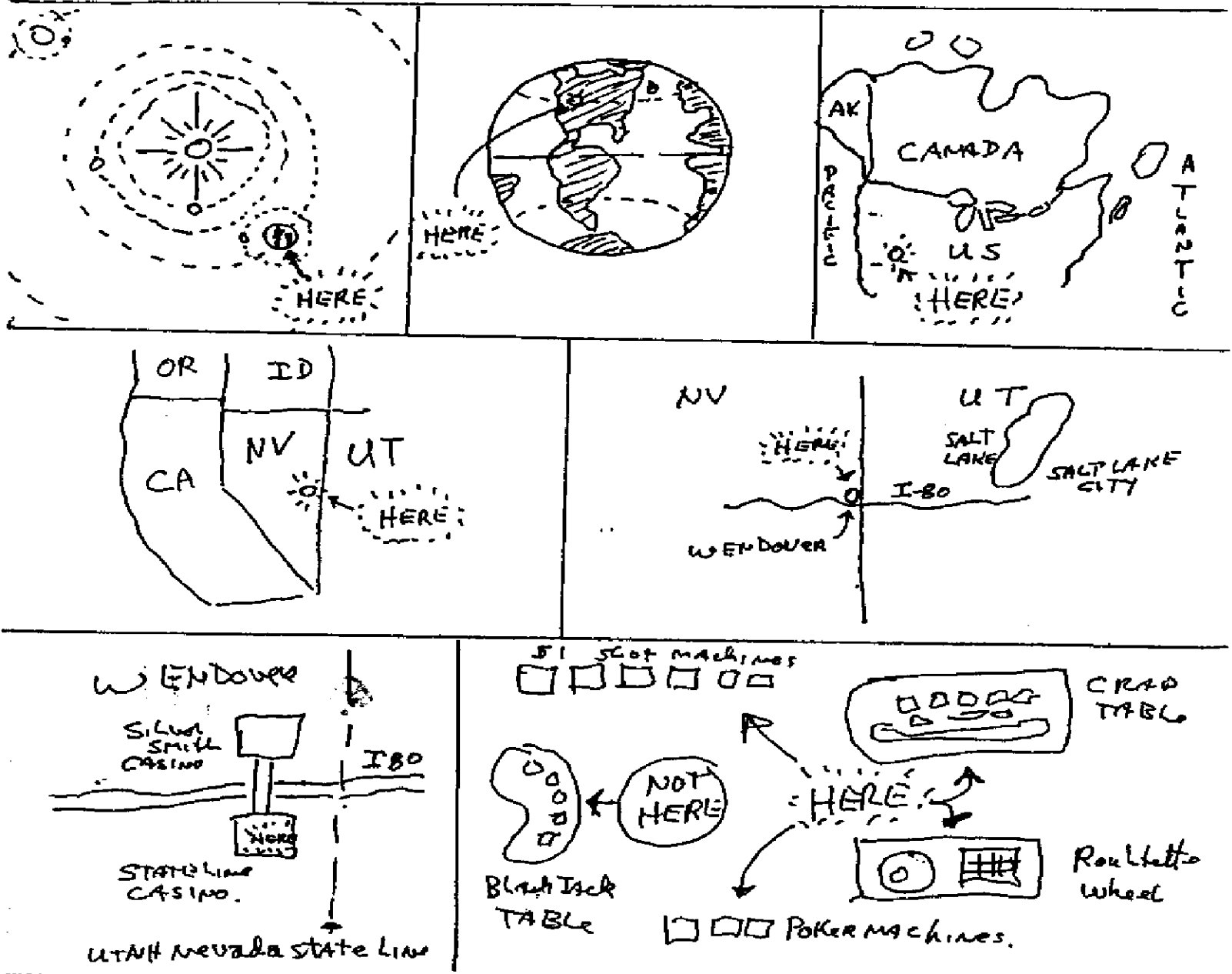


15-16 Oct Location of Le Field Marshall JACK. —



Thank For Invitation But have reservations already MADE.

RBM

RAMBLINGS BY MOONLIGHT #42

October 24, 1994

One Dollar

See the cover for the Number One Excuse for not going to Deadwoodcon

Publisher: Eric Ozog. Circulation: 50. Cover art this month: Jack Jewart.

PO Box 1138, Granite Falls, WA 98252. 206-691-4264. E-Mail: ElfEric@aol.com

Subscriptions: U.S.A.: \$1.00. Canada & Overseas: \$1.50.

Game Deadlines: Friday November 18. BNC BLUES: December 16.

Standby List: Bob Acheson, Michael Gonsalves, Andy Lischett, Paul Milewski, Michael Quirk, Eric Schlegel, Dwayne Shreve, Michael Stewart, James Wall, Andy York. Let me know if you want on or off this list.

Cheyenne: This Home Office Gunboat game starts again in this issue.

Hobby News

The latest fold is I Still Live!, published by Keith Sesler, who is getting married and would rather play Magic. Refund checks will be in the mail. Aw man, don't turn into a Magic addict. Good luck, Keith. Then, just when you think the postal hobby is going to croak, along come a few new zines:

Dip "R" Us: Jack Jewart, 24508 - 38th Avenue Court E., Spanaway, WA 98387. One page Issue 0 from this Tacoma suburb. The new zine will run strictly Regular Dip- which is rather rare these days. Fees will be \$7.00 for life of game + one issue, which includes a \$2 NMR fee where a \$1 is deducted per NMR. Zine will go to a maximum 5 sheets to stay under the ounce and will be a warehouse, but occasional articles and trivia. Jack says the games will be a priority. Colorful stick-on dots on the dip map, but must be labor intensive....

The Noble House: Mark Weseman, c/o Hwang Mok Park & Jin, 6th Floor, Peeres Bldg., 222, 3-ka, Chungjung-ro, Seodaemun-ku, Seoul 120-013, South Korea. Subscription fee will be \$1/issue. Open-page format. Game openings in regular Diplomacy (3-4), and Britannia. Six week deadlines while Mark and family are overseas (probably through Sept. 1996, if the South doesn't get nuked). For those wondering why Mark is in Korea (I was surprised myself) Mark is working for a law firm in Korea and his wife is a Korean born U.S. citizen. The zine's theme will be Pacific Rim news.

CDD Medical Journal: Thomas Pasko, 73 Washington Street, Bristol, CT 06010. First issue should be out now. I haven't seen it yet, as all I have is a letter saying if I'd like a sample I have to ask for it, and this letter just sat on my desk for a couple-three weeks, so.... Game openings in Colonial Diplomacy, and two other subzines will run other games (including the Cognoscenti subzine Tar Pits. Thomas might also run Pax Britannica and Advanced Civilization if there's interest. Four week deadlines with NMR insurance. Sub rate will be \$1/issue.

Compendio Ars Diplomatica: Edoardo Mattei, Viale Sartorio, 95 - 00147, Rome, Italy. From Italy, but the zine is written in English, and Eddy is outreaching for foreign subscribers. Not a brand new zine, CAD, has been around for two years. Features regular Diplomacy and variants including Italian Wars, Atlantide, and Cripto Gunboat. Clean looking digest format. Subscriptions are Lit. It. 27.000/11 issues, probably 27,000 Lira, whatever the exchange rate is (a cup of coffee is probably 1,000 Lira).

News on the Home Front

I know it's hard to get people together these days, but bad karma in particular seems to have been working against Deadwoodcon. The Top Six Excuses for not going to Deadwoodcon this year are:

(6) David Baxter: "I've got too much homework that I haven't finished."

(5) John Fisher: "Me and Nicole have to work this weekend so we can have hot dogs with our beans."

(4) Daf Langley: "I got back home Friday night and my son's knee had swollen up as big as a basketball."

(3) Larry Botimer: "I'm in this class all weekend so I can learn how to teach this army of new IRS agents."

(2) Terry Tallman: "Judy fell off her horse two weeks ago hurting her back and now she has to wear this body armor just like Darth Vader's."

and...the Number One Excuse for not going to DeadwoodCon:

(1) Jack Jewart: "Ole Jack will NOT be able to attend as he'll be standing next to a roulette wheel or crap table, up to his belly button in chips on the days selected....In case you don't know where Wendover, Nevada is, we will enclose a map." I can't argue with that, especially when one has had flight reservations well in advance of the "Not Even a Two-week Notice."

The con was dead as usual. We did have a few bodies slinking around playing some games. The company was good. After work Friday I drove to "town" to pick up some last minute groceries and brewskies for The Rusnak and when I returned about seven I spied the familiar VW bus that Joan Extrom, Ken Corbin, and daughter Crystal came in. I said "Hi Ken" but no reaction from him, as he had his nose in one of Cathy's books. Joan was impressed that I, a man, actually do grocery shopping. Evidently her Man doesn't push himself away from the computer even to execute this basic domestic necessity. I fired up the grill and cooked some hamburgers and hot dogs, and by the time we started eating after dark some guys came to the door- and they weren't here for Deadwoodcon. They had given this other man a lift who had driven his car into the ditch about 16 miles east of here. He appeared to be uninjured, but was incoherent. So I called 911, and Ken, being an EMT, went to check him over. After I called in the info to have a trooper pick him up I went outside to see if I could be of any help. Ken sat down with the man, talking to him outside the restroom. The man was obviously wrecked, and Ken kept him calm until the cops arrived. I thanked the two guys for giving the dickhead a ride (I didn't use those words of course, being a ranger and public servant, but that's what was going through my mind), and said they didn't have to hang around. Ken got a phone number out of the drunk, and I called his family- he lived with two of his brothers, who would end up picking him up at the Marysville PD. The state trooper said the man had a blood alcohol content level of .28. Thanking the officer, I went back to a cold hamburger and Ken to his book. That was the highlight of the evening. Then, Russ Rusnak and Daf Langley showed up. To her credit, Daf tried to raise the dead and get somebody to play anything, but everyone was acting rather lethargic. So we just talked about them good ol' days of Cons gone by. Most everyone crashed and Daf left about midnight for home to check up on her son, who had injured his knee. That left Russ and I chatting until about one in the morning, playing some tunes. Russ was impressed when I put The Kinks State of Confusion on the turntable. I said that album rubbed off on me after hearing it at one of the RusnakCons.

Saturday we got an early start- about 8:00. The weather was cool and rainy on and off. I made a double batch of pancakes for the crew, making too much for us to consume mass quantities of (burble!), but that left some extras for Sheba-dog. The rest of the day was pretty mellow, but a variety of games were played. We were waiting for people to show up, so Ken, Joan, Russ and Cathy played Hearts. I took Sheba and Shannon for a walk, going down to the river so Shannon could throw "rocks in water" and Sheba could

fish. Tom Howell called about mid-morning, saying he got across the ferry onto Whidbey Island and was gradually making his way over here. Buz Eddy and Doug Beyerlein showed up about midday. I dusted off the Milton-Bradley game Summit, a world power-politics diplomatic game that pretty much reflects the era of the cold war, published in 1961- Doug, Buz, Russ, Ken, Cathy, and I played. Tom phoned again, saying he was now in Mt. Vernon, getting closer. We got a game of Risk going next, which Cathy won. I attempted to read highlights from Larry Peery's letter in The Abyssinian Prince about the demise of the American postal Diplomacy Hobby, and was mostly ignored amid comments of "who cares?" (the title of Russ's ex zine). Finally Tom arrived, and the card game Scum got going. Cathy, Russ and I played Titan, which Russ won. The highlight was Cathy attacking my Titan stack with two Behemoths in it, and I gambled by leaving my Titan open to attack, which paid off in mustering a Serpent. Later in the afternoon my buddy Marvin showed up, and several games of Backgammon were played. Saturday night Cathy and I got the spaghetti and salad going, while at the same time playing Titan, proving to a skeptical Ken that it could be done. Then when we delivered the goods, where was Ken to eat it? I ate with the ladies and girls, while the guys ate their spaghetti sticky and cold about 20 minutes later after some righteous backgammon game. Saturday night we played another game of Risk, which Marvin won. Russ, Marvin, and I stayed up talking until three a.m. about various social and environmental issues.

Sunday we had the standard cinamon rolls, courtesy of Joan. It was going to be a pleasant, sunny day. Terry Tallman arrived about nine via the long way around the Sound via The Narrows Bridge, having left Manchester about six a.m. He was wearing brand-new shit-kicking logging boots. We couldn't get Cathy to kiss The Hobby Sex Ghod's toes for fertility, even the outside leather (Terry said "boots are for boys"). Terry said Judy was doing okay (slipped disk in her back from falling off her horse), but it would be about a three month recovery period. Terry asked me if I read Peery's letter, saying Larry pissed him off and that Larry was doing us a favor by bailing overseas. Russ asked Terry what difference did it make and Terry replied, "well, somebody has to be pissed off at Larry." Actually, I think Larry's letter hit the mark in identifying the trends and causes of a fading American postal dip hobby, except where Larry pounds his furry little breast on how much he has done as Savior, only to be ignored by an ungrateful Dipdom that doesn't want to be saved. I know I've also been guilty in ignoring The Savior, but I just don't have the time and energy to do otherwise. Many at Deadwoodcon agreed that what we are witnessing here is the simple replacement of postal diplomacy by electronic mail, and that in the middle 1980s we got out of the Hobby whatever enjoyment we needed, made the friends we wanted, and now it's time to get on with life.

Cathy and Russ played a game of Empire Builder. I got sucked into a couple hands of Scum to teach Terry, and then I was abandoned when the group switched to Hearts! Very lame- I could have gotten into the Empire game. Then Ken, Joan, Russ and Tom played Survive, which was the first Survive game Joan won (right-on, Joan)! Then it was about noon, and the Oregonians plus Russ had to leave (I guess Joan got over Russ's "Bimbo" comment, although Russ had to sit in the back of the bus). I showed everyone around the ranger station compound. Mt. Pilchuck was beautiful with a fresh dusting of snow. It was hard to drag Sheba and Shannon out of the VW bus, as they both remembered the ride in the van to the Big Four Ice Caves hike when Extrom, Corbin and family visited us during last July. So Shannon was all teary-eyed her playmate Crystal was leaving and she couldn't go along. After a game of Aquire between Terry, Cathy, Tom, and myself, it was time to say the last goodbyes and bring to a close another Deadwoodcon.

Cathy's mom and dad were here September 23-26 and we had fun travelling over to Wenatchee via the North Cascades Highway. Cathy's dad rented a GM minivan (which Shannon just loved), and basically the trip was

"ride the bus and leave the driving to us." So I just sat in the back seat the whole time, taking in the scenery and some photos out the back window, and listened to my walkman. I wasn't prepared for this trip at all, with not even a decent change of clothes and didn't have time to shave. The north Cascades are rugged, and especially impressive over Washington Pass. Then over to arid eastern Washington- the rainshadow country. The old-west town of Winthrop was jammed with vehicles due to some special event taking place- not a motel room or even a parking spot anywhere. This was too bad, as Cathy would have liked to have walked around checking out the shops. We drove on to Lake Chelan, seeing the Forest Service Ranger Station right on the lake. The ranger patrols in a boat- what a cake job. We had pizza in Lake Chelan and went to Wenatchee in the heart of Washington's apple country, where Cathy's dad grew up, the son of an apple grower. It was near impossible to find a motel room, with "no vacancy" signs from Lake Chelan through Wenatchee to Leavenworth, and we were almost going to drive through the night back to Verlot. But finally Cathy's dad called on his cellular phone and got us two rooms at the Pacific West Hotel in Wenatchee. Sunday we toured around Wenatchee, Shannon got to throw some rocks in the Columbia River, and we returned via Highway 2 over Stevens Pass. We could see where the forest fires burned over the pass and down toward the highway. Many trees just had dead brown foliage on them- evidently the smoke from a ground fire cooked but did not burn up the needles, killing the trees anyway. Back in Marysville we picked up fish and chips from both Ivar's (wimpy quantities) and Skipper's (mass quantities). On Monday we went to the Alderwood Mall, where Cathy's folks bought her a rocking recliner and I bought her new boots for her birthday.

I got out into the half-million acre Glacier Peak Wilderness from September 17-20, out on the "High Hunt," where I contacted hunters, dug drainage dips on the trail, and relocated two backcountry toilets (basically you dig a new hole, move the wooden box, and cover up the used hole). The weather was postcard perfect, sunny and warm by day (70s), and cool but comfortable at night (40s) with a full moon. Usually it rains a cold rain or even can snow this time of the year- can you say hypothermia? I have a new slogan for the Forest Service, "Wilderness: A Great Place...to Die in." Dean, the district wilderness coordinator, accompanied me, and we covered 40 miles on the loop in 4 days. We began by hiking through magnificent old growth forest along Milk Creek, and climbed the switchbacks out of the drainage to the Pacific Crest Trail over Dolly Vista Ridge in the subalpine (about elevation 6,000) on the north slope of Glacier Peak, and descended out along the untamed Suiattle River. We met two hikers at our camp on Milk Creek who were walking the entire Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada, covering an average 22 miles a day. The scenery was incredible looking northward toward Dome Peak and Mt. Baker- I can't get over the sheer vastness and remoteness of the north Cascades, seeing mountains and forests forever with no people, cars, houses, roads, and other trappings of civilization. It was great drinking cold, clear water out of clean mountain streams. I also learned a great deal about wilderness travel and ethics, and can really appreciate the hard work a wilderness ranger does to maintain the trails and protect the resource for future generations. The 1964 Wilderness Act sets aside these public lands to be "untrammelled by man," to preserve the last remnants of wild America that are still relatively untouched by people. There aren't too many countries on Earth that have any wilderness left, or could afford to set it aside, but the United States was big enough and wealthy enough to do that. I love wilderness, and knowing wilderness exists is enough for me- I don't always have to be out in it. Backpacking is okay, but there is a lot of preparation involved in packing up food, clothes, etc. I can't imagine being out for 10 days at a time, which some of the Darrington rangers do. And if the weather is bad, not only would it make for a miserable trip, but it can possibly be fatal. But to breathe that sweet air, see forever, hear silence, and feel solitude within in a vast and primeval landscape- that's what lures you back.



Ranger Eric, Glacier Peak Wilderness



Cathy's folks and Shannon, Big Four Mtn

On September 11 Cathy, Shannon and I drove the Mt. Baker Highway to Artist Point, a Forest Service trailhead and viewpoint just above the Mt. Baker ski area. The road climbs to an approximate elevation of 5,000 feet, and the clouds parted enough to show spectacular views of Mt. Baker to the southwest (10,778 feet) and Shuksan to the east (9,127 feet), with a dusting of fresh snow. The wind was cold, but we were dressed for the weather hiking about. What really surprised me was how Shannon looked at the map on the trailhead sign, talking and relating the map while pointing to the road switchback below us, and visa-versa. We dropped below to Heather Meadows for a picnic dinner, where we looked at the newly restored warming cabin, converted to a visitor information center. Shannon was ready eat, making it known she did not want to shop around for the perfect picnic table with a view, pulling mom and dad back to the table we just passed!

On August 12 Cathy and I drove to north Seattle to The Oz Nightclub to see Toad the Wet Sprocket. Once I finished shopping for a parking space, my heart dropped as I realized I had forgotten the tickets at home! After licking my wounds and clearing my head from this loss I decided to stand tall, get cash out of an ATM, and buy another set of tickets at the door. My lady was all done up for tonight and I wasn't going to disappoint her. The concert was excellent, Toad is one of the best alternative rock bands in America, they played our favorite songs, and I think Cathy was impressed with her man.

Book Review

by Cathy Ozog

DOOMSDAY BOOK By Connie Willis

It is rare that I do book reviews any more. There doesn't seem the time for them and most of the books I have read lately, while good and interesting, have not moved me like this one did. I always said the gift of a great author was how well they could make me cry because then and only then was I truly a part of the character and feeling what they were feeling. I fear Connie Willis did her job too well. I was crying buckets while I read her book and even found myself forcing back tears while I was trying to sleep later that night.

The cover of the book would put most readers off. I almost didn't take it when Rusnak kindly offered me free books when we were in Chicago. It looks like some kind of romance book set in a future going back to the past kind of setting. I don't even know who the tall dark and handsome knight is supposed to be on the front cover as I read the book. The one character that he might be had little to do with main character, beyond finding her, and there was NO romantic interest between them. In fact, there was very little romance at all.

The basic story line of the book is the main character goes back in time to 1320 or so--she thinks--but takes a virus with her. Ok, you don't find that out until later. However, the timing is wrong. She shows up at the time of the Black Plague. It is written in kind of a "present" and then "past" and then "past" writings in a "doomsday book" that do jump the reader around quite a bit in the manner that I hate! So I ignored and skimmed through the present bits and kept going back to the past where the other character was.

What made this book so good was the view we get of the Middle Ages with no romance. There are no knights and shining castles. Again...what was that castle on the front cover? You find the people...the nobles and the serfs live in awful conditions. The poverty of the serfs is really bad. And yet there is a will and a spirit to the people. Some of the characters in the time frame you hate and some you love. But then the plague comes. And then the tears

starting coming down in buckets for me. The author doesn't make it pretty or show how the characters live through it and find their loved ones and everything is wonderful. There is no joy here and yet there is. There is courage in the face of horrors that none of us could ever imagine. And even if I think of what the main character went through again I could start to cry. Yes, the heroine lives. She was vaccinated against the plague before she went back. I can say no more for it would ruin the ending. I will say this: it deserved its Nebula Award and it is worth its expensive \$5.99 price. Just try to ignore the cover. There is no romance in this book.

CHEROKEE - 1991 W: ENDGAME
CONGRATULATIONS TO CHARLES GREGER

ZINE: Ramblings By Moonlight
 GM: Eric Ozog

AUSTRIA: Brad Wilson (drop '01), Michael Gonsalves (out)
 ENGLAND: Doug Kent (survival)
 FRANCE: Nelson Heintzman (out)
 GERMANY: W. Andrew York (out)
 ITALY: Charles Greger (win)
 RUSSIA: Chris Hurley (out)
 TURKEY: Glenn Vogt (survival)

Supply Centers

| | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| AUS | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | | | | |
| ENG | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| FRA | 4 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | | |
| GER | 5 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| ITA | 4 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 14 | 19 |
| RUS | 4 | 3 | 2 | 0 | | | | | |
| TUR | 4 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 12 |

Endgame Statements

GLENN VOGT: Congratulations to Charles. What a game! The I/T alliance dominated this game from the beginning. We have proven that a long-term alliance can work and destroy every country on the board.

DOUG KENT: This game was a fast and somewhat satisfying one, even for a measly 3-center survival like mine. I was immediately faced with a hostile France who got the jump on me, and I had to spend the first few years fighting for my survival. Charles Greger (Italy) was kind enough to send some Fleets my way, and France must have counted on me being one of those players who stops trying when they are losing. Instead, I did what I could to protect my dots, guessed right once or twice, and managed to fulfill my secondary objective - surviving the game while France was eliminated. Charles was also smart enough to surround me with his fleets, so stabbing later on to help stop the Italian win was never an option.

ERIC OZOG: This was a gamestart "J.R. Baker" in Tom Nash's Been There Done That which never got off the ground. Only three of the original players signed up opted to continue (Heintzman, Greger, and Hurley). As long as I had standbys I figured what the heck. Strong Italian/Turkish alliance until the end, and it shows that these alliances, although rare, can work. No, Greger and Vogt didn't know each other although they both knew me during my Arizona days. A solid, well-orchestrated win by Greger. Amusing to see Germany go from 7 to 0 in one game year, but poor Andy was totally surrounded.

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON - 1990 AT
FALL 1918
NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT

AUSTRIA (Paul Milewski, 4154 Allendale Drive #2, Cincinnati, OH 45209)
a alb-tri, a ser S a alb-tri, a bud S a alb-tri, a vie S a alb-tri.

FRANCE (James Wall, 911 E. Johnson #4, Madison, WI 53703)
f nth-den, f hel S f nth-den, f lon-nth, a bel-ruh, a bur S a bel-ruh,
a hol-kie, f edi-nwg, a tri-vie D R ven,otb, a tyo S a tri-vie,
a pie S a tyo, a ven-rom, f adr-ion, f tyn-tun.

GERMANY (Eric Schlegel, 314 Fords Lane, Aberdeen, MD 21001)
f ska-nth, f den S f ska-nth D R swe,bal,otb, a kie S f den,
a ber S a kie, a mun S RUS a boh-tyo, a nwy S RUS a fin.

RUSSIA (W. Andrew York, P.O. Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307)
f bar-nwg, a fin S GER a nwy, f ion-tun, f aeg-ion, f gre S f aeg-ion,
a boh-tyo, a sil S GER a mun, a pru H.

Supply Centers

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|----------|
| AUS | (5) | vie | bud | TRI | ser | bul | | | | 1 | short |
| FRA | (15) | par | bre | mar | spa | por | lvp | lon | edi | | Build 2 |
| | | tun | bel | nap | rom | ven | tri | hol | DEN | | |
| GER | (5) | ber | kie | mun | den | swe | nwy | | | | Remove 1 |
| RUS | (9) | sev | rum | ank | con | smy | mos | stp | war | | Build 1 |
| | | gre | | | | | | | | | |

Game Notes

All proposals failed: F Win (2 YES, 2 NO); G Win, F/G, A/G/R (1 YES, 3 NO); A Win, R Win (0 YES, 4 NO). New proposals: F Win, A/R, F/G, F/R (NVR = NO, NMR = YES). We say goodbye to Michael Stewart and hello to James Wall.

Darkside Press

GER-RUS: I hope this isn't the calm before the storm.

ERIC-ERIC: Do you stop putting out campfires if you run out of money before the end of the FY?

ERIC-ERIC: No, but we do ask the offending camper for a donation.

GER-FRA: What's the point?

GER-AUS: If there's no Silicon Heaven where do all the calculators go?
Winter 1918/Spring 1919 orders are due: November 18, 1994

OKANOGAN - 1993 C

WINTER 1906/SPRING 1907

FRENCH IN ST. PETERSBURG, BUT CONVOY TO EDINBURGH FAILS

ENGLAND (Keith Sesler, 11130 Burlington #321, Southgate, MI 48195)
even. f iri-mid, f enc S f iri-mid, f edi-nth, f lon S f edi-nth.

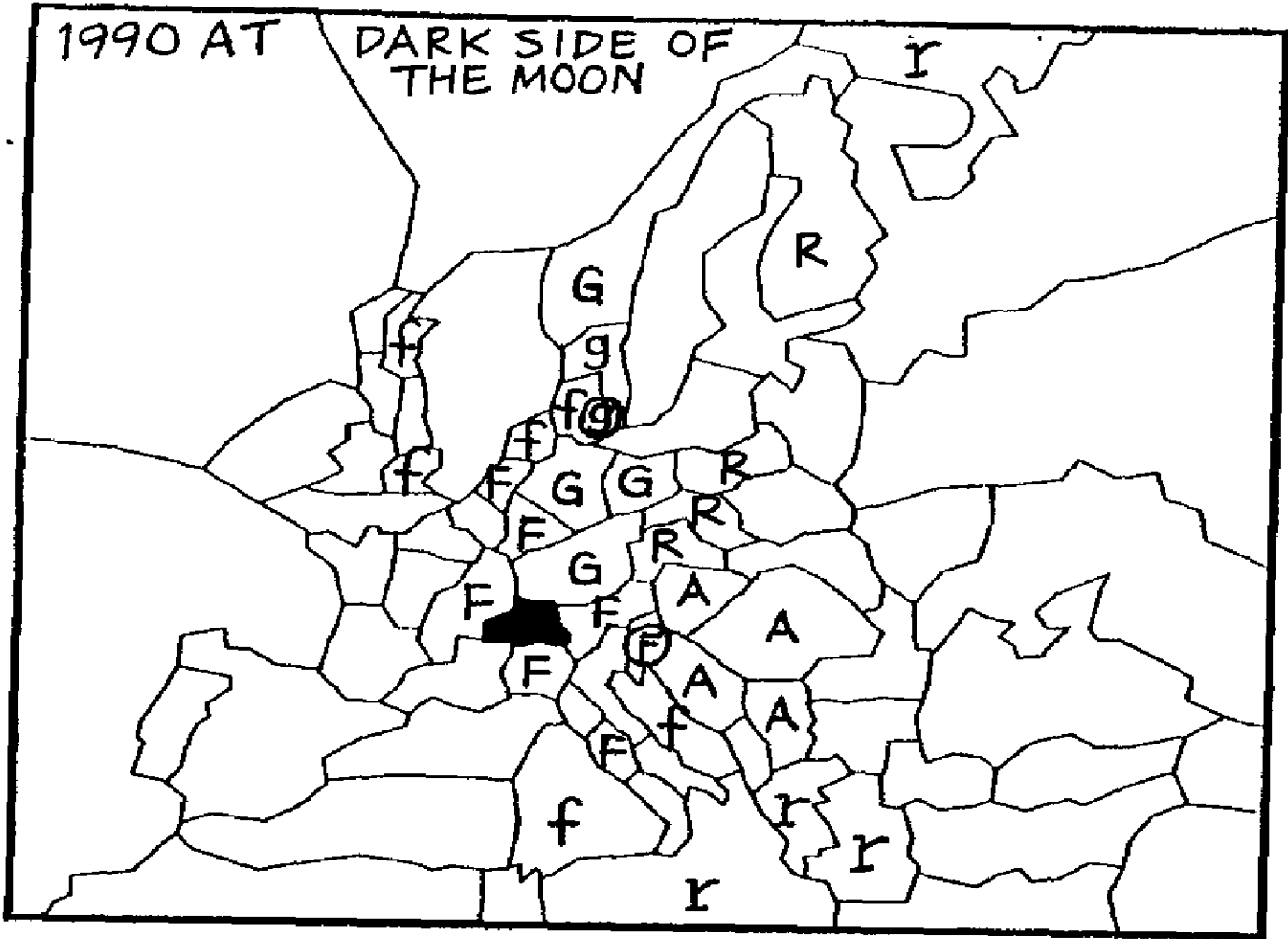
FRANCE (Randy Ellis, COA: 1623 Honeysuckle Drive, Modesto, CA 95350)
build a par. a par-bur, f mid-nat, f spa/sc-mid, f bre S f spa/sc-mid,
a bel-edi, f nth C a bel-edi D R hol,hel,ska,nwy,nwg,otb, a kie H,
a yor S a bel-edi, a gal-ukr, a war-mos, a mos-stp, a lvn S a mos-stp.

GERMANY (civil disorder) f den H.

ITALY (Don Treasure, 407 East Street, Golden, CO 80403)
even. a gre-bul, f aeg S a gre-bul, a rum S a gre-bul D R ser,otb,
a ser-bud, a tri S a ser-bud, a vie S a ser-bud, a ven H, f ion-nap,
f eas-ion.

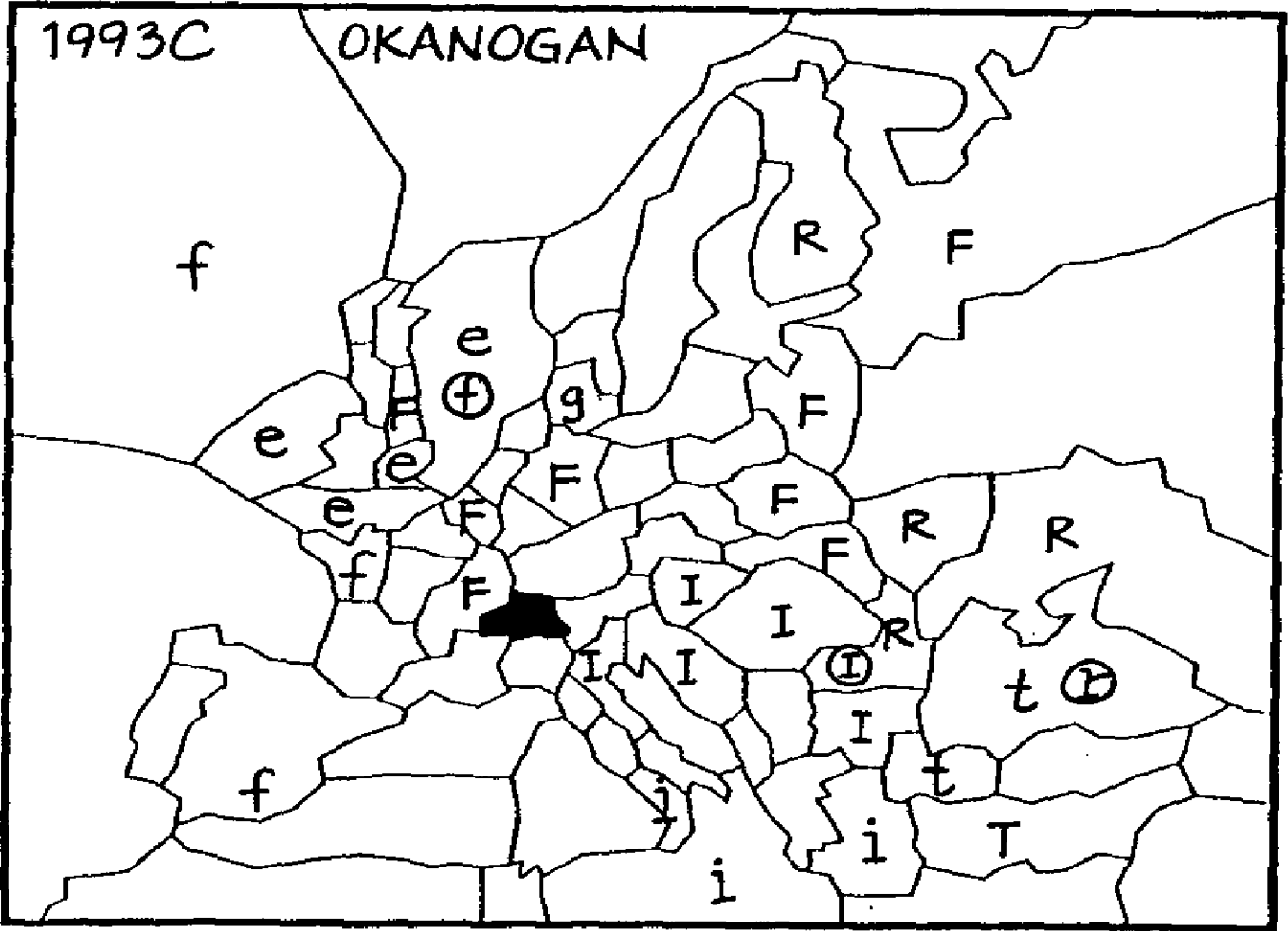
1990 AT

DARK SIDE OF THE MOON



1993C

OKANOGAN



RUSSIA (Ron Bottner, 13030 Northborough, #1712, Houston, TX 77067)
a rum R ukr, a gal R otb. a ukr-mos, a bud-rum, a sev S a bud-rum,
f bla S a bud-rum D R arm,otb, a fin-stp.

TURKEY (Michael Quirk, 3830 Chester Drive, Glenview, IL 60025)
build f ank. f ank-bla, f con S f ank-bla, a smy H.

Supply Centers

| | | |
|-----|------|--|
| ENG | (4) | lon lvp edi nwy |
| FRA | (12) | par bre mar spa por mun ber kie bel hol war mos |
| GER | (1) | den |
| ITA | (9) | ven rom nap tun tri vie gre ser rum |
| RUS | (5) | sev stp bud bul swe |
| TUR | (3) | ank con smy |

Game Notes

Note change of address for Randy Ellis (you ran out of continent, Randy, next stop is Hawaii). Draw vote: F Win failed (1 YES, 4 NO). New proposal: F/I draw (NVR = NO, NMR = YES).

Okanogan Press

ROME-PARIS: We have worked well together, but the decision time for the finale is upon us.

ROME-CONSTANTINOPLE: Cooperation can continue.

ROME-LONDON: Show me how and I might consider it!

ROME-SEVASTOPAL (OR WHOEVER THE SEAT OF THE RUSSIAN GOVT IS): Your spoiling attacks last season were masterful...regretful and misdirected...but masterful.

LONDON: The landing of the Dark Prince's forces in Yorkshire has set off a panic in this God-fearing country. The Dark Prince's unspeakable acts he performs on his vanquished foes is Legendary, and is the major topic in every pub across the land. It is unlikely that help will come from the continent, as the other world leaders are either impotent or are in cahoots with the Dark Lord. In a related event, the incidence of Syphilis has skyrocketed among the Livestock in the Yorkshire countryside where French forces now roam freely. Somewhere in Italy: Squeals of Delight from Don, who says, "I like it, I like it!!!!!"

Fall 1907 orders are due: November 18, 1994.

IROQUOIS - 1993 AP: FALL 1904

COSTLY GERMAN NMR / RUSSIANS PICK UP THREE BUILDS

AUSTRIA (Mike Stewart, 901 N. Citrus Drive, La Habra, CA 90631)
NMR. a bul H D A, a ser H D A.

ENGLAND (Michael Gonsalves, 530 Treasure Lake, DuBois, PA 15801)
f iri-mid, f wes-tyn, f spa/sc S GER a bur-mar NSO, a por S f spa/sc,
a bre S GER a pic-par NSO, f nwy S GER a den-swe NSO.

FRANCE (Glenn Vogt, 1416 W. Orchid Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85021)
a bre R gas. a gas S a mar, a mar H, a par H.

GERMANY (Nelson Heintzman, P.O. Box 603, East Amhearst, NY 14051)
NMR. a bur H, a pic H, a mun H, f enc H, f kie H, a den H.

ITALY (Dwayne Shreve, 739 Union Church Road, Elkton, MD 21921)
f wes R tun, f bul/sc R gre. f nap-tyn, f tun S f nap-tyn, a tri-ser,
a tyo-tri, f gre S RUS f con-bul/sc, f alb S f gre.

RUSSIA (David Baxter, 905 Parker Road, Toutle, WA 98649)
a bud S ITA a tri-ser, a vie-boh, a gal-rum, a mos-lvn, f bot-swe,
a arm-ank, a smy S a arm-ank, f con-bul/sc.

TURKEY (James Wall, 911 E. Johnson, #4, Madison, WI 53703)
a smy R ank. a ank-con, f aeg S a ank-con.

Supply Centers

| | | | |
|-----|------|--|----------|
| AUS | (0) | <u>tri ser rum</u> | Out |
| ENG | (7) | lon lvp edi nwy spa por BRE | Build 1 |
| FRA | (2) | par <u>bre mar</u> | Remove 1 |
| GER | (6) | ber mun kie hol den bel | Even |
| ITA | (7) | ven rom nap tun gre <u>bul</u> SER TRI | Build 1 |
| RUS | (11) | stp mos war sev swe <u>con</u> vie bud | Build 3 |
| | | RUM BUL ANK SMY | |
| TUR | (1) | <u>ank smy</u> CON | Remove 1 |

Game Notes

Very unusual for Nelson to NMR, but just in case...standby for Germany is:
Mike Barno, P.O. Box 509, Gardiner, MT 59030.

Iroquois Press

ITALY-GM: Nick, my favorite liquor store owner just got in some wonderful brews. Ever try Big Shoulders, Porter Beer, or Legacy Red Ale out of Chicago? Delightful taste treats. Another pleasure is Turbo Dog Beer out of Louisiana. Recently my kid sister gave me some Uff Da Beer out of New Glarus, Wisconsin. I would drink any beer having that Norwegian expression on it. It is a wonderfully tasty bock, and I am hoarding my remaining bottles for special occasions. Isn't this era of micro breweries wonderful?

GM-ITALY: Although I'm not into the micro-brewery scene (or beer period for that matter), I'm glad there is a proliferation of the small breweries- free enterprise at its best.

Winter 1904/Spring 1905 orders are due: November 18, 1994.

NISQUALLY - 1994 AK: WINTER 1901

ITALIAN STRATEGY: BE BORING

AUSTRIA (Andy Lischett, 2402 Ridgeland Avenue, Berwyn, IL 60402)
build a bud, a tri. f gre, a ser, a vie.

ENGLAND (Michael Quirk, 3830 Chester Drive, Glenview, IL 60025)
build a lon, f edi. f nwy, a den, f nth.

FRANCE (Bob Acheson, 15715 92nd Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5R 5C5, Canada)
build a par, a mar. f por, a ruh, a spa.

GERMANY (Mick Taylor, 23376 Larson Road, Sycamore, IL 60178-8360)
build a kie, a ber. a bel, f hol, a mun.

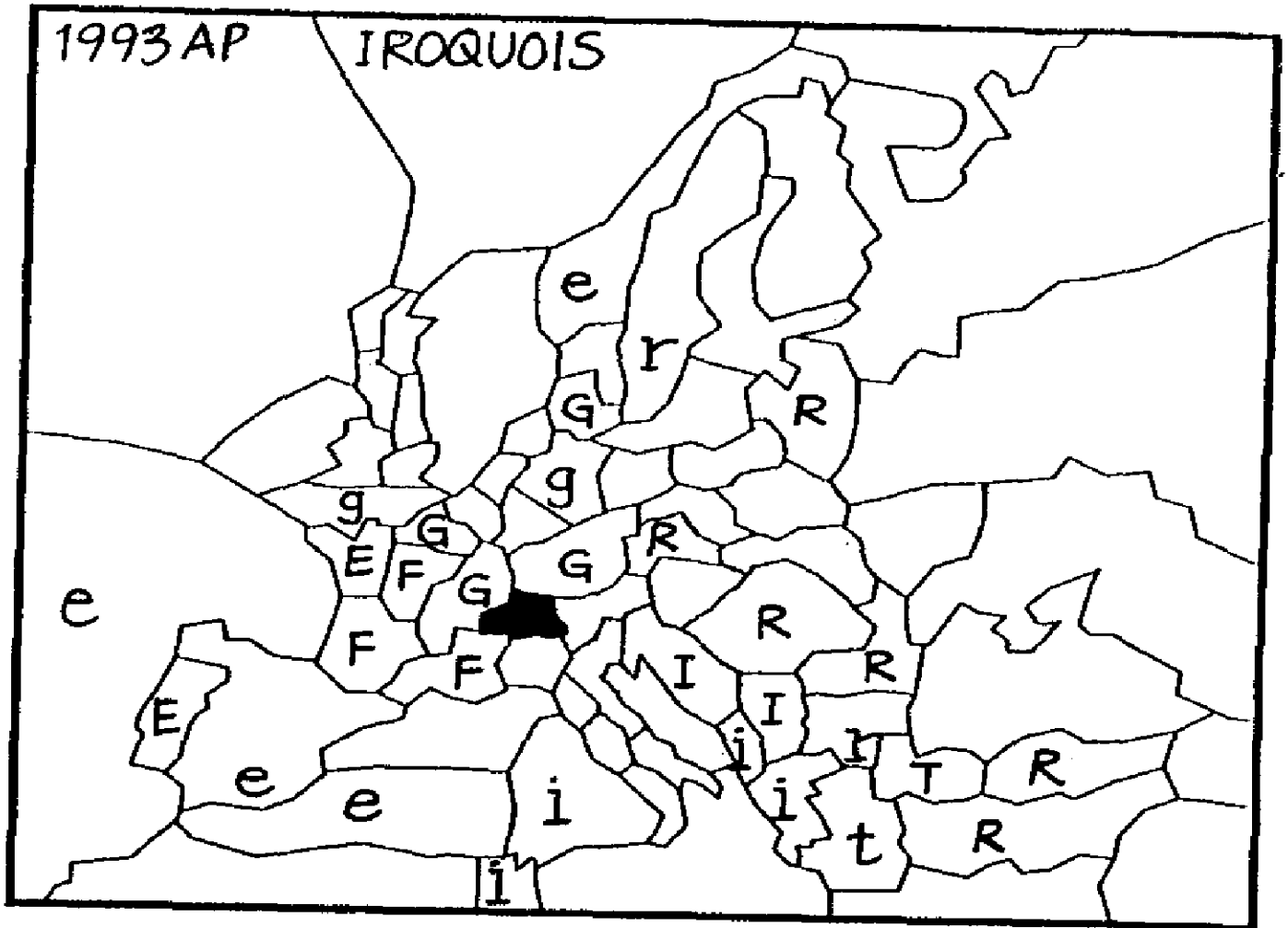
ITALY (Eric Schlegel, 314 Fords Lane, Aberdeen, MD 21001)
build f nap. a tun, f ion, a ven.

RUSSIA (Marc Peters, 370 North Street, Sun Prairie, WI 53590)
build f sev, a mos. f rum, a ukr, a lvn, f swe.

TURKEY (Glenn Vogt, 1416 W. Orchid Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85021)
build f smy. a bul, f bla, a con.

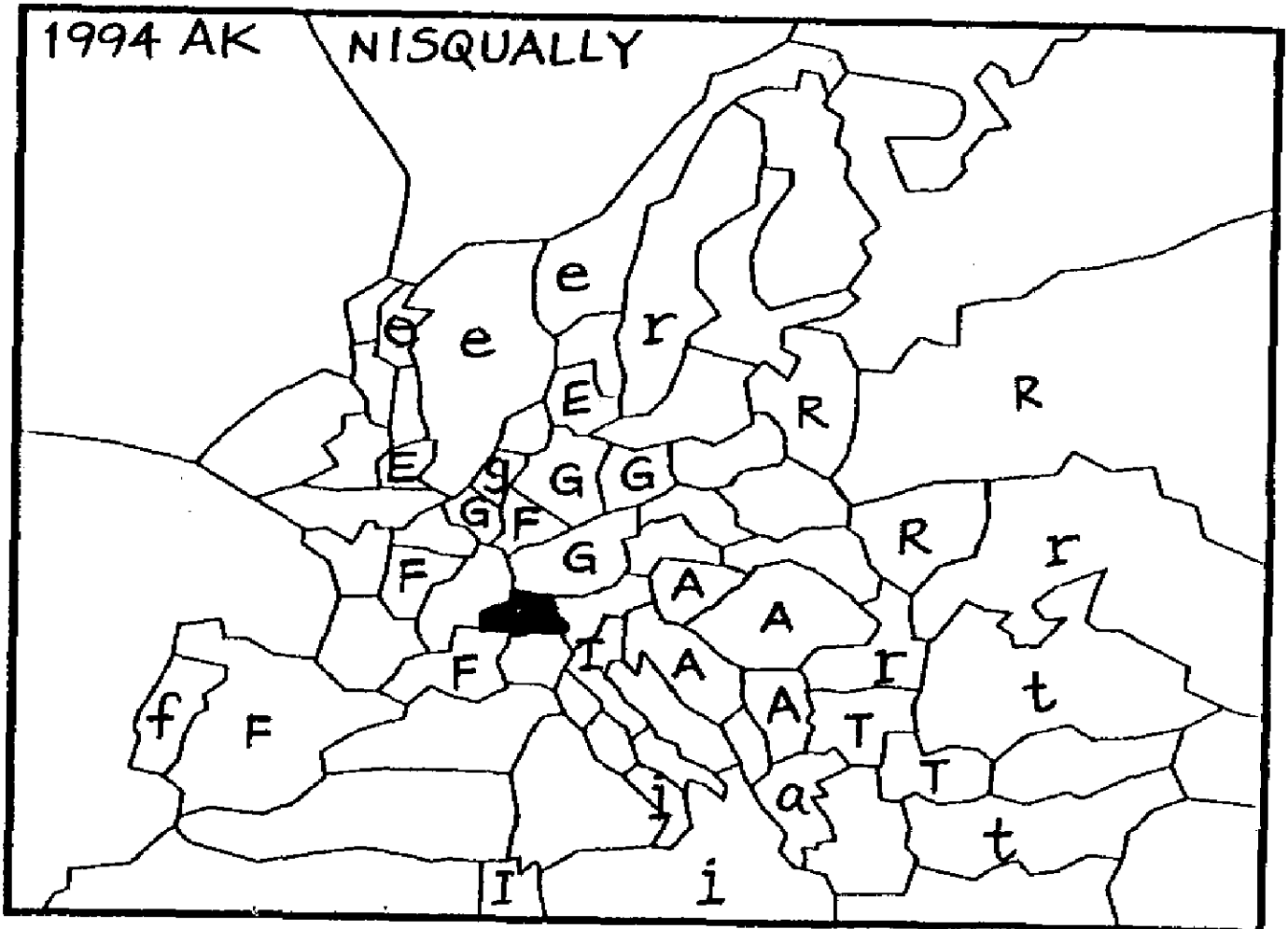
1993 AP

IROQUOIS



1994 AK

NISQUALLY



Supply Centers

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|
| AUS | (5) | vie | bud | tri | ser | gre |
| ENG | (5) | lon | lvp | edi | nwy | den |
| FRA | (5) | par | bre | mar | spa | por |
| GER | (5) | ber | mun | kie | hol | bel |
| ITA | (4) | ven | rom | nap | tun | |
| RUS | (6) | stp | mos | war | sev | swe rum |
| TUR | (4) | ank | con | smy | bul | |

Game Notes

Advance Spring orders on file: A/F/I/R/T.

Nisqually Press

TUR-ITA/AUS: Rumors have it there is an I/A alliance. Italy has already made anti-Turkish moves so I fear operations must begin against you both.

TUR-AUS: How about the truth?

GLENN-ERIC: Will you be offering Dip games with the new Colonial Diplomacy?

ERIC-GLENN: No variants here- they make my brain hurt. Actually, I just don't feel like investing the extra time it takes to learn and GM variants. However, I am taking a gunboat game orphaned from The Home Office. Who knows, maybe someday I'll even open a game of Bernie Oaklyn's Air-Sea Dip just for old time's sake.

ITA-RUS: That's my strategy. I plan to be so boring that everyone falls asleep and doesn't notice me creeping up behind them.

ITA-AUS: It was all a terrible misunderstanding.

ITA-FRA: I'll be very upset if the rumors are true and I see F Mar coming my way.

Spring 1902 orders are due: November 18, 1994.

BNC BLUES - 1993 A WINTER 1902/SPRING 1903 WHEN FRIENDS REPLY, WHO NEEDS ENEMIES

AUSTRIA (John Michalski, P.O. Box 60665, Oklahoma City, OK 73146)
even. a ser-tri, a bud S a ser-tri, f gre S ITA f bul/sc, a gal-ukr,
a rum S a gal-ukr D R ser,otb.

ENGLAND (Melinda Holley, P.O. Box 2793, Huntington, WV 25727)
even. f nwg-nwy, f nth S f nwg-nwy, a yor-lon, f ska-swe.

FRANCE (Paul Milewski, 4154 Allendale Drive #2, Cincinnati, OH 45209)
build a par. a pic-bur, a par S a pic-bur, a bur-bel, f enc-bel,
a spa-gas.

GERMANY (Dan Mathias, 509 Bayview Drive, Lusby, MD 20657)
build f kie. f kie S a den, a den S ENG f ska-swe, a ruh S f bel,
a hol S f bel, f bel S FRA f enc-nth NSO, a mun-bur.

ITALY (Mark Nelson, 1st Flr Fr Flat, 3 Kelso Rd, Leeds, W.Yorkshire, LS2 9PR, England)
build f nap, a ven. f nap-ion, f tun S f nap-ion, a ven-tyo,
a tri S a ven-tyo D R vie,alb,otb, f bul/sc S AUS f gre-aeg NSO,
a apu-ven.

RUSSIA (David Charlton, 150 The Parade, Island Bay, Wellington, New Zealand)
a rum R ukr. a ukr-rum, f sev S a ukr-rum, a stp S f swe-nwy,
f swe-nwy D R bal,bot,fin,otb, a war-gal.

TURKEY (Pete Gaughan, 1236 Detroit Avenue #7, Concord, CA 94520-3651)
a con-bul, f aeg S a con-bul, f ank-bla.

Supply Centers

| | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|
| AUS | (5) | vie | bud | ser | gre | rum |
| ENG | (4) | lon | lvp | edi | nwy | |
| FRA | (5) | par | bre | mar | por | spa |
| GER | (6) | ber | mun | kie | hol | den bel |
| ITA | (6) | ven | rom | nap | tri | tun bul |
| RUS | (5) | stp | mos | war | sev | swe |
| TUR | (3) | ank | con | smy | | |

Game Notes

Keep in mind that under my houserules draws may not be proposed until after Fall, 1903.

Blues Press

RUS-ALL: This time I wrote to my friends! and got some replies! To my enemies I'll ask ex-President Jimmy Carter to intercede on my behalf that the current leader of England and Austria go into exile and leave Russia in peace.
TUR-AUS: Help the Brit get a build? This is the worst kind of self-immolation!
GER-WORLD: Lots of help offered. Any takers?
ITALY-ALL: I have lost all interest in diplomacy...BURN OUT! I propose 1= Original players (E/I/A/R).

Fall 1903 orders are due: December 16, 1994.

CHEYENNE - 1993 Zrb

FALL 1906 REVISITED

GUNBOAT GAME TRANSFERRED FROM THE HOME OFFICE

AUSTRIA: a bud S a tri, a tri S a bud, a ven S a tri.

ENGLAND: f por-mid D A, f edi H, f wal-enc, a lvp H.

FRANCE: a bre H, f mar-spa/sc, f cly-nwg, a bel S GER a hol, a spa-por, f mid S a spa-por.

GERMANY: f swe-nwy, a den-swe, a hol S FRA a bel, f bal-den.

ITALY: A nap-rom, f ion-gre D R eas,adr,apu,nap,tyn.

RUSSIA: a mos-sev, a gal-rum, a ukr S a gal-rum.

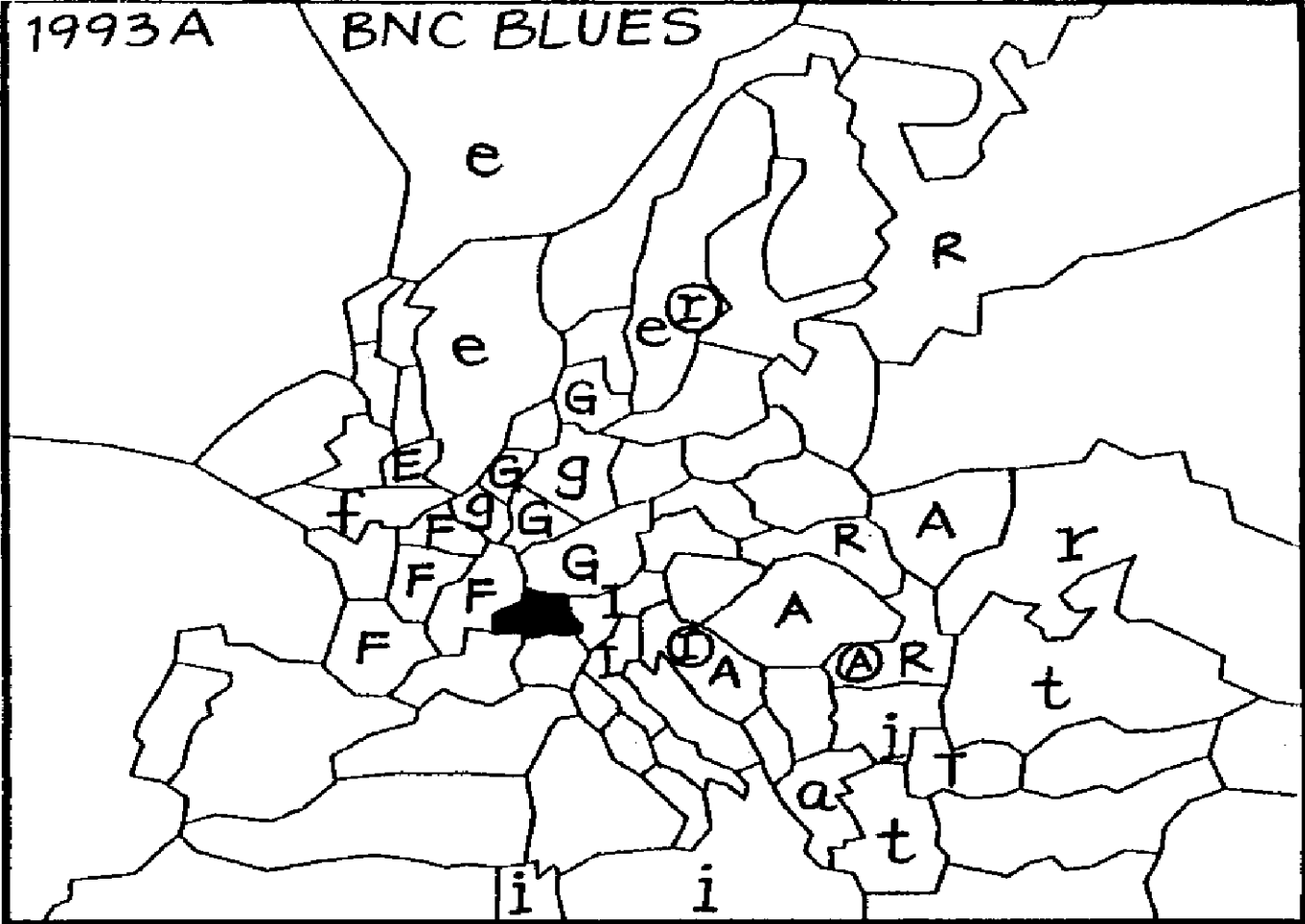
TURKEY: a con-gre, f aeg C a con-gre, f alb-ion, f tun S f alb-ion, a bul S a ser, a ser S f rum, f rum S a sev, a sev S f rum, a arm S a sev.

Supply Centers

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------|-------|-----|
| AUS | (4) | vie | bud | tri | ven | Build | 1 |
| ENG | (3) | lon | edi | LVP | <u>nwy</u> | Even | |
| FRA | (6) | par | bre | mar | spa | por | bel |
| GER | (7) | ber | mun | kie | hol | den | swe |
| ITA | (2) | rom | nap | | | | |
| RUS | (3) | stp | mos | war | | | |
| TUR | (9) | ank | con | smy | bul | rum | ser |
| | | | | | gre | sev | |
| | | | | | tun | | |

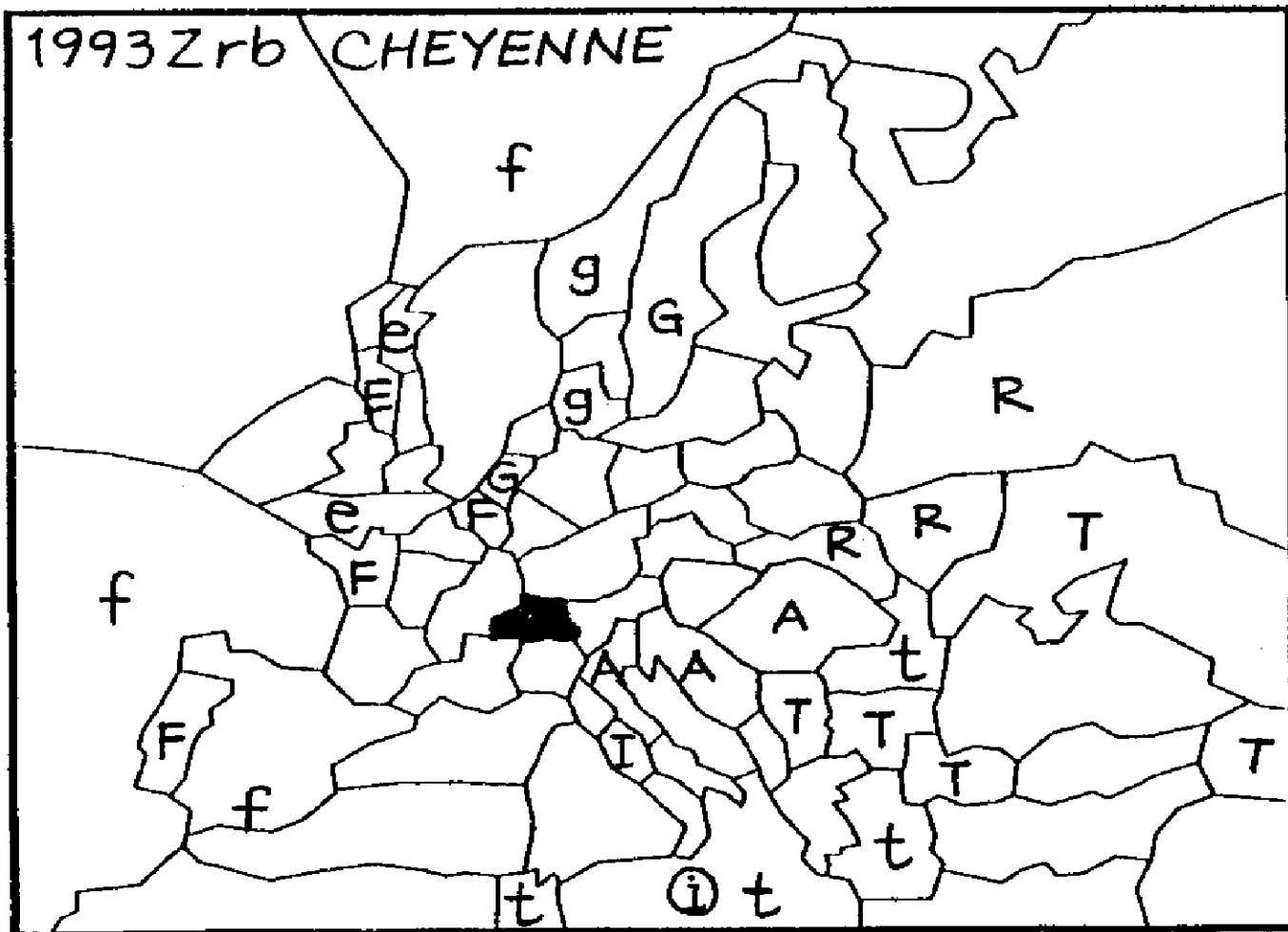
1993A

BNC BLUES



1993Zrb

CHEYENNE



Game Notes

Welcome to RBM! You are playing _____, and I HAVE / HAVE NO orders from you. This is something new- a Gunboat game. What do you say we put this game on a faster track (3 weeks)? It's up to you. If unanimous, I'll do it.

Cheyenne Press

Press, as always, is welcome.

Winter 1906/Spring 1907 orders are due: November 18, 1994.

L E T T E R S

Jack Jewart

Received your sample zine #41 with note to swap zines. Two things on that subject.

First: I'm actually NOT a BIG Diplomacy play. I'm into tactical games such as Afrika Korps, D-Day, Waterloo, Bulge, etc. I got interested in Diplomacy myself as a diversion from tactical games. I also enjoy the multiplayer aspect of Dip. If you've ever been in a game of Dip with me (unfortunately you haven't) Dip is about as close as I come to Role Playing games. I only play in about 3 Dip games at any one time but I do it up big. Diplomatic letters written, sometimes in 3rd person, & I go into great depth, include writing of hilarious treaties with titles & issuing Declarations of War, etc.

Second: It would not be of much benefit to you to swap zines with me as I'm really not going to have much of a zine. In reality, my plan is mainly, REGULAR Diplomacy games only, no gunboat or whatever, & very little extra comments. I realize that there'll be some space from time to time & will come up with something for filler (I hate blank pages or spaces). On the other hand, there will not be that many articles. Dip games will have Priority. The BIG difference in my zine will be a steady SIX week turnaround time. This gives players more time than a 30 day zine but is not as long as a 2 month time (as one game I'm in. A couple players have already commented that they liked that aspect as it gave them what they thought was the best time frame to accomplish a play.

My charges are \$5 a GAME plus \$2 as a NMR fee. If anyone NMRs, they will forfeit \$1 sort of as a fine. If they NMR twice, then they must send in \$2 more to continue. It's NOT an NMR insurance, sort of an incentive NOT to NMR. Currently I have 5 GOOD Dip players waiting to start the first game. I also have one player that's in too many games at this time but has volunteered to be permanent standby, should anyone drop out, if they can get a copy of the zine.

Oh yes, I was editor of "The Strategist" monthly newsletter of the Strategy Gaming Society for 6 years & never missed an issue date.

Good hearing from you. I was actually going to try to get up and see you when you were up near here but now you've moved to Granite Falls. I'm not sure where that's at? I might have even tried the trip to Verlot? on 15-16 Oct but I already have reservations for those dates fly to Wendover, Nevada to State Line & Silver Smith casinos for that weekend. Maybe some future date?

[[So what do you think about making the front cover of RBM? You're in the National Big Time now. I'd like to pull together serious FTF Dip players here sometime after the Holidays, perhaps later February- keep your map handy. It sounds like you have your zine well thought out. It's good to see a new no-frills warehouse Dip zine appear- there aren't many of those around. You may not think your zine is much now, but they all start small and will grow over the next couple years to a hopefully manageable level. You indicated in your first issue you intend to stay under the ounce. I think that makes practical sense- I swear by it. As RBM shows, quite a bit of material can be

included for one stamp and still have a good balance of games and reading material. Good luck, and call on me if you have any questions, GMing or otherwise. We have to support the precious few new publishers we're getting.]]

Mark Nelson

I have played in several international games in addition to non-international games in zines from several different countries (Australia, America, Canada, Sweden, Belgium and New Zealand). I have played in one or two great games where there was active diplomacy but international games in general have little diplomacy and non-international games in non-UK zines also have little diplomacy amongst non-native players. There are one or two zines which have really good reputations for international games.

So the question is, why play in international games? Good question. Even though they aren't as enjoyable as games played in UK zines it's still fun to play against foes and I've always enjoyed correspondence.

Unless you choose your zine carefully don't enter international games expecting hectic diplomacy and shifting balance of power alliances. But they are still enjoyable.

These days I don't play diplomacy in UK zines...too slow! I play in one or two games (including vts) in US zines but most of my games are played over Internet. 48 hour deadlines are the best! I would be interested in an email game (doesn't have to be international) in RBM, I would prefer weekly deadlines.

[[This was a pre-burnout letter from Mark; since then Mark is cutting back on his involvement in Dip. But I hope you hang around, Mark. The only way I would consider an international game would be if it was E-Mail. The post overseas is way too slow- I'd forget who my allies and enemies were by the time the next deadline crept around. E-Mail 48 hour deadlines, on the other hand, would be way too fast for me. I am intrigued and want to try the medium- both GMing and playing. I think it's where the future is. Maybe a weekly or two-week deadline would work out, and it might be fun to publish the results to show the posties. You mentioned you like corresponding, but it seems to me that the level of correspondence postally has dropped off markedly over the years. Anybody know what the quantity and quality of the correspondence in E-Mail Dip games are?]]

Don Treasure

We are all well here and almost back to a regular pattern.

I have really enjoyed the series on The Coming Anarchy. Maybe enjoyed is the wrong word, as it's difficult to enjoy such a gloomy scenario. Preparing for the 21st Century makes many of the same points, in a less personal and apocalyptic manner. The only major disagreement I have with the analysis is that I doubt that nation-states will go quietly - if at all. There are several reasons for this. First, the idea of countries accepting their breakup peacefully seems to fly in the face of most of history. I'd say all of history, except for the recent example of the Soviet Union. But note that the final decision on the Russian Empire is not in, and that Russian troops are present in, I believe, every one of the "independent" countries that were carved out of the Soviet Union proper. Second, those countries with a degree of history together - England, Brazil, and the United States for example - have almost if not more in common than any faction within them would have. And third, trade and the interdependence of modern technology provide a strong economic incentive for continued union. The examples in the article where difficulties are most acute are generally countries that were founded upon the artificial boundaries of colonies that overlaid existing groupings.

Don't make the mistake to interpret that to mean that I blame the colonial powers for the mess that those areas are in. I suspect that the colonial powers provided a Pax Colonial that reduced anarchy while they

remained and enforced some type of standardized rules. I suspect that it is the release from these standardized rules, the population pressures resulting from improved medical care, and the increased international communications that are more direct causes. Note that two of these, and (by some) all three, are generally considered "good" things.

Also, although politically incorrect, the situation in Africa is somewhat different than in others. The African peoples were more "fractured" into groupings, with less recognized "national" interests than Southeast Asia, for example. Additionally, African native populations were not effectively destroyed by the colonial powers, as occurred in Australia and South America. These factors leave the African populations in the most risk. The majority of the people have strong identities with groups that do not fit existing borders (unlike South America and much of Asia). Add to this the fact that the population of Africa is growing as fast as any place on Earth, and it shouldn't surprise anyone that the existing countries do not appear viable any more.

This has turned into a thesis rather than a short letter. It's an interesting topic that could easily effect us all in an amazingly short time. I don't doubt that the world is going to change - that's just standard history. What's so depressing right now is that there are so few positive trends to pin your hopes to. It really depresses my wife, when she wants to know what kind of a world our kids will be facing. Read Earth by David Brin for an interesting view from a science fiction perspective.

I am an optimist, but I suspect that success will be by a different measure than we can foresee today.

[[Thanks for commenting on the series. Unlike your wife, Cathy doesn't want to know what kind of world our children will be facing- she wouldn't even glance at The Coming Anarchy. I'll comment on your three points.

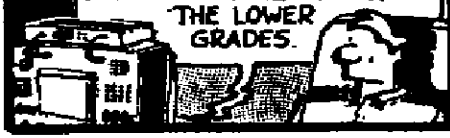
(1) I don't think the more successful nation states like the U.S. will go quietly either, but I think that with a rising population and depleting resources, democratic institutions might die as the population loses faith in them, giving way to a more repressive government. The projection is nearly 400 million people living in the U.S. by 2040. Does Democracy break down with too many people competing for less resources?

(2) The nation states with a sense of history will continue to exist only if they continue to indoctrinate their rising population with a sense of that history via education, and not allowing multiculturalism and bilingualism to take priority above the national interest (read The Disuniting of America, by James Schlesinger). A nation state will also have to get control of its own borders to prevent unchecked refugee flows from the Third World. An example is the flow from Mexico, which might blur the southern border, replacing it with Kaplan's "Latino buffer." I think the U.S. needs to stay active in improving economic conditions in Mexico, Haiti, etc. (which will reduce birth rates) for its own self interest. In that regard NAFTA is a good thing, but it is questionable if it will raise the standard of living for the average Mexican worker. The U.S. is already losing Florida due to refugee flows caused by our own economic sanctions on Cuba. And why do you think we're in Haiti? To stop the refugee flow.

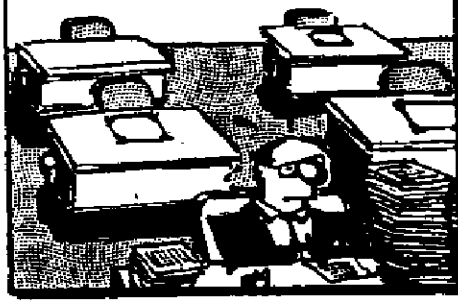
(3) I hope you're right that technology and trade will create the new resources and economic incentives to maintain civil cohesion, but that depends on how well the benefits are distributed. People have to have full bellies, clean water, clothes and shelter. When a large part of the population doesn't get these basic necessities and there's an absence of religion to keep moral fiber together (and a hope that the afterlife will be better), people revert to tribalism, territorialism, and criminal acts in fighting over the crumbs.]]

THE LAYOFFS WENT ON AND ON AND ON. THE DUTIES OF THE NEWLY-UNEMPLOYED WERE ADDED TO THOSE WHO STILL HAD JOBS.

FROM NOW, ON, DUE TO A SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS, JANITORS WILL TEACH THE LOWER GRADES.



FEWER AND FEWER PEOPLE WERE DOING MORE AND MORE.



EVENTUALLY, IT HAPPENED.

ANDY WAS THE LAST PERSON LEFT WITH A JOB.



ANDY HERDED SHEEP, TRADED STOCK, COOKED, PERFORMED SURGERY, BUILT REFRIGERATORS, PLAYED GUITAR, FRIED BURGERS, STRIP-MINED, FARMED, DESIGNED ADS, DROVE TAXIS AND DEALT CARDS AT A CASINO.

ANDY DID EVERYTHING.



FOR A LONG TIME, EVERYONE WAS HAPPY. THE IDLE RICH HAD VIRTUALLY ELIMINATED LABOR COSTS. THE IDLE POOR WERE ALL ON THE DOLE. ANDY WAS TOO BUSY TO BE MISERABLE.

CAN YOU FIX MY WATCH?

AFTER I DESIGN THIS BRIDGE IN ZAIRE.



FINALLY:

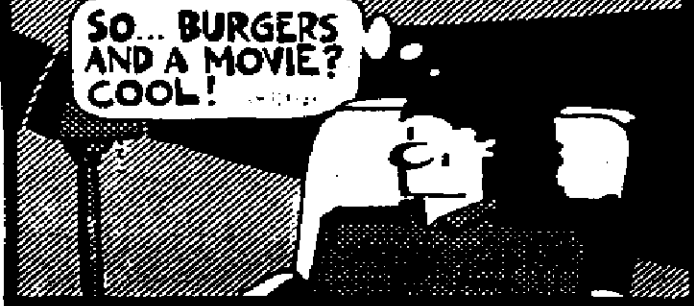
AN 8% TIP? THAT'S IT - I QUIT!

WAIT! YOU CAN'T QUIT!



AN ACTIVITY THAT INVOLVES ONLY ONE PERSON IS SIMPLE.

SO... BURGERS AND A MOVIE? COOL!



ADDING ANOTHER HUMAN BEING MEANS DELAYS, NEGOTIATIONS AND STALEMATES.

BURGERS? YUK! LET'S EAT SOME JAPANESE!

I HATE JAPANESE!



DOING IT WITH A BIG GROUP CAUSES ALL THOSE PROBLEMS TO INCREASE EXPONENTIALLY.

LET'S SEE "THE LION KING"!

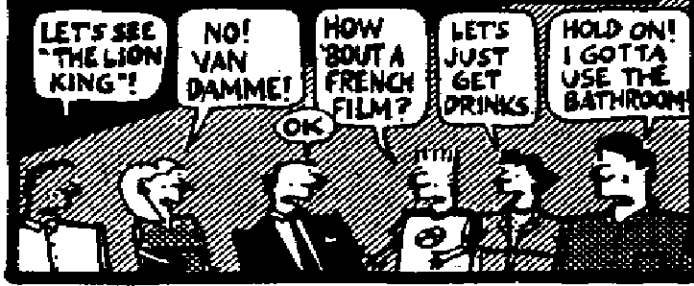
NO! VAN DAMME!

HOW 'BOUT A FRENCH FILM?

LET'S JUST GET DRINKS

HOLD ON! I GOTTA USE THE BATHROOM!

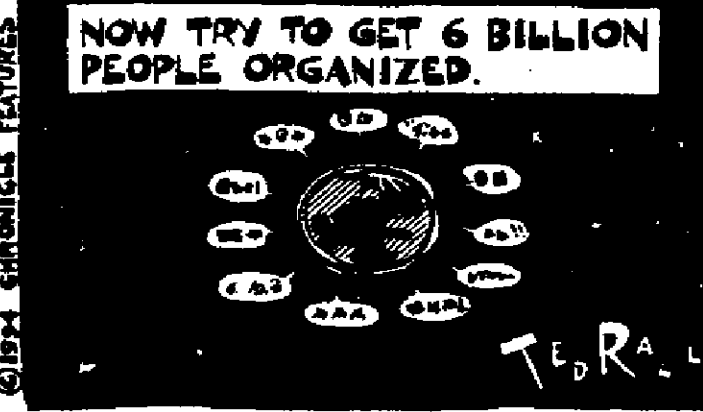
OK



NOW TRY TO GET 6 BILLION PEOPLE ORGANIZED.

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TED RA...



Sorcerers & Strategists #14

For those of you who pay any attention at all, you may notice that #13 is missing. Number 13 is out there and our good Mr. Ozog retains a copy of this document. He did not care for what the article contained and decided not to print it.

What heinous words could this copy have contained? Was it a list of computer codes to break into the pentagon computers and wreak havoc on our nation's nuclear forces? Was it some sort of sleazy story that one would find in an adult book store? Perhaps it had some sort of right wing political point so horrible that Eric could not in good conscience run it in the Zine.

Nope.

It was on Starfleet Battles. You know, the game by Task Force. Starfleet is one of my all time favorites, and last year I attended my first convention to play Starfleet Battles. There was some info on my serious troubles travelling to the con. A letter and a response to what another reader thought of a comment I made. There was some technical stuff that only one who is familiar with Starfleet Battles could understand or enjoy. I don't know how many of you know what Starfleet is and I don't know how many people who read Eric's Zine would care to read an article on such a game. Maybe there are a few. I would hope so. None of this is the point.

The point is, when I began to write this, Issue #1 is lost in antiquity at this point, Sean Brown did not hinder me in any way. This was to be my little corner of the universe. In my corner I could say or do anything that I wanted. What I wanted was to get people's ire up so that they would respond and we could then have a discussion. In order to accomplish this, I would pick topics that I could hold an intelligent discourse on but which were volatile enough to get people interested. As my degree is in Political Science I chose political topics. Little did I know that upon moving S&S to R.B.M. that I would only be able to write about politics.

So, for the past year I have waited and waited to see #13 printed. Obviously, this has not occurred. What to do? Perhaps now that Eric is aware of the major reason for my absence, I will see #13.

Eric feels that his readers would not care to see an article on that particular game. To be completely honest, I don't care. S&S is my corner of the universe. I write what I feel, have done, or what is bothering me at the time. I enjoyed going to Hexacon, my first ever convention, and I think some of that enjoyment came across in that article. If Eric does not want my corner on the universe in his Zine, that is completely understandable. I do not fault him in any manner and I will not hold it against him in any way. Eric is a good friend of mine, and his not wanting S&S in his Zine will not infringe on that friendship in any way. Certainly, not everyone, if anyone, is interested in my corner of the universe.

What does bother me however, is that fact that he would withhold S&S on a personal whim. As I have explained, this was not some sort of N.C. 17 movie script, nor was it an advocacy of violence asking the 50 or so readers or R.B.M. to rise up with our fellow Socialist Comrades in Arms to overthrow the government. It was an article on my trip to Phoenix to play a game.

Anyway.

Here is a definition. I will then prove this definition with facts learned from experience.

People, meaning human beings, are, as a general rule, self-centered, self-serving, selfish scumbags that will do all within their power to make the lives of others miserable.

I do mean this as a general rule. There are exceptions. You may be one of those exceptions. However, those exceptions help prove my definition, not disprove it.

What brings on this little bout of human hating? (Other than my own overactive sense of cynicism). I shall tell you, of course. Recently I was informed by a member of my family that another member of my family has been

using my name and social security number to acquire a number of credit cards in my name. The person committing this fraudulent act has been running up substantial bills in my name to buy drugs.

This person, who we shall call John, acquired my soc. number when I crashed at his house during December breaks from school. I used John's permanent address as my own, because N.A.U. demanded a permanent address. John possessed the most permanent address that I knew of in the State of Arizona. As with most Universities, your student number will be the same as your Social Security number: The Financial Aid office at N.A.U. would regularly send information that I would need to check and confirm, to John's address. For whatever reason, F.A. of N.A.U. continued to send this information, even after I was finished with school and possessed a permanent address of my own. This financial aid information had my student I.D. number printed on it. Therefore, John easily obtained my Soc. number.

Enter the credit card companies. When a new student graduates the credit card companies jump on him. Now this young man or woman will be going out into the world, getting a good job and setting up for a new life. Certainly, a few credit cards will help this young person get on his/her feet. American Express, Discover, Diner's Club, and nearly every bank in the world that offers a Visa will begin sending "preapproved" card applications to this young person, just to make sure that the first ten years of the post-education is spent climbing your way out of debt. The most readily available and easily attained address to send these applications to is the former student's permanent address. The school obviously has no compunction about giving these addresses out. In my case, that was John's address.

John now has my address, my Soc number, and a dozen credit card applications. All of these things provided courtesy of Northern Arizona University. (Personal aside: For all of the work, time and money spent getting a college degree, I have yet to make over \$20,000 in a single year. So much for making money once you leave school, and so much for needing all these credit cards.)

Once I learned of this, I called American Express. They found the card in my name, told me all about my rather large and past due unpaid balance, and gave me my own account number, which I did not know. The AmEx card was easy enough to take care of. The Visa on the other hand is much more difficult. I must now get my own credit report so that I can find the card number for my OWN Visa so that I can cancel it. This has cost me over \$50 dollars.

I called the police. This was a nightmare! I currently live in Tucson. I called the Tucson police department. They transferred me here and there until I was finally told to call the police department in the city where John lives. I called them. Once again I was transferred here and there until I reached a detective. Now I am the criminal. I gave the woman every bit of information I could about John. Height, weight, address, telephone, even his birth date figuring that this would lead to something. NOT! After all of this, on my phone bill, she told me that she would go and "ask" John if he has been using cards in my name. "But," she told me, "if he just says no there is nothing I can do."

"What do you mean there is nothing you can do," I responded. "A citizen has just told you that a criminal with a prior arrests and convictions for numerous drug related offenses has been using credit cards fraudulently to obtain cash to buy drugs! How is that not probable cause to search him and his house for these cards?"

Here is the kicker! "How do I know you are just not trying to set him up for something?"

At this point I had just about had enough. This brainchild of a detective's last bit of advice was to get a report from AmEx documenting the location of each fraudulent transaction. Then calling each store or bank, and each police department and report to them that they have been had.

Let me describe for you what this would entail. John lives in the city of Gilbert. To get to work in Phoenix, John must drive through the cities of

Chandler, Mesa, Tempe and Phoenix. John's family lives in Tempe, very close to the city limits of both Scottsdale and Paradise Valley. John's friends live in Glendale, near Sun City. I have further relatives in Apache Junction, which John has visited on numerous occasions. All of these cities, plus a few others, make up the Phoenix Metropolitan Sprawl! Pounded by a Sun that would make living on Venus look appealing and enshrouded by an orange-brown canopy of slow death that I guarantee you causes more cases of lung cancer each year than Philip-Morris. Phoenix Arizona is the closest thing there is to hell on Earth. I would need to call, at my own expense, each and every store, bank, gas station and you name it where one of my-cards-not-my-cards have been used, plus every police department for each city where one of my cards has been used just to attempt to prosecute John.

The only semi-professional organization that I have talked with since this all began has been American Express. I do not mean the American Express operators you get by calling their 800 number. They were useless people too. The AmEx fraud department, once I at last reached them (the operators I talked to canceled the card but then told my "not to worry about it"), were professional and the type of people I would not want to mess with. The investigator AmEx has in Phoenix told me that little could come of this. Most courts will not waste their time prosecuting for amounts less than 10,000 dollars. As I have stated before, I do not make enough money to get \$10,000 worth of credit.

I have learned a number of lessons from all of this.

1. Never, under any circumstances, allow anyone to get your social security number. Not even family.
2. The phrase "To protect and to serve" is a lie. I was not protected, and certainly not served.
3. As long as you keep credit card fraud to a small amount, it is the most lucrative crime a person can perform. No danger, no effort, and you will do no time.

If you still do not believe that people are mostly scum I have plenty of other examples. Try me.

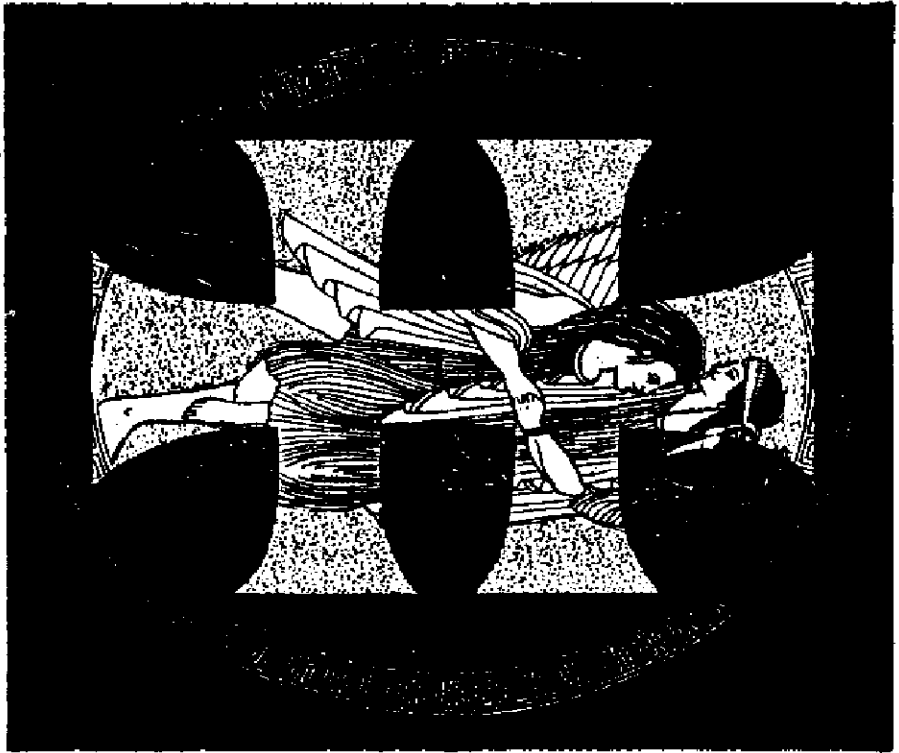
Well, I hope I didn't bore you all too much. I just had to get all of that off my chest. If you have any comments I can now be reached at my new address:

Jonas Johnson
5901 N. Oracle Rd. #29
Tucson, Az. 85704

P.S. May the Diplomacy hobby always remember Fred Hyatt.

[[Sorry to hear that you were the victim of a credit thief- but isn't this much more juicy writing than an obscure Starfleet Battles article? Everyone can relate to credit cards, right readers? Jonas, I'll tell you what, I'll help make it up to you by releasing S&S #13 from the dark recesses of purgatory for publication next issue. You're right, your freedom of expression has been repressed by an unjust dictatorial editor who is biased against Starfleet Battles. But after a year (or more) I have now come to the realization that if I can print a 5 page Pink Floyd concert review (and not everybody likes Pink Floyd) I suppose I can print your Starfleet Battles article (not everybody likes Starfleet Battles). My sister is also writing a Billy Joel concert review for next issue and not everyone likes Billy Joel, eh? Great logic, right? Really, Jonas, it was good talking to you over the phone, I'm glad you're back, and I hope you can continue to write--untethered--for RBM.]]

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Hi Larry - see comments on your
TAP letter under "News on the
Home Front."
-Eric
