

Let's all take (hal) a good look in my size, BERT
Carol I keep telling you! Expect the unexpected when you get...

THE VOICE OF DOOM

August 23, 1983

Circulation: 119

by BNUK

This issue of VD is dedicated to my friends who were there when I needed them. They know who they are.

Thanks to Greg Ellis for supplying the snassy envelopes surrounding this issue. Hope you all enjoy them; I sure did!

Notice a few grains of sand when you opened the envelope? Well, I thought I'd treat you all to a souvenir from Kasekon; the sand is from Jones Beach, Long Island, where we spend several hours at the ocean. I brought back a cupful of the stuff so that you Boomies could feel that you were part of the experience, too.

Roy Harricks, 128 Deerfield Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235 has just come out with the current edition of the Wine Register, which is a listing and capsule description of (hopefully) all wines currently in existence. I haven't received my copy yet, but I understand it is very well done. Cost is \$2.00 from Roy.

Wooden pieces are back, or such is my understanding, anyway! Based on a rumor I heard at Kasekon, Avalon Hill has decided to switch back from those ugly plastic anchors and stars to the beautiful wooden blocks we've all come to love. I hope my info is accurate on this.

Enclosed with this issue (aside from the sand) should be a poll which I'd appreciate all readers responding to as soon as possible. In a few cases, where I think more than one person reads someone's copy of VD, I've enclosed two poll sheets. Please answer those questions that you feel qualified to answer and wish to answer. Results will be printed shortly. Attach additional sheets if necessary for your comments.

I'm soliciting articles for my upcoming fourth anniversary issue. Please help out; I'd like to make this an extra special issue, and I need help from you readers to do it. (In others, just be your usual helpful selves, hey?)

And now for the big news: I have gotten a job as a COBOL programmer for G.E. in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. I'll be commuting 45 miles each way for a while, but expect a change of address here in the next couple of months. In some ways I'll miss teaching, but not financially; my new job means a 70% increase in pay. Ahh, I hope, a rewarding career after a couple of false starts. Wish me luck!

The Voice of Doom is a journal of postal Diplomacy published every now and then by Bruce Lincey, 294 Quarry Drive, Albany, NY 12205. Phone (518) 499-9250. Subs are 10 issues for \$5.00. Standfere are wanted. There are no gaps openings.

Diplomacy is a registered trademark for a game invented by Allan B. Colthamer and copyrighted by Avalon Hill.

The deadline for all games contained herein is September 16, 1983.

Diplomacy in the Dominican Republic

by John Pack

((John Pack is a Dooble who is current touring the world on a mission with the Mormon Church.))

As the most currently divisive, controversial, and discussed (perhaps I should say disgusted) topic in the hobby, the state of the art of Diplomacy in the Dominican Republic seems to fit well into the pages of VD. As you picked up your issue, I'm sure that you were plagued with thoughts of once again being left unsatisfied and doubtful of the truth about the Dominican Republic. Rest assured that as the Number One postal Diplomacy player (by tourney and by unanimous vote of those in the affected area) in the Dominican Republic, I will lay the matter to a peaceful and conclusive rest, if I can continue to support the present weight of my head.

There are many problems with the postal play of Diplomacy here. The first could be lightly described as our postal "service".

"Hmmm...BRUX (names have been changed, er, added to inflict the afflicted) doesn't seem to have received my orders. Um, excuse me (to clerk in post office). What happened to that letter I sent four weeks ago?"

"Which one? This one here?"

Grrrrr.

"Hey, don't get that 'I'm upset with you' look -- we haven't done a single thing!"

As you can plainly see, things really aren't that much different here. Another small problem has probably manifested itself to you already -- where is the Dominican Republic? Very few people know; even the natives are confused. However, after asking a few which doctors and what doctors and where doctors, we can say that it is an island somewhere on the earth. Popular belief would indicate that it has disappeared; however, grim reality tells us that it's still here.

Face to Space play also has its interesting characteristics here. One of them could be described as lying, which is, of course, completely unique to the Dominican Republic.

"Why did you move to the English Channel?"

"I didn't."

"Then, how did that army get there?"

"I don't know; I didn't move it there."

"Oh, OK..."

Even more surprising is the number of lies believed. One could say illiteracy is a problem as well.

GM: "France moves Army Gascony to English Channel."

France: "That's not what I wrote!"

GM: "Hey, so what? You know I can't read, so I just go by what you said..."

Not only that, but the differences between rules, wishes, and the GM aren't known. The difference between an army and a fleet could be described by a Dominican as "Fat and Ugly vs. Thin and Ugly." The only other problem is that if visitors show up (they always show up) the game is cancelled, or if the 7th cousin 9 times removed dies, the game will be cancelled and future games delayed for at least nine days.

Now that this turbulent, destructive topic has been authoratatively dealt with, and now that my 2nd Aunt 3 times removed is arriving...

((A while back VD published an article on the State of the Hobby in the USSR; now we know how it's going in the Dominican Republic! Thanks, and 3 free issues, to John Pack for his efforts.))

J U P I T E R

19800.jk

Game-end Chart:

	1901	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	
AUSTRIA	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	5	7	7	7	10	10	draw
ENGLAND	5	6	7	8	8	8	5	4	3	3	4	5	5	
FRANCE	4	5	5	6	5	5	7	7	7	4	3	1	0	
GERMANY	4	4	5	3	3	4	5	6	7	9	9	10	10	draw
ITALY	3	4	5	5	4	2	2	2	0	-	-	-	-	
RUSSIA	5	4	3	3	4	5	6	5	6	7	6	3	3	
TURKEY	4	6	6	6	7	7	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	

Game: 19800.jk
 Zline: The Voice of Doom
 GM: Bruce Linsey

Cast of Players:

AUSTRIA: Dave Carter (drew 1914)
 ENGLAND: Mark Larzelere (resigned S '08), Mike Barne
 FRANCE: Kevin Turner (dropped S '03), Keith Sherwood (resigned W '12),
 George Leritte (out 1913)
 GERMANY: Paul Rauterberg (drew 1914)
 ITALY: Kerry Blant (out 1909)
 RUSSIA: Scott Halber (dropped S '04), Mark Lew (resigned W '12), John Davies
 TURKEY: Bob Olsen

End Game Statements:

Mark Larzelere (original ENGLAND): The game is not playable. That's the only reason I resigned (this is the only game I've ever resigned from). Glad to see the other players finally came to their senses and ended the thing.

Dave Carter (AUSTRIA): It's true that I enjoyed the novelty of Proxy Diplomacy and the letters from Pudge, Tro and Paul as well as all those other crazies. I also enjoyed grovelling to the other players every springtime. However, I'd never sign up for another one!

Thanks, Bruce, U did a good job on this one.

Bob Olsen (TURKEY): There was something verrrrrry fishy about this game. If I didn't know BRUX so well, and if I didn't have such total and complete faith in his house rules (bow three times) I would definitely think that I was deliberately being shafted. Most of the time, my Fall orders seemed okay, but I had the definite feeling that those Winter builds and Spring orders were not the ones I sent in! I don't know what's going on here, but this was definitely a strange game. I can't remember ever making so many bad moves and misorders. My only consolation was that the other players were making just as many mistakes! I think the problem was that before the game began we all got together and went over BRUX's house rules. After reading them we were all so confused that nothing seemed to go right.

Actually all I ever wanted was a 7-way draw in 1907 (it sounds lucky) but when the time came, certain people refused to allow it. I think this was mostly Mark Lew's doing; he wanted to set the stage for his spectacular NMR out of the game a few years later. Very impressive, Mark.

As for the other players I would just like to mention that it was too bad Rauterberg quit writing press after a while. During the early years we were up to

((JUPITER continues next page))

JUPITER (continued)

our keisters (as it were) in laffs. Then, Paul reverted to his normal drone status. I would also like to mention that Dave Carter grovelled a lot, and that BRUX's gloatings over the agonies of his players went beyond the bounds of good taste. Hey, wise guy, Mark Berch doesn't write my moves for me!

Paul Rautenberg (GERMANY): I entered into this strange enterprise, bereft of any real sense of direction or purpose. Knowing only that it would be a showcase for my press releases, if nothing else, I set out to conquer this mysterious new world.

Making a firm pact with two allies was my initial goal. Together, we would set forth to eliminate some unfortunate country. The purpose was obvious; with allies ordering my units two springtimes out of six, I was assured of some element of growth. All I had to do was hover about the center board; whosoever the winds of fate or malice swept my units, there were centers to be won.

As fate would have it, Mark Lew was swept into command of the first country I had attacked, Russia. We made common cause with the Austrian, and set upon the Italians and the unfortunate Turks. As the Italian player soon lost interest in the game, he was the logical candidate for "first man out." And so he was. The Turks, meanwhile, were bottled up in their own corner for much of the game. Ottoman fleets were occupied with the unhappy purpose of convoying their armies from Con to Smy, and thence to faraway Syria.

The containment of France in the early portions of the game, and a number of NMRs, turned our attentions westward in 1910. Even the Turks, by way of an army convoyed from Syria to Spain, got in on the free-for-all. In the meantime, England and Russia were declining due to a lack of expansion grounds. Germany and Austria had hogged most of the open ground, long before, and our alliance was unshakable.

Since the best one can hope for in this game is a two-way draw, that became our target from the midgame onward. I was pleased to see the other players recognize this reality, and vote the A/G draw accordingly.

As is often the case in regular Diplomacy games, the countries not afflicted with NMRs and player changes fared the best in JUPITER. But contrary to the pattern of Regdip games, the central powers seemed better fitted to success than were those stuck in the corners. No matter where the other players sent us in the Spring turns, we could either run back and defend ourselves, or advance our fortunes in the Fall. Germany and Austria endured very few "counterproductive" seasons the entire game. It paid off in the long run.

BRUX Lindsey (GM): I've never had more fun running a game than I did with JUPITER, despite several GMing errors. For those people who tuned in late, Proxy PloMACy is a variant wherein the countries order each others' units in the Spring, on a rotating basis. It is awfully hard to accomplish anything in this game!

Mark is right, or close to it, when he says that the game is unplayable. However, that doesn't mean that it isn't fun to play! I particularly enjoyed watching an Austrian army land on the English island, an English army reach Con, and Turkey take control of Iberia!

But the most enjoyable factor of the game, to me, was the delightful press. I still maintain that Rautenberg's "2001" press (VD #28, I think) was the most entertaining press I've ever read -- certainly a classic series of releases. And Olsen and Barno were not far behind in their creativity. At one point Ig joined the act with a beautifully-done rendition of "When I'm Sixty-Four", the best musical press release I've ever printed. Too bad this game had to end!

You'll notice that I didn't really discuss strategy here. That's because, so far as I could tell, there wasn't any. But so what? We all had fun!



Z O R A

1982V

Game-end Charts

	1901	02	03	04	05	06	07		
AUSTRIA	5	5	6	4	2	1	0	times	1982V
ENGLAND	4	4	5	6	5	4	3	times	<u>The Voice of Boom</u>
FRANCE	5	5	5	7	8	8	6	times	Prince Linsey
GERMANY	5	5	5	5	5	2	2		
ITALY	4	3	3	0	-	-	-		
RUSSIA	5	4	5	7	9	9	12	times	draw
TURKEY	4	6	5	7	7	10	11	times	draw

Game-end Comments:

- AUSTRIA: Don Garman (outs 1907)
- ENGLAND: Mark Lew (resigned V '06), Richard Wilson
- FRANCE: Bob Oouch
- GERMANY: Brian Loeber (dropped V '04), Bryan Juchowski
- ITALY: Jim Gutflied (out 1904)
- RUSSIA: Michael Diaz (draw 1908)
- TURKEY: Mark Lousiers (draw 1908)

End Game Statements:

Mark Lousiers (TURKEY): I started this game planning to do what I always do when I get Turkey or Austria -- ally with Russia's against the others. But in this case, Russia turned off some of the other players with his early negotiations, and particularly everyone was writing begging me to attack him. So I decided to ally with Austria, who seemed like a more reasonable sort.

But then Austria didn't trust me enough and started moving his units back in my direction. So I gave Sevastopol back to Russia and started sweeping westward with him.

After that, things went pretty well. We were lucky things broke down between Russia and England; otherwise we might not have been able to get a draw.

I had some thoughts about stabilizing Russia and trying to win, but I think his winning chances were greater than mine towards the end. I could probably have gotten a 15 or 16, but I can't know about 16. I would've had to stay with Russia a bit longer, and in that time he might have made a lot bigger gains in the north than I would in the south. Also, I decided I really didn't feel like attacking him. So I voted for the draw.

Michael Diaz (RUSSIA): First off, I believe the whole "USA Threat" was given to me, not for the reason my move to Livonia was to prevent Austria from revealing one of France's in forward direction. Anyway, this was a pretty an interesting experience being as it was my first ZOR game. I have learned a lot. First off about things not being what they seem. Then things are OK until you see and understand them. The first thing I wrote in was "I believe this is supposed to be a situation on the table that I can't play, or else I'll not then ignore all the other things." The game started off pretty well, but I was able to walk on the other everybody except Turkey and Austria. The only one I really wanted to talk to, Mark, but he was busy. I would've liked to have seen him, but he never knew he was playing. I would've liked to have seen him, but he never knew he was playing. I would've liked to have seen him, but he never knew he was playing.

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MILKY WAY (continued)

Final Press:

TURKEY to BRUX: Thanks a lot BRUX for Giving Me this Shit Position.
 ANKARA to LONDON: Just thought I'd make my "Thanks a lot BRUX for Giving Me this Shit Position" Club membership official.
 LONDON to AUSTRIA: Now, now, I didn't just say I wanted the game rehoused; I wanted it rehoused to Strange Doings, so I could be the GM as well.
 LONDON to BRUX: Funny, I've never heard of Strange Doings either.
 BRUX to LONDON: No offense intended. You must hang out in some obscure zine, though, since I read all of the important ones.
 LONDON to ROME: I reckon Greece is pretty well softened up now; you can probably land there any time.
 LONDON to ROSEBUD: I decided that finishing second to Angle is a lot less headache than being allied with you or Kador.



NEPTUNE

1982

ENGLAND HAS FRANCE IN HIS PANTS!

Autumn 1907

RUSSIA: F Swe r OTB

Winter 1907

ENGLAND: Build F LON, F EDI

FRANCE: even

ITALY: even

RUSSIA: Build A WAR

TURKEY: Remove F Aeg

Spring 1908

ENGLAND (Duarte): F POR-Mid, F Ed1-NTH (F LON S), F Nwg-WAY (F SKA S, F SWE S)
 FRANCE (Conlon?): NMRI! F Nth U (d; r You, Nwg, EIG, Bel, Eng, OTB), A Kie U (ann),
 A TRI U, F MID U, A BUR U, A RUH U, A HOL U, F IEN U

ITALY (Jedry): F Ion-AEG, F Ton-WES, A VEN-Tyo, F ADR S FRENCH A TRI

RUSSIA (Kane): F STP(nc)-Nwy, A SER S A Hun, F Hlg-KIE (A MUN S), A War-SIL, F ANK-Conc,
 A TYO-Dr (A BUD S), A Bob-VIE, A Ser-BUL (F HLA S, A RUM S)

TURKEY (Scamk): F SMY S F Con, F CON S A Bul, A Bul S A Gre-Sex (d; r Gre, OTB),
 A Gre-SER

Game Notes: Sorry 'bout the misspelling of Rob's name above. I'm pretty sure Pat will return, but just in case would Peter Ashley, 2530 N. Chelton Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80909 please submit standby orders for France? Thanx muchly, Peter.

All proposals made last season failed. Proposed for next season are an F/R draw and a concession to Russia. Please vote by next deadline.

Press:

SMYRNA: The Sultan is rumored to be despondent over news from the war zone. Following recent blunders, the egre of the north is hampering our gallant troops and we fear the worst may be about to occur. Nevertheless we shall fight to the last if that should be necessary. Hopefully the aid of the Italians shall arrive in time to fight off the onslaught of the slaving fiend. Until then, please render your prayers to Allah.

((NEPTUNE continues next page))

NEPTUNE (continued)

ST. PETERSBURG, WINTER 1908: Imperial storm troopers died in white clouds' while scurrying about as they prepared to retreat back to Moscow. They knew it wouldn't be long before rebel English forces arrived led by Learte, the rebel commander. Anything they couldn't take with them was burned. Meanwhile, aboard the death star...

"What is the situation, commander?"
"Lord Vader! Heavy losses reported in the Kiel sector!"
"Who is in charge there?"
"Uh, Admiral Olsen, I believe, sir."
"Bring him to me, now!"

Minutes later...
"...but Lord Vader, you don't understand... The French, they were everywhere!"

Lord Vader held up a finger at Olsen and began to shake him with the power of the dark side of the force which were his to command.
"You have failed me too many times. You had your chance but did not deliver. You failed!" The dark lord clenched his fist and Olsen's body fell to the floor with a loud thump.

"Over-weighted incompetent," mumbled the dark lord. "Admiral Ozog?"
"Sir?"
"You are now in command of the entire western sector. You must hold on until reinforcements arrive. If you fail, do not bother coming back."

Vader left Ozog to ponder his future and headed for the control room...
"Commander Coughlan, is the death star operational yet?"
"Well, sub, I ain't shore."
"Well then, prepare to fire on the Bulgarian sector."
"But sub, what if it don't work, it might explode..."
"That is a chance we must take, commander! Commence firing!"
...to be continued? (Next month, the dark lord reports to the Empress! (I wonder who that could be!))

BRUX to ST. PETERSBURG: I dunno, but I'll bet she lives on the planet of Hanzoucoix and has magical powers!

SMYRNA: The Sultan would like to congratulate the Bishop of Rome, Pope Edward, on his impending marriage. But remember, the Prophet did recommend four wives were proper for marital bliss. Once again, good luck, and may your children quickly learn the game of seven nations.

BRUX to ITALY: And I'd like to add my congratulations too. Best of luck to both of you!

SMYRNA to MOSCOW: I don't know what the hell Jedry meant by recommending that you read my May letter to BRUX. I didn't say there was anything bad to backstabbing. Just if the stakes immediately panics and drops the game. On the other hand, your choice of stabbing Turkey when you did doesn't seem like a great move. All it accomplished was getting everybody left in the game on your case. One ally, an nation too small, always comes in handy, and you could've always stabbed later when a couple of centers would've given you the win.

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If you're one of the people in the hobby I haven't met, I want your color photo! See page 31 for details.

Lots of NMSs this month; I couldn't make the usual collect calls due to the phone workers' strike. But, you shouldn't rely on the phone in NY anyway!



O R I O N

1982Y

SORRY, GEORGE, THE CONVOY STILL AIN'T GONNA GO!

Winter 1908

- ENGLAND: even
- FRANCE: even
- GERMANY: even
- ITALY: even
- RUSSIA: even
- TURKEY: even

Spring 1909

- ENGLAND (Ansoff): F Ska-NWY (F NWG S, A SWE S), F MID S FRENCH F Por
- FRANCE (Bennett): F ENG S ENGLISH F Mid, F POR S ENGLISH F Mid, A GAS S A Mar, A BUR S A Mar, A MAR S A Bur
- GERMANY (Wittmond): A Lvn-PRU (A BER S, F BAL S), F NEH S ENGLISH F Ska-Nwy, A MUN-SIL, A RUH-Mun
- ITALY (Howerton?): NMRI F SPA(sc) U, F LYO U, A TUN U, F TYR U, A PIE U, A VEN U, A TRI U
- RUSSIA (Bayerlein): A StP-Lvn (A MOS S), A Pru S A StP-Lvn (d; a: Mar, OTB), A War-UKR, F Bar-STP(nc), A FIN-Nwy
- TURKEY (Leritte): F WES-Mid (F NAP S), A Ukr-GAL, A Gal-SIL (A BOH S), F ION G ITALIAN A Tum-Alb (NSO)

Game Notes: COA for Rob Wittmond, 2723 Vanderbilt Lane #5, Redondo Beach, CA 90278. Would Michael Ditz, 5785 Danube Way, Apt. C, Orlando, FL 32807 please submit standby orders for Italy. Thankshluvalot, Michael.

Proposed for next season is an E/F/G/I/R/T draw. Germany wants it known that he is proposing it. Please vote by next deadline.

Press:

- KAISER to PROFESSOR LERITTE: As they say in New Hampshire, show me.
- BRUX to KAISER: I thought it was Missouri!
- TUR to BRUX: Is that clear enough this time???
- BRUX to TUR: Clear as a bell! Your order for the fleet in the Ionian Sea is marvelously written, and should serve as an inspiration to novices for years to come. Where else has anyone ever seen such an outstanding example of a concise, clear, unambiguous order? It's a gen, George! Now, if only the Italian player had ordered his army...

The VD standby list, now the hobby's longest, consists of the following people: Peter Ansoff, Dan Gorham, George Leritte, Peter Ashley, Jim Chatfield, Rob Schunk, Randal Husk, Brent Bennett, Ty Hare, Michael Ditz, Eric Kane, Greg Ellis, Bob Howerton, Richard Edison, God, Mark Frush, Konrad Baumeister, Mark Duarte, Matt Fleming, John Kador, Dave Carter, Tim Allen, G.E. Blender, Pat Conlon, Tim Lynch, Rob Wittmond, Paul Rauterberg, Jerry Lucas, Don Hard, Cathy Cuming, Bob Sweeney, Mike Jones, Dave Spector, Kevin Stone, John Davies, Jeff Panches, Doug Bayerlein, "Jane Proskin", Pat Pakel, Larry Lansing, Edmund Jedry, Mark Keller, Brian Orloff, Chuck Kaplan, Bill Highfield, Rick Ragsdale, Bill Placek, Michael Kettman, Rich Reilly, and Steve Knight. Total of 50 (47, if you insist on counting only real ones). Anyone wanting on or off the list should let me know. Standbys play for free, and upon finishing out their position, receive three free issues of VD. Any player here who doesn't want a particular standby called into his game should let me know. Any standby who doesn't want into a given game should let me know.

PEGASUS

1982Z

"SIDDOWN IN DA CORNFIELD, CHATFIELD. I HAFTER HAVERCHAT WIT YOU!" "OK, BUT DO BE CAREFUL NOT TO SINDON DA HUSK!" "HOW KIN WE STOP WEISNER? HE'S RUSSIAN TO DA FINNISH!" "KIN DA GERMAN HELP? WHERE IS HE?" "HE'S WAY OVER HERE IN DA FARLANE, MAC! HE AIN'T NO HELP AT ALL!" "DEN WE'LL HAFTA DO IT ON OUR OWN. PULL NO PUNCHES!"

Autumn 1907

AUSTRIA: A Rum r SER  
ENGLAND: A Tun r NAF  
RUSSIA: NRR! A Con r OTB

Winter 1907

AUSTRIA: Build A VIE  
ENGLAND: Build F LVP  
FRANCE: Removes A Ruh, F Tyr  
GERMANY: even  
RUSSIA: Build A WAR (will play 1 short)  
TURKEY: even

Spring 1908

AUSTRIA (Husk): F Nap-ION, A Vie-TRI, A Pic-TYC (A VEN S), F Sul(sc)-AEG, A GRE-Ital,  
A BUD-Gal, A SER-Bul, A Rom-NAP  
ENGLAND (Halverstadt): F Lvp-IRI, A NAF-Tun, F PSL-Pic (F ENG S), F HOL-Bel (F NTH S)  
FRANCE (Chatfield): A Bur-MAR, A PIC H (A BEE S), F Mid-NAT, F Tyr-Hes (NSU), F Tun E,  
F For-MID  
GERMANY (MacFarlane): A ROM S RUSSIAN A Ukr-Gal  
RUSSIA (Weisner): A Ukr-GAL (A WAR S), A Sev-UKR, F BLA-Bul(sc), A Ank-Con (NSU),  
A SMY S A Ank-Con (NSU), F Bal-KIE, A Kla-IRI (A MIL S),  
A Tyo-VIE (A BOH S)  
TURKEY (Punches): F CON-BLA

Game Notes: All players who haven't done so, please remember to send in your alipa!  
The dislodged Russian army in Con was retreated off the board because no retreat was specified for it; thus Russia could have built two and will play one short.

Press:

AUSTRIA: The Russian Bear has shown his true colors. I hope the dirty, dastardly attack upon his erstwhile true-blue (red?) ally convinces other eyes to gaze upon the northland with covetous glances. He has shown himself to be the lowest of the mean and the meanest of the low. Besides, I could use the help.  
RUM to BRUK: Two in a row. Now isn't that a good argument for NVR=no? What are your reasons for the NVR=yes rule anyway? The object of the game, after all, is to win, and not to obtain a cheap draw off some jokers who forgot to vote.  
BRUK to RUM: I can't go for NVR=no. Too many players constantly forget to vote all the time, and I have visions of games tortuously inching their way into 1919 because of some schlembloch who doesn't send in his votes. However, I have accounted for this problem in my house rules. Rest assured that after my revised house rules come out, there will never again be any need to restart a game in VD!

MILKY WAY and PEGASUS players please note: your NMR fees were "refunded" by way of a sub extension the first time your games "ended". Therefore, MILKY WAY players are getting no refunds now, and PEGASUS players will not when their game ends.  
In VD the standard procedure for refunding NMR fees is to extend the sub by 6 issues; however, any original player may instead request and receive his \$3 back.

THIS TIME THE WEST FALLS ASLEEP!

Winter 1906

AUSTRIA: Remove F Adr, A Pie

ENGLAND: even

FRANCE: NBR! Will play 1 short.

GERMANY: NBR! Will play 1 short.

ITALY: even

RUSSIA: even

TURKEY: Build F SMY

Spring 1907

AUSTRIA (Orloff): A Tyo-TLA (A VEN S, A VLS S), A Gal-BUD

ENGLAND (Claspey): A DEN-LVA (F BAL G, F DOT S, A SEP S), A NWY S A SEP, F BAR U A SEP,  
F Ska-SWB, F NTH H, F SWG H

FRANCE (Buck?): NBR! F Ion U (d; = Tun, Apr, Adr, Alb, OTH), F TYR U, F MAR U,  
A TOL U (d; = Alb, OTH), A SIL U, A HUN U, A RUM U

GERMANY (Howerton?): NBR! A KIE U

ITALY (Kettman): A Apa-JAP (A ROM S)

RUSSIA (Lansing): F ION H (A MOS S, A WAR S), A UKR S A WAR

TURKEY (Sweeney): F Aeg-LON (F GTE S), A Bul-SER, F Rum-ELA, F Smy-EAS

Game Notes: An E/F draw has been proposed. Please vote by next deadline. CIA for Bob Sweeney, 7273 Vaughan, Detroit, MI 48228. Would Pat Pakel, 635 Raden St., Endicott, NY 13760 please stand by for France, and would Matt Flaming, 4290 Grateau de Ville, St. Louis, MO 63129 please stand by for Germany? Thanks, guys.

Spector and Paul have dropped and resigned respectively, so Brian Orloff is now the Austrian player and Michael Kettman is Italy.

Press:

ANKARA to MOSCOW: I write and call, write and call, write and call. Why shouldn't I be paranoid if you and A/H fail to respond for one full game year? (Move in your case.) If F/E sweeps the board, so be it -- but let's make it HARD. (P.S. No, I didn't retake Cog because I forgot -- I want you to stay in this game, but I won't let it stay yours for long -- WHITE!)

ANKARA to BUDAPEST: Dittol! In spades!

ANKARA to ITALY: Must not leave you out!

LONDON: The US Army is reportedly planning to abduct Queen Victoria and hold her incommunicado somewhere in southern Virginia from Aug. 29 to Sept. 10. Attempts at contacting Vicki Re during this period will result in failure.

ANKARA to PARIS: Army Albania march into Trieste  
Vacationed there for a short rest  
Tried to move into Serbia  
Turkey has moved to curb ya  
I think you'd better move West!

ROME: The fall of the Italian government has left the peninsula in disarray. The new Italian government is currently revising its foreign policy and is looking to bring stability to the peninsula.

BALTIMORE to BERNHARDS (via ANKARA): You must be born under a lucky star. It appears that you will continue for a time. Good luck and write (note 10A).

GERMANS TAKE THE NORTH SEA WHILE RUSSIA HOLDS HIS OWN ON THE SOUTH

Spring 1903

- AUSTRIA (Kidd): A Bol-GAL (A VIE S), A Rus-Ukr (G, r Fed, Ser, UTS), A Tri-Apu  
F ACR 2 A Tri-Apu
- ENGLAND (Sweeney): F Nth-Ion (d, r Edi, Cor, Eng, Hlg, OWS), F Tri-LON, F Tri-V  
F Mip-Srg(ac) (amb)
- FRANCE (Harc): A DRE Molats little British girls, A FOR Molats little British boys,  
F Eng-ION (F WAL S), F SEA(ac)-Mid
- GERMANY (Heintzman): A HOL S A Bel, A BEI S A Hol, F Don-PMI (F SEA S), F Wle-DEB,  
A MUR H, A VEN S AUSTRIAN A Tri-Apu
- ITALY (Kidd): F Ion-ALL, F Tun-ION, A Apu-ROM
- RUSSIA (Kleiman): F Nny-SWG, A Stp-NNY, A MOS S F Sev, A Gal-MUR (F SEA S), A Tri-V  
A Rom S ITALIAN A Apu-Ven (NSU)
- TURKEY (Reilly): F Sny-ARG (F GRE S), A EUL H, A ARM-Sev (F DLA S)

Game Notes: COA for Rich Reilly, Upham Hall, Room #308, Moscow, ID 83843. COA for Bob Sweeney -- see the QUASAR game notes. Dudley Kidd has resigned with those moves. World Greg Ellis, 9430 Concourse #1612, Houston, TX 77036 please stand by for (and assume) the Italian position, such as it is? Thank you, Greg. Your feelings about expansionism should serve you well in Diplomacy...

All proposals made last season failed. Russia wants his votes published; they were as follows: A/E/F/G/I/R/T draw -- I VOTE YES!!!!; H/F draw -- I VOTE NO -- got serious; A/R draw -- I VOTE YES!!!!

A/G draw -- Sure, why not? (Yes); G concession -- Absolutely, YES, YES and YES! Germany wants it known that he voted no to all draw and concession proposals.

Proposed for next deadline are a concession to Germany, a G/P draw, an A/F/G/R/T draw, a move to rescind the separation of seasons (illegal), and a motion to turn this into a black press game. Note that NVR = no on all of those. Please vote by next deadline.

Press:

- FRANCE to GERMANY AND AUSTRIA: Now you two boys, that was not very nice of you to take Venice from Italy. I want you to apologize to him and let him have it.
- ITALY to GERMANY: The German army in Venice will not ever return to the Netherlands.
- LONDON to UNKNOWN: Whoever submitted a concession to F/E -- Mass vote -- however, voted "no". I may get my "ass" kicked but I feel that's a poor way to win/draw (and I am getting my "ass" kicked!).
- MOSCOW to BERLIN: GO, Germany, GO!
- MOSCOW to ALBERTA: Hate (if you know what I mean).
- MOSCOW to GON: Hate (if you know what I mean).
- REILLY to WHOEVER'S MAKING ALL THESE (STUPID) PROPOSALS: NO!!!
- MOSCOW to ANHARA: Well, I guess as you read this, we will all know whether you ordered it or not.
- FRANCE to LUNA: Congratulations, you guys. (Cheers, you bastards)
- MOSCOW to PARES: I'll meet you in Westminster Abbey.
- MOSCOW to ROME: I tried.
- MOSCOW to LONDON: Perhaps in another time...
- MOSCOW to PARES: Grrr...I hate splitting your game up, but for the rest of your game you'll have to turn to page 3. The issue just worked out that way.

(PARES, don't turn page 4)

A Nice Dilemma: Trial by Jury

by Rod Walker

((This article has already appeared in Whitestonia. It was submitted to several zines by the author.))

It's a simple question with a not-so-simple answer: "Can you order a unit to do two things at once?" Most GMs, I imagine, would instantly answer, "No." In a ruling in 1982X last year, that's what Bruce Linsey answered. And the ombudsman selected for the subsequent appeal, Mark Berch, agreed. My answer is, "It depends."

The specific case involves these orders, given first in the normal Rulebook notation, then in the standard notation used in Diplomacy World, and then in the notation used in Voice of Doom (and in which the original orders were written):

- 1. A Ser H  
A Gre S A Ser  
A Gre H  
A Ser S A Gre
- 2. A Ser H S by A Gre  
A Gre H S by A Ser
- 3. A Ser H (A Gre S)  
A Gre H (A Ser S)

Any of these notation systems makes it clear that each unit has been given two orders: one to hold and another to support the other unit in holding. The very extensive Houserules for VD provide that if a unit is double-ordered, it is shown as unordered (but the question as to whether this is really double-ordering will arise momentarily). This HR is to some extent redundant: the Rules provide that an order which admits of two meanings is not followed, and most GMs subsume double-ordering under that provision.

Accordingly, Bruce Linsey ruled that the units were double-ordered, and recorded them as unordered. The player, Ed Wrobel (Turkey), protested this ruling, but the selected ombudsman, Mark Berch, upheld it. Ultimately, although not immediately, this led to Ed's resignation from the game. He felt he had been shafted by a too-precise application of Houserules without proper appreciation for his intent. This latter was, he said, to issue a single order to each unit: to hold and support the other.

It should not be necessary to point out that the most correct way to submit the orders Ed wanted would have been A Ser S A Gre, A Gre S A Ser. That is the way most players would submit those orders and the way most GMs would expect to see them. Nor is it necessary to point out that the GM cannot really consider what a player intended by his orders; that's pure guesswork. He can only consider what the orders mean (not what the player may have meant by them, but what they actually mean when viewed by the GM).

To show the pitfalls of this business of intent, let's take a look at the possible intents of a player who submits the orders in notation #1 (a couple of these would not apply in cases 2 and/or 3 because of their different construction).

- a. The player remembers that a unit must be holding in order to receive support, so writes the H order as well as the S order in order to be sure.
- b. The player is deliberately double-ordering his units in an attempt to blame the HRs for his failure to deliver a promised support. In other words, it's a ploy.
- c. The player wanted to hold, then decided to support and forgot to cross off the superceded order.
- d. Ditto, support orders changed to holds.
- e. Player is testing GM.
- f. Player wants an excuse to resign from the game.
- g. Who knows? It's a screwy hobby.

No, you can't base a decision on intent; the GM can't read minds and shouldn't have to. However, I hope you will keep these possible intents in mind, since we will return to them later.

The real question here is, is this a double order? The knee-jerk answer is, as I've indicated, "yes". But there is far more to it than that. We must first consider what the Rulebook has to say.

Rule VII.4, last sentence: "A badly written order, which nevertheless can have only one meaning, must be followed."

Rule IX.6, first sentence: "A unit not ordered to move (i.e., one that is ordered to hold, ordered to convoy, ordered to support, or not ordered at all) may receive support in holding." (Emphasis added.) The pre-1971 Rules contained similar language.

The first and most important thing we must note is that a unit which is not ordered to move is in fact holding, regardless of whatever else it may be ordered to do. This statement, and concept, has from the earliest days of the hobby led to some confusion. There were players who thought that a unit had to be ordered to hold (as well as support or convoy, if desired) in order to be eligible to be supported in its turn. In the late 1960s it was not uncommon for me, as a GM, to receive an order such as "A Ser B and S A Gre". I printed it as "A Ser S A Gre", and the redundancy soon dawned on the player, who then stopped doing the unnecessary writing. But it was no big deal; the meaning of the orders as sent was crystal clear.

It is equally clear, from both his orders and his subsequent letters, that Ed Wrobel was doing the same thing, under the same misconstruction of what the Rules actually require. He made a mistake. He was punished for it (one of his units was dislodged and annihilated, which would not have happened had his supports been ruled valid). We're coming back to that point, too.

In the context of Rule IX.6, and of this little snippet of hobby history, we now turn to Rule VII.4. Can there be any real doubt that if a unit is ordered to hold and also to support, the meaning (and I don't mean intent) of this apparent double order is clear? No; the order to hold is redundant...the unit is already doing that. The hold order must be regarded as unnecessary, not as a second, contradictory order. There is no possible contradiction between hold and support (or convoy) in terms of meaning (although the player may have intended it otherwise). My own ruling in this case, therefore, is that the hold order is redundant and disregarded, and the support (or convoy) order is valid.

This brings us back to the list of possible intents. If we ignore the more arcane notices e through g, where do the rewards and penalties fall? The ruling which voids the support order rewards the ploy (b) and a careless error (d). The ruling I recommend, which regards the hold order as redundant, rewards the honest mistake (a) and another careless error (c). Well, the careless errors cancel each other out. That leaves us with making a GM decision which will reward either the sneaky Pete tactic or the honest player who's just trying his best. Which one is more deserving? Of course the latter player is...after all, the guy with the ploy can just figure out another way to miswrite his orders. But the guy who's just trying to do the best job he can of writing his orders will otherwise get the shaft every time. (Besides, you can call the redundancy to his attention, and he won't repeat it.)

I suppose it comes down to this: are we, as GMs, running a game or are we running a reformatory for bad kids who can't write their orders correctly? Are we really in the business of punishing those who can't turn in perfect orders time after time? I don't think so; GMs can be human too, or should be. Insofar as a ruling can be applied consistently and without favoritism, it should allow for the occasional human error (and if it voids out a popular deceptive ploy, well, aw shucks). The rule is simple, and in accordance with the Rulebook: in a dual order to hold and support (or convoy), the hold order is redundant and the convoy (or support) order is valid. What could be simpler? What could be fairer? Oh, ye rigid taskmasters, it's time to get a little flexibility. Let those badly-written orders fly when possible (the Rulebook says you must). After all, when it comes right down to it, fellow GMs, are we here to hinder...or to help?

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A Response to "A Nice Dilemma"

by Mark Burch

The core question here is the nature of the "hold" order. Is it a separate and independent order? If so, a unit ordered to both hold and support is double-ordered. If it is merely an aspect of the S and C orders, then adding H to a support order is merely a redundancy. To answer this, we go back to the definitions, given in VII.1:

"A unit may be ordered to do only one thing on each move: an army may be ordered to move, hold, or support; a fleet may be ordered to move, hold, support, or convoy."

Hold here seems to be a separate and independent order, one of, for example, four things a fleet can do. And a fleet can only do one of them. The problem comes with IX.6, which Rod quotes. The last two words seem to imply that holding is a generic term, embracing any order other than a move. The problem is, that notion conflicts with VII.1. I thus prefer to look at IX.6 as a somewhat truncated rule, which more completely would have read, "...may receive support in holding, in convoying, or in supporting."

I think Rod stacks the question a bit when, in viewing the possible intents of the player, he writes, "The player remembered that a unit must be holding in order to receive support..." What the rule says is that the unit not be ordered to move.

I wanted to comment briefly on the Arbudsman's role. I believe he should only overrule the GM when the GM is clearly wrong, or has violated his own HRS. He's not there to say how he would have ruled, i.e. to substitute himself in place of the GM. If I had received an appeal from a player protesting that the GM had ruled the opposite as Bruce (i.e. that the support was valid), I would have upheld that ruling too. A perfectly reasonable argument can be made on either side, and thus neither ruling is clearly wrong. It's like the situation where a player mislabels a fleet for an army. There's plenty of hobby precedent on both sides of the question. In certain areas (such as treatment of deadlines, or draw votes), I think variation in GMing practices is good. In other areas, we might well be better off with some "standard adjudications". This, I think, is one of those areas.

((Now I get my turn to talk! First of all, I'd like to thank both Rod and Mark for the above submissions, even though this topic has already been belabored enough.

It is clear that what we are dealing with is a pair of rules which contradict each other — almost. VII.1 makes it crystal clear that "hold" and "support" are two different orders, and that a unit can only do one of them. IX.6 implies very strongly, but does not quite state, that a unit which is supporting is also holding. In the final analysis, a GM who finds himself in the situation I did must decide which of these two rules overrides the other. I chose VII.1, not only because it is more explicit on the matter than IX.6, but also because it is the one which matches my philosophy regarding the hold order — which is to say that I view it as a separate and mutually exclusive order. I would suggest that the wording in IX.6 be changed to read "supported in place" rather than "supported in holding", to clear up this contradiction.

As for the specifics of Rod's article: to me the discussion about whom to reward, and the question about whether we are here to help or to hinder, are just so much garbage. That is not to say that they aren't interesting questions, worthy of discussion; but they are irrelevant to the matter at hand. As GMs, we are not here either to help or to hinder, but to adjudicate.

Burch, at least, attempted to reconcile his ruling with Rule IX.6. Whether he did a good job of this is of course a matter of opinion; I think he did. But I noticed that Rod Walker didn't even attempt to show how his ruling can be reconciled with VII.1, and I don't think it can be. Rod entitled his article "Trial by Jury." You readers are the jury now, since the question is on the poll sent out with this issue.))

The Successful Standby: Winning with a Loss

by Edmund Jedry

This article is dedicated to all the Diplomacy hobbyists who currently find themselves waiting for a game opening, as a member of a standby list. As a former standby myself, I am fully sympathetic with the suspense and excitement which you all must be feeling. What Great Power will your Gamesmaster ask you to command? Russia, England, France? Or how about assuming the Italian position which controls only one supply center with an army -- TUNIS??

The fear that most of you standbys have usually turns into an apparent reality. You will usually take over a "losing" position where victory is at best impossible.

But before you activated standbys award your Gamesmaster with the "THANK A LOT FOR GIVING ME THIS SHIT POSITION" trophy, don't panic. Recall you now command a "losing" but not LOST position in a game called Diplomacy: B-I-P-L-O-D-I-A-C-Y!! Here are some helpful hints.

First of all, write letters to all the remaining players as soon as possible. Introduce yourself, and ask a few questions about the other players. Ask if any alliances existed before your predecessor resigned; ask if any exist now. Be friendly, courteous, concerned; but most of all ACT STUPID. Don't let the other players know that you have been on the standby list for decades, and that you have been a devoted subscriber to your Gamesmaster's zine for ages. In every Diplomacy game, there is massive discontent and paranoia. (More on this later.)

Country A may be allied with Country B against Country C and you. But Country B is still mad at Country A for backstabbing him several years ago. (Old wounds that never heal are spelled R-E-V-E-N-G-E.) Since you are now an activated NEW player, what a golden opportunity for Country B to get back at Country A by forming a new alliance with you. You would be surprised at how quickly alliances are broken and new ones formed whenever a standby comes into the game.

Secondly, if you are currently in an unfavorable alliance, negotiate a new favorable one with someone else. Try to remain in the game as long as possible. You'll need the experience when you find yourself playing against six well-seasoned veterans in the future. Also, by remaining in the game for as long as possible, you should find out who to trust and not to trust, which will prove helpful if you find yourself in a new game with one of your "old pals".

Finally, with respect to acting stupid, do this for amusement's sake. In Diplomacy, everyone is a potential liar, and it is amazing how quickly you'll find this out when your letters start bringing responses. You know what has happened throughout the game and you have it in writing BECAUSE YOU HAVE SAVED ALL YOUR ZINES SINCE YOU BECAME A STANDBY! (HEHT! HUNT!) But it is absolutely hilarious to see how each of the other players has misinterpreted the events of the game.

In conclusion, to all you standbys, be patient and good luck! You all are very lucky to have as a Gamesmaster the individual who publishes this rag. I look forward to working with you and/or against you in the future.

((One of the types of people a GM values most are his enthusiastic, eager standbys. There is considerable difference of opinion as to how a standby should behave upon his placement into a game. I think, though, that those who, like Edmund, take their position seriously and try to do as well as possible with it are doing the GM and the other players a real service.

I agree with most of Edmund's advice, with the exception of the "ACT STUPID" part, which I think is, um, just plain stupid. (No offense...) But the business about saving your old zines and writing to everyone, and trying to renegotiate the best possible alliances for yourself are all very good points.

Three free ones, Edmund.))



The Gossip Column

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From Steve Langley (7/25/83):

Dear Bruce,

Just read VD #81. Sorry to hear about Alex's hand. Nasty things, cuts -- no serious damage? The description left doubts, and made my legs hurt.

On the discussion of A and F being unique and not interchangeable, I agree that a player who has a fleet in Bel and orders A Bel-Hol should not end up with an army in Holland. I do not agree that A Bel-Hol (NSU), F Bel U is the right way to deal with the problem. As I read the rulebook, the interpretation F Bel-Hol is the only legal and reasonable interpretation.

As to requests for separation, I'm leaning (have fallen into) the school that requires only a single request. Since the combination of seasons is solely to speed up the game (or so I've thought) I can see no argument other than tradition for requiring two or more requests.

I noted that Ron Brown wonders if my policy regarding NFP won't hurt my playing. I must admit that the idea of my printing a game letter is rather amusing, but could be a real concern. Since the question was raised here, I thought I'd answer it here.

So far, in my publishing career, I've not published a game letter, or a letter marked not for print (st. sl.), or say parts thereof. My position on NFP is that I will not respect it as a shield for slanderous insults. I have never received a game letter marked NFP and don't expect to run into that situation any time soon. I have no idea at all on what Ron was basing his statement, "...proven their willingness to print anything." I quoted only in part but I'm sure you will agree that I'm not taking the statement out of context. I would be interested to know what Ron meant by it.

((Sounds as though he simply misunderstood your position. There are actually instances in which I would agree with you that the NFP label is being used as a shield for baseless slander.

I don't recall hearing anyone say that the result of the situation you describe should be an army in Holland. Ronald Brown and I both feel that A Bel-Hol (NSU), F BEL U is correct.

Your concern about Alex's hand is appreciated, I'm sure. There was no serious damage.))

From Bill Highfield (7/26/83):

Dear Bruce,

Since I'm writing this at Lake George -- you'll be reading it soon. Your subscribers are wondering why I'm writing a letter to you while I'm on vacation. Well, Bruce reneged on the deal and Alex isn't coming up for 3 more days! Shoot! Anyway, here I go.

I've got a lot of comments this time -- not many of them controversial -- so stay tuned.

Eric Kane is getting on my nerves. If he's such an Anglophile, let him move to England! If I want to make a few jokes about the English (of which my roots are nearly HALF) then I will. Eric Kane is just an accident waiting to happen -- hopefully HE'LL grow up enough to realize that: a) "HIGHFIELD" is an English name; and b) I often joke around about foreigners.

...I'll let you readers in on a secret. I used to be a liberal -- until two events shattered the "Liberal Dreamworld" I was in. First, our family's grocery store was held up and I was held with a knife to my throat while they took the money. I have never been that terrified in my life and I still have nightmares. I dream

about those cold eyes and the sheer ruthlessness. The only way I could have  
if he killed me! Second, Carter screwed up the Iranian thing. Third and last, the  
people there for over 100 days! Those could be I quickly learned that Iranian  
terrorists, and crooks respond to and understand only one thing - "spinal cords" that  
why I'm so militant. Have any other soldiers been held up at your point. Have any  
just plain been held up? Try it -- you'll fear it!

John Eastrom had better wake up some day. Hey John, I didn't know? The main  
"PIG FARMER"! I mean, it's rather commonplace. It's hard, because you can start  
do farm pigs. I realize that you think pigs are people, but I don't keep it in  
the Russians farm pigs. Why don't you start a SIZE UP THE PIGS program -- call it  
PLEASE -- land in Siberia and get some coverage of the slaughterhouses. Sounds  
good to me! I'll even help pay for your one-way ticket (you might not be coming  
back). While I'm at it -- have you ever been held up, John? Probably not. If ever held,  
you wouldn't understand the character I'm talking about. You've never had nightmares  
of your throat getting cut. It's easy being a hamlet but rather difficult when you're  
awake and an active part of society.

Well, I've been here at Lake George for 4 days -- and the pigs were -- I'm  
stuck here with 4 terminally ill crazies. Last night I was sick and with a need  
and said, "Now I can say that I gave a Hoose head!" (Crazy. Hoarsehead is a type  
of beer for those who don't know.) We have more bad jokes than there are bars (laughs)  
and they're getting worse. It's all because Alex won't leave. I want to see  
her. Oh well.

Thanks, also, to those who wrote me about the situation -- it gave me something  
to do. Thanks for your gorgeous picture from Canada, Alex. I thought I'd tell the  
others -- you know where.

I could have enjoyed the cruise better if we had gone to sea. We didn't. It's  
not sure if the reason's classified or not so I won't say. All we did on board was  
to help repair parts of the ship. It was still fun and in general. A couple of  
mishaps and I didn't get along but big deal. The voyage was full of political  
discussions but, alas, some crazy jerk was trying to kidnap me or take me to church.  
I don't know why he wouldn't leave me alone -- especially after I told him to get  
the road because I don't practice religion (although I did tell him I worshipped the  
Lord -- I didn't lie). I was finally forced to tell him what I thought about  
organized religion. (I believe you can practice at home without going through all the  
BS.) He said that I'd been taken over by the devil and started reciting the Bible  
I damned near busted him in the chops but then I remembered his ignorance. He was a  
prime example of what TOO MUCH religion can do. Someone once said "too much of  
anything is bad" or "only in moderation" or something. I don't know, anyway. I gave  
the guy a message to either leave or die and he went to get reinforcements. For the  
a mob of his fellow Bible-bumpers on my back, I left him.

Before I start up about Latin and Central America, let me do (a) myself to  
you readers. I am pretty moderate when it comes to most issues, but if I said we  
should strike back if Nicaragua does something to us, what's the response? Since the Latin  
column would shrink and I wouldn't be in the SPRING anymore, I say something  
like "KICK THE BICEPS". THEN I got a response! See? I mean, you don't want a  
heart attack victim back to life with a 9-volt battery, do you? Well, I mean you  
You use a couple hundred volts! Then you take the shocked guy to the hospital and  
say that I don't want war either, but we also cannot let ourselves get taken in our  
backyard. If we have to, we'll definitely send troops to Central America. But only  
if the other alternatives fail. I could sure use some more detailed information -- if  
they said their own business (i.e. Albania and Yugoslavia, the Middle East, and  
Nicaragua don't mind their own business, so we must do something -- we'll let it  
stop them.

Well, now it's time to state your number concerning the situation in the already  
mentioned Latin America and the literary test. Let's ask you directly -- what do you

should have a MANDATORY driving test every 5 years for every citizen. There are too many people today who don't know how to drive correctly! Whether it's due to age or stupidity, it doesn't matter. I think that we must insure that our drivers are aware of the proper driving procedure. I am also for a 70-mils-an-hour speed limit on toll thruways -- 55 is too slow. As for DWI cases -- those caught should lose their licenses for 2 months for a first offense and 2 years for a second offense, doubling the penalty thereafter each time they do it! We must get DWIs off the street!

Two last comments: Rod Walker is dead wrong about Latin America and Paul Rauterberg is right -- I don't care how many people we have to kill to protect our freedom. My freedom is more important than the crazy who is trying to take it away. GOD BLESS AMERICA! USA -- FOREVER FREE!

((I think that your comments about Eric Kane and Joan Extrom are way out of line; they are two of the nicest people I've met in this hobby.

You'd be neat to listen to if you were still a liberal, you know? Are you sure that you aren't angry at the cruel, inhumane society that produced the poor, misguided little soul who held you up? (Not that I feel this way by any means; I agree totally with your views on the matter. But I'd just like to turn you back into a liberal, if only temporarily, so that I could read your politics from that standpoint.)

I have come across the sort of aggravating religious fanatic you describe. Reasoning with such people can be about as easy as reasoning with Boardman about fake zines, or you on politics, or Rod Walker on double orders, or...))

From Mark Berch (7/22/83):

Dear Bruce,

The notion that literacy is or ought to be a requirement for voting is elitist gibberish. Maybe you and MacFarlane can get the "data necessary to come to a decision" only via reading, but fortunately, plenty of other people are not that stupid. I see absolutely nothing wrong with going down to Town Hall, listening to the two candidates for mayor, and deciding which one you like better. Moreover, for plenty of people, there is one overriding issue, and once they learn (from a speech or friend) that the candidate for president favors more military spending, or the school board nominee opposes closing the nearby elementary school, or the guy running for State Assembly favors ERA, that is all they need to know. Now you may not perceive one overriding issue and want to collect "data" on 20, but I see no reason why someone else should be deemed incapable of making a decision because his criteria are different from yours. Moreover, I see nothing wrong with relying on radio and TV, and to answer John, more people have a TV/radio in their abcds than can read. Of course, they might not use the TV/radio for that purpose, but literate people might read only the comix in the paper, too.

And historically, the literacy test had everything to do with racism. The only places it was established was where the locals wanted to keep blacks from voting. There was relatively little use of it until after the Civil War. Places like the Far West or New England, which didn't have locals wanting blacks disenfranchised, never used it.

The Supreme Court threw out the literacy test because 1) the states were never able to show a convincing link between being unable to vote intelligently and being illiterate, and 2) the states were unable to keep the test from being used for overtly racist purposes.

Moreover, the notion that one must decide on the basis of the "candidates' views" is nonsense. If a guy is voting for alderman, he may not give one whit what his views are. He can decide that he won't vote for a guy with so little clout that he can't get the street light fixed. And you don't need to be able to read to tell the

street light hasn't been fixed.

Will you allow literacy tests in Spanish -- after all, there are plenty of Spanish newspapers with candidates' views. If not, explain to me why you won't give it in Spanish but you will give it in Braille.

Or do you plan to disenfranchise the blind, too?

Your proposed convoy rule is directly contradicted by XII.4.

Gary criticizes the "East Coast Witches" and you agree, dumping on the "East Coast Clique". I wonder if you are both talking about the same people. I mean, we have to ask, which witches? (Sorry, I couldn't resist.)

Ronald Brown doesn't void orders without a F/A designation but will void them if they get it wrong. Seems to me that approach encourages people to leave them off -- you can't be penalized that way, but you could go wrong with the wrong label.

I'm not "correcting" anything when I accept A Bre when he has F Bre. I am ignoring an error in information that was not needed in the first place. Similarly, if he writes A Munichh, I ignore the spelling error because there is no requirement that Munich be spelled out completely and correctly in the first place. If the player writes the wrong season I'd ignore that too because there is no requirement that he give the season in the first place. Ronald talks about when things are "crystal clear". Sure, sure, only once the guy builds F Bre, it's crystal clear that the unit there is a fleet, even if he mistakenly calls it an army. It's just as clear that A Munichh means the Army in Mun. I just cannot see the value in penalizing someone for making a mistake in providing information and labels that weren't required to begin with. The unit is either an army or a fleet; that's immutable, so who cares what he calls it or whether he decides that A - armada, F = footsoldier. If he says "F Bre which used to be in Mid", and it never was in Mid (his other fleet was) why should that void it -- he was never required to say where the unit was. Or what it is. It's just GMs who have to be so fussy.

((Well, your arguments about getting info wrong when it wasn't required to begin with don't apply to me in this case, since I do require the unit to be labeled. So I'll let Ronald answer you -- although I don't really agree with you anyway. For instance, I don't require the season on someone's orders, I recommend it. And if by leaving it off or by getting it wrong the player confuses me, he might just NMR -- even though it wasn't strictly required to begin with.

The first part of your letter, concerning whether illiterates should have the right to vote, is quintessentially Berchian in both style and logic. How condescending! How sarcastic! How irrefutable! All right, let 'em vote (grumble).

I don't think Gary and I had all the same people in mind, though as you know there is considerable overlap...))

From Mark Luedi (7/19/83, excerpt):

Dear Bruce,

DipCon was alright. The games were horrible for me (they weren't too bad as far as games go; how often do you see a 5-way alliance?), but the rest of the weekend was fun. I think I like the smaller get-togethers a lot better. The Midwest Mob is a wild bunch, ain't we?

Also, as you may or may not recall (it was rather late, if I recall (or maybe I don't?) correctly), I wanted to reassess my comments in my last letter which appeared in VD. Shortly after writing and sending it off, I rethought that comment about our inabilities to change the world. We all can change the world. A bit anyways; our immediate surroundings at least. To say that we can't affect the world is pretty defeatist, isn't it? We all have to do our best, I guess. Too bad we can't do anything about this 95 degree weather, though.

I don't suppose you're thinking about going to Dallas? The gears are already a-rattling. If the Wisconsin people have another Mad City Con next year, it could

It's a very long, enjoyable week!

I agree. I'm not seriously considering going to Origins in Dallas next year. I may opt for Natscon and Katscon instead. It's doubtful that I'll have enough time off from my new job to take a long trip next summer.

I agree with your opinion that small get-togethers are generally more fun than big ones, though both kinds of one are very enjoyable to me.))

Love and peace (7/23/81)

Hi, there, Ed. BRNVA>

Let me first tell you what a great issue #82 was! You are without a doubt one of the outstanding publications in today's hobby. And there are many fine hobby pubs these days. Issue #82 was a gem of the lot, too. Your "found table" on Q1 practices was just superb, informative, interesting...well, it was just tops. Your letters, too, are always interesting and since the time that your editorial policy changed slightly, such improved as well. You really have a good handle on the hobby, too; it's quite remarkable, if not so nice as the serigraphy you used to use. But doing ditto well, in as many copies as you must produce, is itself an art and an achievement. I do not hesitate to recommend you to anyone who is interested in this hobby and in rewarding reading on a regular basis.

(There! I said it and I'm glad. Did I growl enough for a couple more free issues, huh? Did I? huh? huh? Whiiiiiiiiine.) (Seriously, though, let me say that you are one of the great hobby guys and a classic which will be long and fondly recalled, and I hope it never becomes purely a recourse to memory.) ((Reading reminds me of the times, I'd guess that you liked my latest issue. Am I right?))

Well, now. What else? Hunting, I guess. Jim Finley's comment: I have absolutely no objection to a person's killing and eating an animal out of necessity (broadly defined). After all, you eat meat is at the top of the food chain and meat eating is appropriate to me. My objection to hunting lies purely in the notion that it is a "sport" or "thrill". Recreating a life is never "fun". Alas, the world is full of people who will sacrifice anything in sight for the "thrill" of the kill. But of course you are at the subject of "right-minded" and "wrong-minded" hunting, and thus into the deep purple left of hairsplitting.

As to someone's inquiry about the R.I.G. walls quote. I doubt it's quoting the poster correctly, it's from memory. Technically speaking, however, the "no...out" is just as correct as "no...in" or "no...out". It is not such used in modern English, which is no doubt why I'd found it curious. But "out" can be paired with any negative (or neutral) and highlights the contrast, whether it's used that precise word or not.

"Following someone or spreading" well, of course, that's been the usual slogan since the days of Eisenhower and Dulles. As if "communism" were some gigantic worldwide global plot. I can hear some "some senator pontificating about following someone or spreading". The fact of the matter is, ideologies are going to spread, whether you want them to or not. The U.S. may as well oppose the monarchs of gold or oppose communism (whatever the hell that might really be) - however, ideologies of this sort (and most of the asinine ones in history have been religious) always follow some sort of historical development. They spread rapidly in a core area and in some peripheral areas; that they fail to spread into areas where they are not accepted is of the national character. This (and ever at the same time) the "foreign" life remains obscure, many of them indigenous revivals of the "faith". "Communism" is not and never has been a worldwide world conspiracy, and most you are going to see it as a force will be all forms of "movement" rather than some abstract world-wide force of world-wide policy and ideology. The real danger is not from the "spread" of ideologies, but from the "spread" of ideologies. In any event, there is no "spread"

reason why "communist" agents in Latin America should have any influence with us than "non-communist" ones, except to the extent of their own ability by recruiting and irritating hostilities. This has happened with Cuba and in the near future is possible. It is happening with Nicaragua and probably in El Salvador. (By the way, it's not pretty well known that the United States sent the first aid and friend of Latin states, get Stalin or Mao, and have to know the hand he offered in 1946, or on his way would have been really better. An interesting fact of "reconstruction" and ill-fated attempts to control the course of history, especially some things were for us.)

Another note on the Roosevelt Poll. Or, rather, on polls in general. Diplomacy, good, as you know, has a great deal of little jobs as part of our first leader's response. Some is quite some time. I have already seen some specific examples of "pragmatic values" in this. It's a pity that this should happen, but it does, and there ought to be a correction for it.

The other thing, really, naturally, I would prefer that we had a more open and not necessarily for any purpose. Even if the information is not of all needed, I would be glad to see it available. My questioning its absolute utility was by way of challenging the criticism that it was in itself evil and pernicious because it would practically hand players their victories on silver platters. But I do not question whether it could be used. In any event, as you know, people often pay perfectly good money for perfectly useless information. (I should mention the instance, and people still buy books on "Hitler's and Mao's" - do not let get the edition of the and see whether such - really of that was practical effect.

Who really knows, well, of course I have since. I sort of believe people know that. If you was a long time since I was officially designated as "ambassador" in the "field of Postal Diplomacy", these days I've long since had had to get out of the way. In such a situation I have a few respect and honor which aren't strictly in support of articles on the ground of "you're temporarily suspended". But may that I have made a use of "P.D." are absolute gospel. One that Mark Beach was taken over by old there, I refer you to his for the book.

By the way, I still do not have a proper Rejection Slip. (I'm sure it's coming.) Staff Assistant's letter. The Royal-ruled election was a very interesting example of how the Electoral College can screw things up. That is not to say it couldn't, but that election was a very peculiar one. You will recall that this was, in a sense, the last Presidential election of the Reconstruction Era. In this election, the results in three "Reconstructed" states were challenged. These challenges were resolved by a Congressional committee composed of 4 Republicans and 3 Democrats. By a vote of 3-2 in each case, the committee accepted the pro-Republican votes of those states. And thus Hayes was elected. In point of fact, the whole thing was a complete farce. It is virtually certain that Hayes would have secured 100% of the electoral vote had he been considered. He was not, but not by the Electoral College.

By the way, Rock is an interesting case, and there is a reason why it has always been popular, and because popular, naturally, has a tendency to be a little more of a "rock" than of a "stone". (I'm sure you know what I mean.) In fact, in the past, the name "Rock" is referred to as "the pig". In pre-historic times, civilization was by no means confined to the ruling class. When this practice was outlawed by the Spanish, the Royal rulers of Mexico could immediately be put. It didn't take me long to get out, but of course, the fact is the fact of "civilization" or "progress", in every area in which civilization was largely absent. (It's a pity that it was a certain degree in an eastern state concealing how it was done.)

By the way, the next time I have been and have been for dinner, they give me a little dish called "Royal Rejection". That's that. (I'm sure you know of course.)

There is another story about little news from London, especially the "Rock" one. (I'm sure you know of course.)

has to offer. I really enjoy it when you share your extensive knowledge with me and my readers. Case in point: your comments about pork. I am reminded of a story I read once, long ago, about a restaurant that served as its specialty "Lamb Ameristan", an exotic and irresistibly delicious dish. Of course, every now and then one of their regular patrons would disappear and shortly thereafter the house special would again be served...

Why do you perceive a Sino-Japanese alliance, in particular, as "the real danger"?

I agree that the Electoral College wasn't directly the cause of the Hayes-Tilden fiasco. But the idea that voting must be separated by states was the cause... and the Electoral College is just a manifestation of that idea. I don't think that a direct popular vote would be as interesting to watch as our current elections, but I think it would be much more fair.))

From Konrad Baumaster (7/20/83):

Dear Bruce,

Managed to find a few things in your last thirty-pager that were of interest. Shall I go through them one by one?

I don't know whether Bob Jenkins has received the last or latest Stocks and Bonds packet, sent out some 2-3 weeks ago. Last I heard he hadn't.

Of course you liked the Thirty Miles issue -- I thought, at first, that it was a Linsey fake! Sure.

Perhaps I missed something but I wasn't aware that Dick Martin had printed a INQ letter, or announced that he would ignore the label. He did print a harmless section of a Langley letter that was about some game they were in, but then, a) the letter said nothing of importance (typical), b) I had no idea that game letters were off the record to begin with -- certainly plenty are passed regularly, and c) who is Langley to complain about such a practice in the first place? I hardly think that Dick will do such a thing in the future.

I don't see why people need hard and fast rules to govern what they print and what they don't print. Whatever happened to common sense? The policy I have always followed, and which never got me into the slightest bit of trouble, was that if the writer wanted it to be kept between the two of us -- whether so written, indicated by INQ or some such term, implied or by my own judgement of the contents -- it stayed that way. Why do publishers have this insane urge to print everything that plops into their mailboxes, anyway? Anybody remember private correspondence? Apparently only very few.

Greg Ellis' letter was interesting. I, too, enjoyed Simon's A Time for Truth. There can be nothing or everything wrong with a law; if the government is in charge of implementing it, in a short while it will no longer even faintly resemble the letter of the document, much less the spirit.

MacFarlane's comment on Central and South American governments is not exactly on target. One General Strossener (and, of course, Fidel Castro) would certainly dispute his statements on a five-year maximum term for any government to be given. Second, even if the governments would only last five weeks, does that mean that we should be disinterested in trends or patterns? Of course not. A bad government now does not necessarily mean that the one following it will be better. Proof? Is the Soviet Union important enough to mention? Closer to home, we have the Sardinistas. Even closer, American voters threw out the Republican Nixon/Ford administration and replaced it with Jimmy Carter, a man already listed by historians as one of our worst Presidents ever.

John's comments on racism, on the other hand, I find it easy to agree with. If not for an accident of birth (I was born white, and except for some tanning now and then, have not darkened significantly), I could have gone to Georgetown for free. As it is, it costs me \$12,000 annually, after taxes.

Coughlan's letter, of course, is an elaborate joke. First, Dick Martin, Gary's Great Satan, wrote him a few months ago offering him peace and conciliation, if not exactly blood-brotherhood, and was for all intents and purposes told to fuck off. Dick swallowed his pride and was big enough to make the first move -- Gary wasn't interested in anything but fighting. So if that's what he gets, well, whose fault is it?

Second, who's bothering to fight with him? It always struck me that Gary could handle nothing but blind adulation from the hobby -- once a few people denied him that, he flipped out. For example, he begged you to look at the situation. Any judgement of yours would be okay, he said. All right, so you told him what you thought, which was just barely shy of telling him he was right. Nobody -- suddenly you were the vilest scum, walking hypocrisy, dirt. The same was the case with Mark Berch. Nobody was out to lynch Coughlan, though with hindsight it does seem like a good idea to me.

For my part, I printed (after some insulting letters from Coughlan and seeing his monstrous attack on Dick Martin) a short paragraph on the matter and left it at that. His next issue arrived with a continued attack on Dick Martin, some pretty harsh words (and several pages -- some overkill, but then, ranting and raving often tends to go on and on) about me, and the balance of my account.

Clearly, he's the one who began and continued the massive smear campaign of his critics.

That he ignored his "East Coast Witches" (who?), as he says, is a pathetic lie. Or maybe he just blocked it out of his memory?

Third, I'm surprised that you could enjoy reading all about your "sins" from Coughlan. His letter reeks of condescension and righteous I-told-you-so-isms. I couldn't stand it if I were you.

Fourth, I doubt, in fact, that you would stand it if it weren't for your mutual dislike for Dick. This is too bad, but neither you nor Coughlan will find the other to be much of an ally; certainly Coughlan does not have the temperament for it, and you don't have the timing.

Von Metzke I remember fondly, despite the bad rep he got with newscasters over the IW thing a few years ago. He was a hell of a writer, but I'll agree with Walker on this point; he was not the best. "The best", of course, is relative to what kind of writing we're talking about. Conrad's forte was humor (or "humour", as he would have had it), but in this department Walker is his superior. In fact, Rod is probably the most consistently excellent writer of such material that I am familiar with in this hobby. In sarcasm, on the other hand, John Boardman has no peer; his command of history certainly helps him here. Strategy and tactics? Well, any fool can write one, and many have indeed done so, but Lakoff, Ver Broog, and Randolph Sayth do rise above the norm here. And so on...overall, I would say Walker is my favorite, but I'm talking now about the old Brekwon and such stuff of ten years ago. These days Rod does little but reminisce in his articles. (His letters retain their brilliance.)

The newer writers: well, some are better than others; none are as good as von Metzke was. None are even close. Well, maybe Olsen is; the beauty of his work is that it is all done so effortlessly. Of the other writers you mention, I haven't seen a great deal of any of their writing but Olsen's, outside of VD. With Coughlan, aside from his rather lengthy personal attacks I have seen almost nothing original. (His zine benefits from his organization, not his writing.) Those attacks I did enjoy reading, but not because of the quality of the writing.

I see Ghuff Afflerbach is a Frank Zappa fan. That moves him up a couple of points in my book...

Mark Luedi's letter came pretty close to my feeling on Bill Quinn's files. He



league, regardless of what you say, I will not. I think that if everybody has the right to my record -- though Chad knows why they'd want it, as I don't see lots of S.C. charts and names as a great indicator of how I'll play the next game I enter -- then I certainly have the right to know the names of the people who are so bloody interested in the first place. On top of that, I am not willing to pay \$1 to find this information (names) out. These inquiries should be as public as the records are.

I can't find the hit now, but somewhere in your last issue someone writes that a player who plays for fun would not object to having his record made public. This is true; I do not object to having my record known. I object to the mentality of the player who will spend money to discover what any rating system will tell him more accurately -- how good is this player when compared to others? I think that it is true that a player who plays for fun doesn't mind the files existing, but it is also true that no player who plays for fun would ever go so far as to buy them.

The Ruckman Fall? Who cares? I publish what I want; outings be damned. Apparently many people enjoy the stuff, or they wouldn't get it. So then why do they even the way they do over the thing? I have no idea, but I have given up trying to do anything about it. It is so worthless, anyway; I mean, most times have a higher circulation than the total number of this year's voters. Representative? Dubious. Why improve it? It's dead! Barry Express the best club in North America? Well, I suppose you might think so, but I ran across very few others who seem to think that. (Maybe I just travel in the wrong circles.)

Sunderland and Michalski are both right on the separation-of-seasons bit. Ideally, the CP should stay out of the game as much as possible; let the players decide how they want to play it. However, this assumes that all seven players are intelligent, rational players, which is just not always the case. I, like John, have run into several players who separate just as a matter of principle, regardless of what kinds of adjustments are necessary, or do so just to be assholes. These people have to be kept under control, for the continued enjoyment of the rest (majority) of the players. One player's asserting his "rights" to separate seasons often screws the fun for the other six players, each of whom also has "rights", and one of those is to have a smoothly run game.

Oh well, this letter has set here long enough. Time to send it. Let's see if I can dig up a stamp here somewhere (shuffle . . . shuffle)...

((Lots to comment on here. Let's dispose of the unpleasantness between you and Gary first. I can see both sides, and feel that both of you overreacted (now, really, is it reasonable to suggest lynching someone because of a lobby foul?). I disagree almost totally with your perception of the Comfilac/Bertin foul; I viewed Dick as the culprit on almost all fronts, and I'm afraid my two later experiences with him have served only to back up my initial impression in that regard. Nor do I view Gary as an "ally" against Dick.

You are correct to observe that I didn't enjoy reading certain comments in Gary's last letter. Some of what he said about me was very much overstated, and I pointed this out in my reply. By the same token, though, I think it's fair to point out that you are incorrect when you say that what I thought about Gary was "just freely slip of tongue" (as he was right). Not enough of that.

No, the Unity Files of John Joseph issue was not a fake, though I had a lot to do with it.

Your observation that we must consider the kind of writing when talking about the best writers is correct, of course. Gary's is still my favorite overall, but I think the two best written pieces I've come up against were Jack's "Disaster" article in YD #60 and Chad's "Flycatcher's Broken Record" in #70. Both were excellent, which just goes to show you, I'm a fan of good humorous writing.

I can't think that the Ruckman Fall is "dead". I agree that the results would be more significant were all the issues brought forth in an editorial context, but that's another matter. (I'll do it in a later letter, if possible.)

From Don Del Grande (7/29/83):

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Hey BRUX:

Whazzishear (?) about some FIFer winning DipCon? I'm not sure if Duke had been there, that person wouldn't have been able to survive his which, but no FIFers have gotten used to. At least the next DipCon followed Original's lead, so nobody'll be there, except for people who live near there. After I graduate from college in May, I might be able to make it out to whatever the next DipCon Dip type decides to hang out at.

About the chubers concerning our system of voting, Altonen vs. Hayes was a special case of somebody claiming voter fraud in 4 states and a special 13-man panel (8 of which were from Hayes' party) voting 8-7 (no abstentions) to give Hayes the disputed electoral votes, which gave him just enough to become president. As for the electors, it's more than "tradition" -- each party nominates a number of electors for each state equal to that state's number of votes, and the party getting the most votes in a state has its electors represent that state. I don't remember that a party would select an elector which would vote for the opposing party's candidate.

There are flaws in the system. Since the number of votes is in proportion to the number of representatives plus senators, whereas the number of representatives is in direct proportion (or as close as possible given the 435 limit) to the population, the smaller (in population terms) states get more "electoral votes per person". How would you change it? Direct popular vote? Well, that brings up the "majority law leads to majority tyranny", where the party in power slowly erodes out the smaller powers. Won't happen? Tell that to Phil Burton (well, he died recently), Democratic representative from San Francisco. When California got two additional seats, he redraw the district boundaries (passed by the heavily-democratic California assembly and senate, then signed by Democratic Governor Jerry Brown) so that it would be easier for key Democrats -- including his brother John (who chose not to run, so the people elected some Marin County Supervisor from some small community called Green something -- Green Beret? -- oh, Greenbrae, CA, huh? Whatever came out of there) -- to be elected. By the way -- I heard that the census is to be held every 5 years beginning in 1990. Sounds like a good move to me, although this means that some of the states will have to change their districts for 80% of the elections! As well, I'd prefer something like what Britain has (without the royalty) -- it gets rid of the unbridgeable between the Congress and the President where the people suffrage a part of which of which makes us into burkeys.

Here's one for you: suppose a pit bull runs loose and attacks a postman on your street the day before the deadline, and as a result he doesn't deliver on deadline day, resulting in an NMR. Do you say "It's the dog's fault for walking until the last day" or what? (Meanwhile, anyone who phones in on the net day gets their orders in!)

Somebody should tell Fred Davis about what happened in the SF Bay Area recently and see if he keeps his "code numbers". somebody went to New York and made a credit card call. Somebody else heard the number and told his/her friends, who probably spread the word around. When the person returned and got the bill, it was 250 pages long, with credit card calls every 2 minutes or so (most of them overlapped), and the amount was about \$19,500, which, Ma hell, etc.

I still don't understand why, through all of your strictness, you allow the players to vote to disregard a deal/consensus!

FINALLY (you must be tired, since it's 10 minutes before 4 in the morning now) I need your help as a fellow member of the ESK. How can I get you and Harris to give up publishing The Shogun's Sword. I want you to join me in a court for peace within the ESK. With only two of us, the mediocrity of the group would lead to the success! (besides, what's more mediocre than the better of the two until in 1987? Not to mention how I did this year -- how did I do, anyway? Well, not too good, this way. Had I voted for myself, but you got a 4 year into your... I don't know if I have an official ESK card and G.W. thing...

((I propose we wait to see how Cathy Cuning does with The Shogun's Sword before actively trying to take over the ESM. Who knows, the zine may still be in very mediocre hands!

I checked my World Almanac -- your number are correct regarding the Hayes-Tilden info, not Rod Walker's.

I decided to allow the PEGASUS players to continue their game because they wanted it that way and my houserules don't forbid it. However, I have included an amendment in the soon-to-be-released revised version of my houserules that will make it unnecessary ever again to restart a game in VD.

If the mailman doesn't deliver here on deadline Friday (and it happened once; I had to go running down to the main post office to get my mail), then the player's out of luck.))

From Peter Ansoff (7/27/83):

Dear BRUX,

OK, let me see if I have this right. First, you set up the board, using the previous season's adjudications. Then, you read the orders, compare them to the board situation, and determine which moves fail and succeed. Then, you put away the board and type up the results. Do I have the essence of the process down? ((Yes, except that I don't actually put away the board before typing up the game. I just don't refer to it while doing the typing.))

Now, the original issue was why you fail orders which do not specify the unit type, or specify it incorrectly. Obviously, you know which units are mislabeled when you compare the orders to the board situation. Apparently, you're saying that it's too much trouble to insert a letter "A" or "F" in front of a mislabeled order -- and that it's easier to underline it, write "NSU", and then include an extra order for the "unordered" unit. Try again, Bruce. Let me reiterate -- a unit-type designation is not required by the rules, and its omission does not make an order ambiguous. C'mon, admit it -- you made this rule simply because you enjoy making rules. Don't worry, I've seen the symptoms before; I live in a town full of frustrated bureaucrats!

I'm pleased to see that you are considering changes to your HRS on season separation. I gave you my views on the subject in my letters of 22 November 1981 (VD #56) and 6 March 1982 (VD #59), and my conclusions were essentially the same as Berch's. Oh well, who listens to fossils!?!

Incidentally, my arguments about specifying unit types apply with equal force to specification of unit nationalities (eg, the ORION "Game Notes" for Fall 1908).

It looks as if I've finally sold my Buccaneer, to a gentleman who wants to take it with him when he moves to Tanzania (!) next week (!!). It seems that Tanzania has solved its international balance-of-payments problem by simply banning imports -- that's right, all imports, especially such blatant manifestations of capitalist decadence as sailboats. The only way to get one there is to take one with you. John says that the sailing is great in Dar es Salaam...

Keep up the good work.

((Thanks, I'll try. I've never been sailing, and someday wish to try it.

My new policy regarding season separations should appear elsewhere this issue, and will become official soon.

OK, you win the dispute regarding which way is easier when it comes to unlabeled or mislabeled units. But if I were to insert an "A" or "F", I would then be changing what the player wrote down. I view that as GM interference. But I still see no reason why, in postal play, a player cannot take the time to get his orders right. Thus, my adding of certain requirements not specified by the Rulebook. Personal preference and all that; those who object have the option of playing in other zines. This is far from being the only point on which Allan Galhamer and I disagree; look at the ban on negotiations before retreats and adjustments, eg...))

From Greg Ellis (The Houston Halfling replies, 8/11/83),

Dear BRUX,

Once again I find myself at the typewriter clicking off a letter to you instead of the thousand other things that I should be doing. Finals for the second session of summer school are next Wednesday, and the fall session starts August 29. Looks like I'll never have any real time.

As for Latin America: to the Kansas Cajun's comments first. I said that we couldn't do what is right in Central and South America because I can't think of anyone who would be qualified to define "right". Not even Henry K. Should we send aid to the poor countries to keep them from starving, in spite of the fact that most of the money will end up in some bureaucrat's pocket? Or should we march in with troops to be assured that the aid we send is being spent in the most useful ways? Do you think the Latinos would welcome us with open arms? "Si, America, we need your help so please come down here and show us the way to riches!" Not likely. Every country has its pride, and this is especially true of the Latin American countries. They resent the fact that they need aid at all, and quite often the resentment is displaced to those who are giving the aid. Furthermore, what good does it do to give aid at all? As the old saying goes: "Give a man a fish...". We are creating an aid monster. We are cursed for providing the aid, and then cursed again if we reduce or eliminate it. Yes, we could try to let them do their own thing, as Mr. Walker would suggest, but they won't let us. It isn't a question of whether or not to send money, only who to send it to.

As far as past foreign policy decisions go, the Shah fell only when the revolutionaries knew we had a weak President who wouldn't do anything about it. Supporting the Shah didn't get us into trouble, rescinding the support did. Yes, the interests of U.S. business were protected abroad, and in that way the countries' interests were protected. The only other alternative I see is to forbid any company to expand into any foreign country. Then again, most of the good that has been done has been through the technologies and jobs brought into those countries by U.S. companies. Where would Saudi Arabia be now if Exxon had never gone there? Kennedy was the high point of U.S. Latin American policy? Pat, how long were you in Europe? About 25 years? The best thing Kennedy did was the Peace Corps. Other than that all I can remember is the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis. The man was a great speaker; a lousy President. We will continue to sputter and fail in our Latin relations because we are damned if we do, damned if we don't, and damned if we don't do either. The only way we could truly help any other country would be to annex them and eventually make them a state. Imagine if you will the State of Iran, or Mexico, or Japan. The country was designed for unlimited growth, and we don't have any place to grow to (ignoring space for all you SF fans). Speaking of SF: The United Foundation States of America. Gives you the chills, doesn't it?!

Now for what Rod said. For the most part I would agree with him. Indeed, the Soviet-American relations took a turn for the better immediately after President Nixon visited China. Amazing coincidence, no? No. The Russians border China and could easily be overrun by the superior numbers. Sure they could disintegrate a few of their cities, but that's no big deal to the billions of Chinese. I have never said that the U.S. should follow a foreign policy based on ideology. In fact, that was the mistake that Carter made. We should follow policies that will lead to continued American growth and prosperity. Sounds a lot like Diplomacy, doesn't it? If we were to invite other countries to join the magnificent Union we could expand our base of natural resources (including people), our defensible borders, and eventually our ideologies (for those of you who think that is important).

I too am uneasy about communism spreading, but in the case of Latin America I doubt it would last. Most of the Latin countries have very little to offer the Soviet Union other than a market for their arms, so they will naturally encourage almost every dispute. The same can be said for the American arms companies, as

evidence by the Spanish-American War. Some people do profit from war, which is unfortunate.

On to domestic issues. The right to vote in this country is, in my opinion, paramount. When you have taken away the right to vote you have removed the basic right of citizenship. For that reason I not only oppose any kind of qualifying test for voting, but also support the policy of printing ballots in two languages for the language minorities. What are the odds of the government spending money on any group that can't elect them? The idea of accountability is the basis for democracy. For that reason the Electoral College should be abolished, and the President should be given the right to run for office as many times as he wishes. What good is a four-year lame duck President? It would be nice, as long as I am amending the Constitution right and left here, to forbid the Federal government from invading individuals' lives. I would extend this from income taxation to welfare. The Fed is too remote and too bureaucratic to do any good for anybody. In fact it was originally designed to do only two things: provide for a common defense and govern relations between the states (which includes foreign relations). If the government taxes anything, it should be the states themselves, leaving it up to the states to decide how to raise the taxes. Does anyone out there realize that the government is responsible for 75% of every dollar you pay for gas? And that the rising price of food is by design, not "uncontrollable" inflation? Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the government is acting in the public interest by causing, DIRECTLY causing, 3 to 4 percentage inflation through taxation and price support policies.

This is getting a little too soapboxy, so I will go ahead and close here. I lied. Couple quick comments. Strict GMing is the only way to go; house rules are not only good but necessary; adding more laws to help out unenforceable ones already passed doesn't do any good; vote Republican; and finally, play J.L. Halverstadt's Presidential Politics game and get all this garbage out of your system!

Love,  
Greg

((Your comments on U.S. expansionism ought to draw some, er, comments. In fact, I personally tend to agree that there are many nations that would benefit by giving up their sovereignty in exchange for statehood, but just try to convince the people of those nations to do so. The national pride you mention earlier in your letter would rear its (ugly?) (gorgeous?) head -- I can't think of a single independent nation on earth that would willingly join the U.S.

I don't agree with you, curiously, that strict GMing is the only way to go. There is plenty of room in this hobby for diversity, and while strict GMing is the only way to go in VD, there are other GMs and players who want to do things differently. I'll be seeing you in Presidential Politics! After reading Jake's writeup of the game, I can't wait to begin. And the cast of players (all but one are Doomies) looks very impressive too. Wanna be my veep if you can't win the GOP nomination, heh heh?))

From John Michalski:

Dear Bruce,

On the 2-requests-for-separation vs. one-critical-build, it would be simpler to consider the GM as a "player" in the game drama, whereby if someone could convince you of the critical situation, you and he make two. The only problem is that you'll take more heat from the clowns who feel that a visit from Aunt Hildegard on deadline week was a "critical situation"...

Note to Kelley re Hightower: On the other hand, isn't there a refreshing frankness about those who will say instead, "Fuck with us and we'll nuke you"?

That was a brilliant move with Walker which I'd never thought of: rejecting

something. Unheard of, audacious -- damn! I wish I'd thought of it myself! I always found his stuff too good though, and it never occurred to me. He's really a good chap it seems.

Hunting for sport is wrong, and stupid as well. I support widespread gun ownership, but guns should be strictly used for their proper purpose, which is against our errant fellow man.

((I agree with that, while personally supporting tough gun control laws as the best way to accomplish it.

I've made my decision regarding separations, and your solution smacks too much of GM interference for my taste. (Hell, it doesn't just smack of it, it is GM interference.) See my comments following Paul Rustenberg's letter.

Walker's stuff is exceptionally good. The piece I rejected was a two-page, serious discourse on theology, submitted in response to the innocuous "God is a Woman" item I ran about eight issues ago. Theology just isn't my bag and it's a subject that I won't go into in any great detail here; thus I sent the article back. I prefer Rod's writings on other topics. This was a rare (unique?) occurrence in VD's history; I reject articles fairly often but usually do it because the quality of the writing isn't up to par. Many other zines would probably be glad to run the article.

So what conscientious player would allow Aunt Hildegarde to visit on deadline week?))

From Joan Extron (8/7/83):

Dear BRUX,

Samantha says thanks for the phone call, even tho she didn't talk to you. Ken and I discussed the matter and decided she's much too young to get phone calls from men (especially when they're 27 years older than she is!). Anyway, next time you'll just have to ask for me. It was really nice talking to you. Thanks for calling.

Here's the requested picture for your collection. No fair letting Highfield use it for his dartboard.

As for the list of what I stand for, you'd better scratch "semi-vegetarian". I don't cook meat very often, but we have been consuming a lot of Bob's 39¢ burgers and crisp meat burritos from Taco Time. A friend gave us a housewarming gift of a barbeque grill so it looks like we're becoming carnivorous. Somehow, barbequed tofu just doesn't make it.

Congratulations on the new job! How is it? Good luck finding a new place to live. We'd certainly be glad to help you move if we lived closer. Believe me, we're experts. The best method is to have a group of 30 or so friends descend upon your place, do all your packing, load up vehicles and/or U-Haul, and unload at the new abode. That should take about 8 hours, then you can spend the next 8 months unpacking. Only took us 2 days to find the toaster and 1 1/2 weeks to find the can opener.

Our new place is nice, though it's still a disaster. The view of the river out back is lovely, and we can watch the bluejays steal dogfood off the deck. Luckily the dogs haven't noticed yet.

How was KaneCon? Hope your weather was as nice as ours.

Only one comment on the last issue. No need to be controversial every time (right Highfield?). In Pat Conlon's letter, Pat mentions "a torture expert named Snowball, an albino dwarf whose specialty was biting the balls off live victims." If I didn't know better, I'd say that was our Saneyed, who is, coincidentally, also named Snowball. She eats anything.

Looking forward to the next VE. Hello to Alex.

Love,  
Joan and Samantha

((Thank much for the photo. Samantha is a cutie! And Aunt reminds me -- I

wanted to ask other Doonies out there to send me color photos of themselves, as I am in the process of putting together a Dip photo album. I already have perhaps the most extensive collection of photos of Dippy people in existence, and want to expand it further. Those of you whom I've met personally, don't bother as with a couple of exceptions I already have your picture. But those whom I haven't met, for the most part, I need your pix. Thanx.

I do hope that you and Ken will reconsider about lett~~ing~~ me call Samantha. I promise, no funny business on the first date!

As I type this I haven't begun my new job, though I will have by the time you read it. I'll keep you posted on how it's going. As for my move to Pittsfield, when the time comes, General Electric is going to pay for everything, so I won't be needing any help. KaneKon should be described elsewhere this ish, but in case I don't get to it I'll say now that it was perhaps the most fun I've ever had at a Kon, and I hope to go again next summer.

Thanks for the well wishes!))

From Jeff Panches (7/16/83, excerpt):

Dear BRUX,

...I know you have heard about all these organ transplants that are going on now. Well, it seems that there is a company in Texas which is going into the commercial brain transplant business. You walk in, select a brain from a number of display cases should a loved one have his head crushed in an accident.

One day a lady walked in needing a new brain for her husband who had lost his in an auto accident. She walked around admiring all the brains with a salesman. She stopped at one and said, "This looks like a nice brain."

He said, "Yes, ma'am, it is. This was the brain of a very promising college student, 22 years old and getting straight A's. It's only \$50,000."

Then the lady said, "No, not mature enough." She walked on and stopped at a second case.

The salesman said, "Ah, this is an excellent brain, a young businessman who was on his way to the top of the company. This brain sells for \$75,000."

The lady said, "My husband was never interested in business." She then noticed a display case at the end surrounded by lights and with the brain sitting on a satin pillow. The lady asked, "Please tell me about this brain?"

The salesman said, "This brain is an exceptional bargain at \$100,000!"

She asked, "If the brain is such a bargain, why does it cost \$100,000?"

The salesman replied, "Well, this is the brain of a Diplomacy player."

The lady said, "\$100,000 for a Diplomacy player's brain -- it doesn't make sense!"

The salesman's retort: "Look, lady, it costs that much because it's never been used!"

((How does one groan convincingly in print?!))

From Randolph Smyth (7/17/83):

Bruce:

This has been "VD afternoon" -- which is to say that between back-busting bouts of cleaning out my weed-infested garden, I've sweated up the living room couch relaxing with the 8 back issues of your zine. Actually they are just about the last of the 200+ pieces of mail waiting for me upon my return 2 weeks ago, but after 3 months, what's another couple of weeks? The zine poll correspondence was the bummer...

Just a couple of notes. In VD #79, p 17, I don't think I deserve being recruited to your side of a debate on GMing strictness. For instance, I will ignore a unit's

hold order if "superceded" by something else. As someone noted in an earlier issue, the problem crops up fairly frequently with novices, and I won't stick by the letter of the Rulebook when it's worded somewhat confusingly. The offender gets a personal note with the adjudication to tell him the proper format, but the orders go through as intended. (If a player wishes to disorder his units deliberately, I expect him to be more ingenious about doing so, such that I have to disallow them: the deliberate disorder is, after all, a Moderately Advanced Technique.)

In fact, it wasn't that many years ago ('80?) that I had quite a verbal joust with Francios Guerrier, which started with my comment that he was too literal-minded at times. In that case, though, a couple of his rulings which weren't covered by houserules seemed arbitrary to me -- I think there's less ground for quibbling with you, with the procedures down in black and white.

The example hasn't convinced me to amplify my own houserules, though. Oddly, the only time I've had a real procedural difficulty with rule-related problems in my games in FSF was upon being "called" by one of my players for violating my own houserules! The dispute went to an ombudsman where I quite properly lost, but I still think my original ruling was more "sensible" in the particular circumstances. It would have been a non-issue except that the player had been counting on me to respond "correctly"; I quite agree that houserules are largely a limitation on the GM, hence my preference for keeping them as short (and vague) as possible. As long as the players are happy, that's what counts.

Re ditto (still?!): the first issue was kind of a disaster, though everything was legible; after that you've had no trouble at all. Why all the moaning about difficulties in making corrections, though? -- I find ditto masters just as easy as a typed page (though perhaps a bit messier).

Regarding telephone orders: in a way, it's an advantage to be as busy out-of-the-house as I am. While I do get the occasional call, anyone who starts relying on the phone quickly learns that he'll get stung two deadlines out of three. The people that do get through are invariably making last-minute changes to already-submitted orders. To those who are homebodies or married, tough luck. Tough luck, too, to any player who rings up at 10:00:01 PM on deadline day; my watch, by definition, gives the correct time.

I'm snarly these days as my computer is still not operational; every time I get a shipment of Module X that, by my calculations, should give me a functional system, it comes with instructions to "interface to the rest of your system with Ribbon Y"...which I don't have. On looking back, I shouldn't have sold my trusty ditto duplicator so soon; the next issue of FSF might be either delayed or quite expensive. Looking even further back, I should have banged down my money for an all-in-one system rather than going modular, though I wouldn't have had the educational experience. Grrrr.

?Something else I was going to say. Well, I'll be writing again in a few months, no doubt. Until then.

((I think you may have misunderstood me in VD #79. I wasn't talking about strict GMing, but rather comprehensive houserules. And, having seen your houserules, I regard them as more comprehensive than most, though you seem to feel otherwise.

Correcting ditto, for me, just means going back when I'm done typing the page and whiting out all the mistakes -- which accounts for the occasional blank spaces you occasionally find between words in VD these days. Certainly, it was much easier to correct my errors when I was typing on erasable bond...

I remember very fondly your big debate with Guerrier, and I remember thinking just how much I agreed with him, for the most part.

I, too, will ignore a unit's hold order when it is superceded by something else. However, I don't consider two simultaneously submitted orders to supercede each other. Any order can be superceded by a later order, but in my opinion a "support" order does not automatically supercede a "hold".))



From John MacFarlane (7/29/83):

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Dear Bruce,

Interesting issue. The phone GMing piece was excellent, as were the letters. I especially enjoyed Jim Finley's...let's see what Highfield says to that!

Albuquerque is really a nice city. Warm and dry in the summer, just enough snow in the winter, and almost no smog. Within easy striking distance of the "great outdoors": rafting on the Rio Grande, skiing at any of several locations, and hiking almost anywhere. An hour's drive from Santa Fe, the "culture capital" of the Southwest. Even has a large wargames store with gaming rooms and a mail order service!

Disadvantages: hours and hours of highway driving to get anywhere out of state, and no cons within 500 miles. But despite these shortcomings, I strongly advise you to move out here if you can get a job. You won't regret it. Besides, it's only two hours from Los Alamos.

And believe me, the northern section of the state is, at least in my opinion, much more interesting (and more comfortable -- it gets hot down there) than the southern.

I agree with Michalski that at least two separation requests must be received in order to grant a separation. I agree that many situations require different diplomacy for different builds, but shouldn't it be easy enough for the player who wants a separation to have a friend or ally vote with him? In any case, it helps if you look upon postal Diplomacy, complete with combined seasons, as a totally different game than face-to-face, requiring a different style of play and strategy. Diplomacy takes long enough already to play by mail -- if every third season is separated, forget it.

What? I expected an Origins article. Maybe next issue?

((Check out Steve Knight's article. It's a gem.

I've never had the pleasure of seeing northern New Mexico; my travel there was limited to the far southern parts of the state, including the White Sands and, of course Carlsbad Caverns. I'm sure I'd like the area you describe.

The problem with your separation argument is that a) sometimes it might not be easy enough to get an ally to vote with you, even when a separation is needed, and b) why should players have to conduct this level of diplomacy, anyway? But Paul's letter follows, and after that I'll announce my decision.))

From Paul Rauterberg (7/26/83):

Dear Bruce:

Don't let Michalski intimidate you with impassioned responses and knee-jerk complaints about knee-jerk players. If you over-bureaucratize the mechanism for separations of seasons, you'll be doing more than indulging in "GM interference". You'll be putting onerous demands on players to justify their negotiating strategies to non-players (in this case, supposedly "neutral" referees). Plus, you'll be putting yourself in a position where you are judging a player's negotiating technique, even after he explains it. In a recent game season in St. George and the Dragon, I wrote such a "justification" in request of a separation of seasons. It ran several paragraphs, and I felt no qualms about my reasoning. But, to my genuine surprise, the seasons were not separated, and my requests for an explanation of the GM's decision went unheeded. This is the closest I have come to resigning from a game since I joined the hobby. (The only reason I didn't probably had something to do with the fact that I guessed right with my "conditional" orders.)

This is a players' game; not a dictatorship of the "neutral" GM. Sure, some

players may abuse their rights, but don't let that stop us from trying to do what we've managed to do in a few of their years. (Sincerely, Andy, 1971)

By the way, my favorite game of all time, Chess, is being played in Cheesecake. It is being run flawlessly by Andy Lisowski, who is playing it as a GM, or as a publisher, or as a friend. As a new GM, I certainly hope to match the high standard that Andy has maintained since the mid-70s.

(I agree. I've been receiving Cheesecake since I began playing, and it would be one of my top choices as a place to play if I were restricted to a game.

OK, I've now heard both sides of the "separations" argument, and am going to do something I don't do very often: compromise. The current UD separation policy rather requires two separation requests when there are minor "bad" requests or adjustments. I'm going to reduce that number to three -- meaning that for some cases it will be easier to get a separation, but it won't always be as easy as one request. This compromise will probably anger all concerned, but I think it's a good idea.

In principle, I agree with you, Burch, and myself -- that if a separation is needed and it still takes two requests to get it, then a player must also consider the practical side of the matter -- on cases like the UD and UD issue. Too many games would be slowed down unnecessarily if they responded to request. And, as you point out, it would be unfair of us to make the judgment into the decision, even though John suggests this is the better way to do it. So, while I am with you philosophically, and am making separations just a little easier to obtain, I'm not going all the way on this one.

As a side note, this is only one of two UD proposals to which I am making a policy appeal. (You know the points to any UD who can get them, and I'll be sure to do so. The new policy will be reflected in my new, revised UD manual, which will be in the players' hands by the next game deadline.)

~~~~~

Shortly before Andy's sixteenth birthday on July 20, I sent out an UD card with, for sixty of you, a post card to be forwarded to Andy. Together, the sixty cards could be put together in a 6 by 10 rectangle to form a nice birthday card for Alex, with a nice birthday message and a picture of a birthday cake with lit candles. I chose the sixty people involved from as many of the UD as I could as possible, so that the big card would come from all over.

Well, sixty out of sixty was an awful lot to have sent, and I plan to make up the five missing cards so that it will be complete. Monday I'd like to take a picture of Alex with the card and submit it to the UD Back of World Records as the "most traveled birthday card" or something like that. That card came back from 30 different states, and the whole thing was in six colors. Thanks to those people whose cards came back. They were received from Andy, John, John Kelley, Jim Williams, Bill Placek, Bob Eisen, John Kador, Fred Davis, Dave Kleinman, Mark Busch, Jerry Lucas, Jeff Panches, Ty Hare, Tom Walker, Bruce Langley, Bob Wittmond, Chuck Afflerbach, Ben Brown, Peter Ansoff, Hank Berry, Ray Morrison, John Michalski, Ruth Glaspey, Ben Schilling, Al Ross, James Woodson, Jeff Bohn, Kerry Blant, Bob Nowerton, Nelson Heitman, Eric Koso, Mike Burch, Walter Kistner, Kevin Stone, Dan Stafford, Bob Busch, Jeff Albrecht, Bruce Jackson, and Walter Langley. Conrad Baumeister, Rick Ragdale, Steve Angle, Russ Woodson, John MacArthur, Andy Knight, Mike Jones, Dudley Kidd, George Laribe, Greg Allen, Mark Taylor, Jeff Brown, Joan Exton, Mike Holman, Tom Hurd, Jake Halverston, Gary Broughton, Steve Kim didn't get asked to forward a card. It was either because you were in the same state or you live in a state with too many other UD (such as New York or California) or most cases. What thought I'd let you all know how it turned out. (Sincerely, Andy)

Time for just a few random ramblings...Lake George was really great. We spent a beautiful week in a primitive, tiny cabin (no bathroom, no electricity, etc.) on the shore of the lake. The beach nearby was excellent. Canoes were free to us, and we rented a motorboat for the week. Billy Highchair, Mike Barno, Howie Lord and I stayed for the whole time; Howie's friend Ty and Alex each stayed for part of the week.

I just have to tell you all about Bill's sunburn -- it was one of the high points of the trip. He turned as red as a communist! (Sorry, Bill, I couldn't resist!)

But seriously, there was lots and lots of excitement -- swimming, boating, sitting around the campfire, lying on the beach at night, fishing, and so on. One of the best parts of the trip was the day that Bill, Mike, Alex and I took a large bottle of sweet wine out on the boat and cruised about three miles to a part of the lake which is in reality a big swamp. Leaving the open water, we ended up in a region full of lily pads, frogs, snakes, creepers, insects, and a gorgeous mountain backdrop. It was stunning. Alex, naturally, insisted that we steer the boat right up to the flowers and pick one of each color for her. This resulted in some perilously tight tangles between the lily pads and the boat's propellor, but we paddled out of danger each time.

Another day, Howie, Ty and I went fishing and smashed the boat on some rocks.

Alex is very proficient at cooking over a campfire. One night, we had some of Bill's Rochester steaks (almost as good as flank), with salad, baked potatoes, and sauteed mushrooms. Another night we had a terrific shish kabob. But the best one of all was the morning I was cooking some bacon over the fire, and accidentally spilled the hot grease all over my foot. Hey, guys, what on earth was so funny?!

Quotes of the week:

Alex (after dropping her allergy pill in the dark): "Oh, no! I can't find my pill!"

Mike (without a moment's hesitation): "All right, guys, better check your wallets..."

Other than that, ask Bill or Alex some time to describe me jumping up and down on the bed at midnight, pretending to be a maniac from Pak-ee-stan.

And boy does Alex snore loud! (Joke!) (Actually, Barno really does.)

Too soon, our time was up and we left. I took Mike back to his car in Albany, then took Alex home. Ended up staying over for a pool party the next day. It was a week I'll never forget.

KaneKon was great as well. Doomies there, aside from Eric, included Ed Wrobel and Kevin Stone. Also Brian Lorber. We played several different games, including quite a few rounds of Family Business, a very intriguing card game. One day we went down to the beach (remember the sand that came with this issue?) and the others buried me in the sand up to my chin; then Ed Wrobel made me admit that he was right in his double-orders dispute before they let me out. I plead coercion! Another time we were eating spaghetti at the house, when I mistakenly dumped a whole jar of red pepper on my serving (I had thought there was a sprinkle top on the jar, but was wrong). So, I mixed in the pepper and did the best I could. But the next morning wasn't the most pleasant of my life. And, I still wonder what Eric's sister's spaghetti tastes like...

We also went to a Mets game (won by the Expos, much to my delight and everyone else's disgust). The best part about this was the semi-literate usher who kept putting us in the wrong seat, which would subsequently be claimed by their rightful owners. There oughta be a law...

And, we played a face-to-face game that lasted till 1918, until it ended in a 5-way draw by stalemate. I was a 9-center Germany; part of a four-way alliance to stop a 17-center Turkey who at one point looked unstoppable. But we did it.

For a more detailed write-up of Lake George, see the latest issue of The Modern Patriot; for other views on KaneKon, see the next Amuln or Politaese, where I think Ed Wrobel plans to publish an interview with me (cringe...).

RIGEL (continued)

ENGLAND -- WAR ROOM, BRITISH DEFENSE MINISTRY: A weazy, frustrated Prime Minister stares bleary-eyed at the Strategy Board in the War Room. Sweat beads upon his brow. All key areas are being held -- for now. London has been spared -- for now -- and the North Sea refineries remain in production. It is, however, a matter of time before the forces arrayed against the fleet crush and destroy her valiant forces.

The few areas of attack left England are slowly, slyly being covered. British intelligence reveals the formation of German Fleet Kiel. A vague, tenuous idea of F North retreating to the Helgoland Bight (there to threaten 3 key German industrial centers) fades. The Russian fleet in Norway is sure to be heading to the Norwegian Sea. The BEF lies destroyed in Norway.

The only bright spot, the only part (albeit vital part) of the British war plan succeeds. France is held once again. 100% of her resources are required to hold against English fleet units. A brilliant (lucky?) piece of planning, that. Not if France is to aid in destroying England -- isn't it right that she, in turn, makes sure that France is next? No matter, I can't have her any more. Still it would be nice...

He turns away from the depressing sight, lights his pipe, and tries to remember the days of his youth. He remembers only the Academy where a grizzled old admiral used to teach him strategy and tactics. Wait a minute! Yes, it will work! An attack plan that, if it succeeds, will once again "freeze out" France and allow English centers to fall into Russian/German hands instead; and if they get their hands on them surely they wouldn't give them to a weakened France!

Yes, things are looking up. He'll sleep later. There are orders to be drawn up, plans to be made...

MOSCOW to BRUX: Could you send me the other players' orders as you receive them? It couldn't hurt and I don't think it's against the houserules.

BRUX to MOSCOW: Okay; my fee is \$10 per unit per season. But don't tell anyone!

FRANCE to ENGLAND: Paranoia -- it's a terrible thing to waste.

VENICE: Late last evening, the German High Command announced the untimely demise of Generalfeldmarshall Rudolf von Zimmernernann, commander-in-chief of the German occupation forces in Italy. Apparently, the Field-Marshal drowned after being knocked overboard from a gondola which had been rammed by another vessel of a similar type steered by a guerrilla gondolier. The German High Command has announced that appropriate measures will be taken and that henceforth the German military training program shall include swimming lessons.

MOSCOW to BOARD: I challenge all of thee to a Press Duel. Mr. Linsey thought that Mr. Reilly's press was some of the best ever in VD. And Mr. Linsey claims that JUPITER has the best press writers in VD. I intend to prove him wrong (that's not against the houserules, is it?). Next issue, be prepared.

REILLY to KLEIMAN: You want a press war? You're gonna get it...

REILLY to BRUX: The press wars are about to begin!

REILLY to BRUX: What's the longest press release you'd be willing to publish? How many pages of press would you be willing to publish for a single game? Do you mind if I send you some really long press releases in the near future?

BRUX to REILLY AND THE REST OF RIGEL: This is VD, there, sonny! You keep the quality of the press high, and I don't put no limit at all on the quantity. (One advantage of ditto -- I'm not paying by the page any more.) My typewriter and I are ready for your press wars. Let the verbiage fly!

The Story of 1968B

by Doug Beyerlein

This game was started by Stephen Hueston in his zine, The Lost Cnss. The announcement of the players and country assignments went out around New Year's Day. Bill Stewart, a local player, was assigned Austria and Rod Walker had Italy. Within the next couple of weeks Bill's father had a very serious heart attack and was placed in the hospital. Understandably, Stewart during this period lost all interest in Diplomacy and when the deadline for the Spring 1901 orders came the gamesmaster, Steve Hueston, had received no orders for Austria from Stewart. After having no luck in reaching Bill, Steve then called me and asked if I would take play of Austria. Without the slightest idea of who had made alliance offers to Stewart and who had not, I ordered Austrian units to defend against all three of my neighbors. My Spring 1901 orders were: F Trieste to Venice, A Vienna to Galicia, and A Budapest to Serbia.

Following the publication of the Spring 1901 moves I received a letter from Walker asking for an Italian-Austrian alliance. I accepted his offer at once as it appeared that my eastern neighbors were working together for my demise. As time went on our alliance was working well and it was just a matter of time before we had eliminated Turkey, Russia, and France. As we were the only two real powers on the board we knew that one or the other of us would win the game unless we decided to go with a two-way draw. Therefore, we agreed to the 17-17 split to keep peace in the alliance.

As time went on I was fighting the Germans and Walker was beating back the English. As I smashed my way into the German homeland I soon had reached the point where I had 15 centers to Rod's 13. Although I was committed to the tie, I started playing with the possibility of a stab and the quick gain of three supply centers to give me a victory. At this time in the game Hal Naus had taken over as gamesmaster while after a turnover of English and German players, Andy Phillips and Conrad von Metzke had taken over those two countries, respectively. After much thinking and debating with myself I decided to go with the stab of Italy and at this point I wrote to both Phillips and von Metzke and asked if they would help me if I stabbed Walker. This was a mistake. Conrad then mentioned my letter to Rod and Rod reported the fact back to me as Rod apparently thought that Conrad was trying to get Rod to break our alliance. Why Conrad never showed Rod my letter is beyond me. Anyway, my stab came on Fall 1913 when I took Venice and Kiel from Italy plus picking up Sweden from the Germans. That would have won the game except that Walker took Spain with support forcing my fleet to retreat. I had blown the stab for Fall 1913, but by Fall 1914 I knew that I could pick up three additional Italian centers, thus guaranteeing my victory. It was soon after the stab when a letter from Walker arrived. The letter has to be one of the best -- if not the best -- diplomatic letters ever written. It directly pierced my conscience for doing such an evil deed to one of my closest friends in Diplomacy. It was quite a while before I could sit down and write a reply, but finally I did. Rod then replied to that letter and asked for a continuation of our alliance and the draw.

I now had another very difficult decision to make and wished that the game had ended in Fall 1913 with my stab. I finally decided to tell Rod that I was going ahead with the Austrian win. The very day that I was going to write the letter I received Barataria #1 from John McCallum announcing the start of 1972BD. As unbelievable as it may seem once again I was to play Austria and Walker had Italy! I knew that I would be forced into a war with Italy in 1972BD unless I promised Walker a draw in 1968B. Therefore, I told Rod that I had reconsidered and would give him the draw in 1968B. We then concluded an alliance in 1972BD that was initially aimed at Walt Buchanan's Turkey -- but then that is another story.

I was then faced with the problem of wanting the win in 1968B, but was unable to

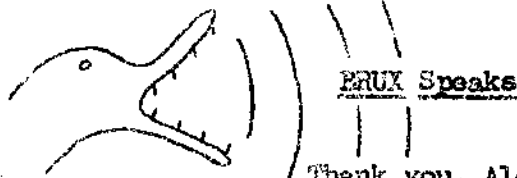
produce it myself. In '68B Rod wanted very much to annihilate Phillips's England and the key to doing that was the English Channel. Therefore, I wrote Andy Phillips and described the situation where if he would let Walker throw the English fleet out of the English Channel Andy could refuse to retreat it. This would give Austria the majority of the units on the board (the victory criterion used in the original GRI rulebook) and the win. Phillips agreed to the plan as otherwise he would end up with zero centers and this way he would at least survive. Now we just had to wait for Rod to attack the English Channel with support and the game would be over.

Finally in Spring 1915 (September 1972) Walker smashed into the Channel and now all Andy had to do was to refuse to retreat the fleet. It was done. But then Naus called for Fall 1915 orders because by his house rules a game could only end at the end of a game year after the winter builds and removals, even though the annihilation came during the summer retreat season. Anyway, Walker did not send in his Fall 1915 orders, von Metzke moved his German fleet into England's Edinburgh (giving Germany a build, but nowhere to build), and I had officially won 1968B without attacking Italy. This was my seventh win and was only marred by the news that Rod Walker was dropping out of the Diplomacy hobby. After such a good battle it was too bad to see him go.

And that is the story of 1968B. Now I bet you would like to know how I won 1968AD as Germany.

((Would we? Of course we would. I'd be honored to print that story as well. Good writing like yours is at a premium here, Doug. Seven free issues.))

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Alex Lord has decided to discontinue her column in The Voice of Doom. There are many reasons for this decision, but the major one is that she is about to begin a new school year, and things will be very busy for her now. Additionally, My job in Pittsfield is far away from Greenville, and so I won't be able to see Alex and her family as often as I used to.

Back in Voice of Doom #58, over a year and a half ago, Alex and one of her friends wrote a humorous piece called "Soggy Peas", describing what it was like to have BRUX as a teacher. This was very favorably received, and after reading her mail following the article's publication, Alex asked me if she could write a monthly column for Voice of Doom. I agreed happily, and Alex's Column was born. Since then there have been 23 issues of her column published in VD.

The thing that I appreciated about Alex's Column most of all, and I think a lot of Doomies agree, is that it was a welcome relief from the house rules debates, the controversy, the discussions of double-ordered units, and the Great Diplomatic Coups. Alex's Column is where Doomies would go when they wanted to read some good, light-hearted humor. It added a flavor to the zine that hadn't been there before. Alex became a hobby personality in her own right. Who could possibly forget her classic article about the day at the amusement park, or her story about BRUXCon last winter, when she got to meet other Doomies for the first time. Which is not to say that her articles were always light-hearted: the "hunting" article in VD #68 last November led to two follow-up articles and dozens of comments in letters from the readers. The discussion started by that article is still going on to this day (see Walker's and Michalski's letters this ish.). Alex, your column will be missed in VD. Hopefully someday you'll be able to write for us again. But, for all the entertainment you provided in these pages, thank you very much.

My First DipCon -- the Untold Story

by Steve "Cupcake" Knight

The major problem with trying to get to my first DipCon was funding; I fretted about it for at least a week after deciding to try to take up the Midwestern Mob on their offer of sharing a ride in a rented Winnebago. Eventually, however, I saw my mom off at the depot, and after the Arabs to whom I was selling her assured me that she'd be treated nicely, I took their shekels and purchased my bus ticket to Milwaukee.

Paul Rautenberg picked me up Thursday evening, but plans had changed; instead of going to watch the Brewers demolish the Minnesota Twinks ("farm team for the majors"), Paul, Mark Frueh, and I went to Zur Krone, a tavern that served many varieties of imported beer. There we met Konrad Baumelster (and several others who don't play Dip) and spent the evening sampling Angel Ale and playing some nickel-and-dime dice game. Mark was not, however, content to restrict himself to such social activities, and spent more than an hour conducting diplomacy with a Milwaukee player from the bar's pay phone. We topped off the evening with three (or more; things blur) rounds of dice against the bar for straight shots of imported liqueur.

All of this, of course, put us in an excellent frame of mind for the next day. Mary Peters' and James Wall's arrival heralded an expedition which entailed the outlay of large amounts of cash in exchange for large amounts of supplies, primarily liquid, for the trip to Detroit itself. Dale Bakken's arrival heralded loading up the rented Winnebago, picking up Baumelster, and heading towards Chicago to pick up Russ Rusnak. With the full complement at hand, we started in on the card-playing.

It was while playing cards that my first step towards infamy was made inadvertently. I had just pulled one of my routinely brilliant card plays, resulting in the loss of a dollar or two, and yelled at myself for it. "Knight, you fool! Cupcake!" Fiendish grins appeared on the faces of the Mob: "CUPCAKE?!"

Thus are hobby nicknames born.

We finally arrived in Detroit about 2:30 a.m., after depleting most of the two dozen sandwiches we had brought and most of our beer, and proceeded to spend a good half hour finding parking, dodging Minotaurs, and looking for the Book Cadillac Hotel in the middle of the city that Daedalus built. But wouldn't BRUX, Hamlin, Williams, and Luedi be asleep? No, I was assured; it was THE ORIGINS BEER BLAST, in great big fucking capital letters, and spirits were no doubt still high. Plans started circulating to bust in and pour beer on Luedi's head en masse to chastise him for not showing up at MadCon I, but were eventually discarded by all but Rusnak.

We did, however, manage to make it to the hotel and sneak in with a half case of Pabst; after being eyed by the desk clerk, we got Garry Hamlin's room number, called their room, and actually woke the four of them up. (Ask Jim Williams for his impression of Hamlin answering the phone at 4:00 a.m.) They were obviously recovering from the excesses of THE ORIGINS BEER BLAST (in great big fucking capital letters), right? What room number? 2037? Okay.

So we trooped up to the 20th floor with our Pabst and clustered around 2037, eight guys more than a little punchy and not quite a lot drunk from the long ride. BOOMBOOMBOMBOOMBOMBOOMBOMBOOM! "All right, open up! Let's get this party back on track!"

Silence. A small voice: "...who is it?"

"Landshark!" "Candygram!" Laughter. Pause.

BOOMBOOMBOMBOOMBOMBOOMBOMBOOM! "Hey, c'mon, guys -- let us in!"

More silence.

"What the hell -- if they're gonna be pricks about this..." We decided to start our own little party in the hall if those jerks weren't going to let us in. Beer was quickly passed around as we started to grumble.

BOOMBOOMBOOMBOOMBOOMBOOMBOOMBOOMBOOMBOOM! "Alright, you assholes, what is this?" another pause. The door finally opened, revealing a thin guy -- Hamlin, right? -- standing in front of what was a well-kept area, but obviously a single room. What the hell...?

"Yeah, what do you guys want?"

"Hi, uh, Carry. Is this where the beer blast is? Where's Bruce Lindsay? Mark Luedi? Jim Williams?"

Now this guy was really cool. "No, uh, gee, they never showed up. I heard that there was something going on up on the, uh, 29th floor, though."

"Oh, uh, okay; we'll check it out."

He walked away bewildered, called Hamlin again. 2307? "Those fuckers told us the wrong room number!" Plans were quickly resurrected to pour beer on Luedi's head as we charged up three floors.

The plans were, however, never realized, as the arrival of actual beer in room 2307 was greeted with such delight that it was immediately evident that THE ORIGINS BEER BLAST, which was supposed to still be going on at 4:00 a.m., had lost its fucking capital letters and degenerated instead into the original non-beer non-blast. With the help of our meager supply of beer, though, the room quickly became very social as everyone got introduced and started gossiping. All the excitement proved too much for Hamlin, who promptly fell asleep; this delighted Wall, who equally as promptly dubbed Hamlin "Hobby Pet Rock." (You can all read about it in James Wall's forthcoming book, How to Name Everything in the Postal Diplomacy Hobby, coming out later this year from Pappy Press in Madison, Wisconsin.)

The next day brought the Panel Discussion, the opportunity to meet a wide selection of Hobby luminaries, and the Tournament. I drew Russia to Carl Russell's Turkey, and stabbed him first turn. We patched things up, however, when it was apparent that Bill Becker's Italy wasn't as gung-ho on attacking Carl as I had hoped, and proceeded to waste the nondescript Austrian. Hans Peters' Germany managed to shift alliances with blinding speed, which kept the west sufficiently confused so that I didn't have to worry about Don Swartz' England, and our R/T alliance didn't really see any organized opposition.

The alliance drew some notice from James Hall when he stopped by, ever quick to name something else. "You allied with 'Greampuff' Russell?! What a pair -- Cupcake and Greampuff, the Confectionary Alliance." Thanks, James.

By game-end, though, I had somehow managed to luck my way to a sixteen center Russia. (So it was a four-way draw, okay, shoot me.) Swartz, Becker, and Russell. "Nice game." Compliments from real Dip players! Oh, wow!

Hoinowski: "You know, I think you've got a shot at Best Russia." Oh, boy!

Kane: "Hey, you'll probably be on the top board tomorrow!" Oh, shit.

Try to understand. I had come to Detroit hoping that I would simply survive the stupid tournament; to find myself on the top board would be alarmingly better than I had ever dreamed. Visions started appearing in my head of someone taping a big sign on my back reading "I'M NEW HERE, STAB ME" just after I drew Italy against Birsan, Kendter, Byrne, Masters, Buchanan, and Dittus. No matter that only one of those six was actually there, as far as I knew; my paranoia cared little about its target.

This colored the rest of the evening for me; I was jittery and irritable, and not even the privilege of sitting next to Mark Borch when everyone went to Greentown after the DipCon Society meeting could calm me down. I ended up back at BRUX & Co.'s room, along with most of the rest of the Mob. One weird way to finish the evening -- a hoped-for Dip game never materialized, so I wrote a promised letter home while watching a four-way Gunboat game. Jim Williams explored his freshly-purchased copy of "Titan" with some others; BRUX didn't take part in this, but he did let us know he still existed by lying on his bed, waving his arms and legs from time to time,



and morning. "Sasatgooyis" (Don't ask me...) Things finally simmered down about 4:00, when I fell into a fitful sleep, wondering what the second round of the tournament would bring tomorrow.

This presaged the only war on the weekend, which occurred the next morning when I failed at my bid to be known as the "Hobby Alarm Clock." A reconstruction of events after the fact indicated that something on this order happened: Lundin's alarm had been set for 7:30, to allow us all plenty of time to get to the 9:00 start. When it went off, Lundin hit the alarm, but not a one of us stirred. I, however, by doing for a few minutes, woke up with a start, immediately thought, "Tournament! Top Board! Oh, shit!", gathered up my stuff, and stumbled out of the room half asleep. Talk about confusion.

It wasn't until they started calling names for the second round that a semblance of rationality played the clouds. "Frico, Lindsey!" No answer. I looked around the room -- where the hell was FRIC? Where the hell were the rest of those guys? Oh, shit... I found a pay phone and called the room, where my fears were confirmed they were all still asleep, and I was willing to put some money on the fact that I wasn't going to be their favorite person that day...

I returned to the tournament room just in time to have Mark Peters greet me with a big smile. "Hey, Opeaku, you're on the top board!" Oh, shit -- it was turning out to be one hell of a great day, let me tell you. Things looked up a bit when I drew France; Fred Townsend was England, and he got together with myself and Eric Mack's Germany to put together yet another western triple. This was fine until Eric started getting a bit nervous about taking on the brunt of the fighting while England had a relatively easy time of it in Scandinavia, so I went ahead with a side at the latter. This gave an all-clear for Al Pearson's Turkey and the Austrian (can't recall the name) to get together and harass Friso Lorber's Italy. One or two kept looking on mine and Eric's part regarding trying to wipe out the last British star in Berkshire, so ended up with an *11/12* four-day. Not bad, especially since the game was under scrutiny for a top board.

The game itself, though, didn't even come close to my unexcusable fears, which was a relief. It was interesting, however, trying to juggle diplomacy on the board with the real-life diplomacy that had arisen because of the "Alarm Clock" controversy. Mark used some over and expressed some understandable annoyance. I was feeling guilty because a couple of his players, Mark Frisk in particular, had had some very decent matches from the first day that were to diminish because they didn't get to their games on time. So what the hell could I say?

If I were Shep Rose, I suppose I could have said, "Ha, it was all part of my plan to keep you guys out of the second round so I could go better!" If I were WPA, I could have said, "Sorry, but you had not explicitly requested walk-up insurance, in accordance with Article 27." If I were Friso, maybe, I could have said, "Go fuck yourselves, I'm not your man, and it's not my fault if you can't get up on your own." If I were a bold-faced liar and assumed Diplomacy over into my personal life I could have said, "I tried and tried to wake you guys up, but you just wouldn't." Or perhaps, "Well, I got up before your alarm went off; I wasn't even there, and you're damned lucky I called you at all."

But no, O'waa, so I could only say, "I'm sorry guys. I fucked up," and feel guilty and take some shit. It's a bitch trying to be a nice guy in this hobby.

As far as the tournament setup went, however, my two first-days were, to my amazement, enough for seventh place and a 2-1 tie certificate. I had not only survived my baptism by fire, but had come through it well enough to have been placed second on the way home. "Guys, if I hear you name, 'But I'm only a model' ever again, I'm going to put your teeth down your throat, okay?"

By my mind, though, the tournament itself was merely icing on the cake. The real thing about Diplomacy was, in a word, the people and the overall watching the

stretched civility overlooking the fence. Everyone secondary to the people's struggle with  
to the Mykon Committee after he let it be known that, "By all means would like my  
liberal." Practising with all the people who were only people in a good nature, and  
seeing how their postal persons compare to the available personality. And, above  
all, making friends with a bunch of outcasts. This is one half of a really good

(Indeed it is. What a spectacular gathering of articles there was. It was, of a  
very appropriate time too; the past two years I wrote long articles about "The  
East" (1961) and "Origins" (1962) but this year the tangy for the "East" and "Origins" articles really filled the bill for me.

I like the point Steve makes at the end, when he says that the rest part of  
hippies is the socialising with all the people that we mostly live through the world.  
I agree entirely. In fact, I'd go so far as to say that I could probably enjoy  
hippies without ever playing a game, which of course I wouldn't want to.

Thanks, Steve, and see you from time to time for an extremely well done article. You  
can sleep on my chair for good old looking explicit (and not so explicit)

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Sometimes, when someone is saying something, you conversationalist, usually a point  
where that person has absolutely nothing useful left to say. (The same what I mean  
I mean, the guy might run out of topics, or perhaps he has been told a single topic  
to death, or perhaps he's just plain boring to listen to. Sometimes such people tend  
to go on and on when you wish that, at least, they'd start up. I know you've all  
seen examples of this -- even some publishers occasionally exhibit this fault, but  
you get the picture, don't you? I mean at least ought just go on and on and the  
publisher just doesn't want to end it because he's making so much out of it. He  
himself speak, or in some cases, making himself type, even though he has no use  
material of interest left or publish for the world. I don't know you, but I mean  
people like that.

Remember, please, to return the post enclosed with this issue. I need your  
reply. Also, I just noticed that I never closed the quote in the "East" article  
and I like to think that I start. So here goes.

Steve

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