

Oh no! Here comes...

THE VOICE OF DOOM

#1

October 2, 1979

Circulation: 0

by BRUX

Greetings, fellow Diplomacy player. I am Bruce Linsey, an enthusiastic hobbyist who has decided to take the plunge and publish a sine of my own. This is issue #1 and will be a largely introductory issue. I hope that you, the reader, will like what you see enough to subscribe. Your feedback is most definitely wanted; there is always room for improvement.

For the majority of you who do not know me, I have been playing postal Diplomacy since June of this year and am currently in four games. I've also played in about ten face-to-face games, and frankly, it's my opinion that Diplomacy is by far the most enjoyable game I've ever played.

I am 24 eventful years old, graduated from State University of New York at Albany with a B.A. in math, and am currently employed by I.B.M. in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

This sine will feature articles on both Diplomacy and non-Diplomacy topics, an editorial/letter column (BRUX Speaks), a frequently appearing travel article (BRUX Goes Wandering), puzzles, contests, humor, hobby news, and, of course, postal games. Except for the games, which I hope will start next issue, each of these makes at least a brief appearance here. The sine will be published once every four weeks, and will generally run 10 to 12 pages.

It is my hope to eventually build up a relatively large subscriber base, and to get several games in progress within the next few months.

The Voice of Doom is a journal of postal Diplomacy published every four weeks by Bruce Linsey, 71 Hudson Terrace Apts., Newburgh, N.Y. 12550. Phone (914) 561-0362. Subs are 10 issues for \$4.50. Openings are available in regular Diplomacy. Standbys are wanted. Gamefees are \$3.00, and you must keep up a sub. A \$3.00 refundable deposit is required to insure that you don't drop. Standbys play for free (and if they finish out the position, receive three free issues).

Diplomacy is a registered trademark for a game invented by Alan B. Calhauer and copyrighted by Avalon Hill.

This sine is dedicated to my dog, Trouble, who licks dirty feet.

The BRUX Policy

My Promises to Players and Readers

The Voice of Doom is going to be run on the principle that the games come First. My most important task will be to provide a good, solid game for the players in this zine. I will therefore rate material to be printed in the following order of priority:

- 1) The players' moves
- 2) Press (although in some cases I will censor this - read the house-rules next issue)
- 3) Hobby news and articles
- 4) Editorials and letters

Nonetheless, I do expect to have some interesting articles, as well as a (hopefully) lively letter column. Letters will usually be printed, space permitting, and I reserve the right to edit them as I see fit. Those readers that know me are already aware that I will not shy away from a topic because it is controversial!

I will pay for original articles (not letters) that I use at the rate of three free issues per printed page. I also reserve the right to edit these. I may occasionally reprint an article that has appeared elsewhere, especially if I have something new to say about it, but I will not generally rely on reprints.

I will give one free issue to anyone who brings in a new subscriber, provided that the new subscriber mentions the name (one only!) of the person who recommended this zine.

The players' deadlines will be every fourth Friday (read the upcoming house-rules for details) and MY deadline will be to have the zine in the mail by the following Tuesday, unless Monday is a holiday, in which case I'll have to say Wednesday.

I will trade this zine one-for-one with certain other zines. If you publish and wish to trade, let me know.

I will make every effort to finish any game that I start or take over. If for any reason I cannot do so, I shall refund all game fees and NMR fees involved, and attempt to rehouse the game.

I will start by running regular Diplomacy, open to almost anyone. If enough interest is shown, I may eventually run all-novice, all-expert, or all-Canadian games. Variants are probably not in the near future of this zine.

I may be able to take over some orphaned games, though not at first. If I do this my house-rules will be used, and no fees will be charged except that all players will be required to keep up a sub.

My fees will be as follows:

\$4.50 for a 10-issue sub

\$3.00 game fee

\$3.00 NMR fee, refundable if you don't drop your position

Samples are free for a SASE, and standbys play for free, receiving three free issues if they play out the position to the (bitter!) end.

Houserules Highlights

Due to their excessive length, I was unable to fit the houserules into this issue. I plan to try and get them into #2, but in any event, anyone who signs up for a game will get a copy immediately. Right now I just want to give you a few of the highlights:

- 1) Deadlines will be strictly adhered to in all cases.
- 2) Phone orders are accepted at the player's risk.
- 3) Standbys will be used.
- 4) Orders conditional on a previous season's orders will be accepted.
- 5) Black press will be allowed - get this - only in the April Fool's issue each year (first issue published in April).

Why am I going to be so strict about deadlines? Because I've got to draw the line somewhere, and then be consistent about it. It's not fair to accept one player's moves ten minutes late and then NOT do it for another player the next month.

Why a \$3.00 MMR fee? Because I want to give my players as steady a game as possible. The players that are likely to drop are the ones that I would prefer did not sign up for a game!

Why the unique rule about black press? Just for fun!

"Waiter! Waiter! There's a dead fly in my soup!"

"I'm not the waiter, I'm the manager; that isn't soup, it's stew; it's not a fly, it's a moth; and it isn't dead, merely comatose. Aside from those minor discrepancies, your assertion is basically factual."

Puzzle

A man looks at a portrait and truthfully proclaims, "Sons and brothers, I have none, but this person's father is my father's son." Who is in the portrait? Don't jump to conclusions.

The answer resides on page 6.

Oh good, I have enough room left for a couple of quick plugs.

Write to K. Arnett for a sample of Volkerwanderung, a good-looking new zine. You'll like it! 1500 Waterway Circle, Chesapeake, VA 23320.

For a good, solid, experienced, and reliable gamesmaster, few can top Lee Kendter, publisher of Why Me? 4347 Berner St., Philadelphia, PA 19135.

For lots of excellent reading, try Diplomacy World, from Jerry Jones, 1854 Wagner St., Pasadena, CA 91107. Jerry had to fold his other zine, but this one is going strong.

Finally, I must mention my personal favorite, Brutus Bulletin, available from John Michalski, Rt. 10 Box 526Q, Moore, OK 73165. John runs fast games.

(continued)

If I built an ARMY in Trieste, what does that mean? Oh yeah, Italy tried to... oh wait, I couldn't have built a fleet, because if Italy so much as tried to retreat to Tyrolia, I cancelled everything and put the army in Trieste. So ignore the paragraph before this one. All right, so if I built an army in Trieste, better bounce Italy in Vienna. Army Trieste to Vienna.

If I built an army in Vienna, let's see now, that means Germany retreated to Tyrolia and Italy off the board. O.K., I better do army Vienna holds if I built one there, especially because I shouldn't defend Trieste anyway because my promise to Italy is still in effect, him not having retreated into my territory. UNLESS - what if Germany retreated to Tyrolia and Italy off the board, causing me to build in Vienna - and then Germany REMOVED army Tyrolia during the winter! Then there's no threat to me any more! Wheee, I think I'll stab Russia! Move army Vienna to Galicia if that happened! But remember, if it was the army in Sweden that Germany chose to remove, army Vienna holds.

That leaves the question, what if I built in Budapest? This would mean that Italy retreated off the board and Germany did not retreat to Tyrolia. Good. I can still attack Russia. Army Budapest to Rumania - unless Turkey built an army in Constantinople. Then I better not antagonize Russia, so if this happened move army Budapest to Serbia. This holds UNLESS Russia's removal was his army in Finland - in that case those English forces, occupying Germany already, look way too strong, and I'd better do army Budapest to Vienna so that my back door isn't wide open for England.

Oh dear, I see I'm being ambiguous again. What if Turkey did NOT build an army in Constantinople, and Russia removed his finished - whoops, Finnish - army? I guess what is logically correct depends on what I meant by the word "this" in the last sentence of the last paragraph. Did I mean just the preceding sentence, or did I mean the whole beginning of the paragraph? Well, I'll say I meant the whole beginning... so then I still want the move to Vienna.

Hey, c'mon, stop ripping up my moves! I still have some press here for the spring!

Let's see, if Italy retreated to Tyrolia and built a fleet in Naples, I want to say, "AUSTRIA to ITALY : YOU NURD...", but if Italy retreated to Trieste replace the word "NURD" with "TURD". And if Germany made it into Tyrolia, but Italy went off the board, replace the word "ITALY" with "GERMANY"...

Note to all remaining players : Two changes of address. Austria can now be reached in the 'murdered' section of the county cemetery, and I, your trusty GM, now reside in the state penitentiary for life.

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Obituaries

Lies, Deceit and Nefarious Schemes, published by Jerry Jones, and St. George and the Dragon, by Bob Sergeant, both folded this month. These were two of the hobby's best zines. I feel as though two good friends just died. Nuff said.

Postal Tournament Upcoming

As most of you probably know by now, a postal tournament, run by Bob Sergeant, will be starting around New Year's. Bob has my full support in this venture; the tourney is bound to be a big success under his able guidance. As it appears now, each player will be in three games - simultaneously, which means that I will probably not be able to play, incidentally - and the Dragon's Teeth Rating System will be used to determine the standings. Bob wants to hear from anyone who may be a potential GM for the tournament. Good luck to all!

Bob Sergeant inhabits whatever dwelling is at 3242 Lapine Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46224, and is very busy trying to get this thing off the ground.

A Necessary Warning to All

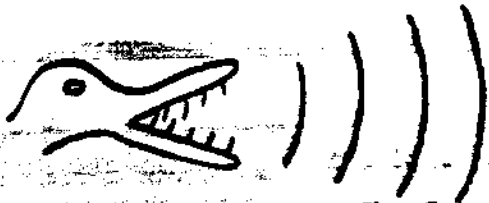
To all who aren't already aware of it, that is. In the interest of the hobby, I must immediately condemn the actions of Buddy Tretick, alias Bernie Oaklyn, as a GM. I'm not going to cite all the evidence I've seen right now, but "Oaklyn" is a thief who has been known to steal people's sub money, and is a dishonest GM as well, having also falsified the orders of players in his zine and played in his own games under various fronts, including James Alan, Stephen Andrews, and Brian Edwards. Under no circumstances should a player who wants to play in a fair game sign up for one in which "Oaklyn" will be the GM, nor is it a wise decision to send him any money for ANY reason whatsoever. Unless, that is, you would like to see a crook at work. Tretick's zine, by the way, is called Le Front de Liberation du Diplomacy and is run under the "Oaklyn" alias.

At least two publishers that I know of have dismissed Tretick from their games, and several other have mentioned that he would be unwelcome as a player in their zines. This, of course, is my stand also, though if Tretick wants to subscribe I'll oblige him. He is, by the way, receiving this sample. Indeed, it's sickening to have to print this in my first issue, but the hobby needs to be warned before more people are suckered into sending him money. And since I'm sending this issue as a sample to between 600 and 700 people, of which over 200 are brand new to the hobby, I felt it essential to say something now.

One final, lingering request to Tretick: Come on, Buddy. We know about your doings beyond any shadow of a doubt. And the new hobbyists that don't will soon find out about you via articles like this one. So, if you are at all psychologically capable of doing so, why not send out a promise never to repeat your crimes, stop publishing, and come clean. If you do this I would be the first to publicly thank and congratulate you, and in time I'm sure you could be welcomed back into the good graces of most of us - as a player who just wants to enjoy the games. Won't you please have a good long thought and at least consider it?



The answer to the puzzle is that the person in the portrait is the man's daughter.



BRUX Speaks

The Scoring System Controversy

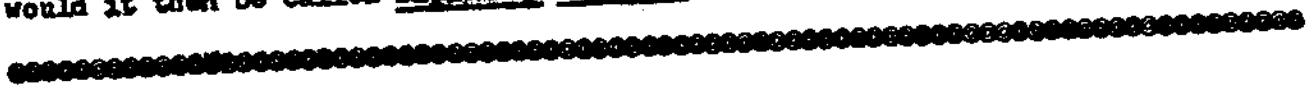
At this year's DIPCON, such noise was made about the deficiencies of the scoring system that was used. Its inventor was Mark Berch, the publisher of Diplomacy Digest. Indeed, I was one of those who did a lot of the criticizing, eventually coming up with what I felt was a much more equitable system (which will, by the way, be published both in this zine and in Diplomacy World in the near future). The Berch System had replaced the previous year's Rocamora System - a system that has outstandingly had features, one of which is to encourage cross-game tactics. The Berch System was a much-needed improvement.

Now, however, it seems that two individuals, one of them Mr. Rocamora himself, have been put in charge of next year's DIPCON and have flatly declared that it will be the Rocamora System again next year. Is this the way things are run in this hobby? If so, I must protest loudly! I doubt, first of all, whether either of these two gentlemen has even seen my system, or any of the other new ones that have come out. For Rocamora to bluntly declare that the subject is closed is quite frankly an act of belligerence. How about giving careful study to some of the new systems, and then, if Rocamora still prefers his own, debating the issue through the hobby's zines, and finally deciding - with the help of anyone who cares to contribute his thoughts on the subject - what really is the best way to go?

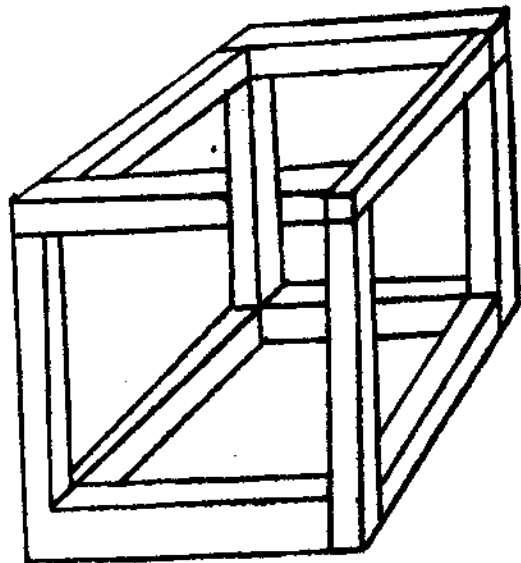
Do I hear any "ayes"?



Speaking of Mark Berch, if he were to eat an issue of his own zine, would it then be called Diplomacy Digested?



CAN ANYBODY  
HERE EXPLAIN  
WHY I FLUNKED  
MY ART COURSE?



*BRUX*  
CAO

Contest

Who's the Best (or Fuzziest) Diplomat?

You are Austria and I am Russia. In our initial negotiations, we agreed that you would support me into Rumania in fall, 1901, and that we would leave Galicia empty. Yet after the spring, 1901, moves come out, there you are with armies sitting in both of those provinces. It's now up to you to write me a very convincing (or very funny) letter explaining why you had to do this. The letter which I find the most imaginative (convincing or funny) will be printed in issue #3 and will win its author FIVE free issues. I may decide to pick two winners if I get excellent letters from both categories. I may also print letters which were not winners, but good nonetheless. Contest deadline is November 21, 1979, and my decision is final.

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Sad

by Judy Linsey

Soft and silky,  
Mournful eyes  
Listen to her  
Pitious cries

No energy to hold  
Tail high  
Not a bark escapes  
Just a lifeless sigh

Cry not, poor dog  
Though we've all gone away,  
We will return  
At the end of the day.

Thank to my sister Judy for this submission. One free issue, Judy, (hee hee) even if you DO prefer Monopoly to Diplomacy. (Let's see, now - Monopoly, huh? Isn't that the game where you go directly to Wales; do not pass Go; do not collect two builds...).

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My cousin Rob and I threw a frisbee back and forth 492 times last summer before Rob hit a tree with it. We were going for 500 throws without a drop - grrrrr! Can anyone beat this record?



WHEN THINGS GO WRONG  
AS THEY USUALLY WILL  
AND YOUR DAILY ROAD  
SEEMS ALL UPHILL  
WHEN FUNDS ARE LOW  
AND DEBTS ARE HIGH  
WHEN YOU TRY TO SMILE  
BUT CAN ONLY CRY  
AND YOU REALLY FEEL  
YOU'D LIKE TO QUIT  
DON'T RUN TO ME  
I DON'T GIVE A SHIT!



BRUX Goes Wandering

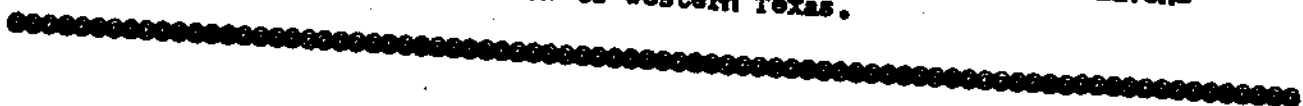
This feature will appear frequently and will be devoted to sharing my travel experiences with my readers. In this issue, BRUX explores the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

Virginia is one of the most varied states in the country. From the modern, cosmopolitan urban areas of Alexandria and Richmond, to the Deep South tobacco plantations, to the pounding surf of the Atlantic, to the desolate poverty of the hillbilly Appalachia heartland, this state really has it all. Separating Appalachia from the rest is that famous mountain range, the Blue Ridge. John Denver's melodious assertions to the contrary notwithstanding, the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah River bless Virginia, not West Virginia, with their presence.

In the north, the range forms the backbone of Shenandoah National Park. The road leading up to the top from the east twists and turns like a rattlesnake with indigestion. Upon reaching the crest, the view is spectacular. The road follows the summit of the range, passing through at least one tunnel as it does so. To the west, on a clear day, one can see several ranges over, into West Virginia. To the east, down the forested slopes, lies a vast expanse of farm country and small towns. Up here, the road is called the Skyline Drive; south of the park it is known as the Blue Ridge Parkway.

My recommendation is to camp here in the fall, for when the morning fog lifts and the autumn colors blaze forth in all their glory, it is then that inner serenity prevails, driving away worries and petty thoughts, and ushering in peace and relaxation, and a full appreciation of nature's beauty.

I just realized that that last sentence is enough to make one puke, but it's true, so I'll leave it there. Stay tuned for BRUX's next adventure, into the Guadalupe Mountains of western Texas.



Three Zines Join the Navy

That's right, folks! There was, in the past, a little-remembered day when three of the hobby's zines decided to join the Navy. Those three were Lee Kendter's Why Me?, John Michalski's Brutus Bulletin, and John Kelley's The Beholder.

Our three zines walked onto their ship proudly. Faced by the captain, all three snapped rigidly to attention. Then the captain issued an order to Lee Kendter's zine, but the zine's reply was a dry, crackling, "Aye!" - a very disappointing reply. So the captain gave the order to John Michalski's zine, which replied with a barely audible, "Aye!". Finally, in desperation, the captain snapped his command to the third zine, John Kelley's. And lo and behold, John Kelley's zine also responded, "Aye!", but this one had the sound of glorious evening bells, and those who were there thought that they perceived wonderful background orchestration and rippling chords in the sound of that syllable.

Which just goes to show you, beauty is in the "Aye!" of The Beholder.

## Love at First Sight

### Me and Diplomacy

Up until about six months ago, I was a Normal Human Being (NHB). In other words, I had never played, or even heard of, Diplomacy. I was in a toy store one fateful day back then, and happened to see the game on the shelf. Having a little excess dough, I made possibly the best investment of my life and bought it. When I got home, I set up the board and started reading the rules. The exact point at which I fell in love was when I read rule IV; part 2, which describes some of the aspects of negotiating as they are used in face-to-face play. Unable to find six other people who were willing to throw away their NHB status, I almost instantly sent away for the list of postal gamesmasters. By the time it arrived, I had gotten the job at I.B.M. and moved to Newburgh. I quickly sent in a request to Craig Reges for his zine and the Novice Packet, and when I got those I signed up for a game. My eagerness to play was absolutely unbearable. I was no longer an NHB.

Well, anyway, Reges took so long to start my game that I signed up in two other zines and wound up not playing in his zine at all. The first game I got into, then, was in Claw and Fang, as England. My excitement and involvement with this game is such that I have sent or received well over 100 separate pieces of negotiation already, and the game is just past winter, 1901. Three days after this game started, my second one did. In this game I'm Germany, and the excitement level in this game is possibly even greater than in the Claw and Fang game.

Anyway, I soon joined two more, one of them on a whim (it is a blind game) and the other by accident, so I've now reached my full capacity for games, given the rate at which I negotiate.

It was about mid-August, after attending DIPCON and having a ball, that I realized that I was going to publish. My finances, enthusiasm, and spare time were all in excellent shape, so all conditions were "go" (and still are). So after talking it over with some other people, I went out and bought a spirit duplicator for almost \$300, only to find that it gave maybe thirty good copies and quit. So with my wallet weeping, I returned the machine and bought a \$400 mimeograph. Unfortunately, I had several problems with this as well, so I finally realized that it was going to be photo-offset or nothing. As you see, I've made my choice. Writing up the stuff for this issue proved to be fairly easy - I'm bursting with things to say about Diplomacy and myself (I'm doing this page just about last). The zine you're reading is the culmination of many hours of thought, planning, toil, and joy. And I hope to be doing this for years.

The thing that has impressed me most about the postal hobby, aside from the fact that the game itself is sheer hell, is the general atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness I've found. After these few months, I've made several good friends, none of them NHB's, perhaps, but all of them sharing an interest in this terrific hobby with me. So when you see me refer in print to this "wonderful hobby" of ours, or some such phrase, you may be sure that I mean those words sincerely. It was, indeed, love at first sight.

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I'm thrilled to death to be doing this.



Do you have something that you want advertised? Send it in and I'll probably print it (especially if you are a subber)!

Notice to all players in the Albany, N.Y., area: I will be getting a face-to-face game together in Albany on Thanksgiving weekend. Anyone who is interested, please write to me. Brian, Nick, and Gary, would you guys please make sure this thing gets organized up there this time? Let's make this one a day game. Conrad Struckman, you are also invited if you will be in that weekend. Write me if you want to play.

Before I go, I wish to thank:

Bob Arnett for his advice and list of players;

Mark Borch for his advice;

Fred Hyatt, also for the advice;

Lee Kendter, Sr., for the advice to use a mimeo, which unfortunately didn't work right for me;

John Kelley for his encouragement;

Linda Simpson, for all the advice, help, and encouragement;

Jerry Jones for his advice and list of hobbyists;

Bob Sergeant for advising me to get advice from Lee Kendter;

John Michalski for about ten different things, including sending me the Publisher's Handbook, answering questions, and just making himself thoroughly helpful;

Randolph Smyth for the use of his house rules in forming my own set;

And anyone else that I might have forgotten. I sincerely appreciate what you people have done for me. If this zine becomes the success that I think it will, I owe that success to each and every one of you, and I'm not going to forget that.

And that, folks, wraps up the first issue of The Voice of Doom. It's my hope that you enjoyed this sample. If so, how about subbing? And if you want a GM who is willing to give you a steady, reliable game, how about playing or standing by? This I can guarantee - my enthusiasm for this hobby is unsurpassed, and unlikely to wear off for a good long time.

Hope to see you all next month. And have fun in the Diplomacy hobby, one and all.

BRUX

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