825
Travis Laster, 125 Garden Court, Winchester, VA., U.S.A. 22601
Matt Kazur (21), P.O. Box 5492, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. 20016
Bruce Linsey (22 + 40¢?), 73 Ashuelot St., Apt. 3, Dalton, MA, U.S.A. 01226
Andy Lischett (T), 2402 Ridgeland Ave., Berwyn, IL, U.S.A. 60402
Dick Martin (T), 26 Orchard Way N., Rockville, MD., U.S.A. 20854-6128
Peter Mateunas (24), Box 125, Fly Creek, N.Y. U.S.A. 13337-0125
Jack McHugh (21 + 40¢), 730 Unson St., Apt. 6, Allentown, PA., U.S.A. 18101-2212
Bruce McIntyre (21), 6191 Winch St., BURNABY, B.C. V5B 2L4
Bob O'Donne1l, 2700 Biehn St., Apt. 4, Klamath falls, OR, U.S.A. 97601
D.S. palter (21), 999 Central Ave., #300, Woodmere, N.Y., U.S.A. 08003
Kenneth Peel (T), 8708 First Ave., #T-2, Silver Spring, MD., U.S.A. 20910
Larry Peery (C), P.O. Box 8416, San diego, CA., U.S.A. 92102
Marc Peters 921 at most), 1814 Cameron Dr., #3, Madison, WI, U.S.A. 53711-3357

Bye, Bye Bobby

It now appears as though Judge Robert Bork is almost certain not to be confirmed as a Justice of the Supreme Court, which even uninterested readers of PRAXIS may perhaps applaud in the expectation that they are going to be spared from a whole lot of gloating. No, not really. I was going to say on the front page that there was a very exciting development that I wasn't even going to mention out of respect for the feelings of those of my readers who might disagree. Oh I might have mentioned that the issue had a letter from Mark Weidmark of Borkville--whoops, I mean Brockville!--or noted the superb performance of Boston defenceman Ray Bork (Bourque?) but that would have been all except perhaps for the full-page picture on the back cover.

I am quite shocked and depressed by Bork's defeat, but am gradually getting over it. I suppose I am required to offer a few comments.

Those who remember the debates in these pages over Rehnquist (William Rehnquist, that is, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America) and Scalia might expect to find me full of the same contempt earlier evidenced for the liberals and their works. I don't really feel that way. Sure, People for the American Way were operating at their usual gutter level and they had lots of comrades among the special interest groups. Yet there were no significant attempts to dredge up innocuous tidbits about the Judge's former life and twist them to achieve the desired effect as if Judge Bork were merely some sleaze competing in a particularly low-class Democratic primary. There was one foray of this type that you may not even have heard about. Senator Pat Leahy was going to make an issue of Judge Bork's alleged drinking problem. His concern was about an event some years ago in which Judge Bork arrived at hospital having suffered an arm injury and was (supposedly) found to have imbibed alcohol to a degree that put him just below the legal level for impairment while driving. Of course, Bork wasn't driving at the time; he went to the hospital after slipping and falling on some ice. Nevertheless you can see how a certain class of politician would salivate at the idea of catching Bork dead to rights (so to speak): Drinking and Walking, they's got him cold. Leahy satisfied himself with writing a personal letter to Judge Bork about the matter (don't know how many copies he sent to the Judge's friends) and leaking the story to the press. If you haven't heard of it, it's probably because the only news media that found the story worthy of reporting was--guess. It's USA Today, and what would we do without it? The liberals' new discretion in unleashing personal attacks must be attributed, I am afraid, not to moral scrupulosity but to the pragmatic realization that the American people don't like this kind of stuff and worse, it doesn't work.

The most distressing aspect of the Judiciary Committee hearings was the Senators' appalling ignorance of the basic constitutional principles of American law. Before the hearings I read somewhere that all the Senators on the Committee were lawyers. I dearly hope that this is not true. Indeed, having listened to Senator Dennis Deconcini's questions for as long as I could take, I think that it would be defamatory to allege that he is a lawyer. Joe Biden we all know about, now--Bork was damned in his view when he read Bork's work and found nothing worth stealing. Much of the impression Bork created of being halting and tentative and changing his mind was caused simply because it's damn hard to explain something complex to a moron with the same eloquence you can achieve when you're talking to someone who knows something about the subject under discussion.

Or is it hard? Some of Bork's supporters were expecting him, before the hearings, to be "Ollie North with a beard" and were disappointed when he wasn't. He could have been, had he been interested; it would have been simple to deflect the Senators' specific inquiries and launch off into attacks against those aspects of the Warren Court that made it so unpopular with the public in its heyday. It would have been simple for him to answer questions about the Court's expansion of rights in a way that would have had him denouncing crime in the streets and guilty criminals running loose by the end of his fourth answering clause without hardly anybody, and certainly not Dennis Deconcini, realizing that he wasn't still answering the question that had been asked. But he didn't do that because he's not, like Ollie North, a dishonest schemer with no respect for the laws and Constitution of his country. He answered the barrage of hostile, malicious, ignorant questions with patience, respect, and honesty even though it may have cost him a seat on the Supreme Court. I like that, although it's no more than I would have expected of him.

Should we turn now to Judge Bork's views? Much of the criticism of him has taken aim at his now infamous 1971 article for the Indiana Law Journal. I recently read a very condemnatory article about that article in The New Republic, and various press reports about the Borkian piece left me worried whether he really was the great jurist I expected, so I took an admittedly drastic step tonight. I went over to the University of Toronto and read it. It is one of the most brilliant lectures I've ever read--lecture because that's what it was, a lecture he gave as a guest speaker. It sets out Bork's view of the judicial role, one in which the judge must discover and apply legal principles neutrally in such a way that their limits can be clearly defined and explained to ensure that judicial decisions are more than just disguised statements of a judge's own values. Most of his controversial evaluations of prior Supreme Court decisions simply follow self-evidently. And he was (Gee, just like he said) not discussing whether particular results in those cases were correct, but whether they had been reached through proper application of genuine legal principles susceptible to critical examination.

What of his "confirmation conversions"? Well, as far as I've been able to determine, they're haven't been any. In all cases where I've been able to hear Judge Bork answering questions directly or to read a transcript of his questions and answers, such "conversions" haven't existed. One example will suffice: Judge Bork has said that he thinks the Fourteenth Amendment should be restricted to questions of procedural equality and racial discrimination, the questions for which it was intended as anyone with any knowledge of the history of Reconstruction will surely concede. Now he is asked what standards he would use in applying it, and when he offers some that go beyond race he is accused of changing his mind to ensure confirmation. Well, no, really--I am sure any law professor of any persuasion could identify occasions where the courts have taken wrong turns in interpreting a constitutional provision, in the basic approach. That hardly commits anyone to adopting a different approach once you become a judge, for all sorts of reasons--deference to a long-established body of cases, and more importantly the fact that the adoption of one approach to a problem forecloses other approaches that might have been adopted but cannot now be reconstructed. In other words, if the Borkian approach to the 14th Amendment had been adopted long, long ago, other means would have been developed to deal with the problems that Courts now use the 14th Amendment to address, other approaches which no one has bothered to develop; it would thus be irresponsible to "cut away" the extraneous body of law that has developed without at the same time attempting somehow to "reconstruct" the other roads that would have been built to the same destination.

Hey, this is getting too abstruse, which is what I wanted to avoid. Nor is there much point going on and on about the hearings--Bork's gone now, and we have to live in the real world. I'd still like to talk about Dennis Deconcini, unisex toilets and the question of which of the two is worse for the Republic but not now.

Ronald Reagan may have erred by emphasizing the extent to which Bork would be his legacy to the nation. He invited the politicization of the issue that the Democrats were so willing to provide. One general effect of the Bork fight will be to institutionalize the search for mediocre Supreme Court appointees. Anyone whose views are, in some area, radically different from the general consensus--i.e., anyone with any intelligence who has ever thought about anything--is now a dangerous choice for the Court when there are always legions of harmless mediocrities around who can fill a seat. If you're a Liberal President you don't presumably nominate a Larry Tribe, the Liberals' leading professorial Bork attacker. Tribe undoubtedly thinks of himself as an eminently confirmable moderate; once people have to subject themselves to the agony of reading Tribe's stuff, he will find out that distorting someone's position to appeal to the lowest mentalities is a game many can play. Al D'Amato wants Howard Baker. Others want Orrin Hatch. The southern Democrats, always high-minded, want a southerner. The conservatives have no one of the brilliance of Rehnquist, Bork and Scalia left, so I don't really care who is nominated. There's always Richard Posner of Illinois, a conservative of a very different stripe, very libertarian and market-oriented, the virtual founder of the "economics and law" school, but if the game is now finding provocative quotations and distorting them, Dick Posner will be dead before he gets back home after the appointment is announced at the White House. Let me look something up...Yes, his criticism of utilitarianism is that it maximizes satisfactions, while Dick Posner's ethical theory maximizes...wealth. Let Dennis Deconcini stew over that for a while. Lloyd Bentsen wants someone named Hickeybottom or something like that, without concern for the public disrespect for the institution of the Court that will result. Hickeybottom's from Texas, of course.

The 1987 Runestone Poll

It's time to take a good look at the 1987 Runestone Poll. The Poll's results are reported in The Cream Shall Rise, BRUX Linsey's typically comprehensive 88-page poll 'zine, available from him at 73 Ashuelot St., Apt. 3, Dalton, MA. U.S.A. 01226 for \$1 if you voted, \$2 if you were too lazy (no, I won't get into other possible motivations) to do so.

Pages 4 through 6 discuss the Poll's methodology. The final score of a 'zine is the average of two separate scores. "The Modified Mean" is simply the average total of all votes submitted for a 'zine after the top 10% and bottom 10% of scores are removed. This procedure sensibly mitigates the effects of grudge zero votes. The "Preference Matrix Score" is a little more complicated, derived by comparing voters' preferences for various 'zines. 37 people voted for (or perhaps against) both DIPLOMACY WORLD and PRAXIS in this year's poll; 14 gave PRAXIS a higher score, 16, unaccountably, preferred DIPLOMACY WORLD and 7 gave us the same score. PRAXIS "lost" that match-up, and such a matchup was made for every 'zine in the poll. The number of 'zines that PRAXIS "defeated" (such harsh terminology) is subtracted from the number that PRAXIS defeated, that raw score is converted to one out of ten, and you have the pref matrix score.

Shortly after I received Issue #1 of TCSR, two years ago, I became concerned that the preference matrix scores, while an essentially valid concept, had too much of an influence upon the final score of a 'zine. Before I could get around to writing about my findings I noticed that Bruce McIntyre had made the same criticism in EXCELSIOR and the problems with the pref matrix were later explored by Dick Martin in HOUSE OF LORDS as well. Let me show you what I mean. Let's take a look at the top 20 'zines by each standard:

<u>BY MODIFIED MEAN</u>		<u>BY PREFERENCE MATRIX</u>	
1. Blunt Instruments	8.625	1. Costaguana	9.924
2. Costaguana	8.608	2. Blunt Instruments	9.621
3. Retaliataion	8.545	3. Praxis	9.470
4. Praxis	8.308	4. Europa Express	9.318
5. Diplomacy World	8.300	5. House of Lords	9.015
6. The Canadian Diplomat	8.288	6. Diplomacy World	8.939
7. Magus	8.233	7. Redwood Curtain	8.788
8. Europa Express	8.217	8.= The Canadian Diplomat	8.561
9. Redwood Curtain	8.077	8.= Over There	8.561
10. Over There	8.070	10. Magus	8.409
11. House of Lords	7.885	11. Zine Register	8.333
12. Sleepless Knights	7.830	12. Cathy's ramblings	7.803
13. Cheesecake	7.810	13. Sleepless Knights	7.424
14. Frobozz	7.786	14. Diplomacy Digest	7.348
15. Zine Register	7.768	15. Feilletonist's Forum	7.197
16. The Armchair Diplomat	7.750	16. Perelandra	7.121
17. Rebel	7.744	17. Retaliation	6.970
18. Feuilletonist's Forum	7.711	18. Bushwacker	6.894
19. Graustark	7.692	19. Rebel	6.818
20. Kathy's Korner/Whitestonia	7.571	20. Excelsior	6.742

See my point? You don't? Hmmm, I've sort of forgotten it myself....Oh yes, the point is that there is, in the nature of things, a much bigger range between the top 20 matrix scores (3.182) than there is between the top 20 modified mean scores (1.54) Since the final scores, and rankings, are determined by averaging the two scores, the preference matrix will tend to have a larger effect on the final scores than the modified mean. This thesis could be explored much more effectively by someone with a greater knowledge of statistics, but look. The top ten in the preference matrix are much closer to the final top ten than the top ten in the modified mean. Only 15 of the top twenty in the modified mean finished in the final top twenty; nineteen of the preference matrix top twenty did do. Dick Martin's Retaliation finished 3rd in the modified mean but only 17th in the Preference matrix, suggesting that if the two components were of equal weight he could be expected to finish 10th (3=17divided by 2); Retal finished 12th overall, two places lower. Yet Dick Martin's other 'zine, House of Lords, showed an opposite pattern, finishing 11th in the modified mean, and 5th in the pref matrix. You might expect it to

finish 8th if the two components were of equal weight (11 + 5 divided by two); it finished 6th, two places higher. the 'zine doing better in pref matrix finished higher than "expected" in this sense; the one doing better in modified mean lower. This example proves nothing in itself, of course, but if you took time to look at both complete sets of rankings I am sure you could come up with many more.

Before anyone starts to slaver, none of this is due to a sinister conspiracy; it's a problem of statistical illusion. At Dipcon I suggested to BRUX a very crude way of reducing the problem by using a simple formula based on the way the National Football League used to rate quarterbacks until the mid-seventies. Simply rank all 'zines from one to whatever, by both measures, and add the rankings, with the 'zine with the lowest total being first, the 'zine with the second lowest total second, and so on. (Example: PRAXIS finishes with $4 + 3 = 7$, DIPLOMACY WORLD $5 + 6 = 11$, so PRAXIS ranks higher than DIPLOMACY WORLD.) The problem with this system is that it uses a quite crude method to decide final placings based on quite complex and accurate initial measures.

BRUX as it turned out was aware of the problem and had thought of a way to solve it. All you need to is alter the pref matrix scores by a formula designed to make the standard deviation of the pref matrix scores equal to the standard deviation of the modified mean scores. The rub is that there are already people who don't like the Poll because the formula is too complex, demanding that the Pollster "simply count the votes" and not indulge in a passle of high-falutin mathematics. Nevertheless I urge BRUX to make the change in formula next year and explain (in advance) why he is doing so.

Another point about the preferred matrix is that it tends to punish warehouse 'zines. Jeff Richmond complained about it this year, and Andy Lischett did so this year. Note that Cheesecake finished 13th in the modified mean standings. Yet it finished only 30th overall, really getting bombed in the pref matrix score. To my mind, the fact that the matrix hurts warehouse 'zines is a merit of the pref matrix scheme; I believe that Andy is justly treated by having his gamesmastering skills recognized in the GM Poll (where he finished first), while recognizing the diverse merits of such other 'zines as Cathy's Ramblings, Excelsior, Feuilletonists's Forum, etc. by acknowledging the degree to which their subscribers prefer them to warehouse 'zines.

You can have a lot of fun with the individual 'zine matchups, which I will now proceed to do. 27 people voted for both COSTAGUANA and MAGUS; 7 preferring each and the other 13 giving them the same score. This very substantial sample considers them to be equal in merit, so surely we must respect that? Yet 20 people voted for both MAGUS and OVER THERE, and by a vote of 9-6-5 (the last figure representing ties), they preferred OVER THERE, suggesting that OT must be the superior of COSTA as well since we have shown that MAGUS and COSTA are equally good. And the 15 people who voted for OT and REBEL liked them both equally; the voters for both REBEL and POMMES MIT MAYO preferred, however, the latter 'zine 6-4-0. POMMES MIT MAYO lost heavily to EXCELSIOR, but even EXCELSIOR, which has done so well in this chain of 'zines, could only tie herb parents' BOAST. BOAST tied BEAGLIERI, which itself tied HANSARD, the 'zine that finished 67th and last in the Poll. We therefore must conclude that HANSARD, which finished last, is more preferred than COSTAGUANA, which finished first.

Thank you very much.

We're up to page 5 of TCSR now.

The "lifetime history curves" are without doubt BRUX's most substantial contribution to the Poll this year, and perhaps in the three years he's been running it. They chart each and every 'zine's history in the Poll over the years. The curves allow you to appreciate at a glance such things as THE CANADIAN DIPLOMAT's consistent improvement right from the beginning, NO FIXED ADDRESS's gradual ascent to its glorious peak, followed by its symmetrical decline, SLEEPLESS KNIGHTS' simple consistency, etc.

The results themselves? Well, I assume you already know them. No real surprises. The "sub-polls" on page 43 compare the favourite 'zines of publishers, Canadians, and furriners (i.e., non-Americans). Larry Peery made a slighting remark in DW about how PRAXIS finished 3rd because it's a favourite of Canadians, whom undoubtedly weighed in with their (presumably too high) votes in massive numbers. In fact, PRAXIS finished 4th in Canada, below where it finished in the main poll, which came as no great surprise to me-- a lot of my compatriots don't particularly like it. Pierre Trudeau fans, I guess.

On page 44, BRUX looks into a question of interest: are the 'zines that win the "Rookie of the Year" prize good 'zines, on balance? Real good, or just OK?

The rookie section is a nice little walk back through history. This year's rookie-of-the-year, BLUNT INSTRUMENTS, was a spectacular effort and well deserved its second-place finish. Its future prospects? Let me say this...I think there's a very good chance that BI will never ever finish lower than second in its whole career (*harder-har-har*).

Next comes the sub'zine poll, and a fine essay on the rise and fall of the sub'zine. As a class, sub'zines bore me to tears. I don't get REBEL, which contains HIGH INERTIA the very respected winner of the poll. (By the way, I intend to get REBEL, REDWOOD CURTAIN, POLITESSE and some other 'zines I currently don't receive; I try to keep my interest in the hobby alive by 'rotating' the 'zines I receive, subbing to new ones as old subs run out.) THE MEGADIPLOMAT, one of my particular favourites, finished a good third; FIAT BELLUM, HARE OF THE DOG and SHADOWPLAY seem uperrated to me.

The GM poll deserves my own little anecdote. When Bruce Linsey called me up to inform me of my 3rd-place finish, it was a little earlier than I expected. I had intended to write three speeches in case BRUX printed quotes from the winners, as he has done in the past. I intended to have one speech ready for 1st, one for second, one for third, and an obscenity-filled diatribe for anything else. Anyway, after our conversation, I noted that BRUX hadn't told me where I finished in the GM poll, as he had offered to do the year before. After I hung up I got paranoid, concluding that I had finished so badly that BRUX had been embarrassed to tell me where I stood. I didn't think my GMing was that bad, although there's been a controversy or two in my games the last few months....I was delighted to find, when I got TCSR, that I finished 20th--exactly the same as last year. Seems pretty fair to me--all of the people finishing ahead of me of whom I have any experience deserved to, and my actual votes (7 9s, 2 10s in 14 ballots) are somewhat better than I would have given myself. So I'm happy...but, like last year, I have resolved to improve my timeliness this upcoming year and to open a slew of new games, thereby diluting the votes of any of my past players with unpleasant memories. Can't figure out why Dan Stafford finished 39th; he did a good job in the game I was in.

The essay for this section asks the question, "Do The Great GMs Publish the Good Zines?", correlating 'zine poll and GM poll standings for years past. I should mention that this and other essays in TCSR show a decided resemblance to some of the essays and statistical techniques used in Bill James' baseball abstracts over the past few years. And do it well. BRUX, have you considered sending Bill James a copy c/o his publisher? I've often thought of working to obtain the addresses of various luminaries I admire--Bill James, Woody Allen, Ronald Reagan, Hunter S. Thompson--and sending them freebies of PRAXIS to see whether I'd get a letter back. The study is interesting, BRUX concluding that "good GMs generally tend to publish good zines as well". I'm not that impressed with the correlation between the two. Of the 67 good GMing years BRUX has listed, less than half of the performances occurred in 'zines finishing in the top one-quarter of the 'zine poll. Great GMs tend to publish above-average 'zines, but I doubt that anyone would have denied that, and tend to publish great 'zines slightly more often than just good ones--that's the conclusion I'd draw.

There are two large controversies surrounding this year's poll--the application of the Davis Rule and the decision to not count the 'zero' votes Dick Martin asked his subbers to give to Retaliation. I have something to say about both, but I'll do that in a separate essay so the squeamish may avoid it. (*sometime - maybe*)

The voters---441 in all--and their qualifying involvement in the hobby are listed in a separate section, which makes interesting reading in itself. I didn't know, for example, that Luke Clutterbuck of Bobdi Beach, New South Wales, Australia reads Cathy's Ramblings. 21 voters came from Ontario. It seems to me that we ought to try to beat out Texas (25 votes) next year.

BRUX's next essay explains something called the Hobby Health Index, which is an indicator of the strength of the average vote for 'zines, GMs, and sub'zines, in a 4:4:2 ratio (I would suggest 5:4:1, and yes that underweights 'zines as compared to GMs). The average vote and thus the Hobby Health Index has been rising for the past three years, something BRUX attributes to the end of the Great Feud. This undoubtedly is a major contributing factor; just getting rid of the grudge zeroes must have had a major effect. (One cringes to think what the Hobby Health index would have been in 1985 if a give-VOICE-OF DOOM-A-zero campaign had been undertaken instead of the boycott). BRUX argues that more liberal voting standards cannot be responsible, as individuals might change their voting standards but large collectivities cannot. This I disbelieve.

First of all the composition of the hobby is always changing and I see no obvious reason why the three hundred or more people who voted this year but not two years ago should have the same standards as the electorate of that time. Secondly, why should not the voting standards of collectivities change over time? I can imagine this happening for reasons. People might have been so disgusted with things two years ago that they gave all 'zines a somewhat lower mark than they would give in a more pleasant time, making everyone pay indirectly for their displeasure at the state of the hobby which is in some sense everyone's responsibility. And I further think that collective voting standards, or at least averaged voting standards, might likewise become more generous or tougher for no discernable reason at all.

Let's look at it this way. If average 'zine votes have gone up but voting standards have not changed, then the zines of today must be better than the 'zines of two years ago. Is this true? I've made my own, purely personal little study, comparing the #1 'zine of 1985 with the #1 this year, the twos, the threes, etc--limiting myself only to those comparisons I could fairly judge, and recognizing that I rely on memory with all its faults. I came up with only 16 matchups I could judge, and the 1985 'zines beat their modern counterparts by a hefty 13-3. I don't believe the calibre of the average 'zine has improved in the last two years--indeed, I think it has declined. This would imply that the Hobby Health Index measures, yes, how satisfied the hobby is with itself, but not necessarily how healthy it actually is. It is absolutely true that it is a good thing that The Great Feud is over, but it has taken something with it, namely controversy. Before The Great Feud, 'zines were charged with a furious interest in the procedures and policies of the hobby itself, an interest that regularly flared into discussion and debate without any back-of-the-mind fear that you were committing yourself irrevocably to one of two antagonistic "sides" or indulging in destructive activity merely by expressing an opinion about somebody else's ways of doing things. Such discussion and debate was healthy, true as it might be that it had pathological offshoots, and its absence is a bad, not a good, thing. Eric Ozog wrote a witty little essay in the last Cathy's Ramblings dividing the hobby into three sections, "New Blood", "Golden-Agers" and "Old Farts" and analyzing each. He had a lot of interesting observations, most notably that "Hobby old Farts are rebellious, can be anti-Establishment, and would write emotionally charged, poison pen editorials until recently, when that became out of fashion after the 'great feud'." Yes, exactly, and I've read enough 'zines from 1983 and 1984 to be convinced that there is more to my view than foolish nostalgia.

BRUX's final interpretive essay on page 87 deserves more prominence. It's called "The Great Ones", and it offers a list of the twenty greatest 'zines by lifetime score considering only those listed in this year's poll. His methodology is a major improvement over that used in his essay on the same subject last year. There is one problem. Longevity has been given too credit and excellence too little. Under this system a purely wretched 'zine that lasted thirty or so years by a miracle of longevity would be permanently honoured as the "best" ever to appear in the hobby. Right now the system measures the entire area under the lifetime curve line. The system should credit only for the years in which a 'zine finished in the top half of the hobby's zines by measuring the area between the zine curve and the 50-percentile line--the area above the line only, of course. An above-average 'zine can be thought of as contributing something to its lifetime ranking, while a below-average 'zine has really added nothing to its pre-existing level of achievement. This argument is easy to understand, and so I recommend against setting any higher standard than the line of averageness--the 50th percentile.

If one were to go further and subtract points for years in which a 'zine had a below-average ranking, you would be committing the same error that Pete Palmer committed in designing his system for measuring the all-time worth of baseball players, one Bill James criticized cogently in the Bill James Baseball Abstract. Merely by existing, by surviving for another year, a 'zine should add nothing to its all-time ranking but neither should its ranking be reduced.

THE CREAM SHALL RISE--it gave me a lot of pleasure, as you may have guessed, and I congratulate BRUX for a truly spectacular effort. I recommend it without hesitation to anyone who is interested in postal Diplomacy. At \$1 or even--shame--\$2, you won't find a better hobby bargain.

And now, Dr Carlos Pedegral analyzes the handwriting of the Editor. Then we will discuss some of his slanderous charges.

HERE IS THE RESULT OF YOUR ANALYSIS, WHICH IS CONFIDENTIAL, OF COURSE. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS DESCRIBE THE DOMINANT CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR PERSONALITY AS REFLECTED BY YOUR HANDWRITING.

WELL-BRED AND EDUCATED

YOU ARE WELL-BRED, AN UNCOMMON FEATURE IN OUR DAY AND AGE. GOOD MANNERS RATHER THAN SHEER FORCE ENABLE YOU TO ATTAIN YOUR GOALS.

YOUR UNSWERVING CORRECTNESS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES MAKES YOU AN EXCEPTIONAL COLLEAGUE, COMPANION OR FRIEND, AND IS THE KEY TO A PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL SUCCESS VERY FEW PEOPLE ACHIEVE.

ABILITY TO COPE

YOU HAVE A GOOD ABILITY TO COPE, EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE LIKELY TO GET DISCOURAGED AND EVEN SOMEWHAT DEPRESSED WHEN ENCOUNTERING OBSTACLES.

JUST WHEN EVERYONE AROUND YOU STARTS TO BECOME CONVINCED THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN UP, YOU BEGIN TO CALL ON YOUR INNER RESERVE OF STRENGTH. BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ALLOW YOURSELF TO SURRENDER TO YOUR OWN WEAKNESS, YOU FIGHT TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE DIFFICULT SITUATION AT HAND. AS A RESULT, YOU USUALLY PREVENT A TRIP FROM BECOMING A FALL.

NONCONFORMIST

YOU DO NOT POSSESS MUCH PATIENCE, BUT IMPATIENCE, ONE OF THE TRAITS THAT CHARACTERIZE YOU, ALSO HAS ITS ADVANTAGES.

IMPATIENCE IS A FEATURE OF NONCONFORMITY, AND THE WORLD OWES MUCH TO NONCONFORMISTS, FOR THEY DO NOT ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE LED BY THE FALSE BELIEFS OF THE PAST. WITHOUT NONCONFORMISTS WE MIGHT NEVER HAVE GONE BEYOND THE CAVEMAN'S SUN WORSHIP. THEREFORE, DEVELOP YOUR NONCONFORMITY: IT IS A VIRTUE.

ROMANTIC

ONE COULD CALL YOU ROMANTIC AND SENTIMENTAL. AS A MATTER OF FACT, YOU HAVE A VERY HUMANE ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE. THIS LEADS YOU TO SEE THINGS IN A WAY THAT SOMETIMES BLINDS YOU TO HARSHER REALITIES.

YOU ENJOY DAYDREAMING, AND YOU LIKE TO THINK THAT THE OUTSIDE WORLD IS MUCH LIKE THE INNER WORLD OF YOUR DREAMS. AND YOUR DAYDREAMING HAS LEFT YOU WITH A CAPACITY FOR CREATIVITY. BUT, SOMETIMES YOU MAY BECOME OVERLY ROMANTIC AND EMOTIONAL.

SENSE OF JUSTICE

ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF YOUR PERSONALITY IS YOUR SENSE OF JUSTICE. YOU HAVE A TRULY HUMANE ATTITUDE THAT ENCOMPASSES ALL PERSONS. FOR YOU THE ONLY TRUE JUSTICE IS THAT WHICH IS POUNDED ON THE EQUALITY OF ALL MEN.

YOU ARE A PERSON OF STRONG CONVICTIONS, AND YOU WEIGH THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO OTHERS. YOU MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO SQUARE YOUR DEEDS WITH YOUR WORDS.

TENDENCY TO BE TYRANNICAL

THERE ARE TENDENCIES TO BOSSINESS IN YOUR HANDWRITING. IT IS NOT EASY TO SPECIFY THE SOURCE OF THESE TENDENCIES, BUT THEY GENERALLY INDICATE THE EXISTENCE OF SOME EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES.

YOU ALMOST ALWAYS HAVE A DEFENSIVE POSTURE WITH REGARD TO SEX. YOUR INHIBITIONS MAY HAVE CONDITIONED YOUR CHARACTER, SO THAT YOU HAVE ADOPTED A TYRANNICAL ATTITUDE IN OTHER AREAS. THIS BOSSINESS IS A WAY OF COMPENSATING FOR DEFICIENCIES OF AN EMOTIONAL NATURE.

THE PATH TO CHANGE IS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS THAT GIVE RISE TO THESE TENDENCIES.

LATENT AGGRESSIVENESS

INTENSE PEOPLE ARE GENERALLY DETERMINED PEOPLE; WHEN THEY ACT, THEY DO SO ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND SUCCESSFULLY. YOU ARE NOT ONLY INTENSE BUT ALSO AGGRESSIVE, WHICH CAN BE A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE FEATURE. ONE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN A SPIRIT OF DISCRIMINATION AND HABITUAL CRITICISM.

IF YOU SUCCEED IN CONTROLLING YOUR SOMETIMES OVERCRITICAL NATURE, YOU WILL HAVE BETTER SUCCESS.

TIMID

YOUR HANDWRITING DISPLAYS SIGNS OF INSECURITY, WHICH MAY CAUSE YOU TO REACT WITH EITHER TOO MUCH AGGRESSIVENESS OR, ON THE CONTRARY, WITH TOO LITTLE VITALITY.

A TIMID ATTITUDE CAN HAVE A SERIOUSLY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON YOUR LIFE: THEREFORE, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU OVERCOME IT.

UNAPPROACHABLE

YOU ARE CONCERNED, ACTIVE AND EFFICIENT, AND DO WELL AT EVERYTHING YOU UNDERTAKE.

IN SPITE OF THIS, YOU CREATE BARRIERS TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVATE LIFE FROM THE PRYING EYES OF OTHERS. WHILE GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS EASY TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU, YOU SELDOM ALLOW THAT COMMUNICATION TO REACH ANY REAL DEPTH.

DREAMY

YOU ARE DREAMY AND IMAGINATIVE. CONTROL YOUR DREAMS A LITTLE...BUT NOT TOO MUCH. THEY WILL HELP YOU TO SOFTEN THE HARSH REALITY OF DAILY LIFE WITH A TOUCH OF UTOPIA.

DEVELOPED EGO

YOU HAVE A DEVELOPED EGO. YOU ARE VERY CONCERNED WITH YOURSELF AND WITH WHAT OTHERS MIGHT THINK OF YOU.

THIS CHARACTERISTIC HAS BOTH A NEGATIVE AND A POSITIVE SIDE. DEPENDING ON HOW YOU USE IT, IT CAN EITHER LEAD TO VANITY AND SUPERFICIALITY OR ON THE CONTRARY IT CAN GIVE YOUR PERSONALITY A DIGNIFIED TOUCH OF SELF-RESPECT AND SELF-CONFIDENCE.

THE ABOVE ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR PERSONALITY ACCORDING TO YOUR HANDWRITING. AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMBINATION OF THESE CHARACTERISTICS WAS CARRIED OUT IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE PRESENCE OF SPECIFIC TENDENCIES OF BEHAVIOR. IN YOUR CASE, IT REVEALED 1 PARTICULAR TENDENCY ABOVE AVERAGE IN COMPARISON TO THE GENERAL POPULATION:

LATENT DEFENSIVE AGGRESSIVENESS (20 PERCENT)

THIS MEANS THAT YOU HAVE MORE LATENT DEFENSIVE AGGRESSIVENESS THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON. THE PERCENTAGE BETWEEN PARENTHESES IS THE MEASURE OF THE STRENGTH ABOVE THE NORM OF THIS TENDENCY.

I HOPE YOU HAVE FOUND THIS ANALYSIS INTERESTING AND THAT IT WILL BE PROFITABLE TO YOU.

WE ARE ALL AWARE OF HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO GET TO KNOW OURSELVES. BEFORE YOU MAKE A DEFINITIVE JUDGMENT ON THE RESULTS OF THIS ANALYSIS, LET YOUR FAMILY OR CLOSE FRIENDS READ IT. THE OPINION WE HAVE OF OURSELVES FREQUENTLY DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE REALITY. WE ARE GENERALLY EITHER TOO SELF-INDULGENT OR TOO CRITICAL OF OURSELVES. AND VERY OFTEN, EVEN CLEAR CONTRADICTIONS ARE INHERENT IN US.

THANKING YOU FOR YOUR CONFIDENCE, I AM,

SINCERELY YOURS,

CARLOS PEDREGAL

((Now, just a second here, "Dr" Pedregal. Let's get real. Now I don't say there's nothing in your approach; you're dead on about my strong sense of justice, I have to agree, although you seem to be a little mixed up about the content of true justice. But bossy and tyrannical? Emotional difficulties and defensiveness with regard to sex? Overcritical and filled with "Latent Defensive Aggressiveness"? Hmm...I can think of some people in the hobby who might testify on your behalf on that last one, having received some of my angry letters, but...there's a difference between objective analysis and simple defamation, and you're getting pretty close to the line my friend.))

((We'll see what the Good people of PRAXIS have to say about your charges. And then, after I've had a chance to gather some evidence--well, if you're not about to retract, then WE'LL SEE YOU IN COURT, MY PHONY SUPERSTITIOUS "DOCTOR" FRIEND!!!)).

NBA Predictions

I've never really done this before, only having become interested in basketball after playing the fine Strat-O-Matic simulation game reviewed here previously. But let's give it a try:

EAST

- 1. Boston Celtics--no strong challenger.
- 2. Washington Bullets--no thanks to Tyrone Bogues
- 3. New York Knicks--must deep-six Bill cartwright
- 4. Philadelphia 76ers--going nowhere in particular
- 5. New Jersey Nets---not with mike Gminski

CENTRAL

- 1. Atlanta hawks--playoff disappointment but so what
- 2. Detroit Pistons--this season's playoff disappointment
- 3. Chicago Bulls---won't need michael to do it all
- 4. Indiana pacers--my favourite. Stevce Stipanovich is my kind of player--medioc in all categories
- 5. Milwaukee Bucks--no 50 wins this year
- 6. Cleveland cavs--rooks fail to develop

MIDWEST

- 1. Dallas mavericks
- 2. Utah Jazz
- 3. Houston Rockets
- 4. Sacramewnto Kings
- 5. Denver nuggets
- 6. San Antonio Spurs

WEST

- 1. L A lakers
- 2. Golden state
- 3. Portland
- 4. seattle
- 5. Phoenix
- 6. L A Clippers

FINALS: ATLANTA HAWKS over LOS ANGELES LAKERS

PDO AUCTION '88

It's that time of year again...

John Caruso and I seemed to make a success of the PDO Auction last year. A lot of money was raised without any hobby controversy. Consequently, John and I have decided to run this annual fund-raising event for hobby services for another year.

Last year we distributed \$400 to Pontevedria, the BNC, the MNC, the Orphans Services and Ken Peel's hobby recruitment schemes. This year we would like to raise \$600, but we will need your help.

OFFERS

We need offers of items to auction. We will take anything: last year we auctioned off subscriptions, game openings, boardgames, photographs, records, stamps, and hordes of old zines. The stranger the items the better! If you think it could sell, let us know. Don't send us the items. Just let us what is available and suggest a minimum bid if you wish. We need to know what is available by November 25th. Please send all offers to John.

BIDS

When all the offers are in, John will produce a booklet showing what is available. This will be sent to all editors and will be included in Diplomacy World. People send their bids to John and the highest amount pledged will secure the item. The deadline for bids will be on Lincoln's birthday, February 12th. Go raid those savings accounts!

MONEY

When the winning bids have been determined, the money should be sent to John. Like last year, the money will not be allocated by John or myself. Instead the money will be divided up by a five person committee made up of mostly experienced former custodians who know about hobby services. Although John and I run services, we will not be applying or accepting funds from this auction. In addition none of the committee members will be eligible for funds either. This is intended to minimise any possible conflict of interests.

PLUGS

Publicity is vital for the success of the Auction. We urge editors to give the auction a plug both now and when the bidding stage starts. If you would like copies of the Auction booklet please let John know as soon as possible. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome. We look forward to hearing from you!

John Caruso, 29-10 164th Street, Flushing, NY 11358
Simon Billenness, 630 Victory Blvd Apt 6F, Staten Island, NY 10301

Have Fun



Civilization Forum

One more, last, final page to be typed out and this thing is out the door tomorrow. As I mentioned on the cover, I have now become interested in Civilization so maybe I'll maunder on about it for a while. The first thing to do in Civ is to deal with your neighbours over city sites. You need an agreement over division of areas of expansion. This should be little problem, as most experienced players realize the advisability of avoiding initial conflict and will bend to make a deal. At BRUXCON, a few of the players had had most of their experience in some sort of three-man game in which each takes two powers, and had developed a very militaristic style; these players, although knowledgeable, did poorly at BRUXCON because of their penchant for saticking their nose where it didn't belong and making enemies.

Many players take, as their general standard of success, the number of cities they have built. It says here that the eighth and ninth cities are of no particular use in the game. raraely will you develop any powerful combinations of "8" and "9" cards, and you can always buy "9"s anyway. The only use of ~~8 and 9 cards~~ the eighth and ninth cities is to ensure that when one or two get wasted you still have seven left.

Your fourth, fifth or sixth city should often be a "desert city", not on a city site, in a location chosen to block conflict with a neighbour or be safe from attack and reduction, contemplating an endgame position where a united front will be trying to reduce all your cities to move you back one on the AST chart. You do plan to win, don't you?

Before things get going you should know in your mind (by charting it out, if necessary) just what combinations of cheapo cards you can buy in order to ensure that you can make your country's AST total. Thoughts about cards? "Agriculture" is somewhat overrated; once you get to a certain point in the game, famine doesn't really hurt you much and may even help you maintain a balance between treasury and stock. "Astronomy" is delicious, allowing you to be opportunistic in picking up stray city sites and do damage to your opponents wherever they may be found. Perhaps at my suggestion, the rest of the board conspired to buy the last Astronomy card and deny Peter Mateunas, Thrace (I think) or maybe-yes, it was Crete wasn't it--any Astronomy in the last game at BRUXCON. I was especially delighted to see this because the buyer of the last Astronomy, Bruce Linsey, acted against his own interests as Peter's loss of seafaring power forced him to stick to attacking his nearby opponents, including BRUX himself. Great scam, though; destroyed Peter's chances entirely.

Trade boycotts are worthwhile only if a player gets two spaces ahead of everyone else on the AST. It's good to be the first into trade boycotts, organizing them, and also the first out, by negotiating the deal you really need.

In almost every session of trading, you should be planning to pick up a specified set of commodities which, with your entire treasury, will be just enough to purchase a particular card.

Don't show anybody else your trade cards or your hand. It's against the rules, and ruins the game.

As Egypt, build cities on the frontier with Babylon and on the border with babylon (hey those are the same thing!) and on the source of the Nile first, leaving the flood sites for later. The flood site ciyties will be for sacrifice, deisgned to be destroyed by calamities and raided by foreign ships and reduced so the crowd has something to "ooh" and "ahh" about while your basic % cities are safe from the tumult. Africa should be aggressive in insisting on a piece of Sicily and taking a far eastern border with Egypt to solve its population expansion problems.

Ships are mostly useful in controlling your treasury-stock balance.

Well I suppose that's all pretty obvious but then I've only played Civ twice, so why don't you write in and tell me what you know about Civ. Who's the best player you've ever run into? What's your favourite and least favourite country and what's your idea of a Civ preference list? I realize that by the time you get to #5 the other players' choice of countries becomes the most important factor. Do you like to jump out in front of the AST or hang back and if so how far? Are you an illyria fan like me? Do you set up trades just to slip epidemics over? Do you bring a few extra trade cards and slip them into your pocket just in case you need them? Shouldn't do that, you know. Do you think a nine-player game would work and if not, why not?

One more thing. Can anyone explain to me how to win at Titan?

I really, really gotta go. Keep in touch!

The Withering Away

So what's going on in the hobby? Not a Hell of a lot here, as should be obvious....Frank Easton and Doug Williams have put together a Canadian con, "Can-Con '88", for glendon College (a nice place) in Toronto August 12-14 1988. Their good sense is shown by the fact that at least so far, they haven't aske4d me to have anything to do with it, although I do take credit for persuading Frank not to have it the same week-end as Dipcon sas he was planning in the belief that no-one would be going to San Anton from Canada. I thought that having it on the same date would get some of our American friends real ornery, and rightly so.... Diplomacy World # 48 is out and it's not very good. I guess I should get off my behind and write something for it, as should you--you lazy bum! I have in mind an essay on Borkian neutral principles as applied

to Gamesmastering. I kid you not....I'm looking forward to getting Mark Berch's triple-issue Diplomacy Digest containing his answers (well, everybody's answers) to his gamesmastering questuions. It says something about the lingering backlog from the postal strike that I haven't got the issue yet although some of my American friends got it ten days ago....Simon Billeness has a flyer out promoting Diplomacy Worldcon, July 15-18 1988 in conjunction with Manorcon in Birmingham, England. It's a shame that he doesn't know that the first name of the inventor of Diplomacy is "Allan", not "Alan"....Still reading DW. The demo game end-game statements are quite interesting, as I'd been interested to see what would happen when randolph Smyth met up with Kathy Byrne. It appears that their letter-writing styles weren't complementary and Kathy and Edi Birsan got the better of it. Reading between the lines, it seems that the winning Birsan-Byrne alliance came to dislike Randolph because of his conservative style of play. I'm sure that's the very style which has made him so successful in the past, but it seems to me that he may have been taking it to extremes the last few years, not that I have any evidence or anything....Larry Peery has an article about an ideal game cast list. He mentions Dave Lincoln, which I applaud. It's amazing to see him at a BRUXCON with his kids or visit him at home--he's a quiet, nice, great guy--and compare that with his absolutely ruthless, bloodthirsty way of playing Dip. It's made him very successful. It's interesting that he seems to be teaching his kids the same approach to games--he throws them in (well, actually they choose what to play themselves) into game situations and never "helps them along" or expects anybody to let them win because they're young or encourages them to complain when, for example, Russ Rusnak devotes himself to destroying their chariots or they get hit in Civ. very impressive....So much for DW. Larry seems to have written most of it himself. Reminds me of this political college publication I edited. And you know what? that's the one problem an editor can't do anything about himself. Write him an article...puh-leeze!....

Finally got the fake Retaliation that came out some months ago. Nothing much to it. Interesting that many BRUX Linsey non-fans assumed that he had done it because the two aren't getting along. I can't respect the literary judgment of anyone who would draw such a conclusion. For one thing, the thing wasn't at all funny, and it contained none of the Linsey trademarks. Has anyone owned up for it yet (I hope not)....Hugh Christie has adopted longer periods between deadlines to accommodate canadian players. He publishes Over There, which I like. See mailing list for address....The most mis-spelled word around is "accommodate". It has two "m"s. About a year ago my secretary informed me (triumphantly, because I am a stickler about such things) that I was spelling it wrong, as I was. Since then, I've noticed that everybody who uses the word seems to make the same mistake--Randolph Smyth, BRUX Linsey a and Hugh Christie being three that come to mind....Rereading the Retal fake, I hereby declare that it was done by a resident of the Washington area....Hagalil Hamarvi by Ran Ben Israel, RR #2, 571 Sunnidale Rd., BARRIE, Ontaruio, canada L4M 4S4 contains interesting articles and letter-column discussion about Judaica. The official hobby Holocaust-denial letter 'zine....

Someone's going to have to deal with the "Bad Boys of Diplomacy", Bruce Geryk and Jeff Zarse and Steve Clark, very soon. I can't do it because I think the two ^{Chumps} met through PRAXIS and have been loyal fans, I knew them when they were just regular Rehnquist-hating guys. So who wants to bell the cat?