

The Scribblerist

Issue #3

*** Fit As A Fiddle ***

July 29, 1988

The Mark Berch Department

After a reprieve from the oppressive heat and humidity that characterizes the Hooville summer we find ourselves thrust back to face the full fury of a raging Mother Nature. Temperatures still haven't gotten back to the hundreds but it's getting there, and the humidity has already arrived.

GAME OPENINGS : One Gunboat Diplomacy game opening [three signed up, four needed].
One Snow Fighting opening [four signed up, four needed].

Circulation : 33

URBANE SCRAWL Part I

Yes, that's right this is another issue of that award winning zine, THE SCRIBBLERIST. I bet a few of you thought you'd never see it again. But I'm back and on time, just like that nightmare that haunts you night after night. What have we got lined up for this issue? Well, the letter column is slowly picking up steam, I've got quite a bit to say in the "hobby news" section though there is frightfully little to talk about. We've got another gamestart, some more play/read lists, another quiz, and a lot of drivel from your humble editor. Also, lo and behold, I've decided to throw in a subscriber list and maybe an excerpt from a book (no, this is NOT Perelandra!).

First things first, corrections/plea for mercy. As I was reading over last issue I was disturbed with how many errors I let slip by. Some of them made me look like a real idiot. Let me assure you here and now that I will do my utmost to eliminate such mistakes in the future.

Second is a retraction of sorts. My comments in US Part I last issue were effectively put to rest between TS #2 and this issue in that I have garnered quite a bit of publisher support as evidenced by the fact that I now carry 11 trades and one mutual sub, not to mention one sub from a fellow publisher (hi Cathy!). I really do appreciate all the support and encouragement they, and the rest of you, have given over the past weeks in the letters you've written and the plugs you've given. I'll see if I can't reciprocate sometime in the near future.

And finally, a dedication. This issue goes out to a woman who I'd imagine most everybody knows and has most likely played a game of postal dippy against. She has made me one of a select group of publishers; she has put me in the minority, a position I relish. This woman is none other than Melinda Holley. She doesn't play in any of my games nor does she standby or even subscribe. A rare bird I be, indeed!

That's it for now but never fear I'll be back with more opinions and little snippets from my life and the world around me. Remember, wherever you go, whatever you read, the heavy hand of the editor is never far behind...

CATCALLS FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

Another CATCALLS arrives with every issue so be sure to write me and you may be featured. This issue we've got a few new players of the game and a couple returning veterans. Topics include Noriega (will I ever let this die?!), SDI, and a few other things. So let's quit dawdling and get this show on the road ...

David Orne:

As a geographer, I am very interested in hearing more about the "formally wooded" area you live in. I am curious : is Virginia colonial garb worn by the trees there or are modern tuxedos acceptable?

<<Oh sure, kick a man when he's down! I said I'm sorry, what more do you want? BLOOD?!?! Actually, that was one of the mistakes from last issue that I'm most embarrassed about. I shudder every time I think about that one.>>

<<On to a more serious topic, that of Noriega, though it is slowly evolving into a discussion on intervention in general, which is just fine with me.>>

John Justin:

Use of force would succeed in stopping the problem <<the entire Central American drug situation>>. Active United States aid would revive the area and hopefully create prosperous future allies, assuming such aid was given with a heavy US presence. Such examples would be Japan and Germany. Naturally, there are significant differences, but those examples show it can be done ...

I agree with you to a point when you say that massive aid would necessitate a "heavy US presence." However, such a presence need not be in the form of the US military nor does the presence have to be a visible one. Much of Central America fears the US and what it can do. If we went marching in declaring that we were going to straighten up "their" mess we would stir up quite a bit of resentment. We have to be honest with the people of CA and let them work out the problems their way. Also, when you cite Japan and Germany as examples I fear you are way off base. For one, a war ravaged economy is far different from an existing system riddled with corruption, the latter being much harder to "clean up." One must also consider the fact that both Japan and Germany had an industrial base from which to rebuild whereas Central America has never had any industrial base to speak of. Secondly there is a difference between a battle fatigued people and the Central Americans of today. The Japanese and Germans had for the most part known something better than war, a time when the arts flourished and life wasn't so difficult. The Central Americans on the other hand have known nothing but poverty and suppression under one regime after another. They've seen too many friends and relatives die and are therefore thankful to be scraping by with whatever they can. This makes them suspicious of change and promises of a better life for they have been fooled so many times before. And

**WORK HARDER...PLAY HARDER...
STAY HARDER...LONGER!**

they become especially suspicious of a towering outsider who promises them a better life for they remember the multi-nationals of years gone by. It is a tough situation and if we want to win we will have to play by their rules and on their turf.>>

available. Aid goes to corrupt leaders while the local governments are powerless to stop the druglords even if they tried. These drug exporters rule their countries through terror and death threats ... Intervention by the US is justified as much as it was by the Jap attack on Pearl Harbor (well, almost). True this will shoot our popularity all to hell, but face it - we're not popular now anyway. Years of namby-pamby foreign policy has ruined our international standing. So, what use in trying to save something that doesn't exist?

<<What we are trying to save is our own skin. You're right in saying that we've ruined our reputation overseas, especially in the third world countries, but that doesn't give us license to go out and flex our sagging muscle. What concerns me most is the possibility of turning the whole of Central America into another Vietnam. Our military intervention may overthrow corrupt bureaucracies but our presence would alienate the people and could easily lead to a war of attrition against elusive guerilla movements. What I believe we must do is step up our interdiction efforts and nurture the reformers struggling in Central America. This would help to alleviate the problem in the short term plus put us in good position to wipe out the problem in the long term.>>

Steve Courtemanche:

Concerning the policies of the Reagan administration and Noriega : Strongarm tactics that don't have muscle behind them are doomed to failure. They even have a tendency to backfire even when they have the required muscle.

The United States is a democracy and is thus heavily influenced by how other nations view us. Strongarm tactics make us look like a "bully," a meddler in other people's affairs. Noriega's policies were getting him into enough trouble. If we maintained our legal position without taking action against the whole country we would probably be better off. We, as a people, should try to help others instead of trying to foment discontent and rebellion.

<<Here, here! Steve's letter goes to the heart of what I'm trying to say. We must encourage those who believe as we do as opposed to attacking those we disagree with. Yes, we are not the most popular nation but why would we want to push the Central American nations farther away? We've tried direct intervention and it has only caused problems. It's time we tried to push our policies with a gentler hand.>>

<<I thought I had cleared up the whole bit about my name last issue but apparently I hadn't, my apologies. Maybe the following will straighten things out ...>>

Eric Lisseev:

Thanks for clearing up my question on how to pronounce your name. I'm glad that I asked, because I'd been getting it wrong. My guess had been that it rhymed with "bark" or "dark." While it's unusual that the spelling Mark gives three syllables (including several "L" sounds), I suppose it's not impossible.

P.S. While we're on the subject, how do you pronounce your last name?

John Justin:

And, speaking of your name, you have it all wrong I'm afraid. The -eht is obviously supposed to be pronounced 'A', so, Lii-le-lay is the correct pronunciation. So, you can now tell all your friends the true sound of your name and thus end the error of your ways.

<<Damn! I knew my father had been lying to me all along. Ever since birth he's been perpetrating this fraud. I'm stunned. Well thank you John for giving me the strength to shake off the burden of my mispronounced name and the deceit that was coupled with it. My, I feel invigorated, like a new MAN!>>

Alas, we return to a very serious subject, SDI. Three people responded to my plea last issue (and, yes Eric, your letter did make it on time! ...>>

David Hood:

I have to comment on your remarks regarding SDI. Your objections to Ballistic Missile Defense are wholly based on misunderstandings as to the nature and objectives of a space shield.

No one (in their right mind) argues that such defenses would constitute an invulnerable "bubble" to protect the US population from the destruction and environmental effects from Soviet warheads. Indeed, the proposal I have argued for since 1982 involves non-laser devices, so called kinetic-energy rockets and the like which boast a leakage rate of 10% or more. In addition, we need to build terminal point defenses, like Swarniet or others, which prevent Soviet warheads from exploding at our own missile silos.

You see, the point of strategic defense is not to protect the people, but to protect U.S. nuclear forces. The only plausible scenario for a first strike by either superpower is an attack on the retaliatory capabilities of the other - since an attack exclusively based on U.S. cities would only guarantee destruction of Soviet cities. Building and deploying defenses to protect our missile silos and bomber fields are designed to bolster deterrence, not replace it by creating an invulnerable "bubble."

<<It has always puzzled me when proponents of SDI said that the reason for deployment is to protect our own retaliatory capabilities against a possible Soviet first strike and hence bolster deterrence. I simply can't believe that the military would be ignorant of an impending Soviet strike on the US mainland. Why do we have arctic early warning stations? Strategic Air Command headquarters buried under an ungodly amount of earth? I always thought it was to insure that we would detect incoming missiles so that we could get our missiles out of the silos before the Soviet missiles struck. My conception of a nuclear war is not that of two boxers standing in the ring taking turns hitting each other while the other allows himself to be hit. Rather, like all warfare, it will be a melee as the two superpowers launch missiles only minutes apart in order to protect them from the other. You say this will bolster deterrence. But I ask why do we need to? The Soviets would be fools to think that they could catch us off guard and have all their missiles strike before we knew what was going on. In any event, events such as nuclear war have the tendency of gradually building up to such frightening parameters that surely our nuclear forces would all ready be on alert. One more thing that bothers me greatly is the whole idea of SDI protecting missile silos and such as opposed to cities. Let's say that the Soviets did in fact launch a first strike and we did have SDI deployed. Most of our missiles may have survived but what exactly would they be protecting? Miles upon miles of rubble that was once a great nation and millions of corpses. Those corpses would have given their all to a government that failed them yet saved the lives of thousands of its baby warheads.>>

In this case, the amount of collateral or environmental damage is immaterial - as long as we can show the Soviets that, say, 50% of our missiles will remain, they would never attack in the first place.

<<I would be willing to bet that we could get at least 50% of our own missiles off the ground before Soviet warheads struck any US installations without SDI. And even if only, say 10%, managed to get airborne prior to Soviet attack we would still ravage the Soviet Union.>>

Now some would argue that our submarine-based missiles provide necessary deterrence without protecting our land-based missiles or bombers. But putting our eggs in one basket is precisely the opposite of what we have tried to accomplish with our Strategic Triad approach (land, sea, air). And given recent Soviet advances in anti-submarine warfare techniques it is imperative that we increase the credibility of our deterrent by using strategic defense to protect our missile silos, bomber fields, and command installations.

<<I agree with you here in that we must keep our strategic forces dispersed in order to preserve their existence. However, the credibility of our deterrent is as strong as it ever was utilizing the Triad approach and I see no need to fix something that isn't broken.>>

Point defenses can be deployed now at the cost of only \$1-2 billion. Space-based defenses which would destroy enemy missiles by shooting small rockets at them are almost ready as well - the entire system could be built for \$100 billion or less if Washington would quit dragging its feet on the issue.

<<I have a hard time believing that such a system could be deployed so cheaply; if you've got some documentation on that I'd love to see it. And if we do deploy point defenses let's protect the people, not missile silos which are bound to be emptied on our first learning of a Soviet strike.>>

Subsidiary benefits to SDI include protection against possible third-country launches (given the state of nuclear proliferation, this is an important issue). It also can be used to protect against accidental launches by either superpower - the scenario often sensationalized by liberals in the media and elsewhere.

<<You yourself said that SDI was meant to protect the missiles and not the cities. If a Third World country were to launch an attack it would almost assuredly be directed at the cities. No country aside from the Soviet Union could hope to go toe-to-toe with us so why would a country want to waste its precious missiles on silos. They may be able to take out a few missiles but we would still have thousands with which to counterstrike. The goal of such a foolish country would be to kill as many people as possible. And everybody knows where the people are, the cities.>>

Strategic defenses deserve better treatment than just calling them futuristic "bubbles" protected by "Star Wars" lasers or particle beams. They can be built now using less sensational technology and just ordinary rockets.

<<You're right, SDI does deserve to be treated in a realistic sense as opposed to being viewed in a purely "Star Wars" sense. But the reality of the situation is that it is an expensive and unneeded system of questionable worth.>>

Eric Walton:

My opinion on Star Wars comes to the same conclusion as yours: that Star Wars is a waste of money, but I think your opinion of the "bubble shield" is a little too strict. <<I would say that that characterization on my part was more simplistic than anything else.>> I think everyone knows that there will never be a "bubble shield" around the U.S., even the president. It is my opinion that why should we spend millions, billions, even trillions of dollars on stopping ICBMs from hitting the U.S. when atomic bombs can be smuggled into the U.S., put in a suitcase or car, and exploded near their targets. So we might be able to destroy their ICBMs, they would still get what they wanted destroyed. I think the U.S. should build an ABM system using today's know-how. The U.S. is allowed to protect one area with such a system under the ABM treaty, but instead we have decided to gamble our money on making [a better system]. The Soviet's have built their one ABM system to protect Moscow, why don't we learn something from them and do the same.

<<I don't think that the Soviets would be able to mount a covert effort as expansive as smuggling multiple nuclear devices into the U.S. without our finding out about it. However, I think you raise a good point in that the Third World countries that David mentioned above may be able to carry something like that out. I didn't realize that we were allowed to construct one protected site. If we really fear a Soviet attack so much why doesn't the government set its mind to that as you suggest?>>

John Justin:

As far as SDI goes, it is not intended to be a foolproof bubble - no such system is likely to exist now or ever. Something will always get through, maybe most of the missiles. However, as any serviceman or student of the strategic arms race should know, the present nuclear arms strategy involves, amongst other things, plans for first strike capability. Such a plan involves removing the enemies nuclear capacity before he can implement it. At this time, the only part of the Triad the Soviets are unable to nail with fairly decent chances of success is the Boomers. However, recent developments in satellite

technology may soon make even these missile platforms vulnerable. In any case, the reason the Soviets don't strike first (amongst others, such as no real need, humanity, etc) is that they have no guarantee of successfully removing our capability. SDI would add to their uncertainty. Such a system, though no perfect shield, could remove enough incoming missiles that a successful attack on our missiles would be uncertain. As long as their success is uncertain they will not take the gamble. That is the only viable reason for SDI in its present form. However, one should also consider that the Soviets have been testing and developing similar systems. The Times (or some other paper) had an interesting article showing a satellite photo of a mountaintop installation in Russia. Civil experts (no U.S. government comment was made) believed that the complex was a prototype anti-satellite installation. I would much prefer to see both sides with such a system, wouldn't you?

<<Well, I don't know about that. I'd hate to see space militarized in any way and would prefer that every space-faring nation could come to an agreement to keep all weapons, defensive and offensive, out of the heavens. As for your SDI comments I still have a hard time seeing why people insist on saying that we wouldn't be able to get our missiles launched before a strike. You point out correctly that the only legitimate reason to deploy SDI is to widen that frame of time when we can get off a retaliatory strike. But the need for that doesn't seem to justify the cost. A minute or two, even in a situation as horrendous as nuclear war, doesn't seem to warrant an outlay of billions/trillions of dollars when there are so many other worthwhile projects to support.>>

<<And now one final query ...>>

David Orne:

Who the hell are the Bad Boys?

<<Oh boy, is that a loaded question. Anyone want to explain this one to David? I'll give it my best shot. The Bad Boys are three people who became disgruntled with the postal hobby and decided to launch into a series of attacks on the hobby in general and on specific persons involved in postal dippy. Occasionally they have made valid points and sometimes they've made me laugh [many times, more at their actions than at what they've said]. But for the most part those points are masked behind an amazing amount of vicious and malicious attacks on various people. They are callous and really don't care what people think so they have given themselves free reign to launch mean-spirited and unconstructive attacks. As Don Williams pointed out in the latest FIAT BELLUM the best way to deal with them is to ignore them because they feed off counter-attacks and people who try to reason with them. Without an audience the Bad Boys will die out; true, they'll go kicking and screaming, but they will gounheaded. To be fair I have to say the Bruce Geryk, one of the Bad Boys, runs an entertaining and very enjoyable United League. How was that guys [and gals]?>>

Well, that's all for now. If you think it was tough to read just think about having to type it all in! Actually, I appreciate all the letters and encourage you to write in with your comments on these opinions or any others. Hey, this is actually beginning to look like something!

PLAYLIST THE FIRST

Here we go again with another round of music that I think is great stuff. Some of these are old favorites and others I've just picked up, but all are worth a listen.

Led Zeppelin, IN THROUGH THE OUT DOOR [One of Led Zep's later releases but has some great music including one of my favorite Zep tunes [sentimental reasons, hi hon!], "I'm Gonna Crawl."]; Grateful Dead, AMERICAN BEAUTY [Call me a sucker but this is just fun to listen to. It also doesn't hurt that I know all the words. An old favorite]; Molly Hatchet, FLIRTIN' WITH DISASTER [Now this is truly some good old boy country metal. They've played Hoovile a couple times but I've never gotten to see them.]

"Trouble in the Land of Wine and Roses"

That's right, we have an NMR. Scott Beckett, playing France in this game, failed to get orders to me by the time this went to the copier so he is hereby removed from the game and a standby is called. Will David Orne, 1234 Reynolds Rd #242, Lakeland, FL 33801 please take over as France. All orders will be kept on file and you may revise them up until the next deadline. May I suggest that some of you submit press. It would make me very happy.

So, deadline for new "Spring 1901" orders is Wednesday, August 31. Also, please read the announcement below. Good luck.

!!!! GAMESTART !!!!!

Yes, we have one more regular diplomacy gamestart to announce. Again, no Boardman number to announce as of this issue but I do have a name, "Ik". The Ik were a nomadic, hunter-gatherer people who roamed the plains of northern Uganda until they were forced by the Ugandan government to settle in the surrounding mountains and take up an agrarian life. I wasn't so lucky in country assignments this time around: three got their first choice, two their second, one his third, and one his fourth. We'll follow the houserules as printed last issue. How about some press in this one?

AUSTRIA : Thomas Thorsen, 113 Glensumer Rd, Holbrook, NY 11741
 ENGLAND : Barry Hawes, 18292 Rolling Meadow Way, Olney, MD 20832
 FRANCE : Pete Gaughan, 3105 E Park Row #132, Arlington, TX 76010-3710
 GERMANY : Mike Henry, 3755 Capitl of Texas Hwy South Suite 130, Austin, TX 78704
 ITALY : Jim Diehl, 10530 West Riverview Dr, Eden Prairie, MN 55347
 RUSSIA : Vince Shouba, 320 S LaGrange Rd, LaGrange, IL 60525
 TURKEY : Eric Walton, 8116 Millview Dr, Brentwood, TN 37027

Deadline for "Spring 1901" is Wednesday, August 31. Please read the little notice below as it will help me out immensely. And I'm begging you, please try to get all the orders in on time, I HATE NMRing people! Good luck all!

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO PLAYERS : IMPORTANT !!!

These are just a few notes and hints that would make my life a whole lot easier plus a couple clarifications of some [more] mistakes from last issue's houserules.

URBANE SCRAWL
Part II

It's funny. Right now I'm at that time in life when age just really isn't that important to me yet. Sure, I think about what it's going to be like to grow old, but it isn't an overriding worry yet. I'm going to school, becoming a Renaissance Man in order to live my life to the fullest. Is money important? Damn right it is but above all else I've got to be happy. Why else would I be considering anthropology as a career?

So what brought on this sudden rush of mortality. Well, since I last checked in with you I celebrated a birthday, my nineteenth to be precise. How did I spend it [like you really want to know]? I woke up early, opened my presents, and promptly went back to sleep. When I finally woke up again I went out on the town and ran some errands: picked up some groceries for my mom but more importantly I bought myself some birthday presents. That night my folk took me to a sushi bar and a play. All in all not too exciting but I was happy.

But then I started thinking: What is being nineteen? It isn't any great watershed year for me. It was last year that I got the vote and last year that I entered college. I have to wait two more years to drink [legally] and to graduate from the University. Worst of all is that, technically, I'm still a teenager. Damn!

All right. I can deal with it. After all, I like to think of myself as an adult and adults can handle such rude awakenings. But one thing kept on bothering me. Every generation has a label, everyone except ours, of course.

There are the baby-boomers who turned into the flower children who turned into the Yuppies who are now giving birth to the Spawn of Yuppie. But what are we, those kids who spent their formative years [11-19 years old] under the Reagan administration? Ronnies? Well, maybe. Actually I imagine ourselves as "Ronnie's Kids." Picture the donation cans sitting on the counters of 7-11s nationwide: A thirty year old man in a pin-striped suit and shackles sitting on the lap of a smiling Uncle Ronnie with "Help the morally bankrupt, give to Ronnie's Kids" boldly emblazoned in big bright letters below the picture.

But enough of that, back to being nineteen. The most frustrating thing is that I'm supposedly at my sexual peak right about now and there is absolutely nothing I can do about it. It's out of my hands, errr, so to speak. I mean, the ball is in the other court. Noooo, that's wrong too. Hell, you know what I'm trying to say.

- When I said Spring NMRs would result in immediate removal from the game I meant Spring 1901 NMRs. All other NMRs will be dealt with as outlined in the houserules.

- Countries will be assigned for all regular Diplomacy games by preference list. Country assignment in Gunboat will be by random draw.

- I am going against the rulebook when I say that draws need not include all survivors. I also said I would never contradict the rulebook. The reason is that the DIAS rule is a question of playing philosophy as opposed to mechanics. My non-DIAS rule stands.

Thanks to Vince Shouba for pointing these "problems" out to me. I'll be coming out with a separate houserules sheet soon and will send out one to all players as soon as I put it together.

And one more thing. I would appreciate it if orders and PRESS were on separate sheets of paper from any substantial correspondence. The reason is that I have two files, one for orders and one for letters and separate sheets of paper would just make things a lot easier for me.

ALWAYS THE BRIDESMAID

And this here is the standby list. Let it be known that I may call you as a standby for Gunboat so if you have any strong objections let me know. You get one free issue for signing up and another two if you take over a position. Let me know

whether you want on or off the list: Diehl, Salvatore, York, Hurley, Greger, Hawes, Gaughan, Hood, Shouba, Orne, and Fargo. Ah, a very healthy list. Thank to one and all.

PLEASE SIR, MAY I HAVE SOME MORE

Both games of regular Diplomacy have filled up and I won't be opening any more for a long, long time. I do, however, have openings in some other games.

I'm opening a game of Gunboat Diplomacy. So far I have three people signed up and have four more positions open. The game is free if you already play in one of the regular Dippy games and costs \$4 if you don't play in a regular Dippy game. This will get you a gamelife subscription to INTERLOPER, my [sub]zine of seasonal adjustments and winter builds.

My second, and last, game opening is for "Snowball Fighting." The game is free and the rules are available for an SASE. So far we have four signed up and room for four more. Those signed up are: Gaughan, Salvatore, Hood, and York. Let's go people, I'd love to get this up and running.

READLIST

Okay people, time to get an education. These aren't exactly scholarly tomes but they will probably shed some light on a subject that most people know little, if anything, about.

The author is Colin Turnbull and the books are, *THE FOREST PEOPLE*, *THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE*, and *THE LONELY AFRICAN*. They are a mixture of anthropology and commentary on how Africa's "Coming of Age" has affected its various people. And yes, it is from these books that I got the game names.

THE FOREST PEOPLE is Turnbull's journal of life with a band of pygmies living in the forest. It is not only very enlightening but also quite entertaining. The pygmies have an air about them, a lightness of spirit that prevades Turnbull's book. Civilization, or more aptly, western intervention, has left these people largely untouched. Outwardly they live a very simple life but Turnbull shows us the complexity that underlies every pygmy village. The alliances, familial ties, and rituals all lend themselves to the dynamic processes which make up a pygmy's life.

THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE concerns the Ik as described in the gamestart announcement. Here Turnbull has planted himself in an Ik village. It is a sad tale in that these formerly gregarious and active people have been reduced to a life where family is nothing and it is "every man for himself." The children are turned out at the incredible age of three to fend for themselves and after that there no longer exist any real ties of love or caring. Those who do succumb to those emotions almost always end up dead at a terribly young age. No pity exists and, frighteningly, Turnbull shows convincingly how we are following the same path the Ik travelled.

The final book is, *THE LONELY AFRICAN*. It's filled with anecdotes and stories demonstrating how the modern day African finds himself torn between the traditional value system and the lure that western civilization presents and sometimes forces down the African's throat.

The best by far is *THE FOREST PEOPLE*. *THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE* is the most disturbing in the parallels that Turnbull draws between the all but heartless Ik and our own society. *THE LONELY AFRICAN* is interesting because it demonstrates to us how our "progressive" society can be so destructive to an already well established society. Very recommended.

PLAYLIST THE SECOND

Midnight Oil, DIESEL AND DUST (I got this for "Beds Are Burning" and "The Dead Heart" but have since fallen in love with the rest of the album. This is an Aussie group with a message. There's also a lot of great music); Various Artists, *THE STORY OF THE BLUES* (I picked this up on my b-day shopping spree and love it. Some of the best music I've heard in a long time. A refreshing break from rock and roll); Mzwakhe, *CHANGE IS PAIN* (A South African musician who was jailed after releasing this album. The last two tracks consists of him exhorting a crowd to work towards change. You've got to like African music to enjoy this one. Well worth every cent I paid).

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Not a lot of news, per se, but quite a bit to talk about as far as the hobby is concerned. There are a couple zines I haven't seen for a while. I continue my discussion on recruiting novices, and a couple miscellaneous comments. A discussion on the various hobby services? Maybe.

Now about those zines which seem to have taken a leave of absence. First off there is *FEUILLETONIST'S FORUM*. The last issue I saw was #40 (December '87) but I did hear that #41 was supposed to be coming out. Alas, I've heard neither hide nor hair of Greg. Anyone know what's going on?

Another golden oldie is *COSTAGUANA*. I knew Conrad was trimming *COSTA* down yet still wanted to sub. I got the June issue all right, the only problem being that it was over a month late. Any ideas?

And one final query. What is with Cal White's *NORTHERN FLAME*. I'm supposed to be trading with Cal but I have yet to see a single issue. News of any of the above would be greatly appreciated.

The zine that I did get was Bruce Linsey's "Response to SE OF LORDS #16." I would comment but can't see as how I am let to see Hol #16 itself. Julie! Hello?

A couple weeks back I got a copy of "Everything", the zine of the Boardman Number Custodian that lists gamestarts. One thing disturbed me and that was the fact that the highest number given this year was to me for my "Bambuti" game, 1988AV. This time last year when I was starting my first Dippy game the numbers had gotten up the 1987HR. Now I doubt there are that many publishers following Dick Martin's lead in not taking BN's. So why so few gamestarts? Beats the hell out of me. I don't know whether publishers have reached their gameload limit or if there simply isn't that great a call for new games. I'd imagine that it is the former in that more and more publishers are saying "no more!" That's a little disappointing because games are what attract new participants in this little hobby of ours. Which, notice the smooth transition, leads us to the next topic ...

... Novices. They are the lifeblood of the hobby. Without novices not only would the discussions stagnate but the hobby would all but disappear as people slowly drifted away. As I noted in issue one I crossed over from the professional Play-by-Mail hobby and still subscribe to a few of the professional magazines covering that subject. If we as, a hobby, could come to the conclusion that "Dipdom" could use a swift shot in the arm I'm sure it would be no problem to recruit quite a few people from the professional PBM hobby. First off, a one page flyer would have to be drawn up giving a skeletal view of the hobby and pointing anyone interested towards a central focus where the novice could get a good view of the hobby. I still contend that the best introduction possible would be if we could put together the two novice packages [SUPERNOVA and MASTERS OF DECEIT], the two game listings [PONTEVEDRIA and KGO], the ZINE REGISTER, and throw in a couple zines from the zine bank. Get a copy of a few mailing lists, send out the flyers, and wait for response. The crux of the matter is that it would need to be a

hobby wide effort consisting of limited fundraising (to pay for the flyers; we could charge, say, \$5 for the packet), an agreement to suspend the childish feuding for at least a brief period, and a pledge by publishers to accommodate as best they can the novices looking for game openings. Maybe a few new zines would pop up to meet demand. But hey, it's just a suggestion. What do y'all think?

YOU HAVE THIRTY MINUTES, BEGIN

I was right, the last quiz was harder than the first. But come on guys, you can't expect me to just give out free issue higgledy-piggledy; you've got to work for 'em! We'll see what we can do about this month's quiz. I'll try to make it a little easier this time around but guarantee nothing. Standings will follow but first the answers:

1) A griot is what can best be described as the African tribal storyteller. The griot is the one member of the tribe or some such political unit who remembers and relates the history of the African nation. Whether it be myth, pseudo-myth, or bare facts these are the men to go to. Kudos to John Justin, the only one to get this one right.

2) Those four men made up the group, Blind Faith. Their one, and only, album was self-titled. John Justin (again), Dick Martin (I knew he read this rag!), and Charles Greger all got this one.

3) An "aglet" is what we call the end covering of the shoelace. John Justin and David Orne got this one.

4) Last issue's stuoper turned out to be the quote. Actually, I would have been suprised if anyone had gotten it. The quote was from Herman Melville's, *BILLY BUDD*.

This issue's quiz will be here somewhere, but first the standings thus far in the competition: John Justin leads with six correct answers, David Orne and Charles Greger have three apiece, Eric Walton and Cal White carry over from the first quiz with two correct answers each, while Dick Martin, Jimmy Williams, and Bill Salvatore struggle valiantly with one correct answer (no, not between them, each). Remember, each correct answer gets you a free half issue with a special prize going to the winner (the person with the highest count after five quizzes).

boy, I've got all sorts here. Actually I think it makes for quite a good mix of personalities and hobby "figures." No addresses this issue; chalk it up to laziness.

David Anderson [4]
 Scott Beckett [11]
 Ran Ben-Israel [1]
 Simon Billenness [1 - Publishes one of the best zines going]
 Heidi Brown [C - The ol' ball and chain]
 Francois Guerrier [MS - \$4.55]
 Fred C. Davis [1]
 Don Del Grande [1]
 Jim Diehl [14 - The male Melinda Holley] [BaMbuti] [Ik]
 Charles Farqo [1]
 Pete Gaughan [13 - Publishes the zine from which I rip off so much] [Ik]
 Charles Greger [13] [BaMbuti]
 Chuck Hanna [22 - He's got faith in me!] [BaMbuti]
 Barry Hawes [13] [Ik]
 Steve Heinowski [T/C]
 Mike Henry [12] [Ik]
 David Hood [1]
 Chris Hurley [13] [BaMbuti]
 John Justin [C - A crossover recruit from professional PBM]
 Bruce Linsey [11 - Just a guy hanging loose in the hobby]
 Julie Martin [1 - Yes, it's the antiDrux!]
 Tom Nash [S]
 Jim Nickel [12 - My very first subscriber!] [BaMbuti]
 David Orne [15] [BaMbuti]
 Cathy Ozog [12]
 Ken Peel [1]
 Larry Perry [C]
 Bill Salvatore [12]
 Michael Schnelker [S]
 Vince Shouba [13] [Ik]
 Thomas Thornsen [22] [Ik]

Eric Walton [12] [Ik]
 Cal White [1 - Hello?]
 Jimmy Williams [6]
 Brad Wilson [1 - Like SB, Brad publishes one of the best!]
 Andrew York [13] [BaMbuti]

Well, that's it. All told, it comes to eleven trades, one mutual subscription, 3 complimentary subs, two samples, and eighteen paying subscribers. Not exactly a profitable enterprise but I'm not here to make money. And the number of trades effectively squashes my discontent; thank everyone.

One final note: All subs for players in the BaMbuti game have been credited with a free issue due to the delay.

PLAYLIST THE THIRD, AND FINAL

Jethro Tull, BENEFIT [Probably Tull's best "unknown" album. There isn't a track on this baby that I don't really like]; Robert Johnson, KING OF THE DELTA BLUES SINGERS [Some more great early blues. The album consists mainly of Johnson's voice and a single blues guitar. Great stuff]; Aswad, DISTANT THUNDER [Yes, Virginia, there's more to reggae than Bob Marley].

..... ONLY FIFTEEN MINUTES, CLASS!

Well, this time around I've come up with a couple questions that ought to be fairly easy, or at least easily looked up and answered. One question on literature, one politics, one music, and one art. That's right people, art. So come on, give it a whirl. Remember, one free half-issue for each correct answer.

- 1) The majority of this book takes place in the Far Eastern land of Patusan. Name the author and the title.
- 2) Known as the "law and order" vice-president he resigned under suspicion of income tax evasion.
- 3) On the album, SNEAKIN' SALLY THROUGH THE ALLEY, Robert Palmer did a cover of the title track from an earlier Little Feat album. Name the song/album name.
- 4) Name the surrealistic artist who painted, "Peppermint Tower in Honor of Greedy Little Girls."

There you've got it. Now come on, folks! Last time around we had a grand total of four people participating. Remember, FREE issues are being offered.

BACKWASH

[also known as URBANE SCRAWL Part III]

Well, this wraps up another issue. I ran a little bit longer than expected so that accounts for why you got this in an envelope this time around. As I said earlier the due date for orders is August 31 and publication date will be September. I'm not sure how large next issue will be because I will have just started my second year at the University so I probably won't have a lot of free time. Classes? No, parties. Most of these people I won't have seen all summer so I'll probably spend a lot of time just getting reacquainted with my friends. One final note. I'll be going on vacation from August 16 to August 28 so don't expect to be hearing much from me during that time. I ask one favor of you and that is if you have any long letters or a lot of press try to get it to me before the sixteenth so I can get it keyed in before vacation rolls around.

Really, I'm quite pleased with how THE SCRIBBLERIST is shaping up so far. I've been toying with the idea of altering formats just to see how it would work but I doubt you'll see any major changes as the present two column reduced format is by far the most economical. As for the content I doubt if that will ever be fully to my liking. I'd love to include a lot more than I have but I face time restrictions that keep me from spending excessive amounts of free time on the zine itself. The thing that I'd like to see is greater reader participation. If you have any playlists, readlists, humorous writings, how-to-play articles go ahead and send them in. Next issue will see at least two such playlists so feel free to pitch in your two-cents-worth.

It's time to put this baby to bed. Again, thank to all of you for your confidence in me and your support. With luck and a little help this may turn into something you actually look forward to getting every five weeks.

Actual Handwritten Correspondence To You [maybe]

Larry,

Here I am again! Hope you enjoy it and take care.

Best,

