

How well does Dr. Carlos Pedegral know your personality? Find out by resubbing to...

PRAXIS

#9

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Editor's Team: Kansas City Chiefs

This issue sees the installation of an important Administrative Reform, namely address labels. I took this bold step because we are starting to approach the dreaded Issue # 11. Dreaded, because about half (at a guess) of my subscribers signed up for ten issues after # 1. If they don't resubscribe I will be unhappy. If they do resubscribe, it still means a lot of filing and paperwork, which I am not particularly skilled at.

The bracketed number after your name indicates the last issue of your subscription. Some numbers may be wrong; if so, let me know. Some labels don't include any number. These should be added by next time.

Two bonuses to encourage you to resubscribe before the next issue. Did you know that a trained graphologist can tell you all about your personality by examining a small sample of your handwriting.? That's what one J. J. Leonard says in a big two-page ad in the August issue of Sport magazine. Unfortunately the findings of this science are inaccessible to most people, because most experts charge \$ 100 or more. But, as part of a special offer to the readers of Sport magazine, Dr. Pedegral has agreed to analyze handwriting samples for a mere \$ 12 U.S.

I didn't pay attention to this ad when I first skimmed through the magazine, but it later occurred to me that the subscribers of PRAXIS are a fascinating lot, and that there are quite a few about whose personality I would like to know more. To get the straight goods. 100 % scientific. So I will select at random, one subscriber from among all those who resubscribe for ten issues or more before the next issue comes out, and pay for a careful scrutiny of his handwriting by Dr. Pedegral, under the condition that I be allowed to print Dr. Pedegral's assessment and any comments that the ~~victim~~ prizewinner has, and more importantly any comments that I have about the good doctor's findings.

Second incentive: all resub monies up to a maximum of \$72 U.S. received before December 1, 1986 will be donated directly to hobby services, one share each to the BNC, MNC, North American Orphan Czar, CDO (should be enough to buy the Executive a pizza), Fred Davis' Rod-Walker-Award trophy/prize fund, and maybe a sixth service if you can suggest any that need dollars. After all that, if you don't resubscribe you should have problems with repressed guilt and probably recurring nightmares.

Very bad news over the ransom last week. No Fixed Address, Steve Hutton's articulate and funny 'zine, is folding after the next issue. This is a very discouraging development. NFA was a 'zine that I always looked forward to, one that I was always anxious to open and was invariably reading within sixty seconds of picking it up off the hallway floor. It will be missed.

However there is good news in that Dick Martin is reviving his 'zine House of Lords, which is a forum for discussion of issues of interest to publishers and gamesmasters. It folded in 1984 after a certain aspect of its editorial policy came under criticism and the whole issue became a sidenote to another very important and disruptive controversy occurring in that year (no, not Reagan-Mondale, dummies!) I have ordered and received all the back issues of this 'zine and its reappearance is a promising and encouraging event.

Players note: The Algoma commentary, not included in the results flyer, is on pg. 7

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Struggle!

STANDBYS: Bob Acheson, Dace Carter, Steve Clark, Matt Fleming, Bruce Geryk, Melinda Ann Holley, Evans Givan, Craig Reges, Conrad von Metzke, Mark Weidmark

DEADLINE FOR ALL THREE GAMES: Friday, October 10, 1986. PHONE DEADLINE: 11:59 P.M. night before

1986 J

A L G O M A

Winter '02; Spring 03

The proposed federal electoral district of ALGOMA includes the geographic Township of ACHESON.

england takes it one step at a time; FRANCE TRIES TWO

AUSTRIA	(von Metzke)	REMOVE A Ser. A Boh S ITA A Tyo-Mun (nso), <u>F Aeg-Con</u> , <u>A Gal-Sil</u> , <u>A Vie-Tyo</u> (nsu), A Tri U (dis; ret Vie, Bud, Alb, otb).
ENGLAND	(Smyth)	BUILD A Edi. A Edi-Nwy, F Nth C A Edi-Nwy, F Bar S A Edi-Nwy, F Nwy-Swe, A Swe-Fin, A Den H.
FRANCE	(Finley)	BUILD F Bre. <u>F Bre-Iri</u> (imp), F MAO-Eng, <u>A Bur-Ruh</u> , <u>A Bel-Hol</u> , A Pic S A Par-Bur, <u>A Par-Bur</u> .
GERMANY	(Swigger)	<u>A Mun-Sil</u> , F Kie-Bal, <u>A Ruh-Hol</u> .
ITALY	(Bevis)	BUILD A Ven. F Ion-Gre, F Apu-Adr, A Ven S A Tyo-Tri, A Tyo-Tri, A Gre-Ser.
RUSSIA	(Bowen)	BUILD A Mos and A War. A War-Pru, F Ber H, A Ank S AUS F Aeg-Smy (ns) F Bla-Con, A Bul S F Bla-Con, A Mos S F StP (nc), A Lvn S F StP (nc) F StP H.
TURKEY	(Weidmark)	<u>A Con-Bul</u> (dis; ret Smy, otb), F Syr-Eas.

GM: Required for next time are summer retreats (I once took a summer retreat at the monastery in Bracebridge) and fall '03 orders.

Russia-Turkey: You are a strong diplomat. You threaten to get me to ally. Then, you send me a desperate letter that arrives deadline day. Say what?

Paris-London: So sorry--didn't seem like I had much choice.

Russia-France: Your decision will determine how this game goes. How do you decide?

Paris-Rome: See?

Russia-England: What now? Russia-Italy: Westward Ho!

Belgium: The Impostor writhed on his spartan camp cot. His field uniform was laid out across the field desk that occupied the tent's corner. At dawn he would lead the first wave of the assault--was his plan sound? His choices valid? Or had he betrayed his people's trust? His fleets, even as he tossed, slid across choppy seas, nearing the English coast--he should have known that an alliance would never last with a people who boiled all their food, reducing crisp and succulent produce to gelatinous lumps of gray muck... it was for their own good. Besides, he'd been offered a trade treaty that would put Italian zucchini in every kitchen in France. His mind was made up, the die was cast. Now to finish the gallant but doomed Germans and carry out the next step. He curled up beneath the old wool blanket and went to sleep.

KROSCIENKO AM DUNAJEC, Austrian Galicia: The trail was already cold, but - spurred on by the latest telegram from his faithful agent 'Fonzie' Gorbach, and even more by the thought of certain charms for which she would soon become immortal (Encyclopaedia Americana, Vol. 22, p. 56 et seq.) - Trilynda was the subject of one of the hottest (sic) pursuits in European history. Josef 'Sliv' Myslivecek, agent provocateur par excellence, to whom duty was as holy as the Shroud of Turin, could not take his mind off this creature of (er) excessive reputation. And so his quest brought him, by way of the Empire's (nay, even the Planet's) most obsolete railway lines, to this semi-Transylvanian hamlet of no great repute (albeit worth 55 Klein points for its postal cancel) as he tracked his subject o'er moor and marsh, through field and forest, via swamp and slough, amid thicket and tundra, around a dead trap and a very bad lie in the trees, and without the slightest benefit of a subway, in his rather quixotic quest for the Grand High Poobah of ZSOS.

"Trilynda!" he breathed, as the ancient locomotive wheezed its way up the 1% grade, "Thy name cavorts in my consciousness. I will find you, at whatever cost; you must be the key to ZSOS!"

OLAH-SENTGYÖRGY, Carpatho-Ruthenia (several hours later): It had not been the greatest of train rides. It never was, out here in the back provinces, for these were the areas that the Habsburg dynasty cared not a farthing about; it was, in fact, probable that the 'Old Goat' himself had never even heard of Carpatho-Ruthenia, let alone the all-but-invisible hamlet of Olah-Sentgyörgy, nestled high in a declivity in the rolling mountains on the edge of the Ukraine.

But 'Sliv' was not in the least concerned with the Kaiser's lack of geographic education. He wanted only to find the telegraph office - he had a feeling it was not an impressive edifice - and see if Fonzie Gorbach had transmitted a message.

So eager was Sliv, in fact, that he didn't even wait for the train to stop before he leaped off. (Just as well he didn't wait, because the trains don't stop in Olah-Sentgyörgy; they've never heard of it either!) Landing ingloriously in an oat-strewn field, he dusted off, then gazed about.

He was amazed - and it took a lot to amaze a veteran of Sankt Leonhardt in Windischbühlen. The little place to which he had come consisted in eight canvas tents, four mud huts, and - just off to the left - a fifty-six story metal-and-glass office building, with extravagant topiary landscaping, a bilateral fountain with a curious central statue, a brash mural of some sort of heathen rite emblazoned across the facade, and - in stark black Roman letters - a sign stating, "First National Trust of Ruthenia."

Sliv ascended the mosaic stairs to the front door, and entered. There was a desk in the lobby labelled 'Information,' and Sliv approached the young woman in attendance. "Excuse me," he began, "How did this get here?"

"How did what get here?" she replied.

"This building."

"Oh," she laughed. "The people who live in those tents outside wanted an indoor sauna, so they called this loon in Vienna named Gropius and gave him some line about a future Utopian mega-city - and here it is! Isn't it (she sneered) - lovely?"

"You mean you don't like it?"

"Would you? This used to be a nice rustic section of the ultimate in Habsburg obscurity - heck, even the Old Goat himself never heard of it! And now? A couple more monstrosities like this, and pretty soon it'll be as bad as Poughkeepsie!"

"But..." Sliv tried to placate her. "It may be, shall we say, a tad inappropriate, but you have to admit it's nicely done."

"So effing what!" she spat. "It's BORING! I mean, so they got a Picasso in the fountain and a Rivera on the wall. Biggie wow! Do you have any idea how dull it is, standing here day after day, being the receptionist for six hundred empty offices? Got any idea how many suites they've rented? Two!"

"Really?" said Sliv. "You mean you actually have tenants?"

"Two," she repeated. "Over to your left there is the telegraph company, and then up on the thirty-seventh floor is some flaky bunch called ZSOS."

Sliv paled, and both hands began to tremor uncontrollably. "ZSOS!?"

"Oh, you've met?"

"Yes...excuse me, I must get to the telegraph office...." Sliv started at a run down the hall.

"Don't bother," called the woman. "It's closed."

Sliv stopped and turned. "Until when?"

"Until they hire a new telegrapher. The old one died yesterday."

A chill came over our secret agent hero. "Died? Was it...expected?"

"My, no! It was one of the strangest accidents I've ever heard of. He was out seeding his lawn with one of those little plastic Whirlybirds that you just carry in your hand, and...he just tripped and fell in. Incredible!"

"Yes," said Sliv knowingly, "It is indeed."

"The police thought at first it might be murder, but they've decided now that the poor guy was just clumsy. I guess those screwy clues didn't make much sense."

"Clues?"

"Sure...five T-bone steaks, about a fourth of a nilgai carcass, and a photograph of a boat."

"Boat?"

"Something called 'Cracker Jar,' or something close, and it was out of some smelly Ottoman port or other - 'Punky Brewster?' - no, not that - well, anyway, it's one of those places on the Black Sea. I wonder if it's really black?"

"Well, if it isn't already, it will be if ZSOS takes over." Sliv doffed his hat. "Thank you, m'lady, I must go." And with that, he ran out.

The receptionist watched as he left. After the door had closed behind him, she picked up her telephone and dialed 3701. A gruff voice answered.

"Leo? This is Kitten. He's gone."

"Did you tell him about Akibizar?" roared the voice.

"Ah, shit! I knew it wasn't 'Punky Brewster!'"

"No matter. Did you mention the 'Krakaczar?'"

"Yes."

"Did you mention anything else?"

"No...not really...just the Picasso and the Rivera and the nilgai and...."

"THE NILGAI!?"

"Well, I mean, he asked about clues...."

"Oh my God, you told him about the nilgai....now you've done it, if he follows up on that one he'll have it all!"

"Uh-oh - well, he did seem rather dense...."

"Let us hope so," roared Leo. "ZSOS must never be revealed! All right, we'll do what we can. I leave tonight for Akibizar. Would you order a side of beef for me before I go?"

Kitten dissembled.

Somewhere in Greece:

Martini N. Rossi, Commander, Italian Second Army Group, sat at the conference map and wondered just what in hell he was doing in Greece. Why in the name of heaven we were ever in Africa for an entire year (was it only a year?), I'll never know, and now, with the Kaiser dead and the action heating up in the mountains, I get orders to load up on the boats and head for Greece! With First Army Group lost in the woods on a skiing R & R, and for some reason that idiot commander of the south coast fleet trying to join them, I just have to wonder. Are we at war with Austria? Fine way to go about it, attack them from the south, when First Army could have gone into Trieste on donkeys for the past year, and we've got these fleets that either won't leave port or can't do anything but move my army to the strangest places. If I had my drothers, I'd have headed up the coast for southern France way back when the hostilities started. Oh well, I can only pray that when we do finally see some action, my boys aren't so bug-eyed from Ouzo they can't shoot straight. Lord in heaven above, orders to load up again and head for Turkey . . . ?

France - Turkey: I'll miss Trilynda; any chance she'd want French
cider?

A SCANDAL IN CONSTANTINOPLE

Being a reprint from the reminiscences of John H. Watson, M.D.,
late of the Army Medical Department

To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. I have seldom heard him mention her under any other name. In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex. It was not that he felt any emotion akin to love for Trilynda. All emotions, and that one particularly, were abhorrent to his cold, precise but admirably balanced mind. He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen, but as a lover he would have placed himself in a false position. Once he had tried a 69, but found instead he was doing a 42. He was not enamoured by missionaries of any sort. And coming in the back door was simply against his forthright nature.

But, Trilynda . . . ahhh, my own blood runs hot at the memory of her. I had seen little of Holmes lately. My marriage had drifted us away from each other. My own complete happiness, and the home-centered interests which rise up around the man who first finds himself master of his own establishment, were sufficient to absorb all my attention, not to mention the demands of my gynecological practice, which was quite successful due to my attention to horn work, often thrice daily.

One night -- it was on the twentieth of March, 1903 -- I was returning from a journey to a patient (young Mary Whipplepuss, a stablemaster's daughter, very hot to trot indeed), when my way led me through Baker Street. As I passed the well-remembered door, I was seized with a keen desire to see Holmes again, and to know how he was employing his extraordinary powers. His rooms were brilliantly lit, and, even as I looked up, I saw his tall, spare figure silhouetted in the window, and witnessed the golden stream of urine splash down upon the cobblestones and spatter my spats. (Editor's Note -- This is the only recorded instance of Sherlock Holmes taking a leak. For a full analysis of this sentence and its manifold ramifications, refer to "Lurking Below 221B Baker Street -- What Got Professor Moriarty So Pissed Off," Bootmakers Journal, Vol. 29, No. 7, New York, 1975). I rang the bell and was shown up to the chamber which had formerly been in part my own.

With hardly a word spoken, but with a kindly eye, he waved me to an armchair, threw across his case of cigars, and indicated a spirit case and a gasogene in the corner. Then he stood before the fire and looked me over in his singular introspective fashion.

"Wedlock suits you, Watson," he remarked, "but I see you've been getting a little on the side... a little nookie with the stablemaster's daughter?"

"By God, Holmes, how did you know?!"

"Oh, it's quite elementary, old fellow."

"Come off it, Holmes, fuck that 'elementary' sarcasm crap. I'm not the incredible dunderhead you've always made me out to be."

"Very well, Watson. Using my extraordinary powers of observation, I was able to deduce your recent greengowning of a hoydon by the assimilation of two points: the big patches of fresh horse dung on your trouser's knees, and the fact that your fly is open."

"My dear Holmes," said I, "this is too much. You would certainly have been burned, had you lived a few centuries ago."

"There is no witchcraft in my methods, Watson, as you know. By the way, would you like some crack? I just invented it with my chemistry set."

"Holmes, you're not still playing with cocaine derivatives? Why don't you let me prescribe you doctor-approved drugs? Here, here's a prescription for arsenic, three tablespoons daily, and a pinch of cyanide before bedtime. Try the chemists down the street -- "

Suddenly Holmes threw his guant finger across his lips and pointed at the door. Someone was coming. Glunk-glunk-slop. Glunk-glunk-slop. Glunk-glunk-slop-BANG!

"What kind of creature is it, Holmes?" I shuddered.

"Fear not, Watson," Holmes said as he opened the door. A swarthy sailor clutching a bottle of Screech rolled into the flat. "It is but a kind-hearted fisherman."

"Grrrrrrrrr," said the fisherman. "My name be Uncle Bob, and though I be kind-hearted, I'm a cranky son-of-a-bitch. Grrrrrrr. Who of you be Sherlock Bones?"

"Holmes, kind sir, Holmes. I observe that you've only recently arrived in London, having spent some time fighting desparate battles on behalf of the Sultan of Turkey, winning numerous medals and honours, and that -- "

"Grrrrr, never mind pissing down anyone's back, Bones. I want you to find my niece. Her name's Trilynda. Last I seen of her was on my ship, My Lady's Arse. We'ze just got berthed on the Thames, and I decider to takes a nap. When I woke, she's gone. And in her bunk was this."

The kindly old fisherman pulled out from his sou'wester a large phallic object, curved, balanced on it's base by two balls. It was an ebony coloured stone boner.

"What do you make of this, Watson?"

"I say, Holmes," I said, hefting the heavy object in my hands, "now I know why my wife insists on negro manservants!"

"Just as you say, Watson -- now you know. But this phallus is also at the head of a trail of murder and mayhem. It was purchased last August at a little shop in Constantinople by a man bearing a keen resemblance to that master criminal, Professor Moriarty. Since then it's trail through the underworld has lead it from whorehouse to nunnery, causing orgasmic riptides in women all across Europe. But all to no avail -- no one has been able to crack the Maltese Prick!"

Using the sledgehammer I keep for certain kneejerk cuckolds, I tried to crack open the Maltese Prick myself. I managed to drive it through the floor and into the landlady's flat below, but Mrs. Hudson returned it a half-hour later, all wet (she said it fell into her bathtub) but without so much as a nick.

"It's no good, Watson. According to the legends of the Golumba tribe, the Maltese Prick was forged in the fiery snatch of the mythic black goddess Shee-uh-uh-uh-UNH. The only thing that can penetrate that ebony encasement is the legendary triple orgasm. The fact that the Prick was found in your niece's bunk is of the gravest importance, Uncle Bob. Quick, tell me, why did you come to London?"

Uncle Bob produced a crumpled piece of paper and proffered it to Holmes. The great detective barely glanced at it before passing it on to me.

"Now, good doctor, here is your chance to prove that you are not a dunderhead. What do you deduce from it... but hurry, a lady's life hangs in the balance!"

Eighteen hours later I had put the paper through every scientific test known to man, from litmus to bituminous. I read it through one last time. It was handwritten on Buckingham Palace stationery. "In light of your recent wartime heroics and bravery, I have decreed that you, Uncle Bob, should become the first native Governor of the British colony of Newfoundland. I will expect you to come here to accept your commission, say around crumpet-time on March twenty-first, 1903. Best regards for a safe passage, yours truly, Regina Victoria Windsor."

"Wake up, Holmes, Uncle Bob! I've figured it out!"

The detective and the fisherman stirred from their slumber.

"I've got it," I continued shouting. "The British monarchy is in on the plot to get the Prick. They intend to shove it up the prime minister's ass and then -- "

"Wrong again, Watson. Queen Victoria has been dead for two years. The document is a forgery. Watson, you stay here and keep an eye of the peas porridge in the pot eight days old. Uncle Bob, you come with me -- it's time we paid a little visit to the riverfront, disguised as whores! The game is afoot!"

"Righto, Bones!"

MORE TIME ALLOTTED FOR FRENCH RECRUITING DRIVE

The provincial electoral district of BRANT-HALDIMAND includes parts of three proposed federal electoral districts, BRANT, CAMBRIDGE and HALDIMAND-NORFOLK.

FRENCH REINFORCEMENTS ON WAY

AUSTRIA	(Cusack)	F Adr-Ven, A Tri S F Adr-Ven, <u>A Gal-War, A Vie-Tyo</u>
ENGLAND	(Holley)	A Bel-Pic, F Eng S FRE F MAO-Bre (nso), F Nwg-Bar, F Nwy S F Nwg-Bar
FRANCE	(Wiedemeyer)	RETREAT A Bur-Mar. A Mar-Spa, A Gas-Par, F MAO-Iri
GERMANY	(Hurwitz)	A Bur S ENG A Bel-Pic, A Ruh S A Bur, F Kie-Bal, A Swe H, <u>A Sil-War</u>
ITALY	(Carter)	<u>A Ven-Tri</u> (dis; ret Apu, Rom, Tus, Pie, otb), A Tyo S A Ven-Tri F Apu-Adr, F Ion S F Apu-Adr
RUSSIA	(Greier)	F GOB- StP(sc), A Lvn-Pru, <u>A Ukr-War</u> , A Sev-Mos, F Arm-Sev
TURKEY	(Givan)	F Bla-Ank, F Aeg-Gre, A Bul-Rum, A Ser S A Bul-Rum, A Gre-Bul

SUPPLY CENTRE CHART

AUSTRIA	(Cusack)	Home, + VEN/ -Ser. (4) EVEN
ENGLAND	(Holley)	Home, Bel, +NWY (5) BUILD ONE).
FRANCE	(Wiedemeyer)	Home, Spa, Por (5) BUILD TWO
GERMANY	(Hurwitz)	Home, Den, Hol, + SWE (6) BUILD ONE
ITALY	(Carter)	Nap, Rom, Tun/ -Ven (3) REMOVE ONE
RUSSIA	(Greier)	Home/-Swe (4) REMOVE ONE
TURKEY	(Givan)	Home, Bul, Gre, + RUM, + SER (7) BUILD TWO.

GM: Not one but two errors in the supply centre chart last time. Serbia belongs to Turkey; TURKEY receives two builds and AUSTRIA is even. Sweden belongs to GERMANY and GERMANY has one build and RUSSIA one removal. My profound apologies. I was concentrating so much on the adjudications that I thought the supply centre counts would be easy! I read over them a couple times and never caught them, either. I have a new system which should avoid these avoidable errors in the future.

GM: Next deadline is Friday, October 10, 1986, for Wintwr '02 and Spring '03. Phone deadline 11:59 P.M. the night before.

ALGOMA Commentary, by Blair Cusack

(pre-Winter '02)

(Note that in the post-Fall '02 Commentary, Line 4, "accept" should be "expect")

As the Fall moves showed, Austria and Russia seem to have pretty much sympathized with my perception that an optimal course of action by A/I/R was to seal the Munich-Berlin stop line. However the third party, Italy, chose to renege this Fall. In isolation, his?? of?? A/I/R at this time could be attributed to a lack of communication by Austria (see Press: "Rome"...), or, Italian self-interest and greed. But when France moves A Mar-Bur, S by A Paris (instead of the opposite) and orders F MAO Holds (!), then the trappings of an F/I agreement are there for all to see. Such restraint by France may or may not be with English approval--conceivably E/F could be working on Italy diplomatically to remain passive until Germany is KO'ed, and/or they 're working on him to get A/I at war and thereby retain the possibility of an E/F Eastern sweep.

But let's steer away from pure speculation and try to analyze the current situation to the best of our ability based on last season's observations. Munich was pointed out as being a key centre; its capture symbolizing the movement to the Middle Game. It was also noted that England is facing a bottleneck in StP, and that Turkey is finished if A/I/R gel. Lastly, France was seen to have a great deal of potential.

Munich is still critical, but there is reluctance by some parties to advance to the Middle Game (they still feel their prospects are ascendant.) England now has to face a StP that can't be taken until he can get a fleet into Bothnia (F'03 at least). Turkey is finished under about any scenario in the south-East (and that's a stupid move if ever I saw one....the loss of his press will be a blow to us all...sniff...).

((CONTINUED IN "DEMYSTIFICATION" SECTION))

The provincial electoral district of CARLETON includes parts of the federal proposed districts of CARLETON-GLOUCESTER and LANARK-CARLETON.

TRENCH WARFARE ON THE EASTERN FRONT

AUSTRIA	(Ockert)	A Bud-Rum, A Tri-Tyo, A Vie-Boh, F Alb-Adr.
ENGLAND	(Peters)	A Wal-Lon, F Nwg-Nwy, F Nth S F Nwg-Nwy.
GERMANY	(Brown)	A Lvn-StP (dis; ret War, otb), A Mun-Ber, A Hol-Ruh, F Kie-Bal F Den S F Kie-Bal
FRANCE	(Acheson)	BUILD F Bre. F Bre-Eng, F Iri-Lvp, A Spa-Gas, A Bur-Ruh, A Bel S A Bur-Ruh, F Nth-Lon (nsu), F Eng U.
ITALY	(O'Donnell)	RETREAT A Tri-Tyo. F Tun S F Lon, F Ion S A Ser-Gre, A Ser-Gre, A Tyo-Boh, A Ven-Tyo.
RUSSIA	(Coughlan)	BUILD A Mos.A Swe-Lvn, F GOB C A Swe-Lvn, A Mos S A Swe-Lvn, F Nwy-Swe, A Fin-StP, A Pru-Ber.
TURKEY	(Easton)	BUILD A Con. A Rum-Bud, A Bul-Gre, F Aeg S A Bul-Gre, A Con-Bul, F Bla S A Con-Bul.

Russia to Germany: Thanks for the magnificent opportunities you have given me this season! Your headaches are only beginning, and they will be getting worse.

Munich: The crowd was hysterical when word of the Russian troops in Prussia reached them. "Do not worry," he informed them. "The Russian Bear keeps telling me he is our friend. In fact, he will be sending more friendly troops this way and then claim it is all my fault because I did not respond to his insults. I am trying to change our status to that of enemy, like the Turks, so that he will order his troops away from our borders." And, with that, he turned and walked slowly to his gloomy, darkened room.

GM: I was so anxious to start typing all this juicy press that I almost forgot to say that the next deadline is **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1986** and that the phone deadline is 11:59 P.M. the night before. Equally importantly, thank to **STEVE CLARK** for unneeded standby orders for ITALY.

Marc-Gary: Letting France have England "makes your day"? Boy, you sure are easy to please. With even mediocre diplomacy on your part, I'd be defending against France, instead of working in the North where I don't belong. But, clever devil that you are, you managed to say all the wrong things to make me give my centers to that non-writing, undeserving Acheson while E/G brings you down a peg or two. Now that makes my day!

Russia to England: "Alienated everyone on" my "border"? Well, Germany attacked me with his "defensive" moves as he put it, Turkey provided me with the chance to exchange a useless southern fleet for a life-saving northern army to meet the German invader in Livonia, and Austria and Russia have always been friendly towards each other (even now he may be coming to my aid). That leaves you, and, contrary to your inflated opinion, you are by no means "everyone".

Austria to Italy: Thanks, you really know how to hurt a guy.

Austria to Turkey: You change your conclusions and I'll draw mine.

Tur-Aus: I wish your letters to me were as easy to read (comprehend?) as your press.

Russia to England: Enjoy your brief respite from the Russian bear hug. Germany's present is your future. In the meantime, you'll just have to make-do with those French kisses from Paris.

Austria to Germany: Lariat in hand and a tip-o-the-hat.

Austria to France: Attack,...Attack,...Attack, Attack, Attack--Yea, team.

Austria to Venezuela: I await my passport.Aus-Eng: Is this your finest hour?

Russia to France: Which shall it be, London or Liverpool?!

Russia to Italy: If you leave Austria alone, think about a vacation in Bavaria. If you retreat to Tyrolia, you're halfway there.

Russia to Turkey: Thanks again for my new army. I couldn't have done it without you.

Austria to Russia: Give me a "G" and I'll go ask Alicia.

Russia to Austria: Defense! Defense! Defense! Never surrender!

Russia to GM: I don't like to brag but I was in 1984 N as well as our present 1986 N.

The Party Line

Alan Stewart: I think I'll write a few "letters to myself" this issue, if no one minds. The first up this issue is Jim Finley. Jim's letter was around last time, but I held onto it to allow a few newcomers to get into the debate, and because its argument is (mostly) not tied to current events.

Jim Finley:

How's everything? I enjoyed your article about DipCon; also, the continued debate on legislation of morality. Another good issue ((# 7)). Of the zine, I mean--it's the same issue, as far as debate goes.

Another facet of that issue is in the papers, as our Supreme Court upholds laws against sodomy; any form of the practice, whether between homosexuals or heterosexuals-- I cannot, for the life of me, understand how it hurts anyone else, or is any of their business, if consenting adults choose, in private, to engage in any sexual act that strikes their fancy. That's not how the learned justices voted, though.

((The wisdom of such laws aside, I was surprised that any four honest justices could find that it was outside the state's police power. Not that they were dishonest--it turns out that their reasoning was based on another unwanted "extension" of Roe v. Wade. Just shows how hard cases make bad law, I guess.))

To me--regardless of appropriateness as a subject of legislation; that's already been discussed--another question pops up here. If it is moral for any two people to have a sexual relationship, how can it be okay to perform certain physical acts and not so to perform others? And if the relationship is immoral, any form of sexual expression is neither more or less right or wrong than any other.

((Any physical acts? Is there a basic human right to engage in sado-masochism even unto death? Well, I suppose that would be a fitting extension of Roe v. Wade. Necrophilia?))

I wonder what the other readers have to say?

((You had to ask.))

And to give the first issue another kick:

I think--I may be wrong, it happens often enough--that the reason behind the sincere desire voiced by many people, to protect the public by legislating against practices of which they disapprove, is a distinction they have failed to see. That distinction is the difference between being injured by another's conduct, and being offended by the same conduct.

If I were to lobby for legislation against behaviors I find offensive, I'd be a busy guy. I'd be pushing for laws against public smoking, against excessive violence and explicit sex in films;--and on TV--; against many forms of advertising; against music promoting irresponsibility in dealing with drugs; against a lot of things which deeply offend me, and for most of which I could probably make a fair argument that they are immoral. The problem is that those are not things I can honestly say injure me significantly enough to justify curbing the liberties of others. In a free, heterogeneous society, I may ask others not to offend me, but I may not order them without changing the character of that society.

I believe that while prostitution--for example--is offensive to many, myself included, the only people significantly injured by it are the participants, so the legislation appropriate is whatever is needed to ensure that participation is by consenting adults. In this area as in others, consenting adults have the right to harm themselves. That is what is happening whenever an adult smokes a cigarette, gets drunk, is injured in a high-risk recreational activity....

To argue that adults lack the right to make their own choices in matters of taking risks with their wellbeing, physical, moral or emotional, is to argue that they are--that we all are--not wise or mature enough to handle the responsibility. Well, if I am not wise or mature enough to choose for myself, how can someone else know that he is wise or mature enough to choose for me? Say who? That's not what being elected means--the people don't vote to say, "You know better than we." They vote to say "We agree with you on at least some very important issues."

((That's one theory of representation, but by no means the only one.))

((First of all, not all people are equally wise in choosing how to live their lives. To prove this, I suggest you step outside your home, preferably into a busy city street, and look around. The purpose of one stream of political science throughour history has thus been to find the means of insuring that the best and wisest people govern public affairs. This, to understare the case, has not been easy to do. Everyone has more or less given up on the hope of finding a system that will allow the best people to govern public affairs, but the outlook is not so hopeless for having the best principles govern public affairs.))

((There is no dominating theory or consensus on what is meant or desired by "representatio Hanna Pitkin's book The Concept of Representation covers just about everything anybody has had to say about it. I hold to the Burkean theory, whereby representatives are elected primarily for their judgment, to exercise superior judgment. The ultimate verdict on their success comes from those who are represented, of course, but I see no need to bow to every shifting temporary tide of the public will. The value of having representatives who can exercise such judgment and resist temporary hysteria can be seen quite dramatically now that they have this sudden drug hysteria in the United States.))

((I can't go as far as Maistre, who said "Through bad faith or inattention, it is fairly often assumed that a proxy alone can be representative. This is an error. Every day in the courts, children, the insane, and absentees are represented by men who derive their mandate solely from the law. Now the people unite to a high degree the three qualities, for it is always a child, always foolish, always absent. Why then can its guardians not dispense with its mandates?"))

The fact that 90% of the people are offended by something means that it is generally offensive, not that it is immoral, or harmful to the public. Even if it is immoral, it still may not be harmful to the public. The things that should be illegal are things like crimes against the person(s) and/or property(ies) of a specific victim or group of victims. Things like acts of violence against unwilling victims; thefts; drunken driving; fraud; you get the gist--acts of commission and omission that hurt people.

An important fact that too many people never absorb, never really believe, is that their beliefs and values are worth no more and no less than anyone else's, and that as long as they are not injured in the process, their neighbour has the right to disagree with them, to think and act as wrongly--according to their views--as he likes. It may be rude, inconsiderate and ugly, or it may be unobtrusive; that's irrelevant. His rights are as important as theirs--

((About your first clause, I can only say, "How true!". (Clever of you to punctuate it with semicolons so I couldn't interrupt there and then.) Arrogant as I am, I admit that in my heart of hearts, I just never will believe that my values are worth no more or less than, say, Adolph Hitler's, or that your values are worth no more than Idi Amin's, or that Chris Carrier's are worth no more than well, Hell!, Norman Lear's. I am a slow student at the liberal school of moral relativism.))

Personally, I'm too busy being glad I live where I am moderately free of having the "morals" of others forced upon me, and wishing it were more so, to get too agitated about the offensive-to-me things others do. If I could force them to give up their rotten ways, who knows what I might be forced up tomorrow by someone else? My freedom of religion? A lot of people would be happy to make that choice for me, too.

((Like who, for example? In the United States of America. If there are such people, I think that the best way to fight them would be to get the help of the evangelical Christian lobby in the United States, based as it is on the struggle to avoid religious compulsion into a state church.))

Well, I've prattled more than long enough.

((I don't agree, but suit yourself.))

Bruce Geryk:

While I am on the subject of the University of Chicago, I thought I'd ask what you meant by "but then I find all university campuses lovely, even the University of Chicago." I respectfully ask, what is the matter with the University of Chicago's campus??? I admit that the surrounding area is far from attractive, but the campus itself is incredibly beautiful. Far from having buildings of "cookie-cutter similarity," all of the buildings

(or nearly all, I do apologize for the Administration building) are Gothic in architecture, laid out in a very pleasing fashion, and the grounds are very well-kept. Complaints, anyone?

((Actually I have very fond memories of the University of Chicago. When I first visited there I was just a little off-put by being so close to the police precinct with the highest murder rate in North America, and by hearing a student on the dorm phone giving directions to a visitor and say "If you come from that direction right now, just drive right through. Don't even stop for red lights." My memory is of a lovely but elongated campus, so that if you walked through it north-south, the atmosphere was very nice, but if you walked through it east-west, the university atmosphere never really came through.))

I must ask, though, if you have something against my playing in Praxis. I am not a terribly good player, true (or so my "allies" tell me); would you be embarrassed to have a player of my quality listed on the pages of your august 'zine? In #7, you were all aflutter about the lack of standbys, so I thought I'd be kind and join the list. Yet, when I opened my copy of #8, I found eight names on the standby list, none of which were "Bruce Geryk." Should I take a hint?

OK, OK, no more sarcasm, even about Rehnquist/Scalia. In fact, I think I should say something, as I have a hard time keeping my mouth shut, and the ensuing struggle between my vocal cords and my jaw muscles can be quite painful. In all seriousness, I can tolerate (although not agree with) your praise of said judicial nominees. What I cannot tolerate is your summary dismissal of Steve Clark's observation that "[Rehnquist & Scalia] both think that sexual harrassment, sexual discrimination, and racial discrimination are economic problems that the government should ignore." I happened to be at a friend's home, watching cable TV, when the Scalia confirmation hearings were in progress. One woman, from the Nation Institute, had spent a year researching Scalia's judicial record as part of a review programme of potential Supreme Court nominees. She presented an excellent case against him, citing instance after instance where his rulings proved to be not only conservative (which was not her objection), but to be so extreme as to be "outside the mainstream of accepted conservative judicial thought." (this was her objection). I object as well. While I do respect a person's right to hold a certain philosophy, I do think it is possible for a person's philosophical views to be inappropriate to a certain situation. According to the woman's testimony (which was quite convincing), Scalia's interpretations of the law were such that the majority of even his conservative judicial colleagues could not agree with them. I wish I had had a VCR (or a better memory), but I do remember one case in which Scalia ruled that "sexual harrassment was not actionable sex discrimination." Interesting.

You make the point that "judges should ... decide what is legal [your emphasis] according to the law," and say that anyone who graduated from Stanford Law School first in his class would "get your vote" for Chief Justice. (I may be presuming a bit here in saying "anyone," but I would assume that if you would endorse Og the Caveman, you would not be too discriminating.) What I contend, Alan, is that for a judicial appointment of this sort, academic qualifications are not enough. The Supreme Court is, after all, theoretically representational, and its rulings, by and large, should

agree with the spirit of the law endorsed by the population in general. (And don't tell me that the law can only have one interpretation, and that the truly competent judges will find it. If so, why are there nine judges on the Supreme Court bench, and why are there so many 5-4 decisions?) The Court is certainly better-qualified to deal with the intricacies of the law than the masses are, but shouldn't the spirit (and, therefore, the interpretation) of the law be in agreement with the national attitude? After all, isn't that what this "legislation of morality" debate boils down to? That if the morals of the nation have changed so much as to make certain (currently illegal) practices acceptable, the law should recognize them as well? The Court certainly shouldn't be dictatorial.

Returning to the law school point, I also suggest that graduating first in one's class from such a prestigious institution does not necessarily mean that one has an infallible eye for the law (or anything even close). What a class ranking of this sort indicates, rather, is a keen intellect and a powerful rhetorical ability. Assuming that you agree with me when I say that there is room for argument in legal interpretations, isn't it natural for a person's judicial philosophy (or any other kind of philosophy, for that matter) to affect his interpretation of the law? In this case, then, the top-ranking law school graduate will be the one most able to push his interpretations towards his philosophical position, and make them defensible enough to stand. I also suggest that just because a judge can make his reasoning hold up against argument does not mean that his reasoning is correct. There are, I believe, many places in the law where one can "hide." I am not implying that judges will try to "warp" the law, only that they will naturally make interpretations which coincide with their beliefs on any given subject. I think you would be hard-pressed to find a judge who felt very strongly about an issue, but decided that he had no case for ruling the way he wanted to because there was no precedent whatsoever. The superior judges will always find a way around that.

I am not advocating anti-intellectualism (indeed, far from it). I only think that putting a judge with admittedly extreme views (yes, you can argue that point all you like) on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States is unfair from a representative standpoint. (No, there is no Transitive Property of Representation--A endorses B, so if B endorses C, A also endorses C--appointment by an elected president is not enough; look at how messed up the electoral college is.) Is it fair to have one-ninth of the Supreme Court represent a much smaller segment of the population (or at least a much smaller segment of the legal profession)? I think not. Perhaps you do.

I do agree with you, though, on your rebuttal of Messrs. Hutton & Carrier. Your refutation of Steve's letter in Praxis #8 was excellent, and I applaud your logic. If I may add one point to your stance on paragraph #8: I would hesitate to transfer cultural attitudes from one culture to another, and Steve attempts to do in his "temple prostitution" argument. The fact that another culture (although one which has admittedly influenced our own) prostitution was respectable does not prove anything about our own attitudes towards prostitution, except that they are different. There are many examples of different

cultures developing divergent attitudes about many things (even a cursory look at the differences between Eastern and Western humanistic philosophies will give evidence of this). Cross-cultural value transfers are basically invalid, as are the ones Steve suggests.

Pat Redthorne's letter, I think, is a little easier to refute than Steve's (perhaps you should have printed that one first and then warmed up?). After two-and-a-half pages of opinions, I would generally give it a rest, except that Pat's letter struck me as not terribly well thought out. Mind if I waste some more of your 'zine space (or, if you don't print this, your eyesight)?

Pat begins by stating that "people just aren't offended anymore if some lady can make a living giving men sexual pleasure for profit, or if people want to get in [sic] on with members of the same sex. What does this have to do with right and wrong, and how can these personal choices be a dangerous 'evil' in a society full of pollution, poverty, and racial and sexual discrimination?" Two mistakes, here, Pat. Don't make blanket statements like "people just aren't offended . . .," unless you have some positive proof. Alan certainly seems offended, I am offended, and I know many other people who would be (and are) offended. Lecturing is no substitute for argument (although the two sometimes make a good combination).

Secondly, I am not sure what you mean by bringing in "pollution, poverty, and racial and sexual discrimination." Are you trying to say that because the world is full of so much evil already, the existence of a few more evils makes no difference? Or do you mean that when compared to these other evils, prostitution wanes pale, and ceases to be evil by virtue of degree? Either way, the same argument could be used to justify many, many other crimes. This is rationalization, not justification.

What really hits me, though, is your treatment of incest and older person/young child relationships. To begin with, there is a concrete biological argument against incest, never mind a moral one. If a family reproduces within itself, the few defective genes that everyone carries are kept in a stagnant gene pool. If these genes were passed through the population at large, most would never show up as physical or mental deformities, as these genes are basically recessive in nature, and the dominant non-defective genes would override them. Within a family, the protection of dominance which nature has provided ceases to function. Dominant, healthy counterpart are not available to counteract these genes, and the resulting offspring end up severely deformed and handicapped.

The moral question, though, is equally important. I believe that a family should be something which a person can fall back on when others are not there. Friends cannot always be counted on; they have no blood ties to you, and if you alienate them enough, you can lose them. I agree that a family can have serious fallings-out, but this does not mean that the family unit isn't something very special, emotionally. Sexual relationships are all-encompassing in nature. When such a relationship breaks off, the entire relationship ends. Severance is total. For a brother and a sister to break off completely because of a failed sexual relationship, I feel,

is a crime. Family members are subjected to enough stress without having something like that block their emotional interactions.

The problem of having an "older man lead a young child into the beautiful world of sexual pleasure" is basically the same. The two people approach the relationship with vastly different emotional needs, needs which such a relationship is not really capable of fulfilling. The sexual needs of children (when they develop--how "young" is this "child" in your example, exactly?) are very different from the needs of adults (and you can check the latest current of psychological thought on that one). Sexual pleasure is not primary in these needs for a child, while for the adult, it often is. Compatibility cannot be ignored, and to enter into such a relationship with a child who has been "tyrannized by an oppressive and Puritanical family background," which could result in serious emotional trauma for the child, having prior teachings and present action clash so violently, would be the height of self-serving immorality. Please think your arguments through, Pat.

Finally, saying that "it's important ... to stand up to people like [Alan Stewart] whenever necessary" is a nice show of bravado, but it, like most of Pat's letter, relies on emotion and (faulty) rhetoric rather than argument. As an emotional "character witness" for Hutton and Carrier, it does fine. As a self-sustaining argument, I'm afraid, it is inadequate.

I would say more, but carbon ribbons are expensive. Just to remind you, Alan, what exactly did you mean about the University of Chicago's campus??? (I'm not letting you off the hook--remember my last letter.)

Kind Regards,

Bruce Gerye
Bruce Gerye

((No, no, no, no, no! I couldn't disagree more with your observations about the role of the judiciary. The Supreme Court, first of all, is not "theoretically representational". Your remark reminds me of an incident in the confirmation battles over Haynsworth and Carswell when Nixon was President. When Liberal senators were challenging their qualifications to be judges, Senator Roman Hruska of Nebraska said "What about all the mediocre people in the country? Don't they deserve representation too?". He was subject to a storm of well-deserved derision. The Supreme Court should be composed of the best judges in America. It is appointed by politicians, and so you have some compromises allowing for regional, ethnic and religious representation in practice. This isn't too harmful, necessarily, as there are enough good minds and judicial temperaments around to allow these compromises while preserving the quality of the bench. But it is not and should not be a theoretically representative body.))

((Then we have the comment that the Supreme Court should "agree with the spirit of the law endorsed by the population in general". A recipe for disaster. How are the judges supposed to know just what spirit of the law the population in general endorses? Take a poll? The idea is an invitation to that kind of judicial subjectivism that is disastrous for the rule of law. If invited to follow your 'spirit of the law', I might just look around and decide that ~~your~~ ^{the} 'spirit of the law' was a very conservative spirit that authorized me to render decisions that supported conservative interests even though the letter of the law would have gone the other way; liberals might, after reflection on the same 'spirit of the law' decide that the population in general endorses a very liberal spirit.))

((If the population in general has some view of the law that it wishes to have adhered to, the means of ensuring this is its control over the election of members to democratic legislatures that make the law. Or to look at it another way, if judges are to determine the "spirit of the law" that the population wishes to endorse, the most objective way to determine this is by an objective and unbiassed examination of the actual words used by the legislators who the people elect. No recourse to guesswork, speculation or supernatural entities is necessary.))

((A final note on this point. Let's say that great numbers of people succeed in getting laws enacted on an issue by persuading the public in general that their position is right and that they should elect legislators who feel the same way. Thirty years later the "spirit of the law" or whatever is changed, and that justifies judges in interpreting these laws differently? I think not, that this is illegitimate and undemocratic. If people believe that, say, sodomy statutes are wrong, their recourse is obvious: persuasion of the public and election of legislators who are committed to repealing these laws. Relying on judges to do it is short-circuiting of the democratic process.))

((I agree with you that a high academic placement does not guarantee a good judge, but I strongly disagree that superior judges will or do avoid making rulings that go against their private beliefs on issues they feel importantly about. Quite the contrary, it is the best judges who are quite unworried about making decisions that go against the beliefs, because they realize that they are judges and not legislators. If it were thought unlikely that judges could put aside their beliefs when making decisions then judicial review of legislation would likely never have been accepted, because it wouldn't make sense.))

((And as for the point about it being unfair for "one-ninth of the Supreme Court /to/ represent a much smaller segment of the population"...who's kidding whom, here? I admire the Democratic Party for its doggedness in refusing to recognize reality. Some of these types keep referring to Rehnquist as an "extremist". Rehnquist's political beliefs (not that I view them as that relevant, in themselves) are the same as those of the President of the United States, who less than two years ago finished kicking the Democrats' ass up and down these great United States, that being not the first but the second landslide he had won, the first against an incumbent President. Sometimes I think that the Democrats could keep nominating McGovern-Mondale types for the next fifty years, getting maybe, oh, one hundred and twenty or one hundred and fifty electoral votes in all twelve elections combined, and still continue to denounce the winners as "extremists".))

((You go on to agree with some of my views, and even to agree with my refutation of Steve Hutton! I knew that by the law of averages there had to be someone out there who felt that way. I'm not sure I agree with, or even completely understand, your point about cross-cultural transfers, though. Different cultures adopt different attitudes, but does this mean that we cannot criticize the values of different cultures, or examine their attitudes in order to test our own values? If I were to denounce the practice of genital mutilation of young women in Africa, for example, would my criticism be "invalid" as a "cross-cultural value transfer"??))

((Re Scalia: see my response to Steve Clark.))

Robert Acheson:

To give you my opinion in regard to your recent discussions....

I guess that I fall into the category of 'old-fashioned', but not 'that' set in my ways that I wouldn't listen to a differing opinion.

In regard to differing (abnormal) sexual behaviour, do what you want behind closed doors.

In regard to prostitution, you could end a lot of problems by legalizing it.

((This is true. You could also start a lot of problems by legalizing it.))

P.S. Demystification article, "Need Ally? Look in Mirror."--I usually find most Diplomacy articles redundant and boring. Yours, ~~reaffirmed my belief~~ was pretty good.

((You old kidder, you. I'm the opposite--I find almost all Diplomacy articles interesting, even if they're repeating something that's been said before. But my last article threatened to put me asleed right at the typewriter.))

Steve Clark:

For Berryman, check his "Dreamsongs". (I especially like #4). Peculiar, but I like them.

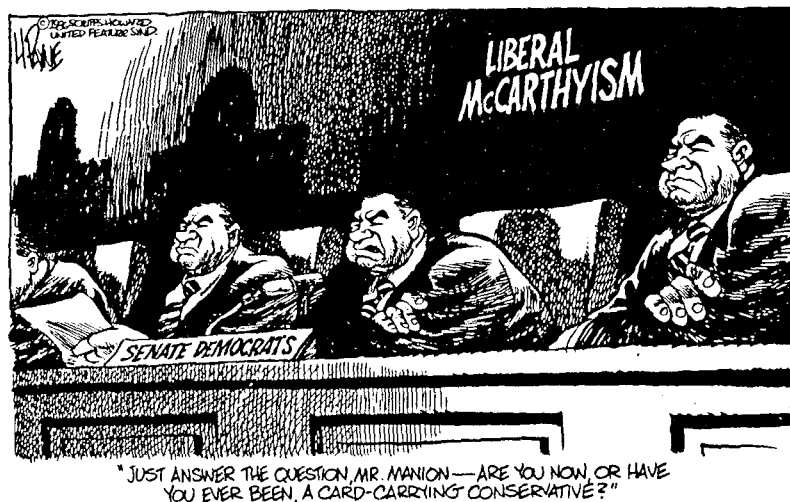
Actually, I think Og would be better than Rehnquist, because Og might use his club when Meese came around. "You know, Og, it's about this Roe v. Wade thing. You see, we've been trying OUCH! Hey stop tha...DAMN!."

I'm sorry, those positions I reported as being Scalia's are actually his opinions as a judge. They were taken from opinions (as in dissenting opinions) he wrote in his most recent position. They involved two cases, one of sexual harassment, and one of racial discrimination. Basically, it was his position that since these incidents took place at private sector jobs, that they were economic problems, not legal ones. Pretty scary, isn't it?

((I was intrigued by some of the things you and Bruce Geryk said about Scalia, so I took two hours yeaterday at the library attempting to look some of said opinions up. I couldn't find the opinions that Giuseppe (or is it Vito?) has been attributed with. Scalia was on the D.C. Circuit Court, so any decisions he wrote about such topics would almost certainly be interpreting Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.))

((First point: you initially said that Scalia believed that s.h. and r.d. were economic and not legal problems. If Scalia said anything like this, it would almost certainly be in interpreting some statute, so he would, again almost certainly, have been giving not his own opinions but his interpretation of the words of the statute and of the intention of Congree as revealed by those words. So if he said that these things were not legal problems, that would be because Congree in his view had not yet made them legal problems by legislating against them in certain circumstances. Second point: the D.C. Circuit Court had already decided that sexual harassment was a form of sexual discrimination before Scalia was ever appointed to the bench; this makes me skeptical of ever finding a decision by Scalia where he says the contrary, despite what the lady said on C-Span. Third point: Bruce Geryk said that someone said that "Scalia's interpretations of the law were such that the majority of even his conservative judicial colleagues could not agree with them." Again, I'm not completely sure what this refers to, but the D.C. Circuit Court is a very liberal court. Scalia joined a few dissents on civil rights decisions I was able to find (all of which I agreed with), and in these dissents at least he was on the same side as perfectly respectable judges like Robert Bork (a fine judge, who I hope makes it to the Supreme Court some day). So in the small sample I could find, Scalia did agree with the majority of "even his conservative judicial colleagues"; they were simply outvoted by the flaming liberals.))

((In sum, I suspect that the opinions you and Bruce have picked up about Scalia were based on distorted and legally slanted characterizations of his views delivered by liberal groups for partisan purposes, although I am willing to do more research if any of the Good People of PRAXIS have any more leads. I do note that Scalia was confirmed without contrary vote, by something like 96-0. The liberals of course had concentrated their fire on Rehnquist (a less conservative judge, in my opinion) because Rehnquist, in addition to his other crimes, is a WASP. I think Dominic or whatever will be a very fine judge.))



Chris Carrier:

Alan:

I enjoyed the last PRAXIS and wish to comment on a number of points.

First, the letter by Pat Redthorne in which he advocates legalizing sex acts between adults and children. To begin with, as I have never seen the name Pat Redthorne mentioned anywhere, I think he is an authoritarian pretending to be a libertarian, trying to discredit the libertarian argument that adults should be free to do as they please provided they do not harm others by dragging children into it.

For the record, I DO believe in a minimum age of consent, which should, however, be uniform for all sexual acts, although there are no doubt people out there who think a person is competent to make sexual decisions at the age of 12. I think that most people are not fully aware of all the consequences of the sexual act until at least 18, and I would favor penalties for adults engaging in sex acts with those under the age of consent.

I agree with you that Ted Kennedy's bashing of Rehnquist is ridiculous. After all, the racially restrictive covenants on property are no longer valid. I work in an office where land changes hands and if there is a declaration of covenants restricting use of the property, by law another covenant must be included, reading: "Any covenants dealing with transfer based on race, religion, or national origin, if any, are hereby deleted." I might also point out that while Kennedy refers to Rehnquist as "Too extreme ... too extreme to be Chief Justice" if I were one of the other members of the committee I would say that Kennedy's driving record is too extreme for a US Senator!!! After all, if it was you or me who was behind the wheel in Chappaquiddick that night, we'd be imprisoned for manslaughter.

Steve Hutton is absolutely right when he states that there must be a position in which the State may function. Certain areas are within the State's control. Certain other areas are outside of it.

Crimes against specific individuals are within the bounds of State power, of course. Also crimes injurious to the security of the State itself -- such as the Whitworth treason trial. (Personally I feel Whitworth deserved a firing squad for selling secrets to the Russians. If the USSR wins the struggle for global domination, there is no more freedom for anyone.) Also actions highly likely to cause harm to another person should be illegal. This is a justification for drunk driving laws. Also actions which take advantage of a person who because of immaturity is incapable of making an informed choice -- an argument for age of consent laws. These things are within the bounds of the State's power.

I don't consider conditions in jail to be a red herring. Jail is an awful place and it should be -- if a judge's awards do not cause a criminal to suffer, there is no desire to reform. But prostitutes are not criminals who need to have their wills broken -- they're just normal men and women like the readers of this zine. Only their occupation grosses out those who wish to run everyone's lives. Furthermore, prostitution in many jurisdictions, including California, does carry a mandatory jail sentence -- in this state, 45

days for a second offense and 90 days for a third. Why the sharing of mutual pleasure should be a crime punishable with mandatory jail time while many violent felons can be sentenced to probation indicates a warped sense of priorities.

Also, I'd like to refute your argument that laws against sodomy are consistent with a free society because such laws have been in place since the founding of the United States. My response to that is this: the concept of freedom is not static. Would you regard the United States in say, 1790, as a free country? It had the bill of rights .. but it also had slavery and only about two percent of the population was allowed to vote. Was it a free country? My answer is both yes and no -- no, because slavery and disallowing most people from the polls is inconsistent with a free society -- and yes, because over the decades and generations the American people were able to win for themselves and their descendants more liberties until we have the society we have today, where people cannot legally be held as slaves, and anyone of age can vote. (By the way, I can see lowering the minimum VOTING age by several years...)

Getting the government out of our bedrooms is another step in the ongoing evolution of a free society, and in line with the traditions of the US and Canada as they have evolved over the last 200 years.

Sincerely,

Chris

PS -- I know you support laws against prostitution, I would also like to know if you support laws against non-commercial sexual acts such as those banned in Georgia and upheld by the Supreme Court?

((I guess I have to invite Pat to write in and defend himself, although it is not an issue I really enjoy exploring very deeply.))

((I suspect some people might think 18 is a little high. Comments?))

((You may have provoked responses from some loyal Kennedy fans out there, although I guess we'll just have to drive over that bridge when we come to it.))

((Conditions in jail are irrelevant to the question of whether the State has the authority to make an act illegal, not to the question of what penalty should be imposed.))

((Has the United States steadily become a freer society over time? Not consistently: I doubt that this is true of economic freedom, for example. However I don't object to your

portrait of the American people winning themselves more liberties over time, and if you believe this to be the case, then I hope you agree that it should be allowed to continue to happen, i.e., people should not depend on the courts to effect the legal changes they want.))
((In Canada, laws against such "non-commercial sexual acts" do not apply when such acts are committed in private between two adults. I do not advocate that this exemption be repealed. This exemption is a legacy of Pierre Trudeau, who said, "The State should have no place in the bedrooms of the nation."))



Bruce McIntyre:

To hell with another gamesmasters forum--I wanna talk prostitution. I predict that your letter column is going to flare up on this subject at last, showing more support for your views than you thought you had, but in case I'm wrong, let me do my best to ally with you -- you hold down the eggheads that wanna talk philosophy, Alan, and I'll make the redneck speeches -- against these immoral fiends.

(I'm only joking, guys. Really I am.)

The problem with prostitution as I see it is simple: it has become far too glamorous a profession -- at least around these parts. If there is such a necessity for the services provided by prostitution, why can't they keep it off the streets? Is the so-called red light district a vital ingredient to the system -- can't any profits be made without it? (Never mind that the local hookers have never realized that a) Vancouver doesn't have any real red-light districts, and b) moving around trying to find the best location isn't going to create one overnight.)

A prostitute has as much right to use our streets to blatantly sell herself as a Jehovah's Witness has to use 'em to distribute The Watchtower: none whatsoever. The illegal part of prostitution is not The Act, not even the effect on the client's wallet after The Act -- the illegal part is the misuse of public property (strike one) for advertisement that is contrary to any advertising code (strike two). And when a hooker takes money from the government for being unemployed, then if I'm the ump, it's strike three and you deserve to be treated as a lawbreaker: yes, jail if the law demands it.

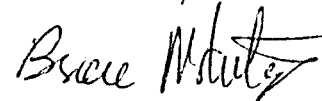
In contrast, the way the law is today, hookers and their clients have been stealing home for years, and have been declared safe under the obvious tag by gutless umpires afraid for their jobs.

Legalize prostitution: hell, yes! (Cheers from Carrier, Hutton, et al; shock from an "I've been stabbed!" Stewart) And when you do, make damned sure you keep it off our streets. For good.

Mr. Carrier and Mr. Hutton aren't cheering anymore. Wonder why. Could it be that prostitution just isn't prostitution if it ain't done out on the street where everyone can see it? Wonder why not.

Chris, Steve: your ball. Alan, type up the Philosophy Today version and print it alongside.

Cheers,



Bruce McIntyre

((Thanx for pitching in with support and it's great to hear from you. Only one problem. Your views are, I think, identical with Chris Carrier's in that he also would allow "zoning" laws to keep prostitution out of neighbourhoods where it is not desired. But it's the thought that counts.))

((And why don't Jehovah's Witnesses have the right to use public streets to distribute Watch tower? Good grief, I thought we settles this back in the fifties when Maurice Duplessis tried to keep them from distributing it in the streets of Montreal. I think they have every right to do so, and oppose any such curtailment of freedom of expression-- yes for anybody--to persuade anybody else to adopt or not adopt any particular views or way of life. Aren't they part of the "public"? I admire Americans for protecting the right of weirdo groups to proselytize in airports (how else could I keep up with Lyndon Larouche's doings? My slogan is proselytization, yes; prostitution, no.))

((And as for the "zoning" approach in general, if sex is such a wholesome and good commodity, why should people be able to sell hot dogs and jewelry and the street but not it? I'll leave it to others to explore this argument, though.))

PS: Uh, Alan: June 26 (#7's cover date) to August 19 (#8's) is nearly eight weeks. Not that I've any right to complain with my record, but that would put you into the XL hall of shame if I hadn't managed to be four weeks late last December. Whatever. I hope you like McBruceBall. I am seriously considering making fielding more important, like about an initial roll of 10-15 (12%, which is where it should have been in the first place, as 12% of runs are unearned) at least, and perhaps as much as 10-17 (15.3%, which might account for not just avoiding errors, but making good plays in the field as well.)

Hell, let me start another topic here in the postscript. The book you need to get to complement your Bill James library is called The Hidden Game of Baseball, by John Thorn & Pete Palmer. My paperback edition cost \$14.95 CBN. Palmer has created new stats, called Linear Weights (LWTS), that in retrospect show the closest correlation to actual performance. His formulae are not that complicated in their simplest form, and are easy to understand, since they are expressed in runs: a score of 30 would mean a player contributed 30 more runs than an average player would. And since statistics show that it takes close to ten runs to change a loss to a win, this player could singlehandedly be credited with the improvement from 81-81 to 84-78, or three wins for short. There are four stats, for batting, pitching, fielding, and running. These are the formulae:

((He gives the formulae, which I won't reproduce; send a SASE to me if you are interested.))

No, I don't expect you to understand all this math immediately. But by using my calculator I can calculate the batting contribution of, say George Bell, the Jays' RBI leader last season. Condensing the formula a bit (The Abstract has no stats for Outs on Base), I see that George contributed 23.76 runs, nearly two and a half wins, with his bat. His base stealing contributed another 2.7 runs, and unless there was a significant difference in his fielding between '84 and '85 -- Palmer's book has complete LWTS stats for '84 -- his fielding is close to average, or close enough so that his contribution beyond average would be minimal. So two and a half wins (from .500 to .515) would be his total.

As for pitching, Dave Stieb, according to the above formula and last year's stats, contributed 49.1 runs beyond that of an average pitcher put in his place, nearly five wins. It's not difficult to figure, you can get out the latest Sporting News and figure how well he's doing in contrast this year.

The book also has a section on park factors, home field advantage, baseball then vs. now, and many other interesting stuff. Like the Abstract, it's as math oriented as you want to make it: the calculations I did for that last bit was the first time I've used (or even looked at) the stats presented in the Abstract. The back of the book shows leaders in all LWTS categories for each season since 1876, and lists of the top 100/200/500 at each of the new stats. (The top five seasons of all time in overall player LWTS wins, measuring batting, running, and defense were held by Babe Ruth -- 1921, 1923, 1920, 1927, and 1924 -- until a modern day player registered the fourth best season in history, 9.4 wins above average, in 1984. Can you guess who it was? Good luck, I'm not telling!)

There's a great chapter entitled The Book...and The Computer. The creation of these new stats is the result of computer analysis of all the major league baseball games ever recorded. One amazing chart this produces is the following:

Win probabilities, bottom of 7th, down by one run.

Runners on	Number of Outs			
	0	1	2	3
None	.343	.298	.262	.239
1st	.413	.348	.289	.239
2nd	.482	.403	.324	.239
3rd	.537	.457	.334	.239
1st, 2nd	.529	.432	.343	.239
1st, 3rd	.594	.483	.353	.239
2nd, 3rd	.654	.546	.393	.239
Full	.683	.557	.411	.239

So much for the sacrifice bunt.

If you have a runner on first and none out, advancing him with a sac bunt decreases your win chances, from .413 to .403. (That's assuming you advance him successfully, not the greatest assumption in the world.)

Here's a better table that applies to all innings:

Translated into English, a team with the bases loaded and one out could expect to get, on average, 1.546 runs out of the inning (plus any they already have, of course). It's interesting to follow the chart through an inning to see who contributes most to an inning's chances of being a productive one, or whose at bat is the most important, etc.

Enough of that! Go out and buy the damn book, I ain't gonna type it all up for you! Go out and buy it!

Well, it seems that a handful of children masquerading as adults have decided that I have cooties. This of course means that such items as the Runestone Poll, Gary Coughlan, the Publisher's Handbook and Mark Berch must be infected too; obviously they're associated with me and thus must be infected. I can think of no other explanation for the behavior of those who try to tear apart anything I do. And the sad part of all this is that the battle is being lost: Linsey cooties are pervading the entire hobby and most of the adults out there just don't see the danger!

((Cooties--how does a term and an idea like that get spread around anyway? I mean, who first decided in some playground to say "Uggh, you've got cooties", and how did this concept spread from there, all around North America and who knows where else, especially in the days before television? Has the inventor of the term and idea ever stepped forward to claim credit? Is he proud of it? When did it start? Humans are strange.))

Whew! Got a little carried away on that one, did I? ((Yes.)) I'm looking forward to the promised story about your gamesmastering ((No space, this issue)). And the typing of your back-page article was hard to read, what with the split lines. ((It seemed like a good idea until I actually got it down on paper.)) Still, that page and page 1 on Sacks were hilarious.

P.S. Loved the yellowness of your paper!

Denis Jones:

Rehnquist, from the little I know about him, is the kind of right-wing nut, the stereotyped (from here) ((England)) American. The kind of person I am glad we don't have that high over here. There has been one piece in the UK press about Rehnquist I've seen.

Try a handwriting book if you want to do an interesting bit on knowing more about Dip players. But it does depend on if you believe that handwriting shows something about somebody's personality.

Well done on your poll results. I liked Praxis.

((Politically it's hard to see how Rehnquist is more right wing than Margaret Thatcher. As a judge he would fit in perfectly among the law lords, as his style of judicial non-interventionism is in the tradition of the English bench.))

Bob O'Donnell:

Praxis was, once again, excellent! Some day I hope to be able to meet you, to see just what you look like.

((What do you think I look like? I know people form impressions of others based on what they read. When I met Simon Billenness, he said that he had expected me to be shorter. Why he would get that impression I don't know, but his impression turned out to be wrong as he realized when he saw my 5'4" figure looming up at him.))

However your idea for some kind of Game Board is both silly and useless. No one can ever get jurisdiction over a postal hobby! At least I don't believe so.

((Consulting my records, I do not find you listed as having been given an official Grant of Permission to Offer Criticism of Board. We'll overlook it this time, so long as you submit a request for the grant in the next three days. Make sure it's on the proper form. I certainly hope you have the proper form--as I am sure you know, it is **your** responsibility to have all Official Board Forms in your possession and available for inspection at all times.))

So you have been faked! Or were you kidding? You see, I did not receive any of the fakes.

((Not many fakes around these days. Not like back when men were men and 'zines were 'zines.))

Thank you once again, and how come Carleton does not have a commentary by Blair?

((Blair offered to do only one game, and Algoma is it I'm afraid. Didn't know it would be so popular!))

By the way do you have any idea why Prostitution is called the oldest profession? I don't know why that would be so, as I would think that tool making would be the oldest or should I say weapon making).

((Those secular humanists are just trying to glamourize it.))

((But, McBruce, I already own the book. And guess what? Pete Palmer and Bill James are good friends (or at least Bill James keeps saying that they are good friends...) and if you get Bill's The Historical Baseball Abstract, you will find a big section in there where Bill discusses Pete's formulae, saying (a) that he tried to check Pete's claims for the accuracy of his formulae and found that (although Pete and he are good friends, and he knows Pete too well to ever suspect that Pete would try to forge data) the formulae are nowhere near the level of accuracy in predicting run totals that Pete claims, and far inferior to many other formulae, like for example Bill's own, and (b) Pete's linear weights don't work, can't work, and lead Pete into many egregious errors in rating the top baseball players of all time.))

((PRAXIS looks like it's going to be frequently late. The games go out on flyer.))

((Does this bother anyone, and if so, how much? Write in with nice, diplomatic comments about how sad you are when PRAXIS doesn't show up, and it might spur me on to prompter efforts.))

Robert Greier:

GHOD I hate the Indians. The last televised game of the year (here by Youngstown), and it is a definite tearjerk. Playing against those Toronto Sad Birds. Were up 6-3 entering the top of the ninth, raining like hell, and we bring in the ever popular reliever Ernie Camacho. Ends up 6-6, postponed due to rain. Yes, Ernie gave those ~~suckers~~ players 3 runs in the top of the ninth.

So I wanna swing a deal! I'll give you Ernie, and Chris Bando (another star performer) you give me Jesse Barfield. Okay. Well, maybe I am being a bit hasty. I mean Barfield is a good player and all. I'll throw in my tapes of the Stewart knockout of Corrales. (Three angles!)

To top it off, Derwood says he'll throw in a "pizza for life" deal for you and Dr. Zhu. Well actually he didn't say so, but you get me Barfield, I'll fill your living room with pepperoni.

P.S. My lawyer says this is as binding as the Chip banks contract.

((I don't know about your deal, but I've got a better one for you. You get Dennis Lamp (11-0 in 1985, and a bargoon at \$565,000 a year), Garth Iorg, Bill Caudill, Buck Martinez (great defensive catcher, and there is no proof that he is the slowest player in baseball), Damaso Garcia and the major league rights to Danny Ainge in return for only Brook Jacoby and Joe Carter. Deal?))

((Domino's Pizza is just getting established here in Canada. Got a flyer under my door the other week and decided to give them a try. Called up to order, and was told that I was outside their delivery area by a couple of streets. So how did I get the flyer? Stupid bastards.))

BRUX Linsey:

P raxis #8 is here. Could you please send me a copy of page 2 of that issue? Mine was blank.

((Rats. Now you'll find out what I said about you.))

I must tell you that Praxis is one of my very favourite zines, and that in my opinion it finished lower than deserved in the Runestone Poll. Your writing is the high point, of course, more than making up for your incomprehensible prejudice against poor, innocent prostitutes.

I'd like to thank you for recommending Bill James' Baseball Abstract a few issues back-- I bought a copy, and it's wonderful. The World Series write-up was terrific, as was the intro to the Houston Astros chapter (an "acquired taste". Heh, heh!)

Thanks also, turning back to issue #8, for your generous review of Once Upon A Deadline. I'm receiving an order a day for it still. Hope a few publishers-to-be benefit from it.

((No need to thank me for a review: I just call 'em as I see 'em.))

Perhaps I can shed a little light on the "contagion" I have, which causes certain hobbyists to boycott anything I touch. I'm not certain, but it appears that the diagnosis is cooties. You remember cooties from grade school, don't you? Someone in your class, probably a girl, probably not too popular, may have had them. Anything she touched automatically had cooties too; anyone who associated with her was infected.

Steve Hutton:

Alan:

1 You are quite right to attack anyone who denies the possibility of anyone's opinion about moral issues being worthy of consideration by anyone else. You are wrong, though, in attacking me since I have never made any such denial. If you wish to express your moral opinions (for example, by advising people that prostitution is morally hazardous), I will do nothing to stand in your way. But, when you say what private acts you are prepared to allow consenting adults to perform, you are not expressing a moral opinion, but saying what sort of dictator you have decided to become. Your moral opinions may well be worthy of consideration, but your commandments are worthy of sarcasm at best.

2 You don't know what I mean by asking what actions the state is entitled to take, but you acknowledge that the state is "very wrong" to take certain actions. Do we agree, then, that certain actions by the state are always "very wrong", regardless of public opinion?

3 I'm sorry, I forgot that you're not a "crass majoritarian". But you seem to feel quite strongly that 'society' should have its will carried out. What, if not a majority, expresses the will of society? How, exactly, are we to determine if society wants laws against prostitution? This is a matter of great concern to me, since I assume that if 'society' believes capital punishment should be reinstated for sodomy you would advocate putting me to death. (Feel free to correct me if I'm wrong in this assumption.)

4 Yes, sodomy was not only illegal in the U.S. at the time of the Bill of Rights, it was also punishable by death. Also, Massachusetts in 1697 the horrible crime of "Atheism and Blasphemy" was punishable by "boring through the tongue with a red hot iron." In many states at the time of the Bill of Rights, idolatry, blasphemy, and witchcraft were capital offenses. In 1967 (yes, 1967), sixteen American states prohibited marriage between blacks and whites. Many states would still prohibit miscegenation were it not for a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in that year.

5 Throughout the English-speaking world, there have been repressive, religious-based laws. Some such laws (against sodomy, prostitution, and pornography) still exist for now. Others (against blasphemy, idolatry, witchcraft, and miscegenation) have been repealed or struck down. When a leader says, "all must live as I choose to live" (or, more commonly, "all must live as I pretend to live"), you have not a free society but a tyranny. In Canada and the U.S., we have much more freedom, and a greater separation between church and state, than most people. We have our share of people who prefer theocracy to freedom, but these ignorant, intolerant people have lost again and again. And they will lose again, even if one of them does run for President in 1988.

6 Oops, am I contributing to the "American persecution of evangelical Christians?" They are so persecuted, aren't they? In 1980, the three presidential candidates had six births among them. In 1986, the Republican candidates are fighting for the privilege of kissing Jerry Falwell's ass (unless prohibited by state sodomy laws). I will admit, though, that there are particular states where evangelicals are given a rough time. Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama are three that come to mind. I don't know how evangelicals in those states find the strength to go on living.

7 And, evangelical leaders need only call themselves "faith healers" to be allowed to practice medicine without a license, commit fraud, embezzle money, and commit other miscellaneous offenses with virtual immunity from prosecution. They are persecuted indeed!

8 But even if they were persecuted, I don't see why it's "very wrong" to persecute your friends (evangelicals) but very right to persecute those you dislike (prostitutes). I'll never have enough mental agility to be a conservative.

Steve Hutton

((re: para. 1: Ah, we are the victims of a simple misunderstanding, it appears--one that I do not exactly accept responsibility for, but one that might have been avoided had I been more precise in my language.))

((No wonder you were so insulting originally, if you believed I was setting myself up to be some "sort of dictator". And I did use language like "This is as far as I'm prepared to go " and so on. But I was using such language as a figure of speech--I didn't really mean that I thought that I should be able to declare prostitution illegal, or that I had the right to make edicts with the effect of putting people in jail. I was offering my advice as to what laws the government should enact--since we are a democracy, I was in fact attempting to persuade my fellow citizens to a certain view of the rules that we adopt to govern our own conduct. So I have no "commandments" to offer--only advice to those with the power to make the commandments.))

((Re para. 2:Yes.))

((Re para. 3: The existing political and social institutions of a community express its will. In North America, we determine whether society wants laws against prostitution by first observing whether they do or do not choose legislators who will enact them (if they are not in place at the time) or repeal them (if they are in place at the time.) The fact that "society" believed that a certain law should be reinstated would not mean that I must necessarily advocate reinstating it, because the duty of a citizen is not to determine what the majority of other citizens want and then to advocate that, but to advocate his own views as to what is right for society and then do his utmost to persuade the rest of the citizenry of the correctness of his views. I hereby promise that if a Bill is introduced imposing the penalty you mention, I will write to my MP in opposition of it. If you end up on Death Row, I promise to supplement this advocacy by writing one letter of protest to each of the three Toronto newspapers and by participating in one public demonstration on your behalf so long as it is held on a nice sunny day.))

((4: Are you serious? You mean they legalized racemixin'too! You've gotta watch those guys every minute.))

((5: The laws against blasphemy and idolatry were religious-based laws, but was the law against miscegenation really a religious-based law? Are the laws against prostitution and pornography really religious-based laws? I would say that they are not, or rather that if they are, they are only in the same sense that laws against murder, theft, and fraud are religious-based laws. People may come to recognize the values suffusing such laws through religious teaching, but these truths are discoverable by natural reason and in no way dependent on acceptance of religion.))

((And I'm now talking about p and p, not m.))
((If politicians seek the favour of a representative of a group, does this mean the group is not persecuted? Black votes were sought very lustily in the United States before the civil rights revolution. Carter and Mondale sought the support of homosexual-rights activists. It doesn't bother me that politicians solicit the support of people I disagree with, nor do I find it necessary to say vulgar things about leaders of such causes. In fact I hope that Democratic Presidential candidates in 1988 have the courage to solicit such support and espouse such beliefs, loudly and vigourously, every day throughout the whole campaign, in every city, town, village and hamlet in America.))

((Congratulations on your publication of a superb 'zine, and I was sorry to hear that it's folding. It and 12PoHC rated a 10 in my book.))

((What in hell happened to this page? Word processors -- phooey.))

Cal White:

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE DIPLOMACY HOBBY

Dear Bill: ((So that's what the hobby's first name is!))

Way back in early 1978, I became the seventh Boardman Number Custodian. I was also publishing a magazine called Electra Glide Blue, serving as Canadian Representative in the International Diplomacy Association (North America) and doing so many more hobby-oriented activities that I still shudder at the work load I was managing. I was eighteen at the time.

Naturally doing all these things gave me a severe case of burnout. I folded my magazine, resigned my seat in IDA(NA) and arranged the transfer of the Boardman Numbers. I called a gentleman named Dennis Agosta and asked him if he was interested in the custodianship. When Doug Beyerlein was searching for a successor Dennis was one of the candidates I was vying with for the position.

Dennis agreed to assume the custodianship and I packed EVERY bit of relevant material into a large box and shipped it south of the border. For the next few months every bit of material I received that concerned the numbers was passed on to Dennis. (I should note that although I am making it sound very orderly, that box that Dennis got had its contents just picked up and dumped into it. It wasn't very neat, but if there was one thing it was, it was complete.)

After my burnout, the thought of anything postal just gave me chills. I didn't want to read any letters because the thought of having to answer somebody gave me a feeling like drowning in quicksand. I won't say I physically suffered, but, honestly, it was a lot of emotional baggage to carry around. My funk even went so far that I had a hard time responding to bills, which caused me some credit rating problems which extend to this day. It is just recently I have started thinking about the hobby again without experiencing that sinking feeling.

A close friend of mine receives Avalon Hill's magazine, The General. In a recent issue there was an article by an old friend of mine, Rod Walker. In it he gave a list of a few publishers, including one in Canada, Dave Carter. I contacted Mr Carter and asked about a few people I remembered from the "good ol' days". Of today's active hobbyists, the most fondly remembered name was Randolph Smyth's. I wrote Randolph and subscribed to Fol Si Fie. A personal letter to him asked some questions about how I was remembered in the hobby or if I even was. Randolph wrote back (it took the Post Office eight days to get his letter to me- some things never change...) and told me that while he was glad to hear from an old friend he believed that there were still some people who were cursing my name.

Now some people might shrug this off, but I have never been that type. It has been bothering me so much that I am writing this letter. According to Randolph, a significant amount of statistical material was missed, lost, or otherwise not included. Several people lost credit for game wins. I can understand some of the more serious gamers being upset at this.

Although I still find it hard to believe that much was lost (I KNOW Dennis received all the relevant information, although I suppose a couple of letters might have been misplaced) I would like to provide any help I can to people who feel cheated. I have a proposal for you and any others who read this open letter. If you want any information about a certain game which either started or ended during my tenure as BNC (approximately May to November 1978) just send me the game number, start or end time, and the name of the zine it ran in. I still have every zine I ever received in a large box in the basement. For every serious inquiry I will go through that zine and try and provide a game summary. I can't guarantee being able to succeed in fulfilling every request, but at least I can try.

One thing I would like to make clear is that I am not trying to place any blame on Dennis Agosta. I have no knowledge whatsoever about how good a job Dennis did with the numbers or even how long he had them. I was the one who burnt out and dumped everything on his shoulders, not him. That's why I feel I should try and provide what help I can.

Anybody who would like to write me with any suggestions or comments (or even hate mail, I suppose) is more than welcome. I am determined to answer all mail.

Yours sincerely,



Cal White

cc: Any publishers I can find addresses for. If you have a zine and haven't received this letter in the mail, please feel free to reprint it. No oversight intended, just a lack of information.

((First things first: I'd like to claim first dibs on all those old-time 'zines once you're finished with them. Let me know if I can come by and look them over some time, or if you offer them for sale.))

((Welcome back to the hobby. We need some wise old hands to give advice to us impetuous newcomers. Being as one of our Toronto 'zines is about to fold, we could use another one if my dream of having 3 Toronto 'zines in the Runestone Poll top ten is to be achieved.))

((Write in and give the Good People of PRAXIS the story of IDA(NA). What was it? How long did it last? Why did it disband, and under what circumstances? There seems to have been a lot of feuding involved--was it juicy? How dirty did it get? Give particulars.))

((I have seen your name occasionally taken in vain in American 'zines, cited as the exemplar of a bad Boardman Number Custodian. But what the hell, this is only a hobby and I don't believe in letting oneself become depressed or unhappy by what happens in it. It's not like the real world. The best thing to do about something in it that is upsetting is to ignore it, in my book. All of which is a prelude to saying, 1978 is a long time ago and 1986 is 1986 so why not forget about all that stuff and rejoin our hobby anew?))

((I ran into a fellow called Donald Wildman at a Toronto con a year and a half ago and he mentioned your name in a very positive context and as being associated with many happy memories. Donald is now heavily into those Fantasy-type games, as I understand it.))

Demystification

Playing France--A Novice's Perspective

by Frank Easton

Special thanks in the preparation of this article to: Rod Walker - The Gamer's Guide to Diplomacy and Richard Sharp - The Game of Diplomacy.

France may well be the best country for a beginner to play - with its outstanding survival rate (about 70%) and a "fair" share of wins, you have a good chance of at least drawing and thus sharing a victory.

I think the biggest problem a novice player experiences is in not negotiating thoroughly enough - and with France's very flexible opening position, there is great scope in this aspect of the game. Particularly at the beginning of the game, when the other players are deciding who to ally with and which direction to go, it is important to convince them of your 'good intentions' and of your value to them as an ally. With the ability of getting two easy builds in the first year without antagonizing anyone, you can effectively 'sit on the fence' to see how things are developing between the others and then choose sides. Going for three builds may clearly be a mistake - the others will not be happy with this and you may have lost your diplomatic advantage by becoming 'dangerous' too quickly, "forcing" the others into an alliance against you that may have not developed otherwise.

Negotiations (in alphabetical order):

AUSTRIA: Relations with Austria are unlikely to be of much value initially - he will not want to see French fleets in the MED and an early attack on GER is extremely unlikely. He will want to be encouraging you to attack ENG or (more rarely) GER, but be vague (no promises). If AUS succumbs early, it may result in a strong ITA or TUR navy - you might want to encourage an ITA-AUS alliance against TUR, hoping that the latter will make it a long drawn out affair. Keep the door open for a mid-game alliance (against ITA and/or GER?).

ENGLAND: From ENG's point of view, FRA is a good friend and probably his most useful ally. If you intend to go for the win however (and why not?), ENG is unequivocally an enemy in the long term. The usual ENG habit of going for Nwy in the first year is certainly in your best interests, but don't be fooled into complacency - he may have good intentions initially, but as he gets caught up in the "dead end" of StP, he'll be looking for the opportunity to move against you. The strong navy he is developing is a potential threat - use him in the initial stages of the game, but move on him before he has the chance to do so to you. The MAO is key to your defenses and F Liv is far more 'offensive' than it is 'defensive'. Don't let him take advantage.

GERMANY: The advantage of this alliance is the opportunity of taking out ENG, thus securing your rear, but this will never be easy and you may need RUS's help in making short work of it. GER will welcome the opportunity to take Nth (which is as good as a supply centre for him), but will constantly be on the lookout for a chance to thrust into Bur. If he is being attacked by RUS however, it would be in your best interests to support him as he will keep the dangerous RUS at bay and be far too busy to attack you. If you can stay on good terms with GER while getting your fair share of the ENG carve-up and retaining at least a 2 to 1 naval superiority, then you've done well and should be on the way to winning.

(Note: A triple alliance btw. FRA-ENG-GER is very powerful and GER is at the disadvantage here, but if you're sincere in your intentions, a draw is the most likely outcome.)

ITALY: The Franco-Italian alliance has little promise except in the unlikely circumstance that ITA intends to move north and east as a land power, a situation you might encourage if ENG-GER are allied. Relations are likely to be cordial and a mutual defense pact may be the best tact - FRA and ITA rarely attack each other early on. However, he will be aware of how easy it is for FRA to mount a swift attack in 1902 (with F Spa (sc), build F Mar) and he may see it as in his best interests to move to Pie in S'01 for 'defensive' purposes. This causes all sorts of problems for FRA and every effort should be made to persuade him of your good intentions (whether sincere or not). In the event that TUR emerges as the eastern "power", ITA will be a valuable 'buffer' - you would like to see him survive, but not to become too strong (which can happen if ITA-RUS ally and take out AUS/TUR). Relations here are always delicate.

RUSSIA: Potentially a good friend, particularly if ENG-GER are allied, but his initial interests may well be on his southern sector. If so, he may try to encourage you and GER to ally against ENG, thus easing his Scandinavian problems. FRA can open negotiations with RUS on a basis of honesty and trust - RUS has little to gain by concealing his intentions. If ENG opens with his popular attack on RUS, any assistance you can give RUS may prevent ENG getting that vital build enabling him to protect himself from your 'back door' attack. Do not, however, offer assistance against GER until ENG's naval power is broken - he is far more likely to get the bear's share of the spoils.

TURKEY: FRA and TUR often have little to say to each other and cooperation is even rarer. He may seek your help if ITA-AUS are allied against him, arguing that the developing ITA navy is a huge threat to you (so is the TUR one, but at least its more distant). As you will often need RUS against ENG-GER, you do not want to see a Russo-Turk war, but encouraging their alliance can be suicidal. The best tact seems to be to convince him that everyone is out to get him - and work things out so that it's true! TUR is a tough nut to crack - keeping him bottled up in the corner should keep ITA (and others) occupied.

The next article on Playing France will deal with "Opening Strategy" and will consider the merits of many of the more popular (and some not so popular) openings.

((Thanx and four-and-a-half free issues to you.))

ALGOMA Commentary continued... (by Blair Cusack)

The French moves to avoid a natural expansion into the Mediterranean and the Italian acquisition of Greece could mean that either France doesn't trust England (as much as Italy doesn't trust Austria) or F/I are much closer than one would have thought. Both parties at the moment possess considerable diplomatic potential while their formal allies (E + A respectively) are committed and out of position to react effectively.

Italy can now consider the R/I combination a viable prospect. Their co-operation would annihilate Turkey and occupy the entire Balkans by Winter 1903--and that is awesome. The cost would be abandoning Germany to E/F, although they could still use German Army Munich as a "cork" and keep Berlin as well if they move fast.

France has some equally interesting alliance options with Italy and/or Russia. I doubt England could accuse France of a double-cross because he was too "nervous" to offer F Mid-W Med, or A Mar S A Par-Bur. Austria has a much stronger case to argue that his former ally has stabbed him, and this is where the French and Italian parallels diverge--giving France a bit more potential in the diplomatic sphere than Italy has.

The Winter builds should give us a lot to think about and because their conditionality will be separated. Speculation based upon the preceding observations leads me to feel that Army Bohemia will be removed, Fleets London and Brest (!) will be built, and armies will appear in Venicw, Warsaw and Moscow. (It is interesting to note that a French NBR accompanied by F Mao-Iri in Spring would be a possible strategy for him to use.)