

I'm really anxious to get to the game this week; we'll see what else there's space for...

Game 1977A1id, Fall 1969: FANCY FOOTWORK IN TURKEY, BUT FRANCE DENIES WIN (4-Player Madman) TO ITALY! WHAT LIES AHEAD?...

COA: Bob Albrecht, Apt. 2, 2005 23rd St, N, Lethbridge, Alta. T1H 2K3.

France (Hugh Polley): f pic-bre; a bel-bur.

Germany (Robert Fisher): (Retreated f kie-hel); f hel-kie, s by a hol; "f kie-nth" (nsu, imp).

Italy (Dave Pengelly): f aeg-con, s by f bulsc; f syr-smy; a gre-ser; a ser-rum, s by a bud; a vie-boh, s by a mun; f nar-urg; a tyo & a bur s a mun; f mid-eng; f spasc-wes; f gas-mid; a par-bre.

Russia (Bob Albrecht): a boh-mun, s by a ber, a sil & a kie; a ukr s a rum; a rum s a ukr; f eng-lon; a edi-lpl, s by f cly; f con-bulsc; f den & f bal s a kie; f eas-syr; f smy-aeg.

Retreats: Italian a mun to ruh or disband; Russian f con to ank, bla or disband.

Centres: France: bel, ~~lon~~, ~~lpl~~ (1) Remove 1.

Germany: ~~kie~~, hol (1) Remove 1.

Italy: home, tun, tri, vie, bud, ser, gre, bul, con, smy, mar, spa, por, par, bre (17). Build 2 or 3 if a mun disbands.

Russia: home, swe, den, nwy, edi, lpl, lon, ber, mun, kie, rum, ~~lon~~, ank, ~~smy~~ (15). Build 2, or 3 if f con disbands.

Winter orders are due Monday, February 25.

Moscow to Belgium: It won't do you much good.

France to the World: Commies to the north; fascists to the south; where's the good old U of A?

Odds & Ends:

1. Fate further interferes with my sincere efforts to get caught up by scheduling "Racines" on Monday nights. That's "Roots" in French. I missed the English version the first fourteen times around, due to not having a T.V., but broke down and bought a 12-inch black-and-white a few months ago and am now catching up via the dubbed version on the local Radio-Canada outlet. Bizarre, but still worth it. (I've got 25 minutes to finish the page...)

2. Anyone have a correct address for J.H. Fleming? His mail keeps coming back marked "Not Deliverable as Addressed", and he's still got lots of sub credit; hate to see him lose it.

3. Confirmed: I'm now Returning Officer of CDO, although no election has been announced (false alarm?) Another new "officer" (for want of a better term): Pierre LaBrèche is now French-language novice receptionist. (No, not an inexperienced office employee, but the person who orients people new to the hobby!)

Letter from Mark Berch: I would like to respond to some of the issues raised by Bob Albrecht in #272 and #274, since I feel that he and possibly other readers may have gotten somewhat of a misimpression from what John Leeder has written.

This deals with the situation where a GM decides to transfer a game to a new GM and/or zine, and the GM believes himself to be acting properly, i.e., I am not dealing with the situation where the GM just abandons the game.

Most agree that the game belongs to the players, not the GM, but in practice it doesn't work that way. If a GM decides to switch the game to a new GM and/or new zine, he will normally just announce that he has done it, state his reasons and assume that his reasons are proper and sufficient. His reasons, as far as he is concerned, are correct by definition. A player cannot expect that his opinion of the validity of the reason will be sought before or after the fact.

As an example, one game I am in was with a GM who had been GMing for five years, very highly thought of and ultra-reliable. I was thus astounded to open the zine one day to discover that the game had been turned over to a new GM, someone I had never heard of. The reason was quite simple: the guy had asked for a game to run. Rather than telling one and all that the next new game would be guest-GMed, he picked our game and transferred it. There was no consideration of too much work or change in life situation or what have you -- indeed, more games were opened later. And our game was not selected because it was the youngest (it wasn't), but because it "is composed of my steadiest players" -- some reward for being steady! So we got a shorter deadline and a less capable GM. Our opinion was not sought before or after the transfer. So far as GMs are concerned, any reason they think to be sufficient is sufficient in their eyes, period. Leeder's reasons for transferring are exemplary, probably the only fully valid reasons, but don't get the idea that his procedure is the norm -- far from it, sad to say.

There's nothing unique about this. In the summer of 1978, Bob Lipton had a big falling out with his chief GGM ((guest GM)), Bob Sacks. Supposedly as a result, Sacks pulled all his games (around seven) from THE MIXULAXU GAZETTE. The dispute was on a matter unrelated to the Diplomacy hobby. Did either GM try to poll the players on where they wanted to play? Did Lipton actually try to block the move? Not on your life! All he did was reach a financial settlement with Bob Sacks. He also gave a description of what the dispute was all about, how it arose, etc. He did not even mention just what Sacks' reasons were for pulling the games out. From his point of view, the reasons were not important enough to mention. It suffices that the GM merely wanted to pull the games out. The "why" does not matter.

In another incident, a GGMed game of mine was suddenly pulled out into a new zine. It seems that the GM decided to publish his own zine. We were not asked in advance whether we wanted to play in a brand new zine rather than one fully established. I'm not saying I was harmed by this. Indeed, there was no charge for the new zine, which turned out to be a lot more reliable than the old one. I am talking about attitudes.

In none of the cases that involved me did I protest. There would have been no point to it. An ombudsman (naturally, an experienced GM) would simply point out that GMs have decided that GMs may move their games at will. By tradition, they do not poll their players on such a matter, nor do they suffer gladly complaints afterward.

So keep this in mind, Bob. John Leeder's reasons did in fact comply with the CDO Code of Ethics and with common sense. But don't get the idea that such behavior is the norm. Even in those cases where the GM believes himself to be acting properly, it is not the norm. And one final thing: Don't forget that you're the one who's upset; he's the one that's pleased. So he will not

reply to your intemperate language with similar language of his own. He'll just sit back and score points off you.

On another topic, I was disappointed that you quoted me as agreeing with you that Oaklyn ought not to be expelled from his present games where he does not violate the zine's house rules, but you didn't when I took strong exception to your statement that the evidence against him is circumstantial.

((Last things first: there are lots of letters I haven't printed or excerpted; several of yours are buried in the pile along with many others. I may or may not print any given letter; remember, I'm not giving space to the Oaklyn-is-Tretick issue. In my opinion, the arguments so far fall short of being proof; in yours, they don't. We'll have to agree to differ, I guess; anyone who's really interested no doubt has seen it all already, or will take the trouble to dig it out for himself.

((Your letter brings up a fair number of ethical issues, somewhat distinguishable. Perhaps we can arrive at some kind of general principle? In general, I feel that GMs should not have a cavalier disregard for the players' interests and wishes. Only the strongest reasons justify moving a game. In most cases where this happens, the strongest reason of all prevails: the GM has become inactive. In others (such as my own) the GM can no longer do an adequate job, certainly a strong enough reason.

((Your first example is one which I would find hard to justify if I were the GM of first instance. Perhaps his intentions were good: to "blood" a new GM by letting him get his feet wet on a smoothly-running game full of reliable players. But I agree that it's rather hard on the players, not to disregard the players' wishes but to not even take the trouble to ascertain them.

((Your other examples deal, not with a change of GM, but with a change of zine. This seems to me to be quite a different issue, as a person can get a zine merely by subscribing to it. I'm not sure I see that a change of zine is as great an injury to a player as a change of GM. As you say, "Most agree that the game belongs to the players, not the GM..." yet you seem to be saying that the publisher (as opposed to the GM) owns a piece of the game as well! Can you amplify your thoughts on this?

((Re your ombudsman comments: it doesn't go without saying that an ombudsman will automatically support a GM just because he's a GM himself (after all, he's likely an experience player as well; also at least one IDA Ombudsman, Henry Kelley, was not a GM, and my first choice for CDO, Ralph Worton, isn't one either). Nor will precedents be automatically followed when they fly in the face of common sense or natural justice. You don't seem to have much faith in the capacities of any individual to handle the ombudsman function! Anyway, thanks for your thought-provoking letter!))

Hmmm... should've been more wordy in my response to Mark. I thought I'd have to leave space for an address label, being as how this is the last issue of the month... but this is page 3, not 4!

More Odds & Ends: 4. Another ex-Huntsvillain enters GMing. Bryan Ronald (now resident in Gravenhurst, I see) long-time subber to and erstwhile player in RUNESTONE is guest-GMing in INFIDEL. Once more, I'm not the only one of the old Huntsville crowd to be still active.

5. CDO's news zine, THE NATIONAL, is now quarterly (and crammed with good stuff); it's free to CDO officers and Canadian GMs and publishers. Subs are \$1/year to other "hobby figures" and \$2/year to others. François Cuerrier, 2210 160 Chapel St., Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1W 3P5, publishes it. Worth getting!
CHIMO!

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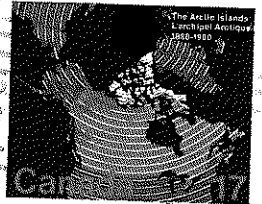
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