

THE VOICE OF DOOM

#76

April 5, 1983

Circulation: 124

by BRUX

If you are not a subscriber to The Voice of Doom, greetings. You are one of several dozen people receiving this issue as a sample, and you are cordially invited to subscribe. The zine is devoted to the play of postal Diplomacy, and to printing articles and letters on both Diplomacy and non-Diplomacy topics. The sub rate is \$5.00 for 10 issues. This issue contains material typical of what you will usually find here, except that it is somewhat larger than normal. I usually publish about 20 to 30 pages an issue.

If you're looking to get into a postal game only, then don't subscribe right now because I don't have any openings at the moment. What I do have and promise to have is lots of good reading material for the Diplomacy fan. I'm hoping that some of you non-subscribers reading this will like what you see and decide to subscribe. If you do, I'll hope that you will participate actively in this zine. VD has been published continuously for $2\frac{1}{2}$ yrs, and next to Diplomacy World is possibly the most widely read Dip zine in North America (check me on that, Envoy fans!).

If you are a European publisher receiving this, then I am offering to trade with you. For the first time in ages, I am willing to trade for other reliable zines, but not with American zines. If we are already mutually subbing (Michel Liesnard, Geoff Cheringor, and Glover Rogerson), then I'd like to convert our arrangement to a trade if it's OK with you guys. I'll assume it is unless you tell me otherwise. Sub rates are not too hard to convert to foreign currency.

As you can see, I'm attempting to add to my already high circulation. Part of the reason for this, in case any of my current subbers haven't noticed, is that I have GONE DITTO! I naturally much prefer to print the zine by offset, but it has gotten to the point where about a third of my income was being spent on my Diplomacy hobby. I love the hobby, but I was going broke. Now, I'll be able to afford to do this and not feel so guilty about it. I realize that VD will be harder to read, and I can't do everything I used to do, but to compensate for this I think you'll find the issues to be a bit longer than the past three or four, and consequently improved in quality. I drove down to Tom Swider's house in Endwell, NY a few days ago to pick up Mike Barno's ditto machine, and was pleased to find that I can get over 200 readable copies from it without too much difficulty. Thus, I can now increase my circulation without not add to my printing costs. And boy, it feels good. Except that I can't correct typos like that in the previous line.

The Voice of Doom is a journal of postal Diplomacy published every now and then by Bruce Linsey, 24A Quarry Drive, Albany, NY 12205. Phone (518) 459-9250. Subs are 10 issues for \$5.00. Standbys are wanted. There are no game openings.

Diplomacy is a registered trademark for a game invented by Allan B. Calhauer and copyright by Avalon Hill.

The deadline for all games contained herein is April 29, 1983.

I think I'll use this page to indulge in a luxury that I haven't been able to afford for a long time: rambling. I mean, when I'm paying the printer \$3.60 per page, then talk is not cheap. But now that the price of rambling is suddenly decreased drastically, I can spout off; the only significant cost is the rise in postage if I do it too much, and that's small potatoes compared to paying for offset printing. Besides, postage only rises once every twelve pages anyway! I feel like a kid with a new toy; the luxury of wasting space. But I won't overindulge lest I bore the audience...hey, WAKE UP!

Going ditto has some other advantages besides the big one of saving bucks. I'm now in control of my own destiny, in terms of how promptly I can put the zine out. With all the different printers I've gone to in the past, it amazes me that I never put out any game results late. There have been several occasions where I've come close to doing so, but I've been very fortunate. Now, I can feel far more confident about doing it. (I can't really complain about my last printer, though; he was the epitome of reliability.) And, of course, I don't lose a fortune unless I keep putting out 40 page per issue; I can come reasonably close now to breaking even on anything up to 34 pages, and may actually make a small profit on a 22-pager! Wheeeeee, this makes up for the past couple of years when I've lost my shirt each issue!

Disadvantages: I have no easy way to correct typos. If it's a game page, I may have to retype the whole page; otherwise, you'll see more misspelled words and/or cross-outs than you're used to here, as I used to do my typing on erasable bond. And, as some of you know, I am very proud of my zine's appearance. So going ditto is a blow to my pride in that regard, but you know that things have got to change when you can't afford a night out on the town as a result of your hobby.

To the novices receiving this: I don't usually ramble on and on this much. I also wish to advertise some items which some of you may find interesting or useful. The first, aside from Voice of Doom itself, which I'm advertising just by sending it, is the hobby's Novice Packet, Supernova. This is a 35-page booklet published by yours truly, which contains many articles and much information designed to help a newcomer get started in postal Diplomacy. Cost is \$1. --It's well worth it. I've sold around 400 of these since I first published it over two years ago. I've heard many people describe it as "indispensable" or some such, so I think you'll be pleased with it.

Also, I have on hand a pretty huge stack of back issues of both other zines and VD that I wish to sell. I'll send you a bundle of 40 to 50 old zines for \$4.00, and 10 different back issues of VD for only \$2.00. (Most of these are 12 pages in length, so don't expect anything like you're seeing here, but there is some good reading.)

The only postal game I was playing in, Swedish Roundabout ('81AM), has just ended in a draw between Garry Hamlin's England and my France. I'm pleased that it's over as I'm eager to reduce some of my hobby commitments and won't be joining another game for some time. Gary Coughlan was the best GM I've ever had the pleasure of playing under and the caliber of play was for the most part excellent. Anyone interested in reading more about the game is referred to the next issue of EE, which will contain my endgame statement and those of several other players. One statistic that may interest some of you is that in 1901 alone, France sent and received a grand total of 242 letters in that game! (This has got to be some sort of record for negotiating.) Well, it seems to have paid off. Now you know why I'm not eager to sign up for another game right away.

I'm sorry to announce the folds of two zines. Diplomacy by Moonlight was one of my favorites, and it just came out for the last time about a month ago. Dot Harry had gone way downhill over the past year, but it too was a very good zine in its heyday and I'm sorry to see it go under. It's always sad to see well-run zines like these fold.

I'll leave this page with the following thought to newcomers reading this: if you're thinking about getting into postal Diplomacy, please give it a try. Start by buying a copy of Supernova, and if you enjoy this sample, by subbing to Voice of Doom. I have enjoyed this hobby for years and you might too. There are lots of potential friends to be made out there, and if you're looking for a reliable gamesmaster with current openings, there are several mentioned in my letter column this issue (Kleiman, Luedi, Howerton; all new but promising) and I can send you the names of others. So let me hear from you. I really want to help you join the hobby, and I don't think you'll regret giving it a try.

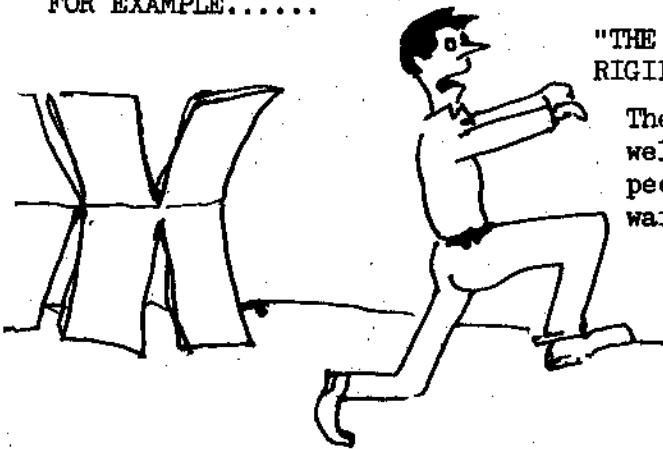
IF SOME OF THESE GAME COMPANIES EVER DECIDED TO MAKE SOME HORROR SHOWS I HAVE SOME GREAT IDEAS FOR PLOTS. THEY WOULD ONLY NEED TO LOOK AT SOME OF THEIR OWN PRODUCTS AND THEY WOULD FIND A WEALTH OF MATERIAL.....

by Mark Paul

FOR EXAMPLE.....

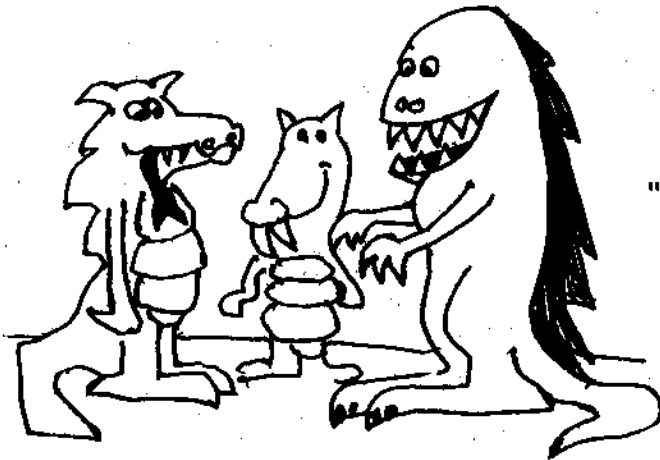
"THE ATTACK OF THE SEMI-RIGID MAPBOARDS"

These boards invaded well-made games and people and left them warped and deformed...



"THE DUMB GAME THAT WOULDN'T DIE"

Just when you thought a dumb game like "Fury in the West" was dead because Battleline folded, wouldn't you know that Avalon Hill would issue it again.

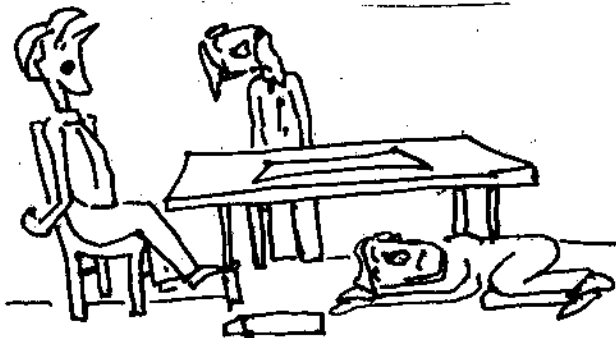


"THE INVASION OF THE DRAGONS"

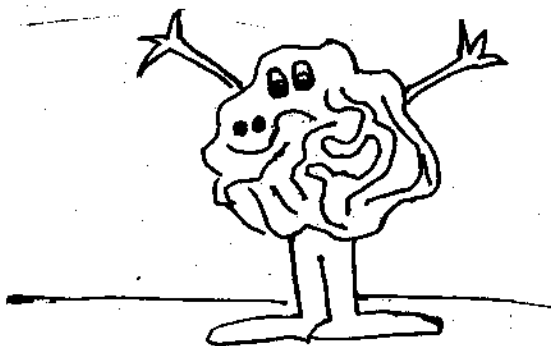
It started with one obscure game at a little-known company. Now every game company floods the market trying to jump on the bandwagon.

"THE NIGHT OF THE DEAD ASLEEP"

Three poor souls who decided to play "Empires of the Middle Ages" find themselves caught in a long night of boredom and confusion.



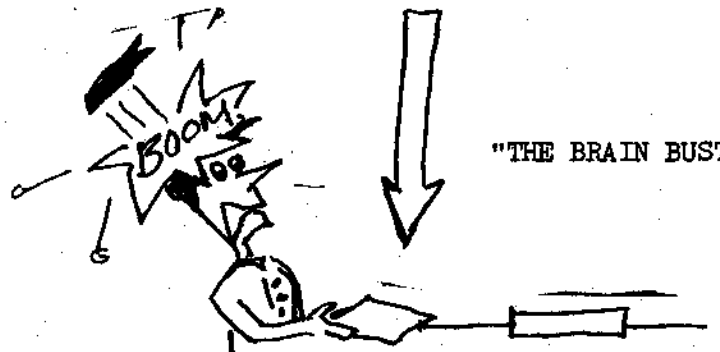
"The word 'level' here refers not to the level of the dungeon, nor to that of the player (see page 34), but to the level of the attacker. This shouldn't be confused with the level of monster (see page blah, blah, blah, blah..."



"THE ATTACK OF THE BRAIN EATER"

A brain eater attacks all the world's game designers and eats their gray matter. The movie ends when it invades Milton Bradley and dies of starvation.

((I nearly died laughing! -- BL))



"THE BRAIN BUSTER"

Some poor Joe decides he is going to learn the rules of Dungeons and Dragons by himself and is lost in a maze of confusion and misunderstanding and eventually his brain becomes overloaded.....

4

Alex's Column

Alex's Column is published by Alex Lord, Doonie of the Year, Box 178, Hannacroix, NY 12087.

Dear Doonies,

As I was lying in bed this morning, agonizing over what I could write this month's article on, I stumbled out of bed upon it. I swung my pretty little, lily-white footsies out of bed and walked to my window. I threw open my curtains to welcome in the warm, dusty sunlight and squinted outside only to see some stale gray snowbanks. But wait! My eyes followed the cheerful cirping up towards the large locust trees outside my two bedroom windows. Every spring, a momma crow (or some other loud bird) picks the cozy little crook approximately two feet up from my window to raise her family in. Indeed, I love the company of her family and friends but it appears that this spring she has really outdone herself. If I recorded what I hear at 5:00 AM every morning till about 8:00 PM every night, I'll bet I could patent and sell these precious serenades. New Yorkers or other people who live in smoggy, crowded areas with no trees or wildlife would "flock" to their nearest Sounds Great store and purchase tapes that could light up their lives, and mornings. They could buy these tapes to meditate by when outside their teeny five-by-seven window is a rusted fire escape, decorated with the only aspect of birds they know -- droppings. Actually, if you listen to their song it is very relaxing and enlightening even for country girls like me. (Marie Osmond never knew it like this!) Although at 5:00 AM I know that I have to crawl out of my nest and face the blinding light that sweeps the pleasant dreams out of your eyes and awakens you to the grim realities of the dank, depressing morning. This is my portrayal of an early Spring morning. Soon it will be late Spring and then Summer, my favorite season.

This summer BRUX and the boys are planning a trip to Bolton's Landing, Lake George. This will be a very emotional and sentimental trip for Bruce because he has told me that he grew up there, during the summers, through the years when he was just a wee bit of a yellow dinosaur. Bruce, my brother Howie, Billy Highchair and Mike Barno are all going up to visit Lake George for a lost week, and a lost weekend. I heard they are going to have a boat, too. I can see it now, Bruce spotting a minnow over the side of the boat, screaming with joy, and capsizing the boat while he eagerly stands up holding his rented professional fishing rod. Howie won't get too much early fishin' in that way. He will have to leave BRUX behind, slurping stale cornflakes and whining, and bring the infamous MP Barno instead. Howie can probably use MP's head of hair (or SOS Brillo Pads...) to hook his flies and lures into, so he won't need to bring his tacklebox. As for Billy, he will be at the bow of the boat pretending he's the captain and will undoubtedly run the boat aground.

They are all attempting to talk me into coming up for a weekend and living within the grasps of nature. They only want me to come so that I can clean, do their laundry, and cook. Sorry, boys, there's no way that I am spending a night some there in the boonocks with only an outhouse out back keeping me company. Maybe I will drive into town and stay at a Holiday Inn or a Howard Johnson's. Summer only comes once a year, and I want to enjoy it with luxury, not in a sleeping bag that smells like mothballs, with mosquitos attacking me like kamikazes and BRUX complaining that he's hungry 24 hours a day. All winter I put up with nature, sooty woodstoves, and dampness. I'm not going to put up with it during the summer. BRUX will have me barbecuing three huge meals a day with side dishes of soggy peas, MP Barno will aggravate me until I'm forced to laugh at his dumb jokes, and Billy-the-twelve-year-old will act accordingly (talking my ears off). Howie thinks it will be fun now, but wait until it happens. He will probably row to the nearest place where he can dock his boat and run all the way to my hotel, so he can use the phone. Another thing is that they'd all better camouflage BRUX and pick a secluded place to camp. If any girls happen to be sunbathing or swimming, get a sight of Bruce in his bathing suit they may mistake him for Big Foot, and call the Lake George patrolmen. I would never get any peace and quiet. Girls would be swarming around our cabin to get a picture of Suasquatch and

ask me if I were his bride. God forbid!!!
I'll be sure to be far away when July rolls around and maybe I'll even leave before
my 16th birthday so that I'll manage a successful getaway. Good luck, Billy, Mike, Bruce,
and Howie!

THANKS FOR THE NUMBER 25 RUBIA BERRY EA RETHIN ONE FOR BARRON

The Alex-Petunia

Thanks, Bruce, for giving me such a lovely, flattering picture and poem in "I Ran the Zoo" zine. I loved it! (I'm probably one of the few!)

Thank you also Bill Highfield for sending me that tape in the mail. I enjoyed hearing your voice for 60 minutes. (I must be a masochist!) I thought you were only going to record on one side. I guess this is just a warning once to visit you at Lake George?

Howie, Mike, and I are working on an elaborate plan to visit you. I'll be sure to be far away when July rolls around and maybe I'll even leave before my 16th birthday so that I'll manage a successful getaway.

alterior motives in asking the people that I did to join her. Howie will make Alex feel safe when she comes up to visit, Mike's head I actually plan to use scrubbing pots and brushes, and I'll just wash around and take it the best way out of gas, so we'll get where we're going.

revealingly, Howie and I really aren't even sure of the exact date of Alex's Column being going out for printing. Howie's name was mentioned where Billy Highfield celebrated his 13th birthday. He had heard of him. I don't know if he's about Lake George, instead, she's a very attentive friend of mine. I got to know Joe Jackson in person recently, but I'll let her know about that. She's a very nice person. I was almost as thrilled as when she mentioned on had visited this state. I don't know if you're visiting or not.

It's going to be a rotten day when you wake up and your braces are locked together. You put your income tax check in the mail. Your wife says, "Good morning, Bill" and your name is called. You get a letter from your business. Your car horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a group of Hell's Angels on the freeway. You turn on the news and they're showing emergency routes out of the city.

Your son tells you he wishes Anita Bryant would mine her own business. Your car horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a group of Hell's Angels on the freeway. You wake up and your braces are locked together. You put your income tax check in the mail. Your wife says, "Good morning, Bill" and your name is called. You get a letter from your business. Your car horn goes off accidentally and remains stuck as you follow a group of Hell's Angels on the freeway. You turn on the news and they're showing emergency routes out of the city.

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The bird singing outside your window is a dove. You open your mailbox and there's an issue of "I Ran the Zoo" zine.

J U P I T E R

1980jk

EUROPE PAUSES FOR THE WINTER AS RUSSIA SEEKS A NEW CZAR!

Autumn 1912

ENGLAND: F Nth r HOL

Winter 1912

AUSTRIA (Carter, ordered by Olsen): Build F TRI, A BUD

ENGLAND (Barno, ordered by Leritte): Build F EDI, F LVP

FRANCE (Leritte, ordered by Carter): Remove A For, A Gas

GERMANY (Rauterberg, ordered by Barno): Build U-boat Squadron Berlin (nope!), A KIEL Over On Its Side (yep!), Eunuch Munich (nay!)

RUSSIA (Nobody, ordered by Rauterberg): Remove A Rob

OLSEN (Olsen, ordered by Nobody): even

Game Notes: Amend the last supply center chart to read England 5, build 2; Germany 10, build 3, since England retreated to Holland.

Neither has resigned the French position and George Leritte is now the French player. The situation with Russia is delightfully complicated. Lew called me to tell me he was resigning. Martin sent in a set of orders for Spring 1913, as well as back-up Russian orders for both the winter and spring, but said that he wishes to resign after these orders. But he also has asked me to cancel his VD sub, so that he is not eligible to play at all. Since Rauterberg sent in proxy orders for Russia and Turkey had no winter orders due, and since Dick has cancelled his sub and Lew has resigned, the player for Russia this turn is Nobody. Normally, I would not let someone stand by without printing his name first, but I have it on good word that Nobody rarely negotiates anyway, so I'll let him play this one turn. Would John Davies, Box 968, Port Hardy, British Columbia, CANADA VON ZTO please assume the Russian position? Start by submitting proxy orders for Turkey for Spring 1913, John.

The German build in Kiel is valid.

Mike, please note that I do not accept future votes except on a player-voted season separation; thus, the votes you submitted with your Spring 1913 moves will not be valid unless resubmitted. That reminds me, for next season there are A/E/F/G/R/T, E/T, and A/G draws proposed; and also a concession to Turkey. Please vote by next deadline. Note that under my new houserule, NVR = no for E/T and the concession, and yes for the others. ~~Any outsider reading this is especially invited to join the JUPITER standby list; it has now been totally depleted.~~

Press:

BARNO to LARZELERE: Hey, you're supposed to be coming back in now! O come, noble M'torso, free this bleeding slave!

MILILIFE CRISIS: Give me all your money, suckers. There's no sine but I want to take a vacation in sunny Mexico. Permanently.

IG LEW: First I keep this game going for 90 years so I can play in VD, then I'm too kindless to send in orders. What a cool guy I am.

OLSEN to BARNO: Of course the Bible has been used to do harm! That's why I suggested it for this game! Was there one European country which did not claim divine approval for its policies in 1901? Or ever? "He who justifieth the wicked, and he who condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord." As for Heinlein, well, to each his own. With one or two exceptions everything he's written post-1958 has been tripe.

BARNO to LERITTE: If you're in, George, thanx.

((JUPITER continues next page))

VUPITER (continued)

TURKEY: I propose that we change this game to my newly-invented Toady Variant (the Jim-Boob Burgans Invitational Game). The rules of Toady Dip are as follows: each player does his best to make sure that Germany and Austria wind up with a draw, or maybe that one of them wins. This will involve making good orders (none of this Ruztarberg scoring around) for each country so that it gains the largest number of dots possible each year. The game will end in a couple of years and we'll all be out of our misery. I'll start by building the two possible Austrian units and using them to slaughter my own innocent Turkish people. I've always wanted to stab myself and this is my big chance.

AUSTRIA: What do you call me when I catch leprosy?

BRUX: I don't think I would call you at all.

BARNO to WILLIS: How do pacifists get into a hobby "about war"? My boy, listen to My wisdom. If you care about something, you educate yourself about it. You get exposure to different experiences in the field. Eventually you gain the ability to distinguish the act itself, however,

I'm not in a wargaming hobby. I'm in a hobby of interpersonal dealings, and I've enjoyed it not for the warfighting, but for the friendships. I never care when I lose a battle on the board -- but when I messed up a friendship, I hurt myself as deeply as anyone else.

SHERWOOD? to LEW?: Boy I'm really into this game.

LEW? to SHERWOOD?: Me too. This is the best game I've played in ages.

BARNO to OLSEN: Hey, didja notice we're the third and fourth biggest powers on the board? And with the way the others have let down in the press over the last year, I'd say if we're gonna end it, we should get a draw!

PAUL RAUTERBERG: I plan to GM all my games just like I ordered my units in this one -- like BRUX with a hangover!

BRUX: I must have drunk when I wrote I must have been drunk when I wrote I must have been have drunk when I screwed up. My apologies and 10 free issues to all the players in this game, to make up for the inexcusable inconvenience I've caused you.

ENGLAND: You know, Bill Hghchair's ancestor Percy Cyril Clancy Waldo Zuzwalt Hyfeld was a well-known inventor. He worked with the British Navy a lot because he liked semen. He invented the "safe" made out of sheep's intestines. Only problem was, he kept forgetting to take the intestines out of the sheep before using it.

LUNA

1982V

...AND THIS LITTLE BOY RESIGNED...

The LUNA game is delayed for 4 weeks. Ig Lew has resigned his position without sending in any final orders, after missing his moves last season, and his standby Mike Jones didn't get any orders in. Under the VD houserules, the game cannot proceed without an English player. Would Richard Edison, 1365 Cedar St., Berkeley, CA 94702 please assume the English position? Thanxaheluvatot, Rich.

Proposed for next season are a concession to Russia, an R/T draw, and an A/G draw. Please vote by next deadline. Note that under my new houserule on the matter, NVR = no for all of these.

Note to all players: I am on call 24 hours a day for the purpose of taking orders and giving out results. I prefer that you call at a reasonable hour, but will not turn you down if you must call at any time. Don't abuse this privilege too often, however, or I'll have to revoke it. Also, if you call during the wee hours you may have to give me a minute or two to wake up. Nothing you submit over the phone for a VD game is valid until I've read it back to you.

MILKY WAY

1982M

FRANCE BUYS, ENGLAND STEALS A GERMAN CENTER AND PROTECTS ANOTHER GERMAN CENTER, ITALY WALTZES INTO A RETREATING AUSTRIA, RUSSIA FLEXES HIS MUSCLES IN LIVONIA, AND TURKEY MARCHES AND MATTS!

Fall 1906

AUSTRIA (Arnaoodian): A ARM-Ank (F CON S), A Lvn-NOS, A SIL-HUN (A BOH S), A Gal-SIL, A Tri-BUD, A PRU-Ber

ENGLAND (Haxzer): F HIG-POR, F BRE-Bre, A Pic-BEL (F NTH S), F BAL S GERMAN A Ber

FRANCE (Rautenberg): A GAS-Bre

GERMANY (Kador): A BUR S ENGLISH, A Pic-Par (NSO), A Mun S A Ber (d; r Ruh, Kie, OTB), A Ber S A Mun, A Bel H (d; r Hol, Ruh, OTB)

ITALY (Anglo): F Gre-BUL (so), A Ann-ALB (F ION S), F SEV H, A Ven-TRI (A TIO S), A MAR-Bur, A PAR-Bur, F SPA (so) H

RUSSIA (Salski): A SEP-LVN (F BOT S), F Ska-DEN

TURKEY (Blitstein): A SMY S A Ank, A ANK S A Smy

Supply Center Chart:

| | | |
|----------|---|-------------------|
| AUSTRIA: | Vie, Bud, Tri , Ser, Gre, War, Nob, Con, Tri , Tri , MUN | 8, even |
| ENGLAND: | Home, Tri , Bre, BEL, POR | 6, build 1 |
| FRANCE: | Tri | 0, remove 1 (out) |
| GERMANY: | Kie, Hol, Tri , Tri , BER | 3, remove 1 |
| ITALY: | Home, Tun, Bul, Mar, Spa, Rum, Par, TRI, SEV | 11, build 2 |
| RUSSIA: | StP, Swe, Nwy, DEN | 4, build 1 |
| TURKEY: | Ank, Smy | 2, even |

Game Notes: All proposals failed. Now proposed is a concession to Italy. Please vote by next deadline.

Press:

MUNICH: Did you hear the one about Quasimodo's retirement? Quasimodo was interviewing some potential replacements. One guy applied for the job and Quasimodo took one look at him and said, "But you don't have any arms!"

"Hey, give me a chance," the guy said, whereupon he stepped back seven paces, ran toward the bell at full speed, and hit the bell with the left side of his face.

"Bing!" went the bell.

"That's pathetic," Quasimodo said. "It's not loud enough."

"Wait! Give me another chance," the little guy argued. With that, he stepped back twenty paces, ran toward the bell at full speed, and hit the bell with the right side of his face.

"Bong!" went the bell, not much louder.

"I'm sorry," Quasimodo said, trying to straighten up to his full hump height.

"Okay," the applicant said, "just one more try." Wearily, Quasimodo nodded. The little guy stepped back 50 paces and promptly fell 300 feet to his death at the base of the Cathedral at Notre Dame.

By the time Quasimodo made it down, a crowd had gathered over the ruined body of the little man.

"Does anyone know this man?" a policeman asked, as Quasimodo approached the crowd.

"I don't know his name," Quasimodo replied, "But his face sure rings a bell."

LONDON to "RADIO FREE PORTUGAL": I appreciate your kind words, your graciousness, and your sportsmanlike attitude. You're a class guy, Rautenberg. Now, for the last time, DIE YOU GRAVY-SUCKING PIG! ... Thank you.

((MILKY WAY continues next page))

MILKY WAY (continued)

GASTON THE GASCON to LONDON: Am I dead yet, or are you going to toy with me for a while?
 BRUX to GASTON: Whaddaya mean? He's been toying with you all game!
 UNCLE MIKE to YOUNG NEPHEW NICHOLAS: And to think some scurrilous churl had the temerity
 to nominate me for the Nixon Award, a nice guy like me. You're most welcome. Put those
 armies to use against the Austrian Scoundrel. In fact, here, have another!

NEPTUNE

1982X

CZAR GOES BERSERK, POPE ABDICATES!

Winter 1905

ENGLAND: even
 FRANCE: NBR! Will play 1 short
 ITALY: NBR! GM Removes A Alb
 RUSSIA: Build F STP(nc), A MOS
 TURKEY: even

Spring 1906

ENGLAND (Duarte): F NWI-Swe, F NTH-Nwy, F Eng-BRE, F Iri-ENG
 FRANCE (Conlon): A Mun-KIE (A HOL S, A RUB S), A BUR-Mun (A TTD S), F MID H,
F BEL S ENGLISH F Eng-Nth (NSO), F Tun-Ion (d; r NAF, Was, OTB)
 ITALY (Cameron): A Tri-VEN, F Ion-TUN (F TYR S), F Rep-ROM
 RUSSIA (Kane): A Rum-SER, A Bud-TRI (A VIE S), A BOH-Tro, A SIL-Mun, A BER S F Kie,
F Kie declares war on all other nations (H) (d; F Hlg, Bal, OTB),
F Bot-SWE (A DEN S), F Sev-BLA, A Mos-SEV, F STP(nc)-Nwy
 TURKEY (Wrobel): F Gre-ION (F AEG S, F EAS S), A Bul-GRE, A Con-BUL

Game Notes: Italy ordered A Alb to retreat OTB; impossible since it was not dislodged.
 The winter removal was made in accordance with my house rules.

Craig Cameron resigns with these moves as he is being transferred overseas. Good
 luck, Craig! Will Edmund Jedry, 8339 S. Kolin, Chicago, IL 60652 please take over the
 Italian position? Thank.

FRENCH TV: We interrupt this regularly scheduled broadcast to bring you the following
 message.

Pres. deGalled -- My beloved country, I bring you sad tidings. The war in Europe is
 not going well for us. Although many factors have contributed to this situation, one of
 the most important failures of my administration has been the hostile relations with
 England. I have pleaded with the English monarch time and time again for a cease to our
 border skirmishes and help against the invaders from the north, all to no avail. Despite
 all my urgings, the English monarch still refuses to believe a single word of any
 correspondence I have sent him. He has absolutely no faith in me and will not end the
 skirmishes at our border, nor help with the menace from Russia. As long as I am in office,
 our country is doomed to lose this war. Therefore, I am making one last effort to change
 the English monarch's mind and, failing that, will resign my post to more capable hands in
 the fervent hope that the English will trust my successor, the border skirmishes will end,
 and the Russian threat will be turned back before it is too late.

((NEPTUNE continues next page))

NEPTUNE (continued)

FRANCE to ENGLAND: Duarte, you've had it! I'm going to crush you like Orloff.
RUSSIA to ENGLAND: Duarte, you've had it! I'm going to crush you like Orloff.
EL SALVADOR to ENGLAND: Any Fool's Day!

OPTION

1982Y

QUIET SIGNS IN EUROPE AS ALL COUNTRIES REMAIN EVEN!

Summer 1906

GERMANY: A Pru r BER

RUSSIA: F Nwy r BAR

Fall 1906

IRELAND (Howell): F MID H A Nwy H (F Ska S F NW S)

FRANCE (Wrotell): F ENG S ENGLISH F MID, F POR S ENGLISH F MID, A GAL S A Mar
A MAR S A Pru, A BUR S GERMAN A Mun

GERMANY (Wiltmond): F Swe-BAL, F NTH S ENGLISH A Nwy, A SIL-PRU (A BER S).
A MUN celebrates Oktoberfest (H), A RUH S A Mun

ITALY (Howerton): F SPA(sc)-Mid, A PIE-Mar (F LYO S), A TRI S TURKISH A Tyo (GTM).
A VEN H, F TYR H, A TUN H

RUSSIA (Deluca): A FIN-Nwy (F BAR S, A STP S), A War-SIL, A Pru S A War-SIL (d; r Lvr,
War, OTB), A Ukr-MOS

TURKEY (Laxelle): F Con-AEG, F WES S ITALIAN F Spa(sc)-Mid, F MAD S ITALIAN F Spa(sc)-Mid,
A GAL S RUSSIAN A War-SIL, A TYO-Mun (A BOU S)

Supply Center Chart:

| | |
|--|---------|
| ENGLAND: Edl, Lvp, Swe, <i>Wty</i> , Nwy | 4, even |
| FRANCE: Home, Por, Lon | 5, even |
| GERMANY: Home, Cen, Hol, Bel | 6, even |
| ITALY: Home, Rom, Gre, Tri, Spa | 7, even |
| RUSSIA: War, Mos, Sev, STP, Rum, Vie, <i>Wty</i> | 6, even |
| TURKEY: Home, Bul, Ser, Bud | 6, even |

Game Notes: An E/P/G/L/R/T draw has been proposed for next season. Please vote by next deadline.

Press:

BER to MOS: I have a lot of post cards.

BER to MOS: Scratch one potential Russian raider...or did you ever think of that?

G to ITR: Did you know that ITR stands for Ineligible To Reregister (i.e. flunked out) in Muddish?

BERLIN: And now retired Field Marshall von Totschlagdieoster, commenting on the current situation:

"The Eastern alliance has the numerical advantage, but we and our allies are negating this through clever use of natural defenses. The question now is which one of them will be the first to stab. As soon as they realize they are making no headway, one of them is sure to try to make it on his own. We face no such problem. Given their numerical superiority, bad faith would inevitably lead to annihilation."

You have been listening to retired Field Marshall von Totschlagdieoster, analyzing the current situation. We now return to our regular program of pro-German music. Now to GUN and GUNS. You're here, why. Life-sipping...
G... ..

ERION (continued)

ROME to CON AND MOS: You're snot-dripping, rusty-haired, cross-eyed, worm-infested maggots!
CON to MOS AND ROME: Eat flaming monkey puss!
BRUX to CON: Monkey puss?! Hmmm...

PEGASUS

1982Z

TURKEY WARS ON AUSTRIA; ENGLAND LOOKS BELEAGURED!

Winter 1905

AUSTRIA: even
ENGLAND: even
FRANCE: Build F MAR
GERMANY: even
RUSSIA: Build A WAR, A SEV
TURKEY: even

Spring 1906

AUSTRIA (Husk): F Apu-NAP, A BUD-Rum, A VIE-Gal, F Aeg-BUL(sc) (A GRE S, A SER S)
ENGLAND (Halverstadt): A Nry-Swe (d; r Fin, OTB), F DEN H (F SKA S), A Bel-Bur (ann),
F HOL-Kie, A Por-NAF (F MID C), F ENG-Bre
FRANCE (Chatfield): F Mar-SPA(sc) (F LYO S), F WES-Mid, A BRE-Gas, A BUR-Gas, F Nap-ION,
A Pic-BEL (A RUH S)
GERMANY (MacFarlane): A Mos-UKR
RUSSIA (Meisner): A StP-NWY (A SWE S), F BAL-Den, A FIE-Hol, A WAR-Gal, A SEV-Rum,
F Rum-BLA, A SMY H
TURKEY (Punches): F Con-AEC (F EAS S), A Bul S RUSSIAN A Sev-Rum (d; r Con, OTB)

Press:

GASCONY: This is the only valid dateline for France this year.
ANKARA to WORLD: The Sultan announced today that the freedom-loving people of Russia have joined the Turkish forces in a noble attempt to defeat the hated Austrian foe.
GASCONY to PORTUGAL: Hope we bounced.
GASCONY: The so-named French Freedom Fighters have decided to walk.
LONDON AND BERLIN (IN EXILE) to THE WORLD: Ready to concede? Our recently consummated alliance with Italy combined with the brilliant results of our fall, 1905 campaign ensure world domination. Give in now and make it easy on yourselves.

Been watching the Houston-Louisville NCAA semifinal game, and think that the Houston team is just awesome, especially that guy Akeem. This should be in the mail Monday night by the time Houston plays North Carolina State in the final game, but it says here that Houston will blow 'em out by 15 to 20 points...

Was playing backgammon against my brother SHRIV a few weeks ago and he rolled four pairs of box cars (double sixes) in a row! The probability of any four consecutive rolls all showing double sixes is less than one out of a million and a half, by my calculations. Unhappily for him, he wasn't even able to move on the last two throws, and I won the game...

Played Rail Baron over Christmas vacation while Farno, Lousy, Highchair, and Kane were here, and liked it a lot. Had sold my old set practically unused, but will be getting another soon...

Q U A S A R

1982AE

AH, THOSE HAZY, LAZY, CRAZY DAYS OF SUMMER!

Summer 1905

- AUSTRIA (Spector): No retreats necessary
- ENGLAND (Glaspey): No retreats necessary
- FRANCE (Burd): No retreats necessary
- GERMANY (Howerton): No retreats necessary
- ITALY (Paul): No retreats necessary
- RUSSIA (Lansing): No retreats necessary
- TURKEY (Sweeney): A Mun r KIE, A War r PRU

Game Notes: The seasons were separated in this game because at least two players requested a separate summer. All press will be held till next season per Houserule Amendment #30. All moves and press currently on file will be accepted as valid unless overridden later. One player who requested a separation did not send fall moves and would have NMRd had the separation not passed; please be careful about this.

Last season I somehow omitted the Turkish orders (gee, Bob, it must be something about you! You're the only one this seems to happen to!). I caught this error before sending out the zine, and corrected it for the players. The orders were: F ANK-RLA, One-ABG, F Bul(sc)-CON, A SMY S F Bul(sc)-Con, A Mun-Tyo (d; r Kie, Boh, OTB), A War-Mcs (d; r Ukr, Gal, Pru, Lvn, OTB). I apologize for the error.

The proposal for an E/T draw did not pass.

Mark Paul writes, "Bruce -- Please apologize for me to the rest of the QUASAR players. I've not been able to answer their mail due to the recent and sudden death of my father. Please let them know that I will have the time to answer their proposals in the upcoming months." Sorry to hear the bad news, Mark.

R I G E L

1983K

EVERYONE WANTS AUSTRIA'S HOMELAND, BUT WHO CARES ABOUT GREECE?!

Fall 1901

- AUSTRIA (Knight): A BEU-Vie, F Alb-TRI (A SER S)
- ENGLAND (Sweeney): F ENR-Bel, A Yor-NWY (F NWY C)
- FRANCE (Hare): F Mid-IRI, A Spa-POR, A Gas-SPA
- GERMANY (Heintzman): F DEN H, A Kie-HOL, A RUH-Bel
- ITALY (Prick): F ION-Aeg, A Tri-Vie (d; r Ven, Tyo, OTB), A APU S FRENCH A Gas-Spa (imp)
- RUSSIA (Kleinman): F Bot-SWE, A Ukr-RUM (F SEV S), A GAL-Bud
- TURKEY (Reilly): F CON-Aeg, A SMY-Con, A BUL H

Supply Center Charts:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| AUSTRIA: Home, SER | 4, build 1 |
| ENGLAND: Home, NWY | 4, build 1 |
| FRANCE: Home, SPA, POR | 5, build 2 |
| GERMANY: Home, HOL, DEN | 5, build 2 |
| ITALY: Home | 3, even |
| RUSSIA: Home, SWE, RUM | 6, build 2 |
| TURKEY: Home, RL | 4, build 1 |

((RIGEL continues next page))

RUEHL (continued)

Transmit to the following...

Game Notes: Autumn and winter 1901 orders only are due at the next deadline; spring '02 will be played at the following deadline...

The very fact that nothing is known... I send to you... and you know... the Sultan... his return... he offered his... the Sultan...

RUSSIA: Admiral Kleiman sends his regards from the Gulf as he does not believe that he has ever seen... the Gulf... the Sultan...

It has come to the attention of the Turkish that certain acts of sabotage, guerrilla warfare and bad manners are the result of Russian tampering.

Sultan to declare war on Russia... the Sultan... the Sultan...

French... the Sultan... the Sultan...

the Sultan... the Sultan... the Sultan...

today... the Sultan... the Sultan...

GERMANY to RUSSIA: Here's your bill... the Sultan... the Sultan...

the Sultan... the Sultan... the Sultan...

the Sultan... the Sultan... the Sultan...

So What's This About Strict GMing, Then?

by Rod Walker

I don't see how anyone can say "nit-picker" with BRUX Linney in the same room. It must be supposed that BRUX is probably the strictest GM in the hobby, with houserules to match. And very pushy he is about it, too.

There are many things which can be said about BRUX's position. And what you say will depend a lot on where you are coming from. A good many GMs (most of them, I suppose) get along on very brief houserules, which serve in most circumstances in normal games. These HRs contain the statement or the implied intent that the GM will resolve problems as they come up. In fact, there are GMs who seem to have no HRs at all, apparently assuming that players will know they are handling their games more or less as such things are normally handled in the hobby.

There are a few GMs, however, who have more extensive HRs, trying to take into account most possible circumstances in advance. It can be argued that so many of the potential problems that the players won't read them anyway (or will tend to forget them over time). It can be argued that the extensive HRs will themselves lead to new problems, since players will try to find ways around them or attempt (sadistically) to find internal flaws and contradictions. It can be argued that you can't take every potentiality into account, so why try?

True, all true.

And yet...

None of these arguments seems to have much real force when it comes down to it. I have long since weighed them myself and found them wanting. In my heyday as a postal GM, my HRs ran to 8 closely typed (elite!) pages. A new version is in progress for the Diplomacy Game, and may actually run longer. So the reader should be aware that where I'm coming from is to a large extent where BRUX is coming from.

Why long rules? They seem essential to me. Postal Diplomacy has been going on for twenty years now, and we have an extensive fund of experience to draw on, and from which we can know what sorts of problems arise in Diplomacy games. Furthermore, there are still many questions, both on the rules and on playing procedure, where answers and basic philosophies differ. Most GMs know how they will resolve many of these questions, even if they do not so state in a set of HRs. (And some of them are so basic to the game, and arise so frequently, that the GM ought to know his position on them or he has no business being a GM.)

The purpose of long HRs is not to establish the GM's power over the game. That is achieved at the outset. A GM with no HR, or very short ones, actually has more power over the game. When problems arise, the game is more likely to be run and may be governed by the mood of the moment. It is entirely possible (entirely probable in some cases) that given the same problem arising on two different occasions, they may give two contradictory decisions. And who's to know? Or what recourse is there even if somebody notices? Even the GM himself could have forgotten, between one occasion and the next, what he did the first time. Too much is left to chance, whim, and mood where the GM has not put contingencies into a set of houserules.

It seems to me that the players in a game have the right to know, in advance, how the GM will act in certain circumstances. He therefore has an obligation to tell them. And he has an obligation then to behave consistently with his declared intention. If the situational problems never arise, fine; at least we were prepared. If the players do not take account of the HRs in playing the game...well, whose fault is that? If new problems arise, the GM will take care of them; that's his job. If players try to find loopholes and inconsistencies, one must ask whether they are playing "Diplomacy" or "Diplomacy League". Much players have lost sight of the fact that the HRs are there to help the players, not restrict them, and that the game does not create a state of war between players and GM. (My own HRs take into account this problem by stating, in effect, that my HRs mean what I intend them to mean, and that the GM alone is responsible for resolving any apparent difficulties which seem to arise from them.)

However, at this point my philosophy departs somewhat from BRUX's. I do not believe

that the rules, or the House Rules, ought to stand in the way of a player ordering his units as he wishes. In other words, miswritten orders and badly written orders do occur... we're all human... and that therefore the GM ought to give effect to the intent of the player wherever that is clear. The Rulesbook in fact says that a miswritten order must be followed and that badly written orders, which never unless can have only one meaning, must also be followed. I agree that the Rulesbook should not be interpreted as to allow wanton sloppiness. Nor should they force the GM to choose between two or more equally possible interpretations where orders are ambiguous. However, under the Rulesbook, if a GM receives an order which appears not to be clear, he is obligated to determine whether there is even so clearly evident intent which can be followed. As an example, say a player has "Hal" and orders "Hal-hol" and "Hal-hol" believe, would show "Hal" as unordered. (Right.) I would show the order as "Hal-hol" since the player has clearly miswritten the order (showing the wrong unit) but it was otherwise quite clear. This is what I mean when I say the GM should not erect unreasonable barriers against players. The recent flap over Ed's orders is a good case in point. My own opinion is that the supports should have been allowed. Ed was, if anything, trying to be precise, ordering two units to hold and also support each other, perhaps overcompensating for BRUX's known strictness. However, that is not to say that these were double orders at all. A unit which is supporting is also holding. Rule IX.61 "A unit not ordered to move (and one... ordered to support...) may receive support in holding." It is of course not necessary to order the unit both to hold and to support, but in fact a good many players (particularly novices) believe it is. This is a well-known quirk in the game, and experienced GMs know that there is a tendency by newer players to issue this sort of "double order" until the redundancy of it is called to their attention. That isn't to say that Ed is a novice at the game, but it is to say that the "double H and S" orders do occur and that they are redundant orders, not double orders.

However, at the same time, as BRUX says, he has never made any secret of his being strict. It seems to me that a point can be reached where detailed HRS and the strict observance of them can interfere with the progress of the game, as appears to be so in this case. But even if you agree with my opinion, please do not think that Bruce has set any sort of record in this regard.

No, indeed. There is always Charles Norbert Reinsel. Was Norb strict? My dears, he was possibly the only GM in the hobby who ran his games as if they were concentration camps. Norb had very few HRS, as a matter of fact... after all, being God, he needed no more than 10. But consider what some of them were. Norb operated on 2-week deadlines. That means that each issue of Big Brother was mailed out exactly two weeks after the last issue. Big Brother was due the day before the mailing date, the deadline was reduced from 14 days to 13! There were no such things as late orders with Norb. Period. No excuses. Secondly, if Norb had orders from all the players at any time before the deadline, he would adjudicate them and send them out. He did not wait until the deadline to see if the players might change their orders. That meant that players were stampeded about sending in tentative orders or anything of the sort, and had to wait until the last minute to send any orders in. This ultimately meant a lot of HRS if the mail was delayed accidentally, a day slow or the deadline fell on a holiday (it didn't make any difference to Norb whether there was mail delivery that day). No general orders, no telephone updates. Thirdly, Norb required that if a player HRS three times during the course of a game, any three times, he was out. No god, no replacements, just civil disobedience. Ultimately all Reinsel games would wind up with 3 to 5 players going into civil disobedience one time or another.

The last result is logical, considering how these rules, strictly observed, they were, acted together. Players were given virtually no time to negotiate. They could not send in tentative orders for fear they might be used before they could be changed as a result of negotiations. So orders were mailed at the last possible moment and all too often failed to reach Norb on the deadline. The resulting HRS severely affected the game and in the end led to the removal of several players without replacement. This was the

only possible result of all these rules, and any fool could see what would happen. Unfortunately, Norb was not just any fool, but an absolute fascist by temperament, and apparently conceived that he was teaching people a lesson about being on time and such.

One might think Norb's GMing style was not only not for everyone, but not for anyone. The truth is, however, that he ran dozens of games (and may still be running them for all I know). Most of them were by carbon copy only, never published in any mine, and long since lost to record-keepers. The amazing thing is the players he got. There were many repeaters, including Allan Calhauer, who had long since ceased to play games elsewhere by mail, and played in some of Reinsel's now-lost carbon copy games. Some excellent players of the 60s also seemed to enjoy the fast pace and somewhat esoteric demands of Norb's postal games... including John Koning, John Smythe, and Charles Wells. Later on, Norb retired and took up travelling about, and did a lot of arm-twisting to get people to join his games. Conrad von Metzke, who had great difficulty saying "no" in person, would agree to join and then BRU out in 1901. Norb apparently never caught on.

So for what it's worth, no matter how awful you think BRUX is, as a strict GM, he is not (yet) quite so bad as some. After all, anyone who thinks that Diplomacy is a river can't be all that bad.

((Some of Norb's house rules sound too strict for my taste, but if he could find players who wanted to play there, who cares?

Your paragraph about fewer house rules = more power is absolutely correct. I've been preaching that theme for years. On the other hand, I do not believe, as you imply, that rules should stand in the way of a player submitting the orders he wishes.

You are wrong also in saying that holding + supporting is not double-ordering. I agree with you that the wording in IX.6 strongly implies that a unit can do both, but VII.1 quite clearly states that they are two separate orders, and that a unit can only receive one order per season. I'd suggest that this contradiction be clarified, preferably by revising IX.6.

One of the things I enjoy most about Rod's writing is that it always gives me a good insight into how things used to be in the hobby, back before I joined it. I've heard of Reinsel before (having read Graustark), but never knew such about him. Does anyone have his address, so that I can send him a copy of this article?

Seven free issues, Rod.))

Now! Win 17 free issues in YD's special...

Great Diplomatic Coup Contest!

What is the greatest diplomatic coup you have ever pulled off in a Diplomacy game? Was it a forged letter that worked brilliantly, or a clever bit of double-talk in your negotiations that allowed you to slide your knife smoothly into the back of an opponent? Did it involve phony orders, or eavesdropping in a face-to-face game? Whatever, YD's readers want to read all about it! So enter this contest by describing your greatest diplomatic coup ever and sending it to me for print. Entries will be judged by the quality of writing as well as the quality of the coup itself. My own greatest coup was pulled off in Swedish Roundabout, and if I'm in the mood I'll write it up and enter it along with everyone else. Best entry wins 17 free issues; second place gets five, and all others printed earn their authors two freebies apiece. Be sure to set the diplomatic situation and the board position well enough so that people reading about your great plot will know exactly what you did and why!

Entries accepted by mail only. Contest deadline is May 25, 1983. Anyone may enter; even those people receiving this issue as a sample!
Good luck!

The Gossip Column

From Steve Knight (1/23/83 and 2/26/83, excerpts):

Dear NIKKI

...A lot (date) comments on your OFF the record... you speak to be honest... proceeding with your right to a legitimate diplomatic option in all cases... that... is... a legitimate diplomatic option... I'm not... I just don't have the right... I think... hit it... the head... in your case... for preserving your... options... overridden... collected the case... you've gotten... you... letter... about... divorce... if going through... what happens to... stuff in the... the... to... I...

...This kind of attention that makes me weary of letter-writing... I'm not... to the... and new... combinations... who don't... I think... on... at least not... after... matter... going... will... I...

...This kind of attention that makes me weary of letter-writing... I'm not... to the... and new... combinations... who don't... I think... on... at least not... after... matter... going... will... I...

...I think... I'm serious... that's... meant to be a... On the other hand, as you've noted, wading through... various ways, I thought I'd make an offer of my own: if you haven't gotten around to... I'd be willing... a lot of...

...of our school's... for my text editing (I'm a Computer science major, I'm... last-minute... from your point of view, but I'd be free to let me know if you're interested...

...I can't foresee having the time to reorganize my... myself any... in the near future, but would consider it a very large favor if somebody who is reasonably familiar with... to...

Why of course it's OK to hurt a good friend -- or anyone else -- if it means preserving your legitimate diplomatic options and gaining a slight advantage in a game. Do you get the impression that I'm sitting back and... I type this?? Seriously, I think that your comments were very well thought out and I find myself agreeing, for the most part, with your logic.

I hope you do become an... as a loyal, screaming... You see the type...)

From Richard Edison (3/15/83):

unreadable header text

Dear BRUX,

Back in VD #73, Bob Osoch described the "two biggest lies in the world." I've always heard them told with a third one. "I've got some cocaine at my place." Anyway, I'm writing for a couple of reasons. First of all, what's the story with "Judy Winsome"? I've heard through the grapevine that "she" is really a guy, and that you're going to print the whole story in your April issue. I am entered in a VI game, which had a Spring '01 deadline of March 17. However, I heard from Mark Duarts, who is not only in VI-4, but also VI-2, that his last moves in the older game had been returned "Not Deliverable", which is why he had supposedly NRD in that game. Since then, he had four other letters returned with that same problem. I wrote "her" around March 7, and sure enough got my letter returned to me on the 9th. Finally, a couple of days ago, I received a letter from "Judy", stating that she NRD had screwed up, because her name didn't appear on the mailing. My NRD isobov want anyone visiting "her", because of a so-called roommate. The thot plicken!

As far as I can tell, most house rules include a blurb about deception of the GM and how it won't be tolerated, well, hell, how about deception of the player? I purposely subscribed to VI for two reasons: 1) because there were some openings, and 2) I wanted to discuss that approached the game and the publishing aspects from a woman's point of view. I really admit that #1 is more important to me than #2, however, I feel that it is just as much courtesy to let a subscriber, such as a player, know what he's getting into, or at least let the players know that the publisher's name is a non de fake, and thereby hope to inspire some possibly great controversy, or at least a lot of curiosity. I don't think I'll write a conclusion for this. I love leaving things unsaid almost as much as I love nonsequiturs.

My second reason for writing is to give one of my housemates, NRD, yet another reason to pull out some more of his already-depleted stock of hair. He thinks it is great fun to read the (very) small controversy his letter on hunting in VD #72 stirred up. Little do the people who commented on his letter know that he wrote most of it with tongue (some might say feet) firmly implanted in cheek, the fact of which he decided not to inform all of you. So, I decided to do it myself! Gosh, it's so fun to stab a guy in print! I could become seriously addicted to this stuff! I hate exclamation points!!!! (Help!)

That bit about the harp seals, by the way, was actually part of a story I told about a former college chum of mine, Mike Post. Mike was not really a conservative or a liberal, or even a reactionary, or a NRD. He just happened to play the devil's advocate. His parents had a ranch in northern Colorado, and he used to do a little hunting during the season. (Ever had a deerburger? Deer bones are so small, they just grind them up with the meat. Ugh.) Anyway, he's in a psych class, and this environmental nut is bemoaning the killing of whales, dolphin, and harp seals. Mike comes out with the crack about the seals, and the other guy tries leaping across two tables to get at Mike's throat, saliva pouring from his mouth. Mike sure pushed his button.

I'm glad to see that you're wutting back on the "personal insult" type of letters. It shows you've got some taste, at least.

((The "whole story" I plan to print on Judy Winsome is in my special issue. I hope she'll reply to your comments; all I have to say at the moment is that I would think that a hoax which hurts players' games may be going too far. Also, Judy is a subscriber here and none of my issues have been returned to me. Yet. Enjoyed the background regarding Ty's letter.))

From Bob Howerton (2/24/83):

Dear BHK,

By this time, you have had a chance to look over what I am trying to do as far as putting out a zine is concerned. I do hope that you will accept the various references to me in the manner in which they are intended. As I probably spend more time reading your zine than any other (there's more of it), I guess that it is only natural that I will tend to draw on it when trying to find some humor or other type of comment. Besides that, you probably belong in the public domain as a prominent figure in the hobby. At any rate, keep up the good work.

I would really appreciate any comment (favorable or otherwise) that would help me make some sort of positive contribution to the hobby. So any advice you might have (other than shutting it down) would certainly be well received. I need all the help that I can get. Also, I could use some more games, but am hesitant to ask you to recommend something unknown. So, if anyone would like to be a player, you might want to tell him that.

On the hunting question: I haven't shot a live animal since about 15 years ago, but can understand the sport. It is just something that I don't choose to do. I do hunt, however, with a Pentax and 200mm lens. That way, I get my trophy, the fresh air, the exercise and nothing gets hurt. I happen to be a Scoutmaster and so much spend some time in the woods as most hunters. I always try to have my troop leave the area just a little bit better than they found it. I really don't have much regard for most hunters, because so many of them leave a trail of litter wherever they go. You really have to get back pretty far into the woods to find a place without an overabundance of bear cans. One other point, I rarely take the troop out during hunting season unless it's to a protected area. It appears that most hunters suffer from very bad eyesight. There are, of course, some exceptions to the above comments. It's just that there are a lot more "hunters" than real "woodsmen".

After 20 years as an intelligence agent, deer or rabbit really wouldn't be such fun. It might be interesting to see some of our "sportsmen" hunted for a change. Or, on the other hand, be hunted for a change.

(You're the second person to suggest that in FL the first being Jack Halverson. I like the idea of getting up an area where hunters hunt hunters. That way, they can satisfy their urge to kill without hurting innocent creatures.)

I can recommend Testaments not to my readers, even though I've only seen one issue. I type this, because I know you're a hobby veteran, and you can like the zine's sort of and I enjoyed your humorous material about me in FL. (Send me any of the zine's good work like the one opening about the zine, or any of the others plugged on page 1 of VD #74.)

From Mike Ditz (2/20/83):

Dear Bruce, As you say you don't want me to let my sub run out like Mark's. Well, if that's the way you feel, here, take my last cent. Don't worry, I will get by somehow. I will just have to collect more cans and bottles. Sniff, sniff. I suppose I can make my operation, sniff sniff, whine whine. And my poor mother can do without a set of false teeth, we have nothing to eat anyway. I can also start reusing stamps. I don't think the Post Office will mind too much. My poor, rest her soul, grandmother won't be getting a new tombstone, but that's all right, she doesn't really need one. And who cares if my baby brother doesn't have anything to eat? Haha, have your lousy money, Scrooge!

- BS. I hope you can't sleep at night.
- PPS. I hope the ghosts of diploia past, present, and future visit you.
- PPPS. Boy wasn't that fun! All in jest, of course. I don't really have a baby brother.
- PEPPS. It's a baby sister.

((Thank for resubbing. By the way, you're starting to get low again. RESUB NOW OR DIE!!))

From Jake Halverstadt (3/8/83):

Dear Bruce:

Here's the kid's action for the Stocks and Bonds game. I'm gonna win this thing -- it's got to be -- because I'm on a roll.

How so? Went to Denver last Saturday for Crusader Con at Metro State. Shitty day, rain and snow most of the way down there. The carburetor on The Snow Goose kept sticking. It was almost like cruise control; I could do about 50 mph with my foot off the gas. That's fine on the Interstate, when you're in fourth gear, but when I hit the city and its stop-and-go, it was a trip rummin' thru the gears. I found I could come off a red light in third gear!

Because the weather was so bad -- and damned if I didn't just look out the window to find it's sleeting, when it's supposed to be a decent day -- Crusader Con's turnout was rather small. What was supposed to be a 49-player Dip section wound up with a big eight. Four of the guys had shown up together. I figured the party was over before it began.

First drawing was to get into the game. No problem. Second drawing was for countries. Big problem. I pulled Italy.

Talked to Germany and Austria, got peace in the middle. Germany was cozy with England, they challenged me to a race for the leftovers of France. They seemed pretty confident that they would be pushing France into my lap, that I might get one supply center, and that would be it. I also felt that I was destined to be the dessert after a big French meal.

Opened to Pic, Tus, and Tyr, convoyed to Tunis in the fall. Built another fleet, moved A Tun to NAP, and by Fall '02 had fleets in Mos and Iyo and armies in Spain and Marseilles. Cut the big deal with Germany and England -- they seemed honorable, and they were -- and by Fall '05 had something like the Lepanto going against Turkey!

It was a bizarre game. Nobody really came after me until it was too late, despite all the table-talk about how strong I was getting. I just played Godfather, had my fingers in everyone's pies. You know how it is -- you split a pair of SCs with four countries, and you've got four SCs and four people happy that you helped them get one.

Anyhow, by Fall '11 Europe was Italian green.

And, by the same time, Denver had picked up about a foot of snow, and Jake had a 60-mile drive coming. Normally it's about 75 minutes from point to point. It took me over three hours to get home. I'd filled my ice chest with Ringnes Dark (super Norwegian beer, \$3.89 a six-pack here and better than the \$4.79 Heineken in my book) to celebrate on the drive home. Also had saved myself a nice chunk of hash for the tournament weekend. The roads were so poor that I wanted my brain at top working condition, so I was happy to stay straight for the drive. Did a 360 leaving the on-ramp. The Snow Goose and I got a close-up view of the concrete median divider. Never hit anything, tho. Man, what a terrible drive.

After surviving all that, I know I'm on a roll. Oh, yeah -- played my first two games of chess of the 1980s last night, and won them both. My opponent wasn't as good as I thought. I know he plays from time to time. Maybe he was just setting me up for next time.

Dog track opens tomorrow, getting psyched to go play the greyhounds. It's something to do until the horses get started. No doubt Sue and I will be doing the Triple Crown events again this year. Watch for a horse called Canadian Factor -- it's very early to be picking Derby horses, but I like his looks. He finished second but was placed first in the Boxie last Saturday, and the horse has one kind of blowing kick!

What's left? I dunno. Writing pretty well for being in a very bad mood. Never would have guessed, would you? Hate my job, hate my writing, hate my messy office, probably hate myself. All relates, I guess. Hate the thought of cooking dinner tonight. Glad Sue will be stuck with the dishes, 'cause I hate the dishes.

Much as I hate to, need to go get this in the mail, drop off some bills, set the wheels in motion to sue my old landlord. At least I'm in a good hateful mood for that.

((Congratulations on your win at Crusader Con! Bet you hated it.))

From Eric Kane (2/6/83)

Dear Bruce,

Good talking to you on the phone. I'm sitting here on a Sunday catching up with my mail. I took my usual afternoon walking football. Well, first time I ever broke anything. Fortunately, though, it was a just a small fracture and I didn't need to get it set. Anyway, you were on my list of people to write. You know, VD is my absolute favorite site to get. I like you, but your e-mails get more often especially with those mid-monthlies! Anyway, since I know you hate pat-on-the-back type letters, I think I'll give some constructive criticism. First, your house rules: you will notice that I have not designated as a singer under you, only as a fellow GM and pubber. I think on the whole you're doing a fine job with NEWS. Responses are pouring in about Anduin #17 when I asked other GMs how they would rule in certain situations. You are getting more support. On a different matter, I think you really should rewrite them so that they are more clear. You have already admitted that they are hard to follow what with the amendments and all. I think that Anduin they can't be worse. I strongly suggest you rewrite them. I mean, if you care so much about making them so clear, and unambiguous, and when you think of all the time and trouble you went to to create them, you might as well present them as well as you can, right?

On to other matters. We all know that you are losing an incredible amount of money on each issue of VD. I also know that I (and others) have already suggested this to you but I'll do it again anyway. Why not go digest? Yes, yes, I know. You want to be consistent. But where do you draw the line between consistency and stupidity? No one will think any less of VD or you. In fact, we would probably enjoy it more since it would allow you to print more than you do now. There are several benefits to going digest. First of all, it cuts your losses in half. Instead of losing over \$100 a month, you would only lose \$50 a month! It saves money as far as number of sheets printed, as well as postage. Secondly, it saves time. Half as many sheets to collate although this isn't such of an advantage because you then have to fold them in half to mail them. I don't mean to tell you how to run your site, BRUX, I just think that this would greatly impress VD. As long as you use a good typewriter with a dark ribbon (and you do), it will still be easier to read. Hmm, have you ever thought about buying your own copier? They are expensive as hell, but if you intend to publish for a long time, it might be worth it in the long run. Something to think about if you wish a lottery!

When you hear from me next, I will be 17 (Feb. 19)! Say hi to Alex for me.

PS. Almost forgot, after the March issue of Anduin, I will be taking a brief break from publishing. I will continue the games I'm running and Anduin will be back sometime near the end of the year. The reason for this is I have too much work in school coming up in the next two-three months and I can't do it. I will be back in action to stay. Please inform your readers that I am not folding! I love publishing so much and I have absolutely no intention of folding. As soon as the summer comes, I'll be back in action to stay. Hang in there!

((Glad to hear Anduin isn't folding.

A discussion of my decision to change the format of my site should appear on page 1 (probably) of this issue.

You're right about my house rules, though I think the index I published recently will be of help until I come up with a better organized set.

Breaks your nose, eh? That's not very smart!))

From Bob Gauch (2/13/83):

Dear Bruce,

Did I really say I had to blow all those silly rednecks ((VD #79, p. 14)) I think I meant "blow by", as in pass. That's OK, you couldn't be expected to correct such an obvious omission just to save me time of what? Now could you? Of course, you

made at least one other correction in the same letter, but maybe that one slipped escaped your hypercritical eye, eh? Yeah, sure, you alimesucking sidewinder!

That's fine, Linsey, because I've got your number now. A recent letter from one of your pseudo-admirers gave me all the ammunition I need to really burn your ass! I think it's time you reconsidered your priorities and made "Regal Treatment of Bob Ouch" number one. Otherwise, I have no alternative to release the facts and let the chips fall where they say. Think about it, my son. Think long and hard.

Enclosed please find ten bucks for continuing my sub to your scandal sheet. No, you won't get rid of me that easily.

((I think the you're merely the latest in a long string of victims of intentional typos. But, I'm so scared by your threat that from now on in these pages you shall be referred to as, "His Royal Highness, King Robert Ouch, Most Majestic of the Dooxies". How's that for crownoosing...uh, brommoosing, that is, damn this typer, anyhow.

From Ben Schilling (2/27/83), excerpt)

Dear BRUX,

As for Mike Barno's reply to my comment on life (?) in the Soviet bloc, consider this. A man in Czechoslovakia was sentenced to five years at hard labor for the mere possession of an "unauthorized" ditto machine. Anybody want to live in a country like that? In any case, even if it were possible to dismantle each and every atomic weapon, the knowledge that such a device is possible will remain. Somewhere someday someone will decide that his back is against the wall and build another one. What happens then? Don't get me wrong, I am not in favor of destroying the world. I just don't want to know let the fascists take over and I will do anything to prevent that from happening.

((I agree, though I think you meant to say "commies" rather than "fascists" in the last line.))

From Greg Ellis (2/11/83)

Dear BRUX,

After sampling your fine zine I have decided to sub anyway. I do have several questions, though.

- 1) What in the hell is going on in the JUPITER game? The issue I received had an English army being annihilated in Turkey. People were snapping builds, I have heard of variants, but this is incredible.
- 2) Is Alex Lord really a pseudonym for Kathy Home?
- 3) Is Alex Lord really a pseudonym for Bruce Linsey?
- 4) If so do you wear women's clothing too?
- 5) Will you put me on your standby list? (For the games, not the clothes.)
- 6) Why do you reverse the "R" in BRUX?
- 7) Did you know that you reverse the "R" in BRUX?
- 8) How is Flumph?
- 9) Can you think of any more (or dumber) questions?

Number five is a serious question. I really enjoyed your zine. I do have to say that it did not help my case as far as my wife is concerned. She thought my in-town friends were strange until she read your zine. I have been attempting to interest her in joining a postal game, but she is a little reluctant. No killer instincts. Any help from you or the other Dooxies would be greatly appreciated.

((Alex a pseudonym for Kathy? CHOK! I reverse the last three letters in BRUX because that's the way it's spelled, and I'm a stickler for correct spelling. Flumph is fine, he just resubbed. Yes, I will be glad to put you on my standby list just as soon as you ask me to do so. JUPITER is a variant which seemed to attract the weirdest people in the hobby. They like to do strange things like order each others' units every spring and sort out my GMing errors. As for your wife, don't drag her in if she's not genuinely interested; let her read your zines and decide for herself. It's always more satisfactory if a person joins a game because he or she really wants to.))

From Dave... I solicited votes for option 1, as I was Dave and I felt that... Russia voted with me, with the other three powers voting for OIL. The OIL had found a replacement and continued the game. Well, I just thought this example would be interesting reading and I must say that your method seems superior to any I have seen in my limited experience.

1. Allow...
2. To take...
3. To have...
4. To suspend...

I solicited votes for option 1, as I was Dave and I felt that... Russia voted with me, with the other three powers voting for OIL. The OIL had found a replacement and continued the game. Well, I just thought this example would be interesting reading and I must say that your method seems superior to any I have seen in my limited experience.

((You're welcome, and I'll be flattered if you choose to borrow a few of my housewifles. (Late note he said 'Yes!') I think that your GM in 1942 should have a housewife to cook...))

I think your goals are... I don't think that you're going to be a... I have always been a... I don't think that the GM just never means the intent of an order. There are just too many

instances of intentionally miswritten orders to justify a GM's guessing at the meaning of a particular order. Some GMs like to play God; I do not.

By the way, suppose France had A Bur, F Eng, and England had F Nth. Would you accept the following orders (all other things being equal, would the French move to Bel, work)?

FRANCE: A Bur-Bel (F Eng S)

ENGLAND: F Nth-Bel

If not then I suggest that you discontinue adjudicating your games using the above format. This is what could have confused Ed. Of course, if you do accept the above, then the point is moot.

((I do accept orders like the above, and have ever since I started GMing. Many if not most of my players have used the notation above with no problem whatsoever.))

From Mark Doedi (3/5/83, excerpt):

Dear Bruce,

God, gotta take a break from all this heavy stuff; trying to tie down some shit... sort of gets to you, so instead, you think of people you need to send mail to, and guess what. Bruce, you're the lucky winner!

OK, so like now we've each credited each other with \$10.00 of mutual sub type arrangements. Actually, Bruce, you blew it for me; I wasn't going to go for anything like that, but now I guess I gotta. But, why just ten dollars, why not fifty??! That'll take my VD sub up to #178 and your TMOBR sub up to #129!! Just think about it, I know you'll go for it. That'll give me an excuse to publish for ten years! (Ha ha.)

I really enjoy all the permutations of the TMOBR name people send me. Boy, assholes and skunks, I'd say you had a two-track mind going there. Mazer somehow figured out about fifteen of them. It's great. I think I could do a psychology thesis based on that information. Well, maybe not, at least not tonight.

Your 17-center bozo moves were incredulous. I'll have to remember to try something like that sometime when I get up to 17 centers. ("That's a big-10 if there son!!") ("I can tell by the bearshit that you like to hide in the weeds.") Come on, Bruce, be real! That situation is about as likely to happen as Nelson Heintzman being able to read Mark Lew's handwriting!! He suffered something catastrophic from my handwriting a couple weeks back from one of my letters. He's even sending me the itemised bill for all the trouble. From what I hear, it made the Buffalo Evening News and the wire services. Seems the police couldn't figure out the assault weapon that knocked Nelson unconscious; there was only this letter from me in his hands. Fortunately, he's not going to press charges.

Also, concerning that Rick Magdale complaint about Bill Quinn's service... Yes, I don't like the idea either. Sure, the information is there to be ferret out, but I don't like the idea of Mr. Quinn making the information available to anyone who wants it. Besides, a player doesn't necessarily use the same style every game, who's to determine that?

I must admit that I thoroughly enjoy Le Voice de Boon every time it appears in my mailbox. That is, before I use it to wrap dead skunks in to sell at the local taxidermist market, just the other day, I almost did the same thing to my face!! I must learn to be more careful; you never know, the communists might be watching. One of these days, I think I'll actually write you a serious letter. Please, Bruce, hold your breath!

Well, I guess I should be moving along. I really have the urge to eat something fattening and sweet at the moment, and everything is going to be closing in a few minutes. So long as I crash down at a cigarette bar or some shit!

((Well, I'd be willing to mutually sub for the next 30,000 years -- except that I honestly don't think that you're going to be able to publish Thirty Millenia of Bad Riting. So let's keep it at \$10, hey? Doomsies who want to see more of Mark's Bad Riting can ask him for a couple of Thirty Bad Skunks in the Middle of the Road or whatever it is that he calls his sine. Mark's address is 930 Atwater #15, Bloomington, IN 47401. See my play in VD #74, page 1.))

From Bob Hum (2/11/83):

Dear Bruce:

Thank you for the complimentary issue of your delightful zine. I enjoyed it, reading

...being notoriously tight (my spouse accuses me of bruising Lincoln's cheek when pinching pennies) I must forego a subscription until such time as you suffer some game attrition and can have a few startups, or another type of game. How about a Bourne? I would jump at the chance for a Big Bourne. (I do have rules in the event that you are interested.)

I feel that a few of your letters deserve a few comments from me. As someone who enjoys hunting deer, I take offense at being characterized as an archfiend wallowing in Beald's gore. In my geographic area (southern Minnesota) 25% of the deer herd dies during the winter due primarily to parasites, disease, and cold stress. Hunting deer prevents the overabundance of deer habitat which would result in a higher overwinter deer kill from the...
By the way, if I shoot a deer, the animal is eaten by my family, and the hide sold or traded. In short, I don't waste this gift.

I wish to assure my sophomoric psychology students who may have generalized phallic symbolism and confused it with hunting, that I am disappointingly normal. Finally, nope, I don't shoot rabbits -- too high a risk of disease in cleaning or eating them (and what would the Rabbi say?).

Now on to the second windmill. I raise chickens (or more accurately cockerals) for our family's table use. Living in the country I can afford the luxury (T) of a chicken coop, and can thereby treat myself to absolutely huge breasts of chicken Kiev. If any of your readers lament the passage of pigs, cows, chickens, and the like, I would urge him or her to spend the rest of his or her life wearing nothing but plastic shoes, as leather doesn't grow from shoe trees. Go ahead, put your feet where your mouth is, your dermatologist and podiatrist will name his summer retreat after you.

Well, I've jostled enough. However, a word on house rules. Compliance with house rules is an exercise in intellectual discipline. In the event that you do not enter an appropriate order you will not get an appropriate result. Just like life, and the corollary continues in that, should you not like the house rules you can find another game -- or start your own game under such rules and quasi-rules as you wish. A multi-issue running debate over house rules brings to mind a French phrase "vapitant sans la fleur" -- the rough translation being "Farting in the flowers".

If one wishes to write of substantive rule change that is another matter. "Coastal Guard", or rather its prohibition, seems inadvisable to mind.

((Thank for the suggestion, but I'm not ready to open any more games of any sort right now. However, you seem like the sort of writer who would fit in well as a non-playing participant in this zine. Can't I talk you into sitting just for the interaction with other readers?)

I still disagree with you 100% on hunting, but all the arguments have been rehearsed here many times.))

From James Keelley (excerpt):

Dear Mr. Linsey:

...I was interested by your "Lucky Guess? Bah!" note in #72. One way that could be used to reduce, or at least control, guesswork, would be to adapt something of a game-theory approach. Game theory deals with situations of interdependent decisions -- i.e. where an outcome depends on the simultaneous decisions of a number of players choosing among various moves. It would therefore seem ideal for use in analysing situations in Diplomacy. What you can do is, for any given situation, construct a matrix, the rows and columns of which represent the various moves open to you and to your opponent respectively. The entries in the cells of the matrix then represent the various outcomes of the different

combinations of your moves and your opponent's. On this basis, you may find that, no matter what your opponent does, you have one best move. Or, you may find that you do have to guess, because the best move to counter one set of actions by your opponent is not particularly good in countering another. At that point, you have to start guessing which set of moves he might use, and you might also try to work out a diplomatic strategy (strategy if the opponent is actually a coalition). The same approach could help you evaluate offers by other players.

Obviously, a good player will do this sort of thing anyway, if only in his head. By formalizing the procedure, however, one might discover opportunities or threats that would otherwise not be seen.

((I think you're correct in observing that most good players form a mental matrix which gives the results of the various possible moves and countermoves in any given situation. I believe that in Diplomacy, though, the situation is even more complex than you describe it: your comments apply if the battle lines have been strictly defined and you know who is on who's side. In other words, you are assuming that the game is a simple one. I would think that negotiations would have to be considered as input to such a matrix, and varying diplomatic relations would have to be considered among the results. Clearly, the consideration of such variables would make the matrix of possibilities inordinately large, which is why I consider Dip a much richer game than, say, chess, where only the tactics need be considered.

Thank for the insightful comments; I think you and VD are going to get along very well!))

From an anonymous subber:

Dear Bruce,

I've just spent some time rereading your houserules but I find they don't seem to cover a case (or at least I'm missing it).

Here's the situation. I would like to ensure that one of my allies makes a particular move. I want him to give his consent to your revealing to me his order on one army prior to the game deadline; or, as an alternative, some sort of binding agreement arbitrated by you that would allow me to designate one of his moves or ensure that he will move as he says. I want to emphasize that this would be mutually agreed upon, not a one-sided action on my part.

As I said, I am not sure that the houserules forbid this type of arrangement. Would you please give me a ruling on this at your earliest convenience? I would like to make use of it (or not, depending on how you rule) prior to the next deadline.

((This received a personal reply, of course, but I thought it was of enough general interest to answer publicly.

There are several ways to try to ensure that an ally will do as you say, such as passing a post card with his moves on to the GM. But in all cases, these methods can be thwarted by the ally if he wants to stab; the card passed on to the GM, for instance, can be overridden by secret later moves.

And that is the way it must be. The minute a GM permits a mechanism for a player to be 100% sure of another player's orders, then part of the spirit of the game has been destroyed. An element of trust must always exist between allies. If there were a way to overcome the uncertainty of a co-player's moves, then all good allies would (probably) insist on its usage, and stabbing would become impossible.

For that reason, I as GM would not permit such an arrangement.))

From Greg Ellis (9/11/83).

Dear BRUX,

Just got VD #74 and had to write for several reasons. To begin with, I applaud your decision to edit out any extraneous personal attacks from letters that you print. Cleverness is one thing, childishness is quite another. It has always been my experience that Diplomacy players as a rule are rather intelligent. The game, however, can lead to flaring

tempers and a lost perspective. It would seem that those people who stick with the game would be the most tolerant. Perhaps not. I have recently sent off for several other sine samples, and you'll never believe what they are talking about -- Voices of Diplomacy. I figure my lot to a heavy game when I can get the game north himself. Well, I figure something like that. I am playing in one game in Jim Heinal's The Game. Issue #8, dated 2/28/53, has quite a controversial ruling by Jim on the front THE UNWANTED CONVOY. Apparently Jim was given the following hypothetical situation: CONVOY: A Hol-Eis, ENGLAND, F Hol-Eis, and what is not a fleet in the Helgoland Bight. ((I assume that the English F Hol-Eis also dislodged?)) Because Jim allows unwanted convoys (please see the wanted support rule IX.1, '96 rulebook) he stated the German move A Hol-Eis would fail. How's that for controversial? That certainly brings up several other questions. Like what is the German army was moving A Hol-Eis? Or A Hol-Eis, English F Hol-Eis? Or German A Hol-Eis, English F Hol-Eis? The possibilities are endless. What that rule is meant to accomplish? I have it! (The Hol-Eis have to hide?)

Finally, about Alex, I am amazed! In full confession of my newness to the hobby, VD, and of course Alex's Column, I must admit that I had a very different idea of who and what Alex is. My VD collection included books with titles 65, 73, and 74. I could have sworn that Alex was college aged. When you talk you were teaching at Greenville College. Well, what is about? (That's a southern expression for "Wow!") Alex is apparently intelligent, imaginative, and for a person her age, amazingly tolerant! Alex, dear, you alone have rejuvenated my faith in the younger generation. I hope to God (notice I didn't say Lord) there are more like you. And to think that you're not from Texas! And worse yet from New York! (The only thing worse than a New Yorker is a "person" from Mass.)

That's about it. Keep up the better work. Oh, yeah, is Ted Kennedy really trying to freeze the nuclear? Remember -- more people have died in Ted Kennedy's car than in Nuclear Power Plant accidents!

((I'm not really crazy about the Game Files, either, and I have nothing to hide. I think that Jim Heinal may have misunderstood the unwanted convoy rule. In order for a convoy to be valid, the fleet(s) doing the conveying must be adjacent to both the province of origin and the destination province of the army. An unwanted convoy such as the one you describe would have no effect on the army's move. Of course, in VD unwanted convoys are ignored anyway.))

too many 15-year-olds get to be game in the real world.

From Kerry Blant (excerpt):

Dear Bruce,
...I'm happy about your decision to edit mail, and to become less involved with personal controversies. I never did feel this was good for the hobby. The Jack Masters, Gary Coughlan, etc. etc. controversies left me feeling ill at ease. A little gossip is fun but things seem to be getting out of hand. You're taking a big step in the right direction.

Karen and I have no idea what we're going to do this summer. We're thinking about a vacation in Mexico, or we may do what we did last summer, enjoy Florida. If you ever make it down here you know you're welcome to stay with us.

Alex sounds like a good person. When we met you I felt a bit of loneliness coming from you. Your heavy involvement with Diplomacy came in part from your loneliness. So it's nice to see you with a friend to help fill this void.

Not much else to say, except did you notice how well I'm doing with Austria in Europe Express?

((Yup. Continued good luck in that game, etc.))

My heavy involvement in postal Dip is due simply to my intense liking for the game and all the friendships I've made while playing it. Thanks for writing!

From Bryan Juskowski (3/11/83),

Dear Bruce,

Just want to drop you a short line to tell you that VD arrived safe and sound. I am not that active in the zine, but I just want you to know that I do read it and enjoy it. I enjoyed your comments on...let's call it nonsense or feuding or bitching or whatever. Also Mike Barno's and what Jeff Note said on it before. Jeff is one of the best persons I have met in the hobby. His attitude toward the game is also one of the best I have come in contact with. It's people like him that make you just ignore or not pay any attention to the cliques that seem to like to feud with each other. Until the feuding gets going and it's too late to make amends. But perhaps some enjoy that too. I personally, though, think that you made a very good move. VD will only be a better zine for it.

On more important matters -- like our Stocks and Bonds game. Well, I really went for it, didn't I? (If you don't remember, I bought all the Stryker drilling I could get my hands on.) I didn't even plan on buying any, but at such a low price I thought I'd better buy some. Then the more I thought the better a bet it seemed all the time. Only time will tell in the end. Some hope it's going to be a bull market, cause I sure am bullish on VD. (())

Well -- take care and thanks for running that game, I am enjoying it heaps.

((I've decided it's OK for me to run short letters like the above concerning the Stocks and Bonds game I'm running outside of VD, provided the turn referred to in the letter has already been played so as not to tip anybody's hand.

I appreciate all your kind words. It's good to know that VD gets read!))

From Jeff Albrecht (3/14/83):

Dear BRUX,

You do have a good memory or else you keep excellent records, BRUX. I had almost forgotten that I once lived in Idaho; thanks for bringing back the memories of a fine state. There is another player from Idaho who dabbles in postal Diplomacy, Joe Gallagher of Boise; Joe plays in LSD for sure and I think he plays in Why Me? and Black Frog unless his games therein have finished (Masters had intended to finish the games). Rich Reilly may well be the first native Idahoan to enter Dipdom; neither Joe nor I are native Idahoans.

On another subject, BRUX, I remember you mentioning Michel Liesnard's zine Chantecler a while back in favorable terms. I am just wondering what you know of this Belgian zine?? Liesnard had advertised an international, English-speaking game in his Chantecler #40 so I responded. He wrote back saying gamefee or sub was \$10 in greenbacks. I sent the \$10 on 23 Dec 1982. To date, I have not heard from him again except to receive #41 in January. I wrote on 20 Feb 83 to inquire about the game and \$10; he's reply yet. I am wondering if you heard anything about Liesnard and Chantecler. Has the zine folded (along with the sawback), is there a health problem, or what? Any information would be appreciated.

((Last issue of Michel's zine was late due to some personal problems in his life, but it did get here about a week ago as I type this. Michel is reliable, and I'm sure if your \$10 got to him that you'll hear about it in time. Remember that overseas mail can be unpredictable and slow.

Michel is the first European Doomie in over a year. He responded to my sample mailing and was quickly followed by three other Europeans.

I seem to recall a Bill Gosveux from Idaho who played (in LINS?) years ago, but I'm not sure.))

From James Woodson (3/12/83):

Dear BRUX,

It's been a while (if at all) since I've written, and now I've gotten around to it. A few comments:

In ORION press (VD #71), Mos to Universe, he (DeLuca?) mentions RFC as being Rugby Football Club. One of my roommates plays for the U of M. R.F.C. When I showed him the

zine, his comments were (jokingly) that "Real Men Don't Play Diplomacy". I told him that I would relay that to the hobby. He told me it was okay, but for everyone to "leave your guns at home".

I agree with Jim Chatfield in that ~~ETD~~ you is best, for basically the same reasons. Thanks a lot for the publishing tips and I'll certainly send you a copy of my zine when it comes out (probably next month). I'll give you the next week and will give you the time and money (I'll receive my Navy commission on April 1) to put into the zine, sure to play!

((Thanks, but I'm not joining any new games for a while. I'll look forward to your first issue, though. Start up the good work!))
From Tom Swider:

Dear BRUN... You said you wanted me to fill up a page or half a page with some type-written junk, so this is it. Big deal, eh? Actually, ditto isn't that bad to use once you get the hang of it. The one thing I hate the most about ditto is the fact that it is hard to make corrections (in my case, mistakes are the rule and not the exception). In order to make corrections, you have to take a rasorblade (or if Alex won't let you near pointed objects, a pencil eraser will suffice). With whatever you are using, you scratch out/erase your type on the back of the stencil. Then, tear off a small bit of carbon paper and type onto that over your mistake; sort of like using correction film.

Also, it's lots of fun if you like having purple fingers. Much better than blue ink, I'll tell you!

One thing Hykey didn't mention is that he has all this paper, which he bought. I'm sure he won't have a use for it without the ditto machine, so remind me about it. You could probably talk Mike into a small price break.

One thing which has always bugged me is do most GMs have votes for draws and concessions? You can't do that in Secret Wars play, so why should postal play be any different? For the most part, I think games should be run as close to FW as possible, which includes DIAS, publicised voting, and retain SW builds/retreats/removals.

The Shogun's Sword has been improving, and since Porter Wightman just got word processing for his Osborne computer, TSS may also be done on a word processor (just like The Modern Patriot). TMP is a good xyn; just wish that people would be more lenient with Bill. He's actually a rather nice person, although a bit loud at times.

Your BRUN Speaks editorial is sort of similar to THE RICHEST GUY IN THE UNIVERSE. Incidentally, here it is: "Nobody's out to get you." That's correct; people (in and outside of the hobby) usually expect the worst in a person. It is about time people started trusting people more these days. Don't let your guard down, but don't close the door either.

Corollary to that is: "Everybody has put their foot in their mouth."

Do you realize that this is one of the few letters I've written outside of my Macroeconomics classes? Just ask Gary or Grad or "Oh so Cute" Cathy or GE Blender or...

Peter Anseff's Hypereconomic Diplomacy game is the first revision. I have a set of the most recent rules, but I don't think I'd want to play it as it is rather time consuming. Also, I like my Politburo game; it is like the board in Magnus/Paranoia Monthly/TSS, except each winter elections for each country are held, and for each country you get one vote for each unit of currency you have. Money can also change hands between players to allow bribes and the like. It's simple yet has plenty of room for player ingenuity.

((I've got a copy of Hyperec Dip somewhere too, thanks to Peter. Looks monstrous.

I feel, and so do many GMs, that some of the rules that work well in ETD play are not best for postal play. Thus, FD has secret ballots, etc. And, as I've expressed on more than one occasion before, I feel that the rule banning negotiations before retreats and winter adjustments is the biggest single error in the Rulebook.

Thanks for your help in my acquiring this ditto machine!))

From Ty Hare (3/22/83):

Dear BRUX,

From the tone of the letter Richard (Edison) just wrote to you ((see p. 18 of this issue)), I imagine that you can glean that he (and not a few others) is a bit confused and very frightened over this Judy Winsome affair. Hints have appeared in the pages of VD as to the true identity of this Winsome person. Frankly, BRUX, I'm concerned for your safety and the safety of others, especially Mark Luedi, who made reference to "The Biggest Secret in the Universe" in VD #70. Should Judy Winsome, whoever he/she/it may be wish to remain anonymous, there may be things afoot, alas, attempting you stop you from printing your forthcoming exposé. Indeed, he/she/it may try to eliminate you and other of your truth-seekers, melting your corpses into many plastic Diplomacy pieces to be played with by countless unsuspecting game enthusiasts.

So, BRUX, I feel it is my duty to go right to the source of this illuminatus-inspired plot. I'm leaving for Mountain View today to uncover this ever-deepening mystery, to discover the true identity of this Judy Winsome character. Once I have the answer, I'll go into hiding where I will get in touch with you and await your instructions.

If this letter reaches the pages of VD, I will assume that you are safe. Otherwise, I realize that I may be on my own. Good luck and be careful. Fnord.

((Judy is no longer being so mysterious about her identity. In Winsome-Lossome #13, she published her phone number. It's (914) 976-2727. I called and had a very pleasant conversation with her. I urge you and any other readers who doubt Judy's identity to call her as well.))

From Jeff Albrecht (3/17/83):

Dear BRUX,

In my note of March 14, I was wondering aloud about the status of Chantecler and Michel Liesnard. Just yesterday, my questions were answered when I received Chanticleer #42 in the mail. It seems that Michel lost his job and apartment at about the same time -- very justifiable reasons for being somewhat late in publishing.

I just thought I would let you know in case you had begun to do some wondering yourself.

((Thank for the update.))

From Dick Martin (3/23/83):

BRUX,

I haven't seen an issue of The Shogun's Sword since January. Either Barno is having an "unannounced publishing delay" or has cut our trade without telling me. Considering that I may be in a game there, I feel this is a serious matter. No lie, no character assassination, just fact.

((Thank for writing. Mike is, indeed, delayed. He has told me that his next ish will be out shortly.))

From John Boardman:

"Said Gro, wincing a little, 'The art of it agreeth well with the sentiment, and with the condition of those who invented it...But true it is that, regarding not the god of fools and women, nice opinion, I do steer by mine own lodestar still.'" -- Eric Rucker Eddison, The Worm Ouroboros (1926)

((This was sent in response to the "Zoo" issue, which John returned to me. Can any of my more knowledgeable readers tell me what he's talking about?))

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(8/15/83) dated 3/14/83

From Rob Lowe (3/14/83):

Hi Bruce,
 Thanks for the game start in Stocks and Bonds. It looks interesting. I'll look at the result tables, looks better.
 I'm sorry Bruce, I couldn't get my wife to include "BRUX" in our daughter's christening. So she stays with Clarice Marie. But Feb 28th (just after the WASH/BASH) she had the baby and by this time she was doing fine and was glad to be at home. Her doctor ordered her to be in the morning if I can't get back to sleep. Well, she was sick and will have to be put back to sleep with "BRUX". Maybe our daughter will still be a evil if she will have to be put back to sleep with "BRUX".

((I take that as a promise! Congratulations on your recent addition and I'm at it, I'd also like to congratulate George and Jennifer Laritte on their new baby boy, Jonathan Christopher. Keep up the good work!))

From Steve Knight (3/28/83):

Dear BRUX:

I was very glad to see your change of position regarding offensive personal material. I mean, I like controversy and argument as much as the next person, but some of the viciousness that I have seen in various zines has made me wonder what I'd gotten into. Looking back from a relative newcomer's viewpoint, what it was such things as this that made me very hesitant to participate in discussions. For example, my labeling my "OK! the Record" comments INQ was primarily because I didn't know whose fingers I'd be stepping on by making them, and had no idea what kind of attacks they'd summon. (Okay, I'm paranoid, so sue me.) I guess my point is that this is not the kind of atmosphere that makes a novice real eager to get involved. I think a change like this can only improve VDS. Well, it doesn't mean you have to stop being dramatic, does it? Well, just ask any of my friends.

Mike Barno's letter in #74 was great to see. Barno has impressed me as someone who has a hell of a lot of fun with the hobby, but who also has the sensitivity to know when things have gone too far. Hence, I was rather taken aback by his letter in #72, but was equally glad to see that Mike recognized the need to apologize.

I can't speak for Barno, Gaughan, or Tallman; but this pacifistic SOB is "into a hobby about war" precisely because it is a hobby. We're dealing with an abstraction of war here, which I approach as a combination of problem solving (tactics) and rhetorical persuasion. I like the mental exercise (God knows I need it!). If it was more than a hobby, I wouldn't touch it. What I can't understand is why Bill Rightfield is into a hobby about communicating when I can't get him to write me no matter how hard I try. (No, Bill, I'm not trying to get into a feud; I'm just at my wit's end about 1982AA.)

((You're right about Barno, in my opinion. I appreciate your writing.))

From Jeff Panches (3/16/83):

Dear BRUX,

Nice to hear your voice the other night -- not very chatty though were you -- oh well, publishing is tough. I'm playing Gunlinger by mail in two other magazines (Envoy and Mike's Mag) and have found it very enjoyable. If you are branching out to other games and if you will entertain the thought of a guest GM I would be happy to run a Gunlinger game. Let me know -- I think it's a good game by mail.

((I'll pass, thanks, though I'm sure there are other publishers who would take you on. Sorry I was in such a rush when I called.))

From Mike Barno (3/27/83):

Dear Bruce,

Again, thanks for fitting my letter into #4. I think you'll find your new policy to be for the best. You've seen that Cazuso and Woody have both tried to be friendlier, at least toward Gary?

Funny how Bob ((Olsen)) mentioned Masters last issue. He had a story published in the February issue of Cavalier, a porn magazine. It's about a guy who encounters a satyr with a huge, um, male organ; the girls all rush to lay with him when he plays his reed flute. The protagonist steals the flute and finds that he's turned into a satyr, goat legs and all, while the satyr has become an ordinary man. The ex-satyr tells the new star that while he'll live a life of constant whoopee, he'll never again be satisfied. Sounds like Jack's experience with Dipdom.

Oh well, gotta get this into the mail.

((So that's what old Black Jack is up to these days, eh?

Glad you like my new editorial policy. None of my enemies has made any move to become friendlier towards me, but that's OK because I feel better about the zine and the hobby since making my decision. And judging from responses received, most of my subbers agree.))

From Judy Winsome (3/29/83):

Dear BRUX,

You are a most perceptive post! But like I've said to a lot of my suitors, you're not the first.

Love,
Judy

((I always enjoy hearing from Judy Winsome as she and Bob Osuch are the only two Dip friends I have who sign their letters with "Love". Glad you (apparently) liked my special issue.

See page 36 for a different reaction (from Rod Walker) to the special "Zoo" issue.))

From Flumphier T. Quiddipoo, Jr. (excerpt):

Broo,

I keep getting these issues of Voo-Doo with a big notation near the sub number, LOW! LOW!

OK, OK! Here you are ----- Moooooooooooo! Mooo -- OOO -- oooooooooo! (Jeez! The things I do just to be a nice guy...)

In catching up on the game press, which I do several ish at a time, I see that the leper jokes are going around.

((Thank you for lowing. Also for renocing your sub. Also for sending that article on Creation to Alex. May I print it?))

From BRUX Linsey (4/1/83):

Dear BRUX,

I am the publisher of a Diplomacy zine. I have a problem that I haven't been able to solve. It is this: when you are done typing up your letter column and find that you have just a fraction of a blank page left, how do you go about filling it? I'm writing to you because I figured that you might be able to help me, being an experienced pubber.

((Sorry, but I haven't figured out how to solve that problem either.))

The Diplomatic Trencher

... by John Kador of senoquer
 to coler ...
 ... people agree that the rules of grammar as well as civility may be suspended
 when it comes to writing diplomacy press releases. That's why, in commenting on a few
 examples of misbehavior in recent press, I will refrain from identifying individuals.
 I will continue to hold individuals responsible for their language in other areas of the
 sheet. But first let's take a look at some recent press.
 ... has been stated, "I will happily avenge on your rotten bones," the unfortun-
 ate writes in Give Me a Weapon. Avenge and avenge are not synonyms. Avenge seems to
 fight's wrong to achieve justice. Avenging is retaliatory retaliation by a person who desires
 satisfaction, not justice. I'm not being ungenerous if I presume that every diplomacy
 writer without exception needs the latter. Another word that crops up is dilemma (often
 spelled dilema). This word often appears in the restraining type of press, should I use
 equally bad things as well as a choice between two equally good things? Or it can be
 a choice between one good thing and one bad thing.

A common practice in game press is to apply one's olfactory senses to describe one's
 antagonist and various parts of his anatomy. So we have in The Modern Patriot something
 about the "aroma of his nasty feet." Not so fast. An aroma is not just a smell. It's
 a pleasant smell. There's no such thing as an unpleasant aroma. If it smells bad it
 doesn't have an aroma. It has a stench. And all stenches are strong and foul. Glad to
 be of help.

Some press makes for rewarding reading. Bylined "Rose," an Irish press release
 used an old unit of measurement called a cubit. From the Latin cubitus, or elbow, it's a
 unit of length described by the distance from the tip of the middle finger to the elbow.
 But you know all that. But did you know that cubit is closely related to the Roman god of
 love, the peculiar little nude chap who went around shooting people with a bow and arrow
 under some eccentric notion that he was promoting harmony? Which brings me to a little
 known fact which does have some relevance to this secretive hobby of ours. Cupid was the
 god of love in the good old days when real men didn't worry about love but didn't want it
 to be common knowledge. Here's where Cupid comes in. Cupid went to a pal god called
 Harpocrates who was the god of silence. Cupid wanted to make sure that Harpocrates kept
 the secrets of love, so Cupid gave his pal a gift. Cupid's gift became a symbol for
 silence. It was hung over meeting rooms as a sign of secrecy. It was hung at dinners
 to signify that the conversation was not to be repeated later. Anything said in private
 was to be "under the seal" at all times. Send your ally a seal and see if he
 keeps your secrets.

One of the bitter arguments in the Dippy hobby last year was over the question of
 gays in the hobby. A voice of tolerance and restraint was that of Larry Peery's Xenocentric.
 In the Pink Triangle supplement (Hitler's homosexual victims were marked by pink triangles)
 Michael Paul Norton asks, "When will people learn that they reap what they sow?"
 Remember, we sow fabric and sow seeds. Reap 'em and reap. There's nothing so
 this distinction.

John Michalaki is a true hobby original, fired from more jobs than Detroit has
 lost. Those of us who miss his calm and comfort in a recent Michalaki interview in
 Steven Duke's The Schmeer (#8, pp 6-13). A pearl from John: "Keep in mind that there
 are (in the hobby) some potential friends, a lot of jerks, and a couple of outright
 pricks. Just like in the real world." I suppose nerd is the way Steven Duke spells it.
 Where I come from, nerd is preferred. After this, I'm going to start charging for straight
 lines.

Later in the same issue (page 3 of the subline Damn the Torpedos), Daphne Anne Fritz
 wife of editor Gregory Fritz, mixes some metaphors. David Stockman has stuck his alligator
 shoes in his mouth and is in the proverbial doghouse. Daphne, mixed metaphors are a pain
 in the neck and should be weeded out.

When the Leader zine poll results were announced, Anduin editor Eric Kane called equal
 Rod Walker "to see how I fared" (#14, p. 18). Anduin, it's fair to report, did not
 fare too well. I feel Anduin should have fared better than it did. Look at its letter
 column. Stacy Langley (#14, p. 2) supports marriage and divorce in the Catholic church.

"They can marry with the confidence that they can bail out at any time." This is in response to a request for comments, made "twice more or less." Whatever.

John MacFarlane lists his useful "ten commandments" of postal Diplomacy in Voice of Doc (#66, p. 23). Number seven is "Look at the board as a whole. Think of the game in a holistic (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts) fashion..." Methinks John let the homophone-like similarity of holistic and whole get the better of his dictionary. He should have left the word undefined for his parenthetical betrays his confusion. Holistic is the right word (the theory that the study of a whole organism is more fruitful than a study of its parts). He actually defined synergistic (a united action of different agents producing a greater effect than the sum of the various individual agents).

In VD (#73, p. 18), Ed Wrobel continues to press his claim that Bruce Linsey erred in disallowing an order that called for a unit to hold and support simultaneously. While Ed's argument is reasoned very precisely, it failed to persuade the ombudsman, Mark Berch. Nevertheless, Ed writes: "And once again I cite Berch's rational in support..." While this may be a typo, rational (adj., sensible, reasonable) should be distinguished from what Ed really means, rationale (noun, the fundamental reason). ((I believe this was a typo.))

Lone Star Diplomat is one of the more literate zines in the hobby. In an end-game statement from Allen King (England in 1981AU, #24, p. 1), King compares one adversary to another: "Another player of this ilk was discovered to be..." Ilk is a delightful word, listed as archaic by most dictionaries, meaning same or identical. In this case, when an identity is drawn between two specific individuals, standard usage prefers the possessive, his ilk.

BRUX teaches math, not English, so Alex Lord has to take full responsibility for her delightful style as well as occasional goofs in her regular column in VD. Her last piece (#74, p. 23) tells of her encounter with an upstate New York primitive: "Talking about illiterate people, this man spoke with a slang that was even hard for me to understand." I don't doubt it, since illiterate is the inability to read or write and has nothing to do with speech. Perhaps Alex means unintelligible. I'm somewhat an expert on this whole subject ever since I saw a billboard which changed my life. The billboard read: "Illiterate? You don't have to be. Write for free information..."

The latest amendments to VD's Houserules are out (#74, p. 19) and Amendment #86, dealing with the number of retreats and adjustments required to separate seasons, includes a word that I've never heard before. "...the GM can still declare an automatic separation on those seasons with a darcimonorious number of retreats/adjustments." Darcimonorious? If the Oxford English Dictionary (unabridged) fails to list the word (and it doesn't), something is definitely out of whack. BRUX, please enlighten us. I hope it's a real word, because I like to memorize long words. Currently, the longest word I know is delicatessen.

Next time, as a tribute to all you writers who are so obviously trying harder, the Diplomatic Typochondrian will note particularly excellent instances of English. Until then, good words to you.

((Darcimonorious means the exact opposite of undarcimonorious. I have used it many times in VD just to show off my broad vocabulary.

I'd like to thank John sincerely for the above article (which earns him five free issues), and indeed for all the articles he writes for me. Some people have expressed the sentiment, "So what?" in response to his criticism of other people's grammar, but I find his writing witty and entertaining. I look forward to more of it.))

I wish to thank those people who have responded to my special "Zoo" issue with some very kind and flattering words. I've spoken to around 10 people, and the response to the issue has been very (although not unanimously) positive. It's good to feel appreciated as the issue was first conceived over a year ago and some of the material in it is that old, though obvious some is newer, too. Believe me, I had a lot of fun with it. I just hope no one took it too seriously...

Submitted to VD by Mark Berch, the following article first appeared in the (British?) paper Daily Mirror and was later reprinted in the British Daily Mail. I figured some of you Dominions would get a kick out of it...

Teething Troubles (It Could Happen to ANY OF US)

by Keith Waterhouse

While these are trying times for all of us, I believe it can do nothing but good to reflect occasionally that on any given day the times are more trying for some people than others. I therefore invite your attention to the plight of Mr. John Ayland, a Liverpool driving examiner, who found himself in the front passenger seat of a car — the make is not specified — careering down a steep hill with a dead body at the wheel.

I can do no better than to take up Mr. Ayland's case as reported in the Daily Mail:

"I thought there must be something wrong with the car (it was certainly not his, you see). The car was careering down a steep hill with a dead body at the wheel. I was pulling on the hand brake but it wouldn't work. I managed to stop the car just before it went over a junction. A policeman arrived and when I told him what had happened he fainted."

Now one obvious question arises: what was the cause of what has happened to the candidate of the Liverpool police? Was he a candidate because of a reputation for clumsiness? But that is his affair of course. The fact is that he is exactly where Mr. Ayland read that if you find yourself having difficulty with a dead body, you should take out the deceased driver's false teeth and apply them to the handbrake. Well, I mean to say, it could happen to any of us.

The obvious answer was the handbrake. There have been reports in from start to finish and while there are sections headed The Hand User On Foot, The Hand User On Wheels, and so on, there is no section entitled The Road User Pope His Clerk. (What I did discover, though, is that there is no illuminated hand signal for "I am stuck in my Nether.") Surely this should be rectified.

I next turned to the British Leyland handbook's section on the transmission which I thought would have covered the activities of dead drivers. However, under the heading of Descending Steep Hill, it recommends only that the second gear should be used and nothing whatever about removing false teeth. It then occurred to me that this advice about what to do in the event of finding oneself being careered downhill by a stiff was very likely not aimed at the general public at all, but was specifically meant for driving examiners, for even it is probably a recurring professional hazard. Where Mr. Ayland was concerned, however, it is a little different. He was a candidate examiner before completing any portion of the test, the candidate at his own discretion may (a) gently apply the handbrake, (b) remove the candidate's false teeth, (c) signal his intention to crash through a shop window, and (d) seek the deceased's license application 'failed'.

That is the obvious explanation. It leaves, however, one puzzle outstanding, which is as follows: WHY?

We are driving examiners required to remove the false gnashers of any dead L-plate drivers in whose company they happened to find themselves? Are they supposed to take them back to the office to prove that they did not fall the candidate maliciously but merely because their car's set in before he could successfully manage a three-point turn? In that event, what if he still has his own teeth? They are not advised, I hope and trust, to pull them out with pliers.

I am afraid that having raised these questions I am completely unable to answer them. But my purpose, as I said at the beginning, was only to demonstrate that there is always someone worse off than ourselves. Mr. Ayland could have been the ill-fated candidate above, there was no one in the whole of creation worse off than himself, with the possible exception of the tortoise corpse by his side. Perhaps. But things could have been worse. Suppose that in the very act of removing the learner-driver's false teeth and wrapping them in his handkerchief, Mr. Ayland had discovered that he was a dead driver also. How could he have explained THAT to the fainting policeman?

THE INSIDIOUS WALKER

36

HATE SHEET

VULGAR FOREIGN PIG!! YOU DARE INSULT THE HONOR OF THE GREAT AND MAGNIFICENT PANDEMONIUM PRESS?! FIE UPON THEE, BASEST OF FOUL DELUDED WRETCHES! YOUR EMPTY SKIN WILL MAKE A FINE CURTAIN FOR MY WASHROOM WINDOW! INDEED, UNLESS YOU... IMMEDIATELY

ACKNOWLEDGE OUR ABSOLUTE AND BEASTLY MAGNIFICENCE, AND RETRACT UTTERLY THAT WIMPY ILLO...

AS AN ACT OF ABJECT APOLOGY TO ME AND MY NATION, YOU WILL PAY A PRICE THAT IS TOO HORRIBLE TO EVEN MENTION!! REPENT, SWINE-- OR FACE YOUR DOOM!!

EARTHWORK, INDEED....



LUCRETIA BORGIA

(POPE JOAN II)

"HUMOROUS" MATTER. ALL THREATS OF DEATH AND VIOLENCE ARE FICTITIOUS.

Watt Vergus Bambi

by Mr. Moose

(Storyteller on Drugs)

actually by Konrad Baumelster

The Secretary slumped back in his chair. The late afternoon sunlight seeped in between the curtains of his plush polyester office.

Damn, he thought, I should get those windows sealed up. The dingy orange sun ruined the cool, clean efficiency of the fluorescent lighting. Yes, he decided, either that or a nice black paint job would take care of the problem, at least temporarily.

The Secretary shook his head with frustration. Two years ago, everything had looked so bright. The minions of truth, justice, and born-again Christianity had won out over the glibless heretics. The pocket knives had been sent back to Plains. His master had given his free rein to rage, plunder, and burn the last vestiges of virgin wilderness. All the whispering environmentalists and their socialist friends were in full retreat. He had his

He sighed. What went wrong? Those communists in the press, he decided, were to blame. So were those lowlife liberals in Congress. What happened to the fundamental tenets of American democracy? America belongs to the elite! Seniors with incomes below \$50,000 had no right to vote! Sherman Hamilton must be spinning in his grave!

"Damn it," he mumbled, "if it weren't for that rag the Constitution..." His mind drifted to thoughts of an America without Democrats, an America run by clean-cut, God-fearing white males in gray business suits, an America with cheap, downtrodden minority labor, an America of chrome, steel, and concrete.

A final, intense ray of sunlight struck the Secretary's high forehead, reviving him from his dark, comforting thoughts.

"Ah," he muttered, "I've got to get away for a while."

He glanced up at the hunting trophies hanging from the office wall. A sinister grin spread across his face. There, right in a row, were his three greatest prizes: Thumper the rabbit, Flower the skunk, and Bambi's mother. He shuddered as he remembered his grisly executions of the cute forest animals. Millions of children had cried when he displayed the stiff, bloody packages on national TV.

"I'll bet the little bambi had nightmares for months," he laughed. "I know, I'll go hunting."

The young deer looked across the small meadow. Early morning sunlight filled the misty forest. He shuddered as the sun's rays crept across his fur. He thought of the hunters he had seen in the woods. Some, he knew, the ugly bald one would be back. This time, he would be ready.

The Secretary stepped off the helicopter gunship. He could still feel the adrenalin pumping through his body as he incinerated thousands of acres of pristine wilderness with the army's most modern implements of destruction.

He gurgled with delight as he thought of all the frightened forest creatures scampering up the trees, away from the fires he had set below. Ah, the look on their faces when they were blown to bits with the ship's flame-throwing guns. Clumps of bone, blood, and fur had splattered the windshield. Yes, he decided, this was the one way to hunt.

Maybe the anti-cute freaks were right, he thought. It was much more fun to kill and maim on an up-close, personal level. Nuclear weapons took all the fun out of death and destruction.

All those damn social programs were to blame, he decided. Imagine, spending money on the poor when it could be better spent on defending God, country, and democracy. Yes, because of budgetary constraints, nuclear weapons had become a necessary inconvenience. More death for the dollar.

He sighed as he loaded the fission bullets into his Israeli-made Uzi submachine gun. Blowing hot little pieces of ammunition into his helpless prey would make

him feel better. The Secretary plunged into the woods. Bambi was out there somewhere.

He heard the sound of heavy, stamping feet. Even before he saw him, he knew it was the ugly bald one. He stepped into the clearing with a broad, gloating smile on his face. He pointed the gun at his forehead.

Suddenly a T-72 missile streaked across the meadow and plowed into the Secretary's chest. Built to penetrate Soviet tanks, it quickly blew the bald one's mangled flesh across several dozen acres. This time, Bambi laughed. He had been ready.

He slowly licked the warm, steaming blood from his fur. Maybe military spending isn't wasn't all that bad, after all.

((Thank, and four free issues, to Leonard for an entertaining continuation of the old hunting controversy and whatever other messages this article is intended to convey. I think it's too bad that deer can't be trained to use weapons!))

The 1983 Runestone Zine & GM Poll

The 1983 Runestone Zine & GM Poll is going to be conducted by Randolph Skyles, 112 Aberdeen St. SE, Medicine Hat, Alberta, CANADA T1A 0R1. The deadline for the Poll is July 1, 1983, but mail to Alberta from the U.S. is slow, so vote now. Instructions follow.

For the GM Poll, you may rate any GM under whom you have played since April 1, 1982. That is, you must have played under his at any time after that date. Rate each GM on a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being the lowest possible rating and 10 the highest. No fractions, please. One may not rate themselves. Rate GMs by name, not by zine. It would be helpful if you would alphabetize your list of GMs when rating them. Sign your ballot and indicate some way in which you are active in the postal hobby (e.g. editor to zine X, player in zone Y, or whatever).

For the Zine Poll, similar instructions apply. You may rate any zine which has published more than two issues since April 1, 1982. Use the scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being the lowest possible vote and 10 the best. No fractions. Subzines should be voted separately from the parent zine; they will be tabulated separately as well. Please alphabetize your list of zines and list of subzines. Ballots which do not conform to the rules may be disqualified. Sign your ballot and indicate some way in which you participate in the hobby. In both polls, rate only North American zines and GMs. All votes will be kept confidential. Oops. Almost forgot. Subscribers may not rate their own zines.

John Jones planned to see Randolph take over the Zine and GM Polls as I know they will be in capable hands. He intends to do more statistical analysis than John Leary. My complete written report will be sent to any voter who includes \$1 (no U.S. stamps, please) with his or her ballot.

I urge all Runes to get out and vote. This poll is the closest we have to a hobby-wide ballot, and I'd like to see what my readers think.

As far as I'll be voting for Gary Coughlan only in the GM Poll, as I haven't played under any others in the past year. I don't know yet exactly how I'll vote on the zines; probably a 10 for PH and some 8's and 9's for the other excellent zines around.

I have only a couple of criticisms of the way Randolph is doing this. First, I feel that anyone should be able to rate any GM, even with no playing experience under that GM, as playing is only one way to determine a GM's quality. Second, Randolph instructs us not to rate zines on the basis of feuds or disagreements with the editorial policies, etc. This is an instruction which may be impossible to stick to. Third, though an editor may not vote for his own zine, it is unclear whether there can be "cross-voting" between parent zine and subzine editors. Thus, I'll assume that Kathy can vote for Whitentonia and John Caruso for XX, e.g., but it's unclear. All in all, though, you should try to follow the instructions, and I think Randolph will do a very good job with the poll.

The Return of the Pilgrim and the Dipinaster

by Mark L. Berch

The Dipinaster peered down from the mountaintop and saw the Pilgrim. He knew at a glance who this Pilgrim was. He was "gasping for breath" and pulling himself up a "rocky outcropping" with his "bloody hands", and "dragged himself a few inches" at a time. Yup, it had to be Bob Olsen. Anyone else would either walk up the road or rent a jeep, but no, Olsen had to do it the hard way. He shook his head sadly and walked back into his cave. At the rate Olsen was climbing, those sides would fold by the time Olsen reached the top.

"Where's my Olsen file?" asked the Dipinaster.

"Right here," said the file, hopping off the shelf and sliding across the floor to the Dipinaster. He picked it up and grudgingly started sifting through it. Months passed, October, November, December, January, February, March, and in April, Olsen finally arrived.

"I seek the Dipinaster....I..." began the Pilgrim.

here to prove it. Anyhow, have some tea."

"Tea? Tea? I don't want any tea."

"You want some of those great 'illusions' like you had last time, right? Well, how can I pull that off without drugging your tea?"

"I thought you used the 'veil of illusion'."

"I do. That's Celestial Seasonings 'Veil of Illusion' Tea."

"Alright, already. Look, I've got some questions for you, O Great Dipinaster."

"Oh no you don't. This time I ask the questions."

"Wait, you're confused. You are the Dipinaster, I'm the Pilgrim, so I ask all the questions, and you answer them."

"Bull! The only reason you asked the questions last time was that you wrote the article. Look at the top of the page. Whose name do you see there?"

The Pilgrim looked up to the top of the page where it said "by Mark L. Berch".

"OK, it does say 'by Mark L. Berch'. Incidentally, do we really need him?"

"Who? Berch? Of course we do. We..."

"No, I mean the narrator. He just checked in a few lines ago, but only to say that I looked at the top of the page. I could have said that without him. So long as we're having a dialogue here, we don't really need the narrator."

The narrator had other ideas, though. He had, after all, gotten the story started.

"See, there he goes again. He didn't need that line at all. It's interrupting the flow of conversation here. OK, what's your first question, Dipinaster?"

"Why don't you admit that you don't belong in this hobby?"

"What? That's a very rude question. What's an appropriate way to ask such a thing?"

"Look, Olsen. You are becoming an embarrassment to me. You are familiar with the 'Berch Infallible Rules for Success at the Diplomacy Table', aren't you?"

"Yes, of course. I memorized them long ago."

"And Rule Two states that, 'In general, the more you write, the better you will do at postal Diplomacy.' Well, you are the living refutation of that rule. I cannot afford to have counterexamples to my rules for people to point at. It erodes confidence in my rules. Worse, it cuts into sales. Now, I have conjured up the correspondence file for this game in which you are Turkey. It's a prime example of what I mean. You have written more letters than the next two players combined. The total size of these letters is almost as large as all the other players combined. And talk about entertaining! Most GMs would kill to have prose as clever as the stuff you casually stuff into a P.S. at the end of a letter. Your letters are humorous and you are always so prompt. Now, what is your position in this game? You own Tunisia, period! And you don't even have a unit left to defend it with. Think of it! It's 1905, and you are down to zip. Now, let's take Kathy Byrne in this game. She writes exactly one letter per game year, saying to a selected neighbor, 'Give me all of your centers, NOW!' and how is she doing?"

"She's only at 1) centers. She doesn't seem to have any enemies, though."

"So you are a flagrant violation of my Rules. Hence, you don't belong in this hobby. Let's face it, Olsen, you LIKE TO BLEED!"

"How can you say that about me?"

"Look down the mountain over there, just a few hundred yards to the left of the road. What do you see?"

"A rock outcropping."

"And what is it? Your blood! You got your blood all over my mountain. It's not just that you bleed in the postal games."

"You'll read me out of the hobby for just one item?"

"No, there's another matter. You have no enemies in this hobby. You get along with everyone. You are in no leads. What kind of behavior is that? Very suspect, let me tell you. You don't see me and Bruce and Kathy and Gary and Michaleki acting like that, do you? You have to be so reasonable, so funny, never put your foot in your mouth. You don't fit in, please! You clearly don't belong in this hobby. Get out!"

The Pilgrim fell silent for a few minutes, thus allowing the narrator ((who was usually interrupted by the editor, much to the Dipinaster's annoyance)) to get in an occasional line after all the heat from the Dipinaster.

"But things don't look that bad, do they? Surely there is some hope for me."

"No, it looks hopeless. I can see absolutely nothing in your favor."

"Well, Dipinaster, I have just remembered my letter in VD #68, page 20. Yes! That was my responsibility! An unwarranted and grossly overstated attack on Dick Martin here. Now I can make myself look like a real jerk just like the rest of you guys. So I'm entitled to get back into the hobby, at least in your eyes."

"Well, you may have a point there. But there is still the matter of your game record. It's afraid it still looks like you are in flagrant violation of my rules. Will you cut back on the quality and quantity of your correspondence?"

"Never!"

"When you are going to have to go out there and win a game! Can you do it?"

"Yes! Yes! Please, everybody, let me win a game real soon! Do you want the tyrannical Dipinaster to drive me out of the hobby? Of course not! So throw that game to me now!!! If you don't, I'll be out of the hobby and that means no more 'Dipinaster and the Pilgrim' series!"

The narrator thought that the end of the series would be a terrible idea. Where would that leave him?

((Geez, and five free issues to Mark for a terrific comeback to Olsen's article in VD #68. What's gonna continue the series now??))

~~.....~~

"Well, I need two or three adventurous souls to volunteer as standbys for the DIPINASTER (game) here in London, as the only person left on the standby list for that game is a lawyer, and he is eligible only for England.

My standby list for the other games (regular Diplomacy is considerably healthier) is as follows: If you are off the list, please let me know. At present the list consists of Peter Smith, Les Gordon, George Levitt, Peter Ashley, Jim Chatfield, Rob Schunk, Randal Hunt, Tom Bennett, Myra, Mike Ditz, Eric Kane, Greg Ellis, Bob Howerton, Richard Edison, John Baker, Howard Kaufman, Mark Quarta, Peter Elitstein, John Kador, Dave Carter, Mike Lantz, Pat Lonion, The Lynch, Bob Wittmond, Paul Rauterberg, Jerry Lucas, Don Burd, Jerry Manning, Stuart Jedry, Bob Sweeney, Mike Jones, Dave Spector, Jim Finley, John Davies, Jeff Panches, Doug Meyerleic, "Jane Proskin", Mark Paul, Larry Lansing, Mark Keller, Anton Orloff, Gerry Austin, Chuck Kaplan, Bill Highfield, Rick Ragsdale, Dave Newell, John Kelly, and Steve Knight. Hell, in the regular games I'd get by even if all my players were to resign en masse!

Players in any VD game may ask me not to call any given person to stand by in their name, and anyone on the standby list can specify any game into which he does not wish to be called. Requests of the first sort will be honored within reason; requests of the second type will always be honored. VD has probably the longest standby list in the hobby, except for Diplomacy, whose publisher Andy Lischett recently got married and has no candidates.

being. (Of course, if you're not a decent human being to begin with, what have you got to lose?) Otherwise, if the immediate gains might be too small to justify the potential losses, you ought to think long and hard first. Not too long, though, or the opportunity will pass.

There's another risk that's fairly obvious, yet it could be overlooked by a novice to this strategy. Be sure, if you feel you must kill, that the guy's moves haven't been sent in already! I know it seems plain that this would be the best procedure, but a surprising number of inexperienced players are prone to making this sort of gaffe. Such an oversight would be quite embarrassing for the murderer; not only would he have to deal with the law and the diplomatic disadvantages described above, but he would also have failed in the whole purpose of his little scheme, since the original player's moves would be used posthumously anyhow (see House rule Amendments #945-958, covering posthumous orders). It may be possible to recover from this error by killing the postman, but that involves the murder of a non-player, an entirely different ethical issue.

The method you use can be chosen with care. Bear in mind that a really violent massacre such as an axe-murder will tend to magnify all of the disadvantages described above. You're more likely to get death row and some of your allies may find this technique less to their liking than a more diplomatic one. So it will pay to make your murder as diplomatically palatable as possible.

Finally, I must mention one other helpful hint. Although, as I've repeatedly stressed, I don't approve of this playing technique from a humanistic standpoint; if you're going to do it, at least do a thorough job of it. You will find very few players less willing to cooperate with you than one who you have tried unsuccessfully to murder, so if you don't finish the job right, you'll really have bungled your chances.

Further articles will deal with such more respectable variations such as inducing suicide, driving a person berserk, and bribing his wife to kill him (surely she's tired of this stupid game and this pointless article...)

And maybe by now you all are tired of this issue, so at long last I'll end it! Again, I hope you newcomers reading this will like it enough to subscribe; this issue is reasonably typical of what you'll be able to expect, except it's larger than usual. I'm working with my ditto machine and trying to find way to make it work well for me as I know that some of the pages in this issue didn't come out too well. Wish me luck!

BRUX

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See # 17 & 31!

Your sub expires with issue # 79 → Time to renew!