

THE VOICE OF DOOM

#86

November 15, 1983

Circulation: 128

by BRUX

SEX!

Now that I have the undivided attention of every one of you (except perhaps Eric Kane, but give him a year or two), I have some Very Important Announcements to make. By the time you get this, I will have moved to 73 Ashuelot St., Apt. 3, Dalton, MA 01226. My new phone number is (413) 684-0567. Please note these changes. Mail sent to my old address will still get to me as my mother still lives there, but it will take longer and orders sent there might not be in my hands by the deadline.

Speaking of which, here's the second Very Important Announcement, for all players here: I will be at my office's Christmas dinner next deadline and will not be home at all on December 9 to take orders by phone. So do not bother trying to call me at the last minute, and I won't take your orders after I do get in. You are warned.

Further announcements are of significantly less importance. Circulation hits an all-time high with this issue; the previous mark was 127. And the 128th Doomic is... Kathy Byrne! For those of you who haven't heard it yet from me or Kathy, we have been able to work out our previous disagreements and we are now very good friends. In fact, I have had occasion recently to discover that Kathy can be very generous and caring toward someone she likes. Consider the BRUX-Byrne feud over. Permanently. Ha. Did I say these announcement were getting less important? Nahhh...

And that brings me to the next subject -- ByrneCon. Kathy is expecting upwards of 30 people to show up at her place on Thanksgiving weekend (Friday thru Sunday) for three days of fun and games. I'll be driving down with the upstate contingent. Other attendees will include Mike Mazzer from California, Bob Olson from Kansas, probably Jeff Noto from Florida, and just about the entire Northeast hobby. Kathy sez that all hobbyists are invited and welcome, and I wouldn't miss it for the world. Why not come and join us if you can (and do not bring a squirt gun)! Oops, that reminds me that Gary Coughlan (Tennessee) will also be there. This thing is going to make Origine look tiny by comparison!

In case anyone hasn't gotten VD #85 yet, please be patient -- it was sent by third class mail and will take a while. Players got their results by first class, of course.

The Voice of Doom is a journal of postal Diplomacy published every now and then by Bruce Linsey, 73 Ashuelot St., Apt. 3, Dalton, MA 01226. Phone (413) 684-0567. Subs are 10 issues for \$5.00. Standbys are wanted. There are no game openings, nor will there be any in the foreseeable future. Your humble editor is crazy.

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The deadline for all games contained herein is December 9, 1983.

Back to the topic of cons for a moment. BRUXCON II is definitely on. I will be holding it at my new apartment beginning Tuesday, December 27, any time after 5PM. This will be a small, informal gathering for the purpose of socializing, playing games, maybe a little collating if I decide to do a mid-monthly around then (-), and just plain having fun. All Doomies are invited and welcome. Probable attendees at the moment are Mike Barno, Eric Kane, Alex and Howie Lord, Steve Hutton, and Jim Makuc. I'll probably have to work on Wednesday, but that's OK; there'll be plenty there for everyone to do. Plus, one evening we're going to go out to the New England Chowder House, a restaurant two miles from me which serves the most delicious lobster bisque I've ever tasted. You'll see what I mean if you come. Please let me know if you plan to show up. Bring games! And sleeping bags...

Then, during the day Friday, we'll head down to Kathy's place for the New Year's Eve ByrneCon. Now where else can you go to two cons for the price of one?!

I hope everyone read the Cyclic Article in the anniversary issue from beginning to end.

By the way, perhaps the funniest article I've ever read in a dipzine was Steve Hutton's "Wizard of Dip" play in the latest issue of No Fixed Address. I was down at Kathy's place when I read it along with everyone else there, and we were all in tears with laughter. Try No Fixed Address -- send a SASE for a sample and tell Steve I sent you to 704 Brant St., London, Ontario, CANADA N5Y 3N1.

You may also wish to write to Rod Walker for a sample of Erehwon, a zine which folded seven years ago with issue #99 and which Rod is now reviving. #100 costs two bucks, though. Rod lives at 1273 Crest Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024.

The Stocks and Bonds game I was running outside of VD has ended in a win for Howie Proskin. It kinda dragged toward the end, but I think we all had fun anyway. Order of finish was 1. Howie Proskin 2. Bob Osuch 3. Rob Lowes 4. Bryan Jurkowski 5. Jake Halverstadt 6. Jeff Noto 7. Rob Proskin 8. Rob Jenkins 9. Gary Linsey 10. Konrad Baumeister. Brian Linsey dropped out on the last turn for failing to submit orders two consecutive turns. My own brother! Just thing of the razzing I'm going to take from this! Well, enough chatter; let's get the games out of the way. Another one bites the dust this month...



NEPTUNE

192X

DÉJÀ VU! TURKEY LOSES GREECE THROUGH A MISORDER -- AND RUSSIA SWEEPS TO VICTORY!

Fall 1909

- ENGLAND (Duarte): F Nwy-BAR, F Swe-NWY (F NTH S), F EDI S F Nth, F DEN-Swe, F England-Bre (amb), F ENG U, F Iri-MID, F Por-Spa(nc) (ann)
- FRANCE (Conlon): F Mid-POR (A SPA S), A Gas-BRE, A Bel-PIC, F Nwg-NAT, F BAL-Swe
- ITALY (Jedry): F Lyo-MAR, F VEN H (A PIE S), F Ion-ADR
- RUSSIA (Kane): A ARM-Smy, F Ank-COW (F BLA S), A Ser-GRE (A BUL S), A TYO-Ven (A TRI S), A Ruh-BEL (F HOL S), A Mun-KIE (A BER S), F STP(nc)-Nwy, A Boh-MUN
- TURKEY (Schmunk): F SMY prepares to be next (H), F Con-Bul (amb) (d; r Aeg, OTB), A Gre S F Con-Bul (amb) (d; r Alb, OTB)

Supply Center Chart:

- ENGLAND: Home, ~~Yat~~, ~~Yat~~, Swe, Nwy, Den 6, remove 1
- FRANCE: Par, ~~Yat~~, BRE, Spa, ~~Yat~~, ~~Yat~~, ~~Yat~~, POR 4, remove 2
- ITALY: Home, Tur, MAR 5, build 1
- RUSSIA: Home, Rum, Ber, Vie, Bud, Ank, Ser, Mun, Kie, Bul, CON, GRE, TRI, BEL, HOL 18, build 5 (room for 3)
- TURKEY: ~~Yat~~, Smy, ~~Yat~~ 1, remove 2

((NEPTUNE continues next page))

NEPTUNE (continued)

Game Notes: The proposals made last season both failed. "England" is not accepted as a valid term for the English Channel, though I did allow "North" to pass this time, Mark, as it was the only legal interpretation...

The Turkish move to Bulgaria is ambiguous because the coast was not specified; therefore the Russian support coming from Bul is not cut and he takes Greece and wins the game. Somehow this all seems fitting...

Congratulations, Eric! Yours is only the second 18-center victory in VD, and I doubt if anyone besides me remembers who got the other one. End game statements are due next month, and I hope y'all will submit them.

Mark Berch trivia dept.: is this the first Russian 18-center win in which Russia did not own any English or Scandinavian centers?

Game-end Chart:

	1901	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	
AUSTRIA	5	4	3	2	0	-	-	-	-	Game: 1982X
ENGLAND	5	5	4	4	4	4	6	8	6	Zine: <u>The Voice of Doom</u>
FRANCE	5	5	6	8	9	8	8	6	4	GM: Bruce Linsey
GERMANY	5	4	3	0	-	-	-	-	-	
ITALY	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	
RUSSIA	6	8	9	10	12	13	12	13	18	wins!
TURKEY	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	3	1	

Cast of Players:

- AUSTRIA: Tim Lynch (out 1905)
- ENGLAND: Mark Duarte
- FRANCE: Jeff Noto (resigned S'03), Pat Conlon
- GERMANY: Lanny Myers (dropped S '02), Brian Orloff (out 1904)
- ITALY: Craig Cameron (resigned S '06), Edmund Jedry
- RUSSIA: Eric Kans (won 1909)
- TURKEY: Ed Wrobel (resigned Su '06), Rob Schaunk

Final Press:

ST. PETERSBURG: Part III, the Return of the Cossacks:

Heavy breathing could be heard. The sound was of pure evil through and through and it seemed to sound like the noise one makes when using an oxygen mask. There could be no doubt about it, the source had to be the Evil Dark Lord, Darth Vader -- the scum of Europe, as he was affectionately known. An alarm buzzer went off on the control board in front of him indicating that a message was coming through from the Western front. Vader put away the dirty magazine he had been reading (and panting over) and switched on the visi-com screen.

"Yes, Admiral Ozog? What have you to report?"

"Victory, Sir! Total and complete. Our defenses have been fully secured and we have gone on the offensive in the Holland and Belgium sectors. There is one thing tho..."

"Well, what is it?"

"We can't seem to locate Obi-wan-Conlon. We thought he might be hiding somewhere in the North and saw many enemy ships, but we detected no intelligent life aboard."

((NEPTUNE continues next page))

NEPTUNE (continued)

"It must have been my son, Duarte. He certainly isn't intelligent, heh heh. Have you checked the Burgundian sector?"

"Not yet, Sir."

"Well, as soon as you have mopped up in the Belgian sector, turn South towards Burgundy. There will be no stopping us this time..."

VENICE to SEV: NONE shall pass!!!...NONE shall pass!!!.....

BRUX to VENICE: Yeah, but none needed to!

BOZEMAN ((TURKEY)) to GREAT NECK: Congratulations, Kane. Now I know how futile it is the stand before the power of the force. I hope the empress will be pleased with the subjugation of Asia Minor. And now in honor of your victory, I'd like everyone to join me in a chorus of, "My Land is Your Land."

ROME to PARIS: No need to apologize, Pat; what was done was done. You had no other choice. Don't take my comments last issue seriously. I only said those things to keep you guessing this season until my last lines of defense are established against King Kane. Now that they are, I will fully support your efforts against QUEEN DUARTE. However, your apparent collaborations with Russia have me concerned. Please be advised that my future movements to Marseilles are PURELY DEFENSIVE. I cannot run the risk of having support cut via Marseilles to Piedmont.

RUSSIA to ITALY: What do you mean Pat blundered? I think he has been playing very well! I had a hunch this particular stop-the-leader campaign wouldn't last. I'm lucky it didn't. It would have been a slow, painful death I was not looking forward to. I was curious to see how England was going to get any further than St. Petey's without any armies, though! When he built those two fleets in 1907, I was pretty sure I had the thing won. It has been fun (at least for me!). No hard feelings? Et aussi, "Le Francais mort en cette guerre."? Mais non! Vive La France!

MOSCOW to LONDON: Not bad, pal, you've done well for a novice. Think of this game as a learning experience. I really am sincerely impressed 'cause I figured you'd just drop out when I stabbed, but you hung in there. It might have been a good idea to build a few armies, though...

WALES to ALLIES: We have weathered nearly all ill winds, friends. There is one particularly noxious breath from France which mars a good game. Little Patsy Conlon wants to take his marbles and go home.

BRUX to WALES: What are you, sick? You forgot your "shalom"!

ROME to LONDON: Shalom you...

S...sline sucking scoundrel,
H...hidsoualy herpetic hottentot,
A...aids afflicted anus-face,
L...leading lady of Liney Land,
O...orangutan brain,
M...maggot mouth.

Hey Queenie, you batch of worm meat, you are the biggest scumbag in this game. It is you who lost our war against Russia. I should have moved west against you earlier, when you took Brest. But I feared King Con would misinterpret my movements. Now your navies will face off with mine. PREPARE TO MEET THY DOOM!!!

BRUX to NEPTUNE: I think I'm glad this game's over.

MOSCOW to PARIS: I don't know why you did it, but thanks! I'd like to think I had something to do with your decision but I guess you viewed me as the lesser of two evils, eh?

PARIS to BRUX: Where's this monster issue I keep hearing about? One hundred and seventy pages?

BRUX to PARIS: Hub? Oh, that. If you don't have it by now, let me know.

((NEPTUNE continues next page))

MOSCOW to SMYRNA: You fought well and your press is most entertaining. I hope to meet you in some future diplomatic encounter. I assure you my communication level will be much higher than in this game. I honestly didn't see the need to write in this game. Maybe I'm wrong but I'm satisfied with the result. I hope you bear no hard feelings either, eh?

WORLD PRESS ((via ITALY)): Italian marines have seized the strategic towns of Trent and Pola in western Trieste. Each town lies 80 kilometers away from Trieste, which is within shelling range of Italian heavy artillery. The well-supplied Italian forces are reported to be "dug-in", and a new type of combat has been introduced:

TRENCH WARFARE. A Major artillery duel between Italy and Russia ensues; casualties are high.

Meanwhile, Italian marines have landed in Marseilles destroying the Franco-Italian transit. No casualties are reported. Relations with France are at best -- neutral. ESKISEHIR, TURKEY -- 17 OCTOBER 1909: The sounds of a rooster crowing echoed through the hills as a small troupe of horsemen ascended a ridge overlooking the valley. The early morning light, filtering through an overcast sky, revealed five men, the leader of whom was noticeably perturbed as his horse delicately picked its way through the loose rock. At last, they had reached their objective and were able to spy out local geography.

Below them was the road leading north to Adapazari, and from there to Istanbul. Normally empty in these early morning hours, it was now full of refugees fleeing southwards to Eskisehir and the Turkish interior as Russian marines occupied their beloved homeland. Suggestions of artillery fire followed them even this far inland as a vague drumming sound penetrated into these secluded hills.

The horsemen remained quiet as they gazed down upon the escaping masses, each trying to contain his emotions and to present an impassive face. Occasionally, however, a tear could be seen rolling down onto a bearded cheek as their attempts failed.

At last, the leader of the party spoke. "Well, generals, it appears that my request for a negotiated surrender has failed. Already, the Russians have completely taken the Bosphorus and will soon penetrate into these hills."

"What would you have us do, Great Sultan?" asked one of the four. "You proclaimed a year ago that the situation was hopeless, and that this was inevitable."

The Sultan replied, "I can have you do nothing, Mardin. We have no troops with which to attack the infidel. All we can do is hope; hope that Allah will lead his people in this time of sorrow until the Russian yoke is broken, hope that the occupation forces will soon tire of raping and pillage, hope that the indomitable Turkish spirit remains ever true in the face of oppression. No, we can no longer fight back; we can only show the invaders that in subjugation, we are a better people than they as masters."

Heads nodded as the generals agreed that the nation was only now beginning the true test of character. The coming years would do more to demonstrate the real patriotism and loyalty of the Turkish people than would have the military victories of the past.

The Sultan chatted softly with his generals for a while longer, and then the troupe turned and left the summit of the ridge. Cautiously they picked their way downhill toward the road; the Sultan had desired a closer look at his beloved subjects, heart-broken as he and they might be. The continued sound of artillery fire haunted the air above them as they descended into the stillness of the valley floor. Only the squeaking of leather and the sounds of hoofs striking rock disturbed the quiet.

After a half hour's riding they halted in a field along which the road passed. Before them stretched a line of refugees, all walking slowly as if they had left behind something which was dear to them but they were reluctant to forget it. Men

pulled handcarts overladen with various household goods as women walked alongside carrying a baby or an especially precious item. The atmosphere was somber enough that even the children did not hop and skip, but emulated the seriousness of their parents. They were the dispossessed.

The Sultan and his generals watched this sorry procession until one of the refugees, a fellow with a great bandage tied around his head, noticed them and bowed to them along the roadside. He had recognized the watchers and made his obeisance; then he rejoined a young woman in a ragged shawl which did little to protect her from the chill autumn air. They rejoined the masses and continued.

Angrily, the Sultan cried out, "Oh, Allah! I have failed in my duty to my people and still they would follow me. What have I done to deserve such pure loyalty? Such people should not suffer as they have." He spun his horse about and galloped back to the military camp at Eskisehir, the generals following at a respectful distance so his thoughts would be uninterrupted by their intrusion.

A drizzling rain began to fall and the dusty road quickly became a muddy morass, slowing the progress of the refugees. Many would die in the ensuing days from the pneumonia brought on by rain-soaked clothing frozen in night air.

The pomping sound of Russian artillery completed the desolate scene. BRUX to TURKEY: And with that marvelous bit of press, the war comes to a close. Thank for the entertainment!

O R I O N

1982Y

GERMANS CONVOY INTO LIVONIA! IS RUSSIA ON THE ROPES?

Spring 1910

ENGLAND (Ansoff): A Swe-FIN, F NWG-Nth, F NWY H, F MID S FRENCH F Por
 FRANCE (Bennett): F ENG S ENGLISH F Mid, A BUR S A Mar, A Gas-SPA (F POR S, A MAR S)
 GERMANY (Wittmond): A Ber-LVN (F BAL C), A SIL-Pru, A MUN-Sil, A RUH-Mun, F NTH U
 ITALY (Howerton): F Lyo-WES (F TYR S), F Spa(sc) S F Lyo-Wes (d; r Lyo, OTB);
 A Ven-TRI, A TYO-Vie, A PIE-Mar
 RUSSIA (Beyerlein): A MOS-Sev, A UKR-Gal, A WAR-Gal, A PRU-Sil
 TURKEY (Leritte): A Ank-ARM, A Con-BUL, F Smy-AEG, A Gal-BUD (A VIE S), A RUM-Sev,
 F NAP-Tyr, F Wes-TUN (F NAF S)

Press:

BERLINER ZEITUNG (EXCERPT): Now that the Ottomans have realized their error and forsaken their alliance with the enemies of the Reich, the time has come to begin the establishment of the new order in Europe, a new order in which Germany will at last find her true place among the nations. Already, elite elements of our glorious armed forces are moving to the offensive, particularly against the Russian scum.

A glorious future awaits us!

PARIS: The Chamber of Deputies has been woken up. The generals and admirals of the Third Republic have been summoned from their various retreats and mistresses. The Foreign Ministry has restocked their stamp supply. The drôle de guerre is over!

BERLIN to LONDON AND CONSTANTINOPLE: Interested in a side bet as to who gets to Moscow first?

PEGASUS

1982Z

LOOK AT ALL THEM LITTLE AUSTROPHILES RUNNING AROUND WITH ONLY ONE CENTER!

Spring 1909

- AUSTRIA (Husk): A TYO S GERMAN A Bud-Vie (NSC), A VEN S A Tyo, A TRI S A Tyo, A Bul-CON (F AEG S), A Ser-BUL, F Eas-SMY
- ENGLAND (Halverstadt): F Mid-POR, F Hol-MUN, F IRI-Mid, F BEL-Pic (F ENG S)
- FRANCE (Chatfield): A Mar-BUR (A PAR S, A PIC S), A BRE S A Pic, F Tun-WES, F Lvp-WAL, F SPA(sc)-Mid
- GERMANY (MacFarlane): A Bud-SER
- RUSSIA (Meianer): F StP(ne)-NWY, F HLG H, A VIE-Tyo (A MUN S), A SIL S A Vie-Tyo (NSU), A GAL-Vis, A WAR-Gal, A RIN-Bur, F Sev-ELA, A UKR-SEV, A SMY-Con, F Con-Bul(sc) (ann), A RUM S F Gon-Bul(sc), A BON U
- TURKEY (Punches): F ANK S AUSTRIAN A Bul-Con

Press: None. You guys are being boring.

QUASAR

1982AE

THREE POWERS TAKE RUSSIA'S LAST THREE CENTERS!

Fall 1908

- AUSTRIA (Orloff): A Tyo-VEN (A TRI S), A Vie-TYO, A Bud-SER
- ENGLAND (Glaspey): A MOS S GERMAN A Pru-War, A STP S A Mos, A Hol-KIE (F BAL S), F Den-HLG, F NTH H, F NWG H, F BAR H, F BOT H
- FRANCE (Burd): A SIL S GERMAN A Pru-War, A Mun-BOH, A Kie-MUN, F TYR-Rom, F LYO-Tus, F TUN-Ion
- GERMANY (Howerton): A Pru-WAR
- ITALY (Kettman): F TUS-Lyo, A Ven-PIE, A NAP-Rom
- RUSSIA (Lansing): NMR! A War U (d; r Gal, Lvn, OTB), A UKR U
- TURKEY (Sweeney): F Adr-ION (F GRE S, F EAS S), A Con-RUM (F ELA C), A SEV-Mos

Supply Center Chart:

- AUSTRIA: Home, Ser, VEN 5, build 1
- ENGLAND: Home, Bel, Nwy, Den, Hol, StP, Swe, KIE, MOS 11, build 2
- FRANCE: Home, ~~Kie~~, Por, Spa, Tun, Mun 7, build 1
- GERMANY: Ber, WAR 2, build 1
- ITALY: Rom, Nap, ~~War~~ 2, remove 1
- RUSSIA: ~~War~~, ~~StP~~, ~~War~~ 0, remove 2 (out)
- TURKEY: Home, Bul, Gre, Rum, SEV 7, build 1

Game Notes: Russia's retreat and removal orders are "hopeless orders" under the VD houserules; therefore he does not need to send them in and no standby will be called for the position. Thanks to Pat Pakel for the standby orders which turned out not to be needed. An E/F draw has been proposed. Please vote by next deadline.

In case it came out hard to read, England supported Germany to Warsaw.

Press:

CON to LON: No problem! Just abuse me in your press! Go ahead, give me a neurosis, tic. ((QUASAR continues next page))

QUASAR (continued)

CON to UKR: Are you alive? Is this a viable alternative to civil disorder?

CON to BURD: Please don't NMR! I'd have to fight Pakel in our fourth common game. Don't do this to me! Retreat! Flee! Fight! But don't NMR!

CON to BRUX: JUPITER! Is that all you can say?

ROME to CON: The Italian government remains nervous with the many Turkish and French fleets filling the Med.

FORCE ((via TURKEY)) to FLE: OK suckers, here comes the East!

~~~~~

R I G E L

1983K

# THE KNIFE!

Spring 1904

AUSTRIA (Knight): A VIE-Tyo, A Gal-BOH, A Bud-TRI, A Rom-VEN (F ADR S), A RUM H

ENGLAND (Sweeney): F LVP S GERMAN Victories Everywhere (H)

FRANCE (Hare): F Mar-LYO, F Spa(sc)-WES, F Lon-WAL (F IRI S), A Bre-GAS, A Por-SPA

GERMANY (Heintzman): A Hol-EDI (F NTH C), A Kie-MUN, F Ska-NWY, F IEN H, A TYO S A Ven,  
A Ven S ITALIAN A Tus-Rom (d; r Ple, Tus, Apu, OTB)

ITALY (Ellis): F TYR-Ion, A Tus-ROM

RUSSIA (Kleinman): F Edi-NWG, A Nwy-SWE, A War-SIL, A STP-Mos, A UKR U, F SEV U, A MOS U

TURKEY (Reilly): A Arm-SMY, F Bla-CON, A BUL-Gre, F GRE-Ion, F Ion-TUN

Game Notes: The unordered Russian units are due to two identically dated sets of orders (sigh). Please note that Ty Hare has a terrible face. Please vote on this by next deadline.

Press:

REILLY to RIGEL: Well, fellow diplomats, word has it that many of you actually believe Kleinman's "Jeopardy" propaganda to have won that round of the press wars. Some of you may even have interpreted my lack of press last season as surrender. Sorry, that is not the case, although I must admit that "Jeopardy" was quite humorous, and for that matter, surprising, when you consider the ponderous nature of the mind it supposedly came out of. "Supposedly," did I say? Yes, my little droogies, I do mean to create some doubt in your minds as to who the real author of "Jeopardy" might be. For I know the true, untold story of how that press came into being. Listen, and I shall relate...

It was late at night, on September 11 (just a few days before the deadline), and your humble narrator (diligent student that he is) was reading "Hamlet" for the fourth time, to insure its permanence in his memory...

"...They are not near my conscience, their defeat  
 Does by their own insinuation grow..."

So engrossed was I in this that I did jump when the ring of the telephone interrupted.

((RIGEL continues next page))



RIGEL (continued)

And let me tell you, this was no ordinary ring of the telephone. It was a desperate, pleading sort of ring, and I knew already that I wasn't going to enjoy talking to whoever it might be. For a moment, I considered not answering, so full of anguish was that ring, but then...

"Hello?"

"Rich? Richard Reilly?"

I paused, trying to identify the unfamiliar voice.

"Yes?"

"This is Dave Kleiman."

"Oh."

"You know...the Russian player in RIGEL."

"Yea, I know. Hello! What can I do you for?"

There was a brief silence.

"Rich...I...I've called to ask you a favor."

"Favor? What sort of favor?"

"A...uh...I'm...not sure how to ask this..."

"I'm not gonna withdraw, Dave, if that's what you want."

"No, no! No...it's not that. I don't expect you to stop fighting me, after all the bad things I've done to you."

He hesitated, then...

"I...I want you to help me with my press."

"What?!"

"Please, Rich, just listen a minute! I...I know I've treated you terribly..."

"You're damn right you have!"

"...what with all those lies and deceptions, trying to turn everyone against you."

"I know all about it, Dave."

"But Rich, please...I...when I challenged you to a press war, I didn't realize that... that..."

"Yes?"

"I...can't write...anything...I try, but...nothing comes. All I can write anymore are programs for my computer."

"Gosh, Dave, that's sad. I guess you're gonna lose both wars now."

"No, please, Rich, you've got to help me! Help me write some press! I can't do it on my own."

"Sorry..."

"I beg you...I'll do anything! I...I'll make a formal apology. I'll let you have Sevastapol. I'll...anything! Just name it!"

"Dave, I'm sorry, but...it's against my ethical principles."

"Rich, I can't bear being made a fool of. They'll all laugh at me if I don't write any press, after all that noise I made about a press war."

"Well..."

"Please, Rich! Pleeeeeeassssse!"

Good grief, I thought, this is really pitiful.

"Dave, I...like I said, my ethics..."

There was a long silence, then...

"I'll pay you."

I was taken aback.

"What?"

"I said, 'I'll pay you.'"

I considered this a moment.

"How much?"

"A...F...five dollars?"

"I...I don't know, Dave. Let me think for a moment."

((RIGEL continues next page))

RIGEL (continued)

Now, I know what you're thinking, my little diplomats. You're thinking that Dave's paltry offer of five dollars was enough to make me forget my ethical principles for a while. But you are wrong, oh yes, for what actually happened was that I remembered at that same instant one of my other ethical principles, which I had momentarily forgotten. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," is how it goes. Therefore, I said:

"All right, I'll do it."  
"You will? Oh thank you, Rich? Thank you, thank you, thank you."  
"All right, take it easy."  
"I'm forever in your debt."  
"Yes..."

"I'll send the five dollars tomorrow."  
"Right, but...I want you to understand, Dave, that I'm not doing this for the money, but because I want to help you out. The five dollars is just...a symbol, of sorts, of our...animosity. We're still enemies. Do you see?"

"Yes, of course."  
"Good, then...let me think a moment, about what you could write..."  
I could practically feel Dave's excitement surging through the phone.

"All right, here it is. We'll do a parody of the 'Jeopardy' TV show. It'll start like this... 'This week on "Jeopardy" we have...'"

"Wait, let me get a pencil..."

And that, my droogies, is how "Jeopardy" came to be, and so it is that I, your humble narrator, am still ahead, by far, in this vicious war of propaganda. (My apologies, Dave, but...I had to tell it like it is. My ethical principles against deception were bothering me.)

ITALY to GM: And the great race is on! What will get here first? The winter builds or the spring moves? Still haven't gotten the fourth annish yet, Bruce. People tell me it's great! I may never know. I hear that third class is still delivering via pony express, and the lost horse is getting pretty old.

THE POSTERS IN VIENNA: Cupcakes. Official baked goods of the 1984 Summer Olympics.  
BRUX to TY: Your decals are a real pain in the ass. Three men in a tub, one of them holding up a cupcake? What's that sposed to symbolize?

KAISER to TSAR: P-K3  
BRUX to KAISER: Ambiguous and disallowed! That "P" could stand for Pawn or pendulum or Piedmont...besides, this is "Press Wars," not "Chess Wars"!

VIENNA to TUSCANY: Hey, we just figured we'd give you a headstart on your initiation into the "Thank You, BRUX, for Giving Me This Shit Position" Club.

ITALY to WORLD: Now I know what it is like being stuck between a Rich and a Hare place. It's like being held in a full Nelson. I'm Kleiman the walls. Looks like it'll be good Knight for sure.

BRUX to RIGEL: Lissen, guys, let's all try to laugh at that so we don't offend him too much. OK?

BRUX to ENGLAND: No, even as you wallow in the depths of obscurity I haven't forgotten you. JJJJJUUUUUPPPPIIIIIITTTTTEEEERRRRRR!!!!!!!!!!!!

VIENNA: Italy will be free ... of Italians.

BRUX to VIENNA: Oh, I dunno. I still see a green army Rome-ing around down there.

ITALY to HEADS OF STATE: Who was the bozo who separated the seasons?

BRUX: It had to be me...the world's most famous clown!

THE CRAZY SON OF A BITCH WHO ACTUALLY EDITED LINSEY'S HOUSERULES: Okay, guys, I slipped in a rule that says Austria has to win any 1983 games played in VD. If BRUX didn't excise it, I expect you all to cooperate and vote me a concession no later than '07, got that?

BRUX to CRAZY SOB: So you finally found a way to win, eh? Seriously now, aren't you thinking of Diplomacy Central??

((RIGEL continues next page))

RIGEL (continued)

VIENNA to BRUX: "Please do not vote by next deadline." Does that mean we can vote on it after next deadline?

BRUX to VIENNA: No, dummy. It was a typo and it meant to say "Please vote by next deadline." You forgot to vote. Whatever it was, you lose.

BRUX to TYPEWRITER: Sorry, guy, here comes our friend Reilly again...

NOVEMBER 10, 10:42 AM, ANKARA: The Sultan's most trusted aide hesitated a moment, wiping the sweat from his brow and nervously straightening his hair, then, drawing in courage with a deep breath, stepped around the corner of the hall and approached the two guards standing alert outside the Sultan's chambers. The aide was resolved to have it out with the Ottoman Empire's seemingly highest authority; to present his perception of the Sultan's state of mind. Thoughts of what might result from this meeting had kept the aide awake for many long nights, but it was something which must be done. It was his duty and it was necessary.

He stopped before the sentinals, feeling awkward beneath the gaze of their curious, expectant eyes, then began to speak but only rasped, cleared his throat, then began again.

"Is...could you tell me, if...if he's in a decent mood today?"

The guards considered a moment, then one answered, "Yes...in fact, he's in quite a good mood, it seems."

"Oh?" The aide's eyebrows rose quizzically.

"Yes, listen." The guard nodded at the door. Curious, the aide leaned slightly toward it to hear.

From within came the sound of a large crowd, as if far away, laughing and applauding. The Sultan's own hearty laugh could be clearly heard with it. Then the laughter stopped, and the aide could barely make out a distant voice, saying, "I'll take ugly rumors for ten dollars..." The aide turned back to the guards, scowling.

"What's going on in there?"

The guards shrugged.

The aide again faced the door, now feeling confident, and knocked loudly.

The Sultan's laughter halted abruptly, as did the other sounds an instant later.

"Yes? Who is it?" the Sultan called.

"Your aide, sir. I wish to speak with you."

There was silence a moment, then:

"Yes, come in."

The aide glanced at the guards, then swung the double doors open and strode boldly into the room. The Sultan was seated behind a desk nearly buried under a pile of papers, seemingly engrossed in the reading of some important document. The aide stopped before the desk, heard the doors shut softly behind him. The Sultan looked up at him, smiled.

"Yes, my friend, what is it you wish to speak of?"

"Sir," the aide began, then paused, and restarted in a softer tone. "Sir, I need to speak to you about a matter of great importance."

"Yes, go on."

"Well, I..." the aide hesitated, his boldness rapidly fading. "I...I'm not sure how to begin."

The Sultan stared at him, waited. The aide drew in a deep breath.

"You seem quite busy." The aide grinned awkwardly.

The Sultan's gaze moved across his desk.

"Yes, I suppose I am," he nodded.

There was a touch of annoyance in his voice, which the aide took note of. Again he gathered his courage, and endeavored to move forward into his carefully planned speech.

((RIGEL continues next page))

"Sir, this war..." he gestured lamely at nothing. "...this war, it's been hard on us all."

The Sultan nodded slowly, glanced down at the report he still held.

"Especially," the aide continued, "for those of us here in the palace. I mean, of course it's hard for our soldiers up at the front, but here...here is where the decisions must be made. Here is where responsibility lies."

The Sultan no longer looked at the aide. He was again examining the report. Yet the aide hurried on.

"And the pressure...the pressures of these responsibilities, they weigh heavily upon us. Not so much on me personally, but on you and your advisors...especially you... and..."

"Yes, go on," the Sultan mumbled.

"Sir, what I'm trying to say is that...these pressures...so many of them, all on one mind, such as your own, might tend to make a person somewhat...somewhat..."

The aide faltered, looked down at the Sultan who clearly was no longer listening, and abruptly exploded with indignance.

"Sir! You're not listening!"

"What?" The Sultan lurched upright.

"Here I am, trying to relate to you a matter of extreme importance...and you! You don't even listen!"

"Oh dear, I'm sorry," the Sultan exclaimed, rising from his chair. "Please forgive me, I've just been so terribly busy today. I...I meant no disrespect for your advice, which I honor. Please..." the Sultan again sat, "...continue. You have my full attention."

"Well..." the aide began, still somewhat excited, "what I've been trying to tell you is that...it is the perception of many of those who serve you...myself included... that you have gone slightly..."

A sudden loud knock on the door interrupted.

"Yes?!"

"It is the chief of security, sir, and two of your generals."

"Send them in!"

"Sir!" the aide protested, "this is a matter of utmost..."

"Yes, yes, my friend, but it can wait a moment. First I must hear what these three have to say."

The three men stepped forward, as the dejected, angry aide moved aside.

"Sir," the chief of security began, "I regret to report that our first attempted assassination of the Tsar has failed."

"Assassination?!" the aide cried. "What...?!"

"Good," the Sultan replied, "We are no longer at war with the Tsar. Another attempt shall not be made." The Sultan looked at the generals. "And...?"

"The Black Sea fleets, and the forces in Armenia, have pulled away from Sevastapol, as you commanded."

"Excellent. I will expect full reports from each of you later. That is all."

"Yes, sir," the three replied, and withdrew.

The Sultan turned his attention back to his aide, who stood in shock, mouth gaping, unable to speak. The Sultan sighed.

"My friend..."

the aide erupted.

"No longer at war...?! Pulling away from Sevastapol?!"

"That is correct. Peace has been made with the Russians. All our forces now are needed in the Mediterranean."

"But...but sir! We spent two years trying to capture Sevastapol. And now, after all those lives have been lost in the fighting, after all the money that's been

((RIGEL continues next page))

spent, after the way the Tsar treated you..."

"Yes, my friend, that is all behind us now. The Tsar and I have forgiven each other...have given each other our words that no more fighting will occur between us in the future."

"I...I don't understand..."

"I know, my friend, I know." The Sultan's voice was quiet now. "As you were saying, this war is hard on us all."

The aide stared, as if at a stranger.

"And you..." the Sultan went on, "you are hereby relieved of your duties."

Startled, the aide protested in sudden fear.

"Sir, I did not mean..."

"No, no clam yourself, please calm yourself. I know what you were trying to say, and...I appreciate it. No offense was taken. But you, my friend, you are not well. I can see. You are pale, and shaken...and in your duties, you have been...not your usual efficient self."

"Oh, sir...forgive me...please."

"There is nothing that needs forgiving. You are just tired...we are all tired... I am tired...this war, it goes on and on." He shook his head wearily. "You, at least, may rest for a while. You deserve it."

"Oh, sir..." tears came to the aide's eyes. "I wish...I wish..."

"I know, my most trusted friend, I know."

And now the tears flowed freely down the aide's cheeks, as he turned away from the Sultan's kind, sympathetic gaze, and, in a daze, walked slowly out past the silent guards, who stared in amazement, as if they'd never before seen a crying man. BRUX to THE OTHER HEADS OF STATE: The Sultan is tearing apart the rest of you in this press war, gentlemen. Now, are you going to let him get away with that?!

\*\*\*\*\*

S I R I U S

1983???

Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky as seen from the earth. It is visible in the southern sky during the winter. Another name for Sirius is the Dog Star.

- AUSTRIA: Steve Knight, 11905 Winterthur Lane, Reston, VA 22091
- ENGLAND: Bob Olsen, 6818 Winterberry Circle, Wichita, KS 67226
- FRANCE: John Michalski, Rt. 10 Box 526Q, Moore, OK 73165
- GERMANY: Mike Barno, CPU #1187, 25 Andrews Memorial Drive, Rochester, NY 14623-5689
- ITALY: Kathy Byrne, 160-02 43rd Ave., Flushing, NY 11358
- RUSSIA: Eric Kane, 109 Hicks Lane, Great Neck, NY 11024
- TURKEY: Mark Luedi, PO Box 2424, Bloomington, IN 47402

The SIRIUS game is being run under the variant rules for Diplomacy Central, as follows:

1. All the rules of regular Diplomacy apply;
2. The first player to successfully order a unit to Albania wins.

\*\*\*\*\*

Some notes on the SIRIUS game. I was fortunate in that I received exactly seven requests for a position in this game, described in the article on pp 160-162 last issue. I decided to run one of these because not only does it look like fun, but the rules are so simple (and the game should be over with so fast) that for once I ought to be able to get through a VD game without any controversy. Ready...set...stab away!

by Rod Walker

Is it true that the State of Texas can legally split itself into five States because that condition was attached to its admission to the Union? Unfortunately, it is not true. Or, rather, fortunately...after all, one Texas is quite enough, thank you.

It is true, as Greg Ellis has stated in a letter to VD, that the Republic of Texas did attach, as a condition of its admission as a State, the proviso that it be allowed to split into five States if it so desired. The question that arises, however, is whether the proviso is binding. The answer to the question is that it is not.

This question has already been tested in court. When the State of Oklahoma was admitted to the Union, a proviso was attached to the admission specifying that a certain city was to be the capital...Guthrie, I believe. When the State legislature voted to move the capital to Oklahoma City, the city of Guthrie sued...somebody sued... and the thing wound up in the Supreme Court. The Court voided the proviso. The Court decided that admission to Statehood was, under the Constitution, an unconditional act. No limitations or conditions could be attached to it. Although the "five-State" condition has never been tested in court, the precedent of the Oklahoma case stands, and we may consider the proviso as null and void.

However, that's not all there is to this question. I asked whether Texas could split up because of the proviso, and the answer is "no". But can Texas split up anyway? The answer to that question is "yes", paradoxically.

(As a side note, however, I'd like to point out to Greg that Texas is not the only independent Republic to give up its independence to become a State, nor was it even the first to do so. We must remember that all of the original 13 States were in many ways independent Republics prior to the Constitution Era (1789-present). One of them, Rhode Island, did not ratify the Constitution until more than a year after it had gone into effect, so that R.I. was pretty much sovereign for that period. The Green Mountain Republic (1778-1791) finally accepted Statehood (as Vermont) in 1791. Both of these were pre-Texas. Post-Texas Republics which later became States are California and Hawaii, the latter having unaccountably to experience a long tenure as a "territory". And the Republic of Honduras has just recently asked to become a protectorate as Puerto Rico is. I rather doubt that will happen, but the argument that a state will not give up its sovereignty today is obviously not airtight. Zanzibar did so in order to form Tanzania, for instance.)

Well, then, can States legally split up? Yes, they can. The courts have long upheld the legality of the split of West Virginia from Virginia, even though this was without the latter's consent.

More important is the doctrine of succession, which in international law states that the legal successor(s) to a government will inherit all its obligations and privileges. The State of West Virginia had to be admitted to the Union by Congress. However, if a State were to split through a completely legal action, so that the 2 or more resulting States were equally the successors of the original, these new States would have to be regarded as ipso facto members of the Union without Congressional action.

Even so, I don't believe there is any clear and present danger of our suddenly being faced with multiple Texases. However, more likely is that you will be faced with dual Californias. The movement to split this State between water-rich North and water-poor South, or urban West and rural East, has been strong in recent years. And someday it may just happen. In which case, think of what fun in the courts!!

((We here in upstate New York would like to discard the Big Apple, too, and let it work its way out of its own problems. Alas, that's unlikely to happen.

Your article is very well Stated. Three free issues.))

The Gossip Column

15

From Mark Luedi (10/16/83):

Dear Bruce,

Just like the long lost Doonie that I am, I am finally writing after what seems ages.

Thanks so much for that nickel you sent me. Isn't it gratifying to know that your nickel helped provide a pair of \$18 Levis to a struggling college student? I had been down to one pair of jeans!

Your standby list in #83: is God real? Or is one of the others listed not real besides the two I know about? Ah, yes, we can guess. We can guess who isn't real. Aha! Have found a member of your standby list who has no basis in reality.

OK, let's see, it's been so long since I wrote to you, and there seems to be so much matter to comment on in the last couple of VDs (82 and 83). Boy, what a ruff on season separations! I'm starting to lean toward the Rusnak method: in-between seasons due about 10 days after the fall and spring seasons. Then nobody has to ask for separations, or ever worry about them. 'Course, there's also prophetics. I've played in a couple of games using prophetics and I find, in general, that they are no better and no worse. There are certain peculiarities. In a prophetic game, you really have to look at the board situation, and you become much more aware of how certain moves might be made, based on where units can be retreated and/or built -- a much more calculating game, and the conditionals don't get to be such a problem. It, however, does not at all benefit the power that is on the way down and out. There is more of an opportunity for that in "normal" games. And, there is often the opportunity to pull a few surprises on one's enemies, or in many cases, one's allies (soon to be enemies). And one can always negotiate before builds.

But I would have to agree (with whom?) that season separations are a rather difficult matter, one of the stickier things that a GM has to decide upon.

The phone discussion was certainly interesting. And what, BRUX, do you do if a hurricane devastates Albany (soon, Pittsfield) two days before the deadline and you have no contact with the outside world for five days? What do you do if your files are somehow destroyed/disappear? Do you call all players collect until you have orders for everyone? I am surprised by the number of GMs (and potential GMs) who offer (would offer) NMR insurance. Boy, talk about going out of your way to prompt a player! And I would disagree with Jim Meinal on his answer to #10. The player modifying his orders has as much a right to modify as another has of getting a first set in. I guess this is another reason I find NMR insurance objectionable. It's the player's responsibility to get orders on file, not the GM's.

Greg Ellis' proposal to "annex" other countries is amusing, if somewhat unrealistic. It might even do away with "colonialism" of other, less fortunate countries, by American (and other, namely British) capitalist interests. Though it could make that worse, I guess. I've only just bumped into "colonialism" in a couple of instances recently. But I suspect that this United Fruit Company (or whatever the name; couldn't find it just now) that gets mentioned once or twice is not a great positive influence on the standard of living in Central America. The only beneficiaries are the capitalists and stock holders, who persuade the government to protect their interests. Maybe I'm a couple of light years off on this -- I have no sources regarding this area of the world.

A couple of other matters:

- 1) May be very interested in using the roundtable discussions for the Publisher's Handbook. Or? Might you be interested in running more, with that purpose in mind?
- 2) Am going to break into the 2-week game arena (separate from Thirty Miles of Bad Road) (is this kid still sane?) and might appreciate that you mention it in VD. Looking at two games (\$10 gamefee + \$6 NMR deposit; standbys also needed @ \$4; this

covers everything), results going out same day -- blah, blah, blah -- zine called Quick Deceit. (Those prices do sound a little high, don't they? I don't suppose you'd be interested?! Get in a two-week game and see the world!)

3) This stuff is NFP (I mean, you can mention the two-week games, but you have to use your own words. (????!!))

Sorry to see Alex fold her column. It definitely added color to VD.

((Not sure I understand about the NFP stuff -- I mean, your words tell the story so eloquently, especially your "blah, blah, blah"! Anyway, I won't join because, my busy schedule aside, two-week deadlines are not enough time to negotiate effectively. Players who want a fast game and a semi-crazed GM are encouraged to look into this, though.

Another roundtable discussion is under preparation here, and you are free to use anything you like from VD for the publisher's handbook.

In the scenario you describe where a hurricane devastates my home just before the deadline; tough bananas. Players who wait till the last couple of days to get in a set of orders take chances like that.

As for God's presence on my standby list; I removed him because I think he takes the game too seriously. If you read my short story in the annish, you'll understand why. He just don't play by the house rules!

Maybe I should explain "prophetics" for the many Doomies who haven't the slightest idea what you're talking about. The term refers simply to spring/summer and fall/autumn/winter combinations -- the opposite of the way most North American zines run their games. Prophetics are used mostly in Europe, and without having played in such a game I can tell you that the conditionals could get extremely messy. I mean, think of all the different combinations of moves that can be made in a season, and you've got to write potential retreats and adjustments for all this? No way you'll catch me playing in one of those! As for in-between separations; I've never really cared for the idea. It's true that this eliminates the need for conditionals, but who needs an extra deadline in the middle of "main" deadlines? I'd just as soon stick to the method I have now; Seasons generally combined with separations easy to obtain.

And now, we move on to letters generated by the anniversary issue!))

From Fred Davis (11/8/83):

Dear Bruce:

Have just finished most of the anniversary ish of VD. I'm somewhat exhausted from the effort. When do you eat and sleep? It's even bigger than Peery's last production, so I'm sure you'll go down in history.

On pg. 162, you commented that only 6 named people had had any contact with the British Diplomacy (er, rather, postal gaming) hobby. Please add my name to the list. I receive two British zines and two from Germany, including Pete Birks' Greatest Hits. Used to receive more English ones, but a couple have folded in the last 12 months. I also met several London area players in one of their pub meetings in August, 1982, including Birks and Tamlyn. One German zine, Sauri's All-Star, runs some international games in English. For more info, write to: Thomas Franke, Rosenstr. 11, D-4220 Dinalaken, WEST GERMANY. He edits one of the subzines therein, and is running my variant, Woolworth II-D, in German.

((Interested Doomies may check it out. I'm sure I omitted the names of several people in North America who receive European zines, but my point is that most of the U.S. and Canadian hobby is missing out without even giving the Europeans a try. I hope that by covering the British hobby in these pages, I'll induce a few Doomies to expand their horizons -- and enjoyment -- just a bit.))



From Rod Walker (11/6/83):

17

Lieber BRUXen:

VD 85 was magnificent! Sigh...

Here for your lettercol are some responses to just a few things in that issue. Plus an article in response to a stray comment by Greg Ellis.

Berch's articles were fantastic...some of his funniest stuff. Remind me to beat him black and blue for not sending those to DW.

About preferential scholarships for blacks and so on: I am not convinced about the "social justice" of this. The "two-wrongs-don't-make-a-right" thing definitely applies. However -- I wonder whether "social justice" is at all the issue. That's nice copy for bleeding hearts, of course. But the real issue is getting into the next century with an intact multiracial society. The social injustices of the past 300 years have put blacks so far behind whites that the only way to deal with the problem is to do as we are doing...to give a certain degree of preferential treatment to the formerly disadvantaged minority. Yes, that foists an injustice on whites. But, frankly, I would rather have a small degree of injustice than have a high degree of urban violence, which frustration-aggression theory tells us we are going to get if we don't do something. The success of what we are doing seems to be shown by the lack of urban violence during the last two very hot summers combined with a bad recession. It boils down to this...do we want to have a few whites without scholarships (and jobs and quite such high salaries, etc.) or do we want gutted cities?

AIDS: Aside from the people dying, the worse aspect of that problem is all the fundamentalist hellfire-mongers and their ill-conceived and almost obscene joy at the situation. Of course, they forget that gays who have stable, monogamous relationships don't get AIDS. Oh, well...with any luck, this problem should be under control by the end of the decade. Then we can all go back to the bars...

James Wall's letter is interesting, if simplistic. "No nation that has slipped behind the Iron Curtain has emerged..." No? What about Yugoslavia? And of course there's eastern Austria. And a good case can be made for the virtual independence of Rumania. The notion about the "Iron Curtain" nonsense is that a Marxist country suddenly can't think for itself and takes orders from Moscow. It's hard to explain Peking in those terms, isn't it?

However, so long as Washington displays knee-jerk hostility to every Marxist government that comes along, they are going to display hostility toward us. It is not at all surprising that Nicaragua has a Marxist government, and we may as well get used to the fact that most Latin American states will have such governments by the end of the century. Latin American revolutions are very faddish, and Marxist agrarianism is "in" right now. Furthermore, there is a very complex love-hate relationship between the Latin American states and ourselves, and it is obvious that the "hate" end of that syndrome will be expressed in whatever will be most annoying to us. If we continue stupidly to oppose the tides of history down there (or anywhere), it will be so much the worse for us. The paradox in all this is this: if you sincerely believe that the USSR is a Marxist state, if you believe that the U.S. is a capitalist state, and if you believe that Marxist states and capitalist states are inherently and inevitably hostile, then you are swallowing the Leninist propoganda line. None of the foregoing statements, preceded by "if", is true. It is to the USSR's advantage for us to believe all that hokum and thus cut off our most viable foreign policy options.

As to double orders: you already have an article touching on exactly this point... Rule VII.1 says absolutely nothing on the subject. I assume you will be printing that shortly.

((Er, ahem... VD doesn't really need another two-page article on double orders, though you're welcome to send in a (preferably shorter) response to the letter column.

Your reasons for supporting preferential treatment for blacks are, to understate the matter, very interesting. What your comments boil down to are this: if we don't

give them what they want, they'll turn into animals and start rioting again, so let's knuckle under and pacify them. True or not, I just don't see any justice in acceding to such tactics. Heck, what if every minority had to be dealt with under fear of the same sort of violence you describe? What if inner-city whites did? Besides, is your opinion of blacks really so low that you truly believe that they will riot if they aren't given preferential treatment? I don't think so, and I wouldn't change my stand on the issue at hand if I did.

I don't recall anyone saying that a Marxist country suddenly can't think for itself. However, look what happens when some of them try to act on those thoughts. I'm referring, of course, to Hungary. And Czechoslovakia. And Poland.

Berch has written some of the funniest articles I have read in the hobby's zines. For all the guff the man takes over his "boring" tactics articles, he's got one hell of a sense of humor, and he certainly showed it here last issue!))

From Nelson Heintzman (11/6/83):

Dear Bruce:

Well, since I didn't write any press for RIGEL this turn, perhaps a quick letter to you might be in order. By the way, what happened to my chess move in last season's press? Inadvertently forgotten? Held over for this issue? Or you are trying to discourage the playing of another game in a Dip zine? ((Just forgot it last time. It's in this issue.))

Thanks for the phone call. Appreciate greatly the invitation extended to me by Kathy Byrne through you; unfortunately, however, circumstances will forbid my attendance. Would be nice, as by now, after a year's time, I've built up several friendships and a number of acquaintanceships in the hobby. Next time, let's hope. As I indicated to you, by the way, when I made my comments about hobby feuds and included Baumeister's name, I was not under the impression at that time that those remarks would be made public. However, parental wisdom always warned me in years long past that whatever one puts on paper can sometimes turn up at unforeseen moments, so one should always be careful concerning one's own writing. So, I stand by my opinions, although I will not respond to any type of negative response -- that's not what I'm into, sorry...

I notice in the Anniversary issue (which was a marvelous accomplishment, Bruce), that Gary clarified his stance over the issue of Affirmative Action, etc. Well, let me shoot from the hip on this one, for a moment. Personally, I have no deep-seated love for it (it is especially prominent in educational fields), but neither do I have any deep-seated hostility against it. The arguments against reverse discrimination are all fine and dandy and are gaining increased credibility. However, I feel this way: historically, this nation was built up by white European immigrants who stole the land from its native population and then proceeded to virtually exterminate those same inhabitants. This same white power structure during the same period imported millions of black slaves over several centuries and used their sweat and toil to further build the economic strength of this country. I won't bother going into the sordid exploitation of Asians, Chicanos, and the prejudice and ethnic hostility existing between northern and southern Europeans themselves. Regarding slavery, I hear all the time that this happened long ago and this is the 20th century, and why should we pay for the sins of people who lived and died way before us, etc. Well, some people feel that the present, the past, and the future are all intertwined -- they cannot just be separated but share a complex dependency upon each other. For instance, the physical, spiritual, and economic growth of a people is (or should be) an ongoing, continuing process. We who enjoy so many benefits today must turn to the past to discover the contributions to this state of affairs by those who came before us. Economically, and here I'm referring to slavery and the cotton industry, it should be pointed out that during a period of great economic and physical expansion for America (1820s-1860s, after that a huge industrial expansion, of course), the South produced around 60% of the world's cotton! Between 1836 and 1840, cotton accounted for 63%

of the value of ALL American exports. Cotton and slavery not only aided the Southern economy, but were a major reason for the growth of the national economy as well. The growth of New York City was advanced because it acted as a distributing and exporting center which made its money off of freight charges, commissions, insurance, etc. While figures and numbers can be bandied about to prove just about anything, nevertheless for a long period of time during this early growth period of the American economy, cotton exports did in fact pay for a majority of the value of the nation's imports -- from which the nation as a whole benefitted. And it was the slave system which provided much of those benefits; since we Americans today are the recipients of all that has gone on before us -- good and bad -- I feel, personally, that it is only fair that we enjoy our benefits, yes, but we should honor the bad debts which have accrued, too.

In conclusion, I would also like to comment on the argument concerning the idea that the law should stay out of issues such as these. Frankly, that is sort of a crock also, I believe. First of all, as a writer to a Buffalo paper indicated a while back, "the U.S. Constitution has never been color-blind." Clearly, the slave issue was shelved by the Founding Fathers and given tacit acceptance. The 19th century abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison, referred to the Constitution as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." A trifle strong, perhaps, but you get the idea. To take positive legal action to balance the negative effects of legalized slavery for centuries, and legalized discrimination for decades and decades after that, seems only logical and right to me. To quote that Buffalo writer one more time: "For over 200 years, race has been a determining factor in virtually all federal, state, county, and city political decisions affecting black people. Because race has been the major factor in holding down black people, it's only logical to use it as a factor in uplifting black Americans. I concur.

((And in doing so, we perpetuate the very racism you detest. Nobody can deny that blacks have received an unfair shake in the past. But there will always be racism and prejudice so long as anybody receives preferential treatment on account of his race. In my opinion, the way to truly combat racial injustice is to avoid making any distinctions on the basis of someone's race. Why must we continue to classify and categorize people -- to "make up for past injustices"? To me, that's the ultimate crock. And the ultimate way of ensuring that racial prejudice and hatred never die.

Sorry you can't make ByrneCon; I was eager to meet you. As for your poll comments making print; I'm sorry I didn't make it more clear that my intention was to publicize the results in such detail. Next time I'll be more careful so that everyone understands just what I plan to make public. Thank for writing.))

From Bob Olsen (11/2/83):

Dear BRUX,

I had begun to wonder, in a vague way, what had ever happened to you anyway when your "little package" arrived in the mail. Before opening it I wondered, "Why is BRUX sending me this flat cannonball?" but upon opening it I found that it was your totally insane, totally out-of-control annish. I must say, I'm astonished, not only because it was so humongous, but also because it contained so much good stuff. Though there were plenty of high points, I'll just mention that it contained a whole flock of the best writing you've done, and what I believe to be Gary's best play (it mentioned my name a lot, hyork, hyork).

I've been given to understand that peace has broken out between you and the East Coast Witches/Clique, and that you'll be at ByrneCon. I'm sure glad to hear that -- I had hopes. Sounds like Kathy's set herself the modest ambition of closing out all feuds and binding the hobby's wounds in one weekend. All very well but what about the really important feuds like me vs. Jim-Boob Burgess?

Speaking of Burgess, do you realize that I made him what he is today (whatever the hell that is)? A year and a half ago Jim Burgess was NOBODY -- nothing more than the

waterboy for the Tretick Toadies! Then he showed up at PudgeCon I and the world has never been the same again! Oh sure, I'm sorry for inflicting such an insufferable, obnoxious, whining personality on the hobby at large, but who was to know? I mean, even after the con last year, Michalaki in MES couldn't even remember Burgess' name but just referred to him as "some Tretick shaftee". Then of course came the Toady Poll and Jim-Boob's campaign for top honors. To our horror we began to realize the sort of creep we were dealing with, but it was too late. Now that he's established himself as the hobby's #1 apple-polisher, he decides to wimpily weasel out of a repeat gig as Top Toady. Tough.

I hadn't realized, when I called in the impartial ombudspersonship of my lover, that I was treading on your fragile ego as well. But now that I know that you wanted to win the Toady Poll, well...who cares? OK, you're a fair to middling toady, but Jim-Boob could teach you a thing or two. Look at his unctuous letter in the last VD, grovellingly aching you out of a free issue of your 170-page issue with middleless vaporings that should never have seen the light of day. Oh well.

I'm sure Woody will be flattered at your characterization of him as "the most obnoxious player" you've ever had. Coming from you, that's like the Babe telling a rookie, "Pretty good wood on the ball, kid," or Charles Manson saying, "Jeez, you're a mean sucker, aren't you?"

The reprint of Graustark #1 was very depressing. Not because of the text, but because on the back, it carried 4¢ postage.

I disagree with your "stab-stab" article, though I must say, it is very typical of your method of play. In my opinion, lying to gain an advantage in a game is perfectly acceptable. But your doctrine of lying again and again and again to the same poor slob can be a trap. 75% of the bad feelings in Swedish Roundabout were caused by overuse of this exact technique by you and England. Fool me once, shame on you; try to fool me twice and three times and four times and you're just telling me you think I'm a stupid ass who can't remember two seasons back, who's so gullible he'll believe anything the Great Master says. All very fine in that particular game with its complete inflexibility and nonexistent balance; but had you or Hamlin gotten into trouble and looked for an eastern power to pull your cookies out of the oven, you would have found your credibility level to be precisely zero. The only reason this was at all profitable for you or Garry was that you were so similar, both using the same techniques, and both being hit-and-run players who aren't in any other games and will never meet us poor suckers again.

An example of the dire consequences of your "stab-stab" doctrine, again from the inexhaustible well of Swedish Roundabout, is the case of Randolph Smyth. After he got his advantage in S '01 by lying about Sweden, he tried to sucker me with yarns about the possibility of peace if I'd only retreat all units away from him, promise never to speak to Osuch again, or whatever. But by that time, my priorities had changed and my #1 goal was not to be suckered again no matter what -- so when times changed, Randolph's stock with me (among others) rated exactly 0 when he came to need us.

As for the "Puppet" article -- too bad your letter to Osuch wasn't published earlier, since it would have assured you a solo victory in the Most Obnoxious category. Good grief, no wonder Bob's hair was suddenly curly when he came to Wichita. That was a hideous letter -- kind of like "the iron fist in the iron glove". As for the matter of your negotiations with me -- I'm glad I didn't go for your proposal. If I had done so, it would have been for the wrong reason (being mad at Dick for something outside the game) and dishonorable. I'm glad I kept the faith with him. Anyway, I guess Mazzer understands me better than you do -- remember his quote -- "It's harder to get Olsen to make a move than it is to get the Rocky Mountains to dance the Funky Chicken."

I have read and pondered your "Gameload" article and I see that you are right. I see the light. Effective immediately I hereby resign from all my VD games.

So you "enjoyed" annoying me with all those letters, did you? Actually, I have

found (both in my case and yours) that sometimes it's possible to write too much, so that the recipient starts to think to himself, "Hey, this guy's a wheeler-dealer, this guy's a hotshot, this guy's after something...this guy's wasting my time." I've put the days of big letter-writing behind me; the return on investment is just not adequate. My policy these days in a new game would be: write each country at the start, reply to anything rapidly, maybe one follow-up letter to a non-writer during the season; another letter at the start of the next season to anybody who still hasn't written, but after that, start organizing an alliance, any alliance, to dispose of non-communicators. Since I never win anyway, at least I can have a certain effect on the game by trying to make sure that whoever does win is at least competent and not a deadhead. But as for sending a dozen letters to some drones who can't be induced to talk, forget it.

I should say something about Alex's Column. Her work has previously been amusing, but this last one I felt achieved something more -- eloquence. It's unfortunate that she had some bad experiences; I guess the postal hobby just has that effect on some people, alas. Another example seems to be Garry Hamlin. Despite certain reservations about his overly Linsey-like playing technique, he seemed a decent sort, and with time might actually have been housebroken, who knows? Well, obviously the hobby is not for everyone, or it'd be a lot bigger (that's logic...actually, that sounds like something Mark Lew would say).

It was quite a thrill guest GMing for Woody...everybody should try it at least once. I'm afraid I'm not out out to be the next Linsey or Coughlan, though; here it is my first time and, well, things came up, and both games were a couple days late. On the other hand I was told to be lenient...unfortunately, my lifestyle does not permit of the necessary promptness. Although there was a certain sense of power (like holding the fate of what is probably Michalski's best current position in my sweaty little hands) it wasn't enough to give me any thoughts of becoming a GM. I'll remain what I am -- deadwood.

My mother was here for a couple of weeks last month. One day in the mail I got that flyer for Rusnak's forthcoming game (you probably got one too) -- three pages, closely typed. My mother remarked that that looked like a lot of work so I went and got an EE to show her and informed her that it came every 5 weeks like clockwork, and that it was the work of one person. She immediately became sure that Gary is insane. (I never argue with my mother!!!) Good thing VD 85 hadn't arrived by that time or you'd be certified by now.

The computer article was a bit beyond my depth (so is the Mindanao Trench). I've had an Atari for 3 years now but know shamefully little about it. I will say, though, that at PudgeCon, when Mike Barno saw my machine, he became green with envy (or maybe it was the pizza).

I'm through bitching about getting the computer serviced -- want to hear about getting my car serviced? I always thought incidents where people went back and back and back to get something done were legends...but it took four trips to the shop to get one thing done. The last time of the four, the service advisor informed me (I hope you are sitting down) that there was mud under the car! I mean, we are dealing with what is obviously the top man in his field now -- the fourth time around, he looked under the car! Wow, maybe next time, they'll pop the hood -- there may even be an engine in there!!! (Excuse me, I'm sulking again.)

By the way, I don't think it was a very good idea to include the Houserules in this issue. For one thing, I had to look through the issue for three days before I found them! And for another, I think it would be better to have the Houserules bound separately, since there's going to be a lot of confusion between VD 85 and people's copies of War and Peace.

You really ought to enter another game, if only to gain some slight credibility as a player. Look at all the mileage you've gotten from Swedish Roundabout, a game where nothing even happened. Better get another one going before the well runs dry. Why not sign up for RRRRRRRusnak's World War IIIb Cosmic Dip game next summer? I'll

vouch for you with Russ if you need a reference. Just think, you could give your opinions on the variant scene and write abstruse articles about how DIAS is anti-Surinamese.

I take a benign view of people like Bill Highfield. Let's just say that sometime a few years from now, he'll look back at some of his writings and blush, and let it go at that.

Well, that's about it. Congratulations on a monumental achievement...no, not reading this boring letter, but your annish. And Four is not such a significant number... what about the Fifth, or Tenth, or Issue 100? Can you top it? What do you do for an encore?

PS. See ya soon? Good! I'll be the one being stabbed by Mazzer.

((Boring letter? No way hosea! Your writing just absolutely tweedles my noodle.

I wish that Woody had let me guest GM for him while he was in Europe. I would have forced those naughty little kids playing in his games to shape up immediately. Imagine that: Woody return from his sabbatical to discover that all his players have NMRed out on technicalities and been replaced by Doomies. I wonder what his reaction would have been.

Regarding Swedish Roundabout, aren't you overstating the case just a bit? I mean, I lied to you about the western triple in Fall '01 but I don't think I lied to you again in the game at all. Oh sure, I would have if it had been necessary, but I don't recall that it was. I should clarify the technique I presented in the "stab-stab" article. It's not a good idea to overuse it, since as you point out the credibility of the stabber will be utterly demolished if he ever needs help again. But it is another option to be used sparingly, as a follow-up to a stab, when the expected gains outweigh the potential further deterioration in the stabber-stabbee relationship (heavy, man).

Yup, I'll see you at ByrneCon in a couple of weeks. I'll be the one egging Mazzer on.))

From Matt Fleming (10/30/83):

Bruce,

I saw in your anniversary issue that you would like to hear from your VD black holes. That is, the people you never get letters from. I guess you now have one less black hole.

I enjoyed just about every page of the anniversary issue. The amazing thing was that even with 170 pages there wasn't an overabundance of prolixity.

You still want everyone's color photograph? ((Yup!)) Then I will have to look for a good picture of myself, which means you will never get one from me.

I'm afraid I would have to disagree with you regarding the literacy test issue. Besides being un-Constitutional (in my opinion, at least), it would be, at best, equivocal. What is literacy? Would it be the same in Hyde Park as in Mobile? The test would have to transcend race, class, wealth, sex, and geography, and I am afraid that that is impossible. It seems to me that voting is expressing one's literacy. I realize that the argument about the desirability of homogeneity for the country has some validity. But does everyone speaking English have the same opinions about our government? Just take a look at your letter column. Written mostly by relatively young white males. Correct? And still the opinions vary wildly. Would you make the distinction between Citizen and civilian that Renaissance Florence did? Essentially this allowed the vote only to those whom you wanted ("Citizens").

I think that everyone is missing one thing about the Electoral College that is essential to changing it. The Electoral College provides the only structure for

changing it -- it provides the sole structure for a Constitutional Convention. I would like to see some changes everywhere, but I realize that it probably won't come about. A College would threaten the security of many people in the government.

I guess I should clarify the statement I made on your survey. The reason I am not thrilled about round table discussions is that they are repetitive. These are respected people, but even so it gets boring. Most of your readers seem to enjoy it, though (a good percentage of them probably being pubbers) so maybe there is something I am missing. In any case I don't allow this to affect my enjoyment of the rest of VD.

So there! One less black hole.

((I like your terminology of "black hole" for people I referred to as "holes of silence". I'd laugh but for the gravity of the situation.

Perhaps I should clarify my stance on the issue of the literacy test. We are a society which is supposedly run by the people. It is the voice of the voters who make us what we are and keep us free. How then can we justify giving the vote to those who would use this right to weaken the very system which provides it to them? We can only be truly free so long as we employ a system of legalized repression for the ignorant masses. Got that?

Yeah, the round table discussions do get repetitive as hobbyist after hobbyist expresses the same viewpoint over and over all at once. But I still find it intriguing to read how different GMs/publishers/players would view certain situations. I think that the cross-discussion generated prompts publishers (especially the newer ones) to think out their positions on certain matters in advance. Keith Sesler, for instance, has told me that this is true in his case. Anyway, they take up a fair bit of space when they appear here, but that isn't too often.

Glad you're no longer a black hole!))

From Jim-Boob Burgess (11/6/83):

Dear BRUX,

I'm quite flattered that you sent me another VD sample. I read almost every page. I'd never looked thru the famous HRS and there were lots of other interesting points as well. You have lots of good writers helping you out and you were very kind to print my two letters. You even published my "Toady Poll" letter before Mark did. Now that you can see that a runoff is on, I hope you voted and didn't vote for me. I voted for you and Bob to tie for first with Mark himself as a write-in for third... the way he toadied to Kathy on the results of his own poll was disgustingly sycophantic.

I'm sorry to have to reiterate this but I won't be kidding. You've got lots of good writers and a lively letter column; you don't need me. I was really embarrassed that you sent me that huge free issue. Your expenses must be huge, too. (I understand that you went to ditto to save money. I approve and applaud that move.) I won't be deadwood and besides I can't afford a sub anyway. I like theazine, keep up the good work and I might be back someday. I think I'll stop here before I end up with another sample. Thank you again, you're much too generous.

((Me? Generous? Bah... Well, I can't in good conscience not send you this issue, since your letter's in it, but don't feel as though I'm trying to pressure you into a sub. Heck, I'd rather have your letters and/or articles any day than your money. Money makes for boring reading.

Well, I didn't like the idea of a Toady Poll runoff, since I felt I earned my share of the victory fair and square. But heck, maybe I'll win outright in the recount -- that would be pleasant. After all, how could anyone deny me the Toady Top Spot after sending you all these issues, hey?

See you at ByrneCon!))

From Mike Kettman (11/1/83):

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Dear BRUX,

Just finished reading your massive anniversary issue of VD. I will have you know it took a week of hour-long commutes to downtown Chicago to finish it. After reading it, I felt very surprised by the wide variety of opinions, topics, etc. It is amazing, the depth and width of your readership. After reading it, I almost wish I had sent you a letter or two for the issue.

I do feel, however, that certain contributors to VD are somewhat cought up in their own importance. Their grandiose, conflictual and arbitrary comments have no place in a magazine devoted to a hobby. I suggest they write to their local papers with their comments on religion, politics, handguns, etc. I prefer my hobby to be clean of the everyday stresses in life -- as a hobby should be.

Well, I fear I have said too much, but your issue #85 is to blame. Seriously, I do enjoy your magazine and look forward to next anniversary issue.

((Thanks for the constructive criticism. It is true that an awful lot of space here is devoted to non-Diplomacy topics, and some people would rather not read this in the hobby's magazines. I have mixed feelings, myself. I like the interaction and exchanges of viewpoints, but would not want to see it get out of hand. I almost feel that the politics here is too much, but maybe not quite.

Anyway, though, I can make a comment to you similar to the one I made to Jake Halverstadt last issue. There are zines for all tastes, including several that discuss only Diplomacy, so you can pick and choose till you get a variety that suits your needs. Anyone who wants me to recommend zines with particular qualities should just ask.

As for the depth and width of my readership; well, you don't think I'd let a comment like that go by without some sort of crack about Bob "Pudge" Olsen, do you? Well, you're wrong! I'm not even going to be crass enough to bring his name into this...))

From Bob Sweeney:

BRUX,

Impressive! VD #85 was great! Too bad you can only do it on anniversaries -- I mean with all the money you save with dittos...

Clarification: on second thought you might be right. There's people (like me) who will always find objections with rules which confine activities. I believe however that by stating NVR = no opinion keeps them quieter than if NVR = yes except for...

Sorry to hear about Garry Hamlin's...er...illness? Affliction? It didn't come from reading Voice of Doom, did it? Perhaps the house rules? How long did it take?

Also, Chuff Afflerbach forgot the dreaded Section 69. Whoever takes any letter, postal card, or package...with design to defame, inflame, incite, recite, deficate, or mutilate the Post (Awful) system shall be fined not more than 3 NMRs or forced compliance with (former edition) HR VII.L.

Also, you mentioned the seven novices in RIGEL -- well, I guesstimate that about #88, there'll be six!

Also, glad you didn't mention JUPITER -- not even once! Perhaps you've recovered from the harsh effects of a Press War.

Well, enough ramblings for now (by the way, have you noticed that my "letter" sounds like my press releases? Incoherent.)

((So? Incoherence is the hallmark of a truly great weirdo.

I think Garry Hamlin's affliction is the direct result of allying with me in Swedish Roundabout. As my ally, he had to put up with two letters a day from me for two years. Look where he ended up as a result.

JUPITER.))



From Eric Kana (10/31/83):

Dear Bruce,

As you know I received the monster issue and I have some additional comments to make.

First, I'm glad to see that Highfield is no longer a Doemie. Good riddance.

Next, I want to compliment Peter Ansoff for putting you in your place. He has you dead to rights on the issue of labeling units. Instead of trying to justify your houserule, why don't you just say flat out that you feel this should be a rule (that units be correctly labeled)? I too insist on the correct label for a unit. It is a general GMing practice which really ought to be in the rules. Did you notice the revisions to the Rulebook concerning convoys in the latest DW? Maybe we could write to Calhamer and get him to have some other things changed "officially". Which reminds me, people who say we don't need HRs and should just play by the rules are full of it. HRs are necessary to clear up certain ambiguities in the rules. It would also help to keep in mind that the rules were designed for face-to-face play, not postal play.

Congrats are in order for Cupcake Knight for his job on your HRs. Now they are legible, orderly, and dark enough to read, but they are still silly! Speaking of which, I noticed that in your S '01 neutral moves, you have German F Kie moving to Den. Since I don't use neutral S '01 moves, I feel inclined to question the "neutrality" of such an order. I know that whenever I play Russia, my negotiations with Germany always include a strong urging to move F Kie-Hol, so that I can be assured of Sweden in the fall. Doesn't F Kie-Hol seem more "neutral" than F Kie-Den? Why did you pick Den over Hol?

Howerton's cartoons were great. I've sent him a sample of Anduin. I think he and I might just hit it off!

Good column by Alex, she really told it like it is.

46-page letter column?!? I'll never top that! And what's wrong with setting records? It's harmless, no?

All in all, Bruce, not a bad issue at all. Keep it up!

((Denmark and Holland seem about equally "neutral" to me. I prefer Denmark because for Germany to avoid moving there assures Russia of Sweden, whereas a German non-move to Holland does not assure that either England or France will get Belgium. I guess then that I regard F Kie-Hol as just a bit too pre-Russia and anti-England or France for my tastes, though it's close.

Two or three of my houserules are silly by intent. But if you mean they're generally silly, I challenge you to say why.

Yes, I noticed the Rulebook revisions in the latest DW, and was extremely disappointed. Not at the revisions themselves, which were fine, but at the fact that most of the points which needed to be rewritten weren't touched upon at all, and now it's even more unlikely that we're going to get Calhamer to make further changes. I frankly wish that I had been consulted before the revisions were done, as I know of (and have publicized) several different areas that ought to be reworded (such as the hopelessly ambiguous "farthest from home" rule). The problems with convoys were far from the most pressing ones in the old Rulebook.

Yes, I feel that the Rules should include the requirement that units be labeled; that's why I have it that way in my houserules.))

From Rich Reilly (11/4/83):

Dear BRUX,

VD #85 arrived today. Egad, you must really wanna see my test grades suffer. 170 pages! I'm amazed...

...as well as upset. With myself, that is. I really would've liked to have contributed something to this special issue (so I could see my name listed on page 1)

After all, Diplomacy is a war game.

In reference to Greg Ellis' story about the McDonald's girl shooting the rapist, even if I had a choice between being raped and shooting the rapist's head off with a gun, I'd choose being raped. I doubt if I could kill anyone even in self-defense. Killing is killing.

No reason for me to take offense at what Bob Osuch said. We low-level munchkins are used to such accusations. Even he would have to admit that, after 5½ years of marriage and one child, it's highly probable that I've been laid at least once.

Wondered when we'd see the Reader Poll results. The local public radio station sent out a poll to find out what its listeners wanted more and less of. The result was that something like 32% wanted to hear less jazz, while 27% wanted to hear more. How's that for a confusing result?

Read Chuff's article about "Postage Dues and Don'ts" just after sending you back the uncanceled stamps. Oops!

Samantha's learned to walk and she's only 9 months old. Heaven help us! She also has her third tooth. She's been awfully fussy lately -- got tired of unfolding discarded computer paper all over the living room and of spreading clothespins across the kitchen floor. If I have to sing one more chorus of "Little Bunny foo foo", I'll SCREAM!

Love and Bunny foo foo,  
Joan and Samantha

((Bunny foo foo? That sounds like some exotic Chinese dish!

I see nothing wrong with killing in self-defense, or even in the defense of others. Would you really allow some demented lunatic to destroy your life before destroying his? N'me!

Football is a century old, and it too is a "passing fad".

Thanks for all the nice words regarding the annish. I agree that Alex is an exceptionally good writer, especially when she's inspired, and she was inspired last issue. I don't really think we've seen the very last of her columns, though I doubt if she'll do them again on a regular basis.

Samantha's obviously a prodigy. We'll have her playing Italy by the time she's three (eat your heart out, Kathy!).)

How about a few quick takes from recent letters to finish this off this month?

Mike Barno: Got to read the rest of the annish on the bus. It'll go down in hobby history like nothing else ever has. Simply fanfuckingtastic!

Rob Schmunk: Tell Alex that her column was exceptionally well-written.

Bill Highfield: Write me a letter for print, buddy!

Keith Sesler: Your ann. issue was great! But your cartoon on p. 98 was disgusting.

FOR SALE: Bundle of 40 to 50 old zines received, up to 4 years old, sent third class, \$4.00. Bundle of over 100 zines, \$7.50. Good for hobby newcomers who want a broad sampling of the hobby's literature.

First person to send me a buck for it gets my extra copy of Europa Express #20, since I have two. It's probably available from Gary Coughlan for 60¢, but I'm not going to mention that cuz I want to sell mine for a profit. Worth it!

A dozen different VD's, pre-#54; yours for \$2.50. Most or all are 12 pages in length, but there is some pretty decent reading in some of 'em.

Does anybody have any old "Tom Corbett, Space Cadet" books to sell me? I need #4, 7, and 8 in the series.

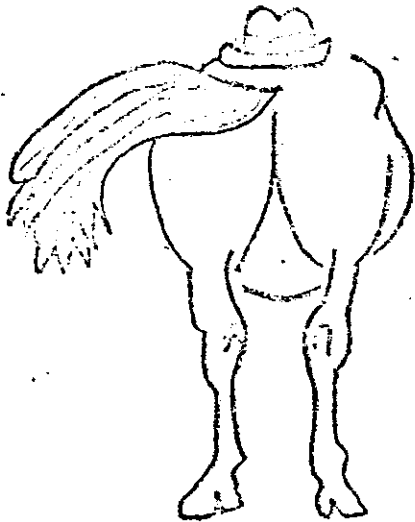
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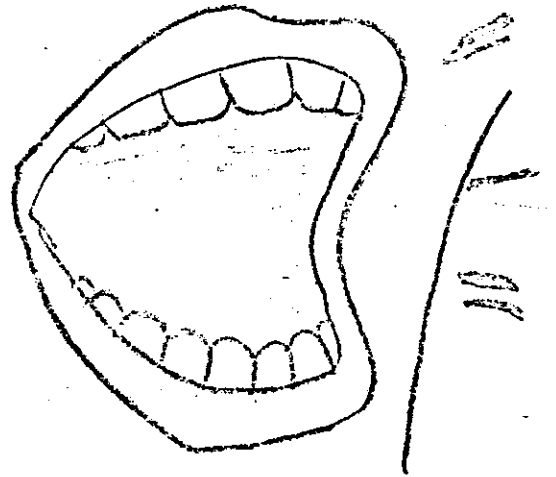
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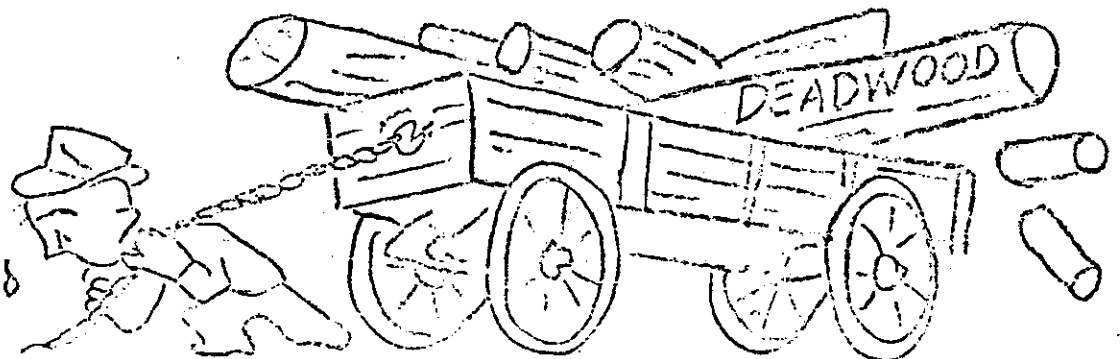
HIS MANAGER



HIS EMPLOYEES



OTHER MANAGERS



HIMSELF

The Deer and Elk Hunt

30

by Joan Extrom

2:30 am Alarm rings  
3:30 am Hunting partner arrives, drags you out of bed  
3:45 am Throw everything but the kitchen sink into pickup  
4:00 am Leave for deep woods  
4:15 am Drive back home to get gun  
4:30 am Drive like hell to get to woods before daylight  
5:00 am Set up camp. Realize you forgot tent  
5:30 am Head into woods  
7:00 am See 8 deer and elk  
7:03 am Take aim and squeeze trigger  
7:04 am "CLICK"  
7:05 am Load gun while watching deer and elk go over hill  
9:00 am Head back to camp  
10:00 am Still looking for camp  
11:00 am Realize you don't know where camp is  
Noon Fire gun for help. Eat wild berries  
12:15 pm Out of bullets, just as 8 deer and elk come back  
12:20 pm Stomach feels strange  
12:30 pm Realize you ate poison berries  
12:45 pm Rescued!  
12:50 pm Rushed to hospital to have stomach pumped  
3:00 pm Arrive back at camp  
3:15 pm Head into woods  
3:30 pm Return to camp for bullets. See partner's elk  
3:35 pm Load gun, head into woods  
4:45 pm Empty gun on a squirrel that's bugging you  
5:00 pm Arrive at camp. See deer and elk grazing there  
5:01 pm Load gun  
5:02 pm Fire gun  
5:03 pm One dead pickup truck  
5:05 pm Hunting partner returns to camp dragging deer  
5:06 pm Repress strong desire to shoot hunting partner  
5:10 pm Take pickup, leaving partner and his deer and elk behind  
5:15 pm Engine dies because of hole shot in it  
5:16 pm Start walking

5:20 pm Stumble and fall, dropping gun in mud  
 5:30 pm Meet bear  
 5:31 pm Take aim  
 5:32 pm Fire gun, blowing up barrel plugged with mud  
 5:33 pm Scream in fright and run  
 5:35 pm Climb tree  
 9:00 pm Bear finally departs  
 Midnight Home at last

Sunday Watch football game on tv, slowly tearing hunting license into little pieces and placing them in an envelope with a note to the Game Warden with very clear instructions on where to put them



Distant past Write classic article on hilarious hunting expedition  
 Recent past Send article to BRUX. Perpetuate hunting controversy in VD  
 Present BRUX types up article. Sends it out with zine. Coos with delight  
 Near future Four free issues of silly zine have affixed selves to sub



Ten Ways to Spot a Computer Expert

1. Does he talk a lot about "hardware" without being able to tell the difference between a gasket and a hexagonal lug nut?
2. Does he often use the word "batch", while failing to follow it with the phrase "of cookies"?
3. Does he claim to know several "languages", none of which are taught by the Berlitz school?
4. Does he often use the expression "garbage in -- garbage out" even when he is not eating at the cafeteria?
5. When playing cards, does he turn pale and shudder each time someone says "suffle the deck"?
6. a) Does he print a lot, using capital letters? b) Does he spell funny, taking words like "cat" and "square root" and making them into "KAT" and "SQRT"?
7. When asked to name his favorite "program", does he choose RANDU instead of Happy Days?
8. While making Christmas wreaths out of computer cards, does he stop to read what they say?
9. If you tell him you've ruptured a "disk", does he ask what was stored on it?
10. Does he say "line" or "queue"? Whereas most people say "line", an expert will say "queue"; you can take this as a cue that his line is computers.

How I Did It: The Houserules Saga

or

I Know You Probably Couldn't Care Less,  
But Let Me Milk Some Last Publicity From This, Okay?

by Steve "Cupcake" Knight

FREE AT LAST, FREE AT LAST! THANK GAWDAMIGHTY, I'M FREE AT LAST! I can't quite believe it, but they're finally published and subject to public scrutiny. In order to satisfy the curiosity of the two or three of you out there who are surely wondering how one goes about such a massive hobby service (and make no mistake about that; I, for one, like to consider trying to make the infamous VD houserules a bit, um, less unwieldy as valuable a hobby service as I'm ever likely to perform), and also try to squeeze a few more free issues out of BRUX, I'll set down a brief (?) history of the trials and tribulations accompanying the task. At least then I won't have to repeat myself if anybody actually asks.

I generally knew what I was getting into when I volunteered to do the editing, but was still reasonably confident that I could do a competent job. I wouldn't have volunteered, though, if I hadn't been able to use my college's timesharing system for the text processing. (For those of you who want the technical details, I did it all on a DEC PDP-11/70 running UNIX V7, using Berkeley's "vi" text editor and a set of "mroff" macros that I wrote for the occasion.) Although I actually volunteered in March, I wasn't going to be able to start the project until school got out near the end of May. In between, I began receiving small sympathy notes and somberly-worded wishes along the lines of "good luck -- you'll need it!" mostly from my compatriots in RIGEL.

Once school ended, I began the actual editing process by typing in the old houserules verbatim, and using that copy to note where amendments applied, and to identify where areas overlapped or where a section was covering too much ground. I had already decided to try a format that mimicked the Rulebook, at least for the first copy that BRUX saw, since the format would be easiest to change later if he didn't like it.

Trying to decide on an organization scheme, however, brought up an issue with which I wrestled quite a bit -- how much right did I, as an editor, have to impose my own ideas on BRUX's houserules? I think that I was ultimately successful in avoiding changing the content, of course, even though the first copy which BRUX saw read to me like Steve Knight trying to rip off Linsey's housemules, instead of someone merely editing the real McCoy. But if an editor has as free a hand as I did in a project this large, that editor is going to have a large influence on the flavor of the outcome, even if the content remains fairly well unscathed. An example of this was the lack of a usual "Miscellaneous" section. I was pretty much convinced that when you're trying to be as comprehensive as BRUX does, a "Miscellaneous" section isn't worthwhile. That is, people trying to use the HRs will all have different ideas about just what is and isn't a miscellaneous topic, and there will be a fair amount of thumbing through various other sections before actually checking under "Miscellaneous." Hence, I stretched and squeezed to try to make each topic fit somewhere in the grand scheme, and hoped that it would at least appear to be in some coherent order after I did so.

If memory serves me correctly, I worked on my first version off and on for a little under four weeks, spending about an hour a day on the average, usually when I had a spare moment away from working on the programming I was doing. Eventually, I finally beat them into a shape that was at least presentable for a first draft. I was, however, quite nervous about mailing the first copy to BRUX; for all I knew, I just wasn't going to be on the right track for what he wanted done with his HRs. I must have told him half a dozen times in my accompanying letter not to hold back on making corrections and changes -- they were his HRs, after all. Paranoid? Well, I'm certainly no stranger

to that state of mind. Among other things, I did want to avoid appearing presumptuous for actually suggesting all of these changes in the hallowed VD HRs, and I wasn't at all sure how far was too far.

Fortunately, I got word via the back of VD #80 that BRUK at least approved of the first version, and I awaited his revisions, anticipating a long session of exchanging drafts and changes. By that time, I had attended MadCon I and was thinking of attending DipCon. One of the reasons that overcame my apprehension at spending the necessary bucks was the thought of hand-delivering the next draft to BRUK. Unfortunately, catching my bus entailed my usual last-minute frantic imitation of a headless chicken, and a crash of our usually reliable PDP-11/70 at a most inopportune time meant that I couldn't get it printed before leaving for Detroit. This was not the last delay that these HRs saw! After returning from Origins, my schedule hit the fan as I tried to juggle my summer job at St. Olaf, hunting for a career-type job, and finishing up some academic requirements on which I was somewhat tardy. Hence, I didn't get the next version printed and mailed to BRUK and Mark Berch (who BRUK had asked to review the work-in-progress) until early August. Mailing, of course, was not time-consuming, but the printing was a different story. The printers I was using (NRC spinwriters) took between 45 seconds and a minute per page, and I tried to use them late at night (after midnight) so that I at least wouldn't appear to be avoiding my other work.

By that time, the houserules were getting large enough that I found it extremely handy to use an outline to find the sections for which I was looking. Especially since Mark would be seeing the whole mess for the first time, I included the outline in that second copy, mentioning to BRUK that I wouldn't include it in the final without his say-so. I'm glad that he found it as useful as I did. Although I'm certainly not unbiased, right now I think that the outline is a major saving grace, at least cutting down on the amount of thumbing that needs to be done to find such-and-such a section.

Unfortunately, my delay in mailing that next draft meant that they arrived in Alexandria about the same time as Joshua Berch, so I inadvertently introduced an extra delay in that way. It wouldn't have mattered very much from my standpoint (I was willing to take any break I could get!) except that I had accepted my current job in Reston, Virginia, near the end of August, and needed to get the final draft printed before I moved in late September. Hence, BRUK sent the final changes (including such things as the "Greater Good" rule) to my parents' home in Minneapolis just three days before I was to fly to Virginia, allowing me just enough time to drive back down to Northfield, edit in the final changes, and print two copies. With moving preparations and whatnot, however, I had to shelve the necessary trip to the post office to mail them to BRUK until I arrived here.

So now they're published, out, and in all of your hot little hands, ready to be ignored. Looking back, I think they turned out decently, but heck, I'm prejudiced. There are minor slip-ups (such as at least two typos on the last page, I know), of course, and things that I maybe should have done other ways, but I suppose I can live with that. So what now? Well, I'm not eager to repeat the experience very soon, although I did enjoy this project and do get a kick out of all the notoriety that's been associated with it.

I am, however, going to keep an electronic copy of the houserules on the computer with which I currently work -- it may very well come in handy in another four years, when there are another 80+ amendments to incorporate. In the meantime, it's just as well that my life is my own once again. I'll just turn the stage back to BRUK and the HRs, and leave this whole affair with the dubious distinction of being The Crazy Son of a Bitch Who Edited Linsey's Houserules -- and Lived to Tell About It.

((Superbly done, Cupcake! You get six free issues and still more notoriety for writing this article. And, you are too harsh on yourself. You did a phenomenal job of editing and organizing, and I thank you for it. I couldn't have done the job nearly as well as you did it. Nor, I think, could anyone else.))

Doomie of the Year, 1983

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This is the official announcement of the Doomie of the Year contest for 1983. The winners in previous years were Bob Olsen in 1980, Garry Hamlin in 1981, and Alex Lord in 1982. Previous winners may not win, though essays about them will be cheerfully printed.

For newcomers in the audience the object of this contest is to write a humorous, satirical, or just plain light-hearted essay about the person who you feel deserves the title, "Doomie of the Year, 1983". The subject of your article may be any person who has been mentioned prominently in VD over the course of the last year, and the article should stress in some way his or her involvement. From among the entries received, I will choose a first prize and a second prize, and print these as well as possibly others. First prize will receive four free issues of VD, while second will receive five free issues! The authors get the issues, not the subjects of the articles. The deadline for this contest is Friday, December 30, 1984.

Who will be the winner in 1983? You decide!

- \* Mark Paul, for making us all laugh while tearing apart today's game companies?
- \* Ruth Glaspey, for sharing with BRUX a love for little furry puppy dogs?
- \* Rich Reilly, for writing the best press in recent VD memory?
- \* Jake Halverstadt, for doing such a great job with Presidential Politics?
- \* Ed Wrobel, for double-ordering his units?
- \* Kevin Stone, for giving BRUX the idea to enclose sand in your envelopes?
- \* Steve Knight, for slaving over the house rules for a whole summer?
- \* Eric Kane, for picking up the only win in VD this year?
- \* BRUX himself, for running silly contests like this one and being a general weirdo?
- \* Rod Walker, for having two articles rejected here in the past year?
- \* Samatha Corbin, for refusing to talk to BRUX on the phone?

Or maybe it'll be someone else -- Mark Berch, Kathy Byrne, Ty Hare, Chuff Afflerbach, John Kelley, or who knows? Why, it could even be Glover Rogerson! That's up to you readers. Get out those pens and start busting on your favorite Doomie now!

And remember, it's all in fun.

BRUX

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*3 issues added for article - thank!*



Your sub expires with issue # 96