

THE VOICE OF DOOM

#98

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by BHX

Christmas Shopping Tips

by Jim "Grouch" Bakuc

Do any of you have to shop for children this Christmas? I do and I'm concerned about some of the products on the market today. Some toys can be dangerous. Here are some tips on what toys not to buy...

If the TV commercial...

- begins with a "Parental Discretion Advised" logo.
- has kids with tattoos.
- ends in a blinding flash and a loud explosion.
- ends with a station cut due to technical difficulties, and you hear sirens in the background.

If the box reads...

- For ages 20 and above.
- support your local Red Brigade.
- autographed by Alexander Haig.
- property of U.S. Army (followed by a serial number).
- remote controlled up to 2,000 mile range.
- has a picture of Kaddafi on it.

If the instructions read...

- pull part A and run like hell!!!
- powered by nuclear energy.
- keep in a cool, dark, lead box.
- playtested in Lebanon.
- for outdoor use during communist attack only.
- not for use within 20 miles of civilization.

The Voice of Doom is a journal of postal Diplomacy published every now and then by Bruce Lindsey, 73 Ashcroft 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 for a damnationously long time.

Diplomacy is a registered trademark for a game invented by Allen B. Calhoun and copyrighted by Avalon Hill.

The deadline for all games reprinted herein is January 20, 1984. Those results have already been sent to the players on separate flyers.

P E G A S U S

1982A

GERMANY DOUBLES IN SIZE; TURKEY HANKS ON STEEL ANOTHER YEAR!

Fall 1969

AUSTRIA (Huck): A Typ H (d; x Via, OTR), A Bul-Bul (d; x Cro, OTR), A TRI-Bul, A VEN-Tri, A CON S RUSKIAN F Ank, F Bus-SMY (F ANG S)

ENGLAND (Halverstadt?): HMR! F Hol U (d; x Hol, OTR), F POR U, F NER U, F TRI U, F BRG U

FRANCE (Montfield): A Bar-Bul (A PIC S), A PAR-Bul, A NIB S A Pic, F Wel-LON, F Spa(oc)-HLD (F WBI S)

GERMANY (MacFarlane): A SIB S RUSSIAN A Bus-Bul

RUSSIA (Hoisner): F RWY H, F HLG H, A NIB-Bul, A Bob-TYC (A MUN S, A VIE S), A CAL-Bul, A War-URR, A Bus-BUL (F NLA S), A Say-Con (d; x Syr, OTR), A Sev-ANK

TURKEY (Punches): F ANK S AUSTRALIAN A Con

Supply Center Chart:

AUSTRIA:	Tri, Typ , Cro, Von, Bon, Hol , Rep, CON, SMY	7, over
ENGLAND:	Typ , Hld, Hol, Dan, Typ , POR	4, remove 1
FRANCE:	Hone, Spa, Dun, Typ , Lvp, LON, BUL	6, build 1
GERMANY:	Bul, SIB	2, build 1 (no room)
RUSSIA:	Hone, Rep, Typ , Spa, HLG, Hwy, Hun, Typ , Dun, VIE, BUL	12, over
TURKEY:	Ank	1, even

Game Notes: Last season the Austrian order F Bus-Say should have been listed as failing. This error was not brought to my attention in time to correct it to the players privately, but since it is not a clerical error the game proceeds anyway.

Please stand by for England: Steve Anglo, Box #7, Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06510. Thankshelot.

Press:

ANKARA: The minor declining power of Turkey has managed to exist for yet another year. Miracles do happen, young man!

AUS to FRANCE AND ENGLAND: SIBS!

AUS to RUSSIA: TARN....

AUS to GER: ???

Q U A S A R

1982AE

QUEEN VICTORIA GOES CONVOY HAPPY!

Autumn 1968

RUSSIA: HMR! A War x OTR

Winter 1968

AUSTRIA: Build A HUD

ENGLAND: Build A LON, A EDY

FRANCE: Build A MAR

GERMANY: Build A HMR

ITALY: Remove F Tus

RUSSIA: HMR! GM removes A Ukr (out)

TURKEY: Build A CON

((QUASAR continues next page))

QUASAR (continued)

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Spring 1900

AUSTRIA (Knight?): A Tri-WIR (A EUD S, A TRO S), A VIE S A TYD, A Sec-TRU
 ENGLAND (Osney): A Lon-WIN (F RY S), A ECU-SEP (F NWG C, F PAR C), A SAS-WIN,
 A Kio-PRU (F DAL C), A MOS S CHEMAN A War-URS, F Hlg-HOL, F HLG H
 FRANCE (Herd): A sil-BAL, F WIN-Ion (F TIR S), A Pac-PRU (F LKO S), A MIL-Typ,
 A ISM-Uls
 GERMANY (Dorsten): A KAN-Uls, A Ecu-PRU
 ITALY (Kotman): A Pio-Ion (d; r Tps, OND), A Nap-WIN
 TURKEY (Lucey): A Con-RU, A Sev-Uls (A RUS S), F HLA-Sec, F Iron-AFU,
 F BAS-Ion (F GRS S)

Game Notes: The R/S draw proposal did not pass. Now proposed is an R/F/T draw. Please vote by next deadline. Oops -- almost missed it. There is also an R/S draw proposed. Please vote on both of these by next deadline. Whatever.

From:

BARB to FUSHA: You'll never know how much your lines meant to me. Sorry to see you go. (In his hat)
 PAUL to LINDA: Hello!
 FRANK to TUNNEL: I see you survived another Thanksgiving. At least Paul would have asked you up!
 GUN to BURB: Thanks -- soon!
 FRANK to GEMINI: Congratulations on doubling your scores and defeating the team. (Sweet? Start?)
 SONIA to FASH: Because der Kaiser needed it back, that's why. And we sincerely hope that you won't be so foolish as to provoke us. Remember, the Team's demise was largely the result of a two-front war. Your most obedient servant, sir.
 GUN to SHIA: That's R/S, not FLE -- he's on our side! (I think? -- huh.)
 GUN to VIE: A Bul-Ser?? Oh! Oh! (I feel so-o-o-o lonely.)
 GUN to HUK: No more press -- so there!
 MARSHALLS to PHINKIE: Let's end it here, okay?

S I R I U S

1900/1901

VD HOUSERULES CHALK UP FIRST POSTAL WIN!

Spring 1901

AUSTRIA (Knight?): RUS A VDR N, A Kud-SEN, F Tri-ALB
 ENGLAND (Olsen): F Lon-ENG, F ECU-WTH, A Lev-VAL
 FRANCE (Nichalsti): F Bro-GAS (A PAR S, A MAR S)
 GERMANY (Esno): F Kio-BAL, A Box-PRU, A Mini-SIL
 ITALY (Byzno): F Nap-ION, A Von-TRU, A Hon-AFU
 RUSSIA (Kara): F Str-(se)-BOT, F Sev-RIA, A War-LVA, A MOS H
 TURKEY (Luodi): F ANK S RUSSLAN F Sev-RIA, A Con-ISL, A Sny-CAN,
 F Azg (A Sny-Alb (NSU), F Ion C A Box-Alb (NSU)

Game Notes: The Austrian orders arrived the day after the deadline and therefore cannot be used. The neutral Austrian orders in the VD houserules were used. Since the VD houserules were the first to successfully order a unit to Albania, the SIRIUS game ends with a victory by the houserules. Congratulations (I guess). Endgame statements are due next month.

((SIRIUS continues next page))

SIRIUS (continued)

Game-end Charts:

	<u>1900</u>	
AUSTRIA	3	
ENGLAND	3	
FRANCE	3	
GERMANY	3	
HOUSERULES	0	wins!
ITALY	3	
RUSSIA	4	
TURKEY	3	

Game: 1987b01
 Zine: The Voice of Doom
 GM: Bruce Linsey

Cast of Players:

- AUSTRIA: Steve Knight
- ENGLAND: Bob Olson
- FRANCE: John Michalaki
- GERMANY: Mike Barno
- ITALY: Kathy Byrne
- RUSSIA: Eric Kane
- TURKEY: Mark Luedi

Final Speeches:

- RUSSIA to GM: You'd better not fuck up my moves, Bruce. I took a long time writing them so that they couldn't possibly be misconstrued!
- BLUMTON ((via TURKEY)) to AUSTRIA: You'd better hope you screw up in this game.
- BLUMTON to DALTON: I request that you publish the preference lists in this game.
- BRUX to BLUMTON: You're within your rights, since the houserules say I will do this on request. They were as follows:

- Barno: ATE
- Byrne: TIGER
- Kane: FAT
- Knight: BIG
- Luedi: GREAT
- Michalaki: FAG
- Olson: FAT

Ha. Actually, all except Knight had Austria first, so I had to break the symmetric logjam by giving him Austria (which he had second) and everyone else their second or third choice. OK?

- ENGLAND to AUSTRIA: Nyaaa! Teacher's pet!
- BRUX to ENGLAND: Now, now, no bellyaching please. I did this fair and square. Besides, I only had one pet as a teacher, and she isn't in the game...
- LURIE to BRUX: Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! He ha ha! Hahahahahahahahahahahahahaha!
- BYRNE to BRUX: How's the Pizza Hut? Ha ha ha!
- BRUX to BYRNE: I don't go there any more. Last time I went, one of the anchovies spat in my face.
- ITALY to AUSTRIA: You know what happens to people who don't go along with my plans!
- TOOTS to KATHY: So you always win as Italy, hey? I'll believe it when I see it.
- BRUX to THE PLAYER WHO MADE ALL THOSE SILLY DRAW PROPOSALS: Sorry, friend, the game's over and I'm definitely not restarting it. Kathy would kill me! Proposals ignored.
- BRUX to HOUSERULES: Congratulations again. And all of you folks, get those endgame statements in as soon as possible.



Roll Over Beethovencon!

Another Play not by Gregory Russell

((Author's Note: Recently Larry Peery hosted a small get-together, which he called Beethovencon, in San Diego. Although we at VD Headquarters have yet to receive any word of the proceedings at this gathering, we're willing to bet that it was nothing like the con you are about to read about. Roll Over Beethoven is my tribute to one of the most preposterous ideas I've heard in a long time -- Larry's proposed "diptax". But I say too much. Read on, and discover the tragedies that might befall one who lets his wildest fantasies slip unchecked into the hobby press.....BRUX Linsey))

The cast of characters in this play, in order of appearance, is as follows:

- Larry Peery. The verbose publisher of Xenogogic lives in San Diego and is the host of Beethovencon. He is also the one who proposed the diptax and, in so doing, inspired BRUX to write his first (and only?) play.
- Tro Sherwood. The hobby's number one Beatles fan goes to school in the San Diego area. He got his nickname as the result of an ambiguous order he once wrote for a Voice of Doom game.
- Judy Winsome. The publisher of Winsome-Losesome lives in the Bay Area of California. Like most residents of the area, it is uncertain regarding its own gender.
- Eric Ozog. The former publisher of Diplomacy by Moonlight hails from Chicago but wishes he were in Seattle with Cathy Cunning!
- BRUX Linsey. The author of this play lacks the modesty to leave his own name out of the script. When he is not busy writing plays or toadying to Alex Lord, he publishes Voice of Doom.
- Joan Extrom. Lady Joan lives in Oregon and, although well-known and popular throughout much of the hobby, has only just begun her first postal game. She has an affinity for pigs...
- Joan's Pig. So we'll accomodate her and give her a hunk of live bacon for this play.
- Ig Lew. The hobby's resident Eskimo lives in Alaska and publishes Benzene. He is notorious for his letters, which consist of multiple random thought fragments which have somehow made their way onto a sheet of paper.
- Michel Liesnard. The former publisher of Chanticleer lives in Belgium and speaks both French and English.
- Alex Lord. The publisher (occasionally) of Alex's Column is known throughout the hobby for her humorous writings in the pages of Voice of Doom. She has never played Diplomacy. She lives in the ~~city town~~ village hamlet backcountry of Hannacroix, New York.
- Perdita Boardman. The wife of Graustark's John Boardman lives in Brooklyn.
- Kathy Byrne. The publisher of Kathy's Korner is an avid Mets fan. This quality of liking to watch men lose also manifests itself in her Diplomacy games. She appears offstage only (by 3,000 miles) in this play.
- Gary Coughlan. The hobby's number one playwright works for the postal "service" and publishes Europa Express. He hails from Memphis.
- John, Paul, George and Ringo. The Beatles, from Liverpool, do not actually appear in the script. However, they were of incalculable help when it came to writing it.

Certain lines throughout this play are marked with an asterisk (*). This denotes something that that character would not dream of saying in real life.

(SCENE): Larry Peery is all alone in his living room. He is sitting in an easy chair, holding and fondling a small, empty wicker basket. In the background Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is playing softly. Larry Peery is all alone in his living room.

Larry (to himself): Gee, I'm all alone in my living room and Beethovencon is scheduled to begin in just a few minutes. I wonder when everyone will start arriving. (He gets up and places the empty wicker basket on a small table just inside the door.) After all, if nobody shows up at my con, how am I going to raise enough money to buy the award plaques for my new Mark Berch Silverdome Award? (His voice becomes almost inaudible as he slips into a thoughtful reverie.) Gosh, wasn't that a great idea, though, charging everyone in the hobby a diptax to play in postal games or tournament games? Now I can finance twenty more projects and... (A loud knock on the door interrupts his train of thought. He gets up and standing at the door is Tro Sherwood.)

Larry: Well, well, who have we here?

Tro: I am the Walrus! (He strides across the room, shuts off Beethoven, and starts playing a Beatles tape.)

Larry: Hey, wait just a minute! This is supposed to be Beethovencon! Just who do you think you are?

Tro: I have no symphony for you at all. (He starts singing along with the song now playing.) I am the Walrus!

Larry (resigned): Well, then, you'll have to pay your tusktax. (He holds forth the wicker basket.)

Tro: Tusktax, my blubber! Who do you think you are?

Larry (singing as a new song comes on the tape):

Let me tell you how it will be
One buck for you, nineteen for me.
'Cause I'm the taxman
Yeh, I'm the taxman.

Should five percent appear too small
Be thankful I don't take it all.
'Cause I'm the taxman
Yeh, I'm the taxman.

If you're playing France then I'll tax Bel,
If you're Germany I'll tax Kiel.
If you're Austria then I'll tax Greece,
If you're England I'll tax all the seas.
Taxman!

Don't ask me what I want it for
'Cause you know even I'm not sure!
But I'm the taxman
Yeh, I'm the taxman
And you're paying for no one but me.

Tro: Oh, all right. Here's a 20-dollar bill. When does the game begin?

Larry: Here's a dollar back.* The game will begin when seven players get here and pay their fees. People are supposed to be arriving right about now. (As he finishes the sentence, there is another knock on the door. He opens it and Judy Winsome enters the room.)

Tro: Well, if it isn't Mr. Wimpy Losesome itself. We've been waiting for you. Wasn't your train leaving at nine minutes after nine this morning?

Judy: Yes, sorry I missed it. I caught the one after 9:09. Hope I'm not too late.

Larry: Well, you are, so you'll have to pay a laxtax.

Judy (ignoring Larry): So when does the game begin?

Larry (persistently): You're late, Judy. Pay your laxtax!

Judy (obviously avoiding Larry): Can I play England?

Tro: I think you'd better pay Larry first, Judy.

Larry (singing to the song now playing on the tape):

Hey Jude, you didn't pay
Put in a dollar, or go away.
Remember to give your money to me,
Then you can start to play Diplomacy.

Hey Jude, don't be afraid
The other players will all have paid.
The minute you throw your dollar bill in,
Then you can begin to play Diplomacy.

And any time you're feeling poor
Hey Jude, the door
Is right there so you can back on out.

For well you know that it's a creep
Who plays it cheap
By holding his hard-earned money out.

So pay, pay, pay, pay, pay
Pay, pay, pay, pay!

Hey Jude, don't be a jerk
My silly projects need cash to work.
The minute you give your money to me,
Then you can start to play Diplomacy!

Judy: Goodness gracious, here's a dollar. Now let's play.

Tro: We have to wait till there are seven people here.

Judy: But...but he said that the minute I...

Larry (quickly): Relax. More people are on their way.

Judy: There's a word for people like you, but I'm too much of a lady to say it. *
(She starts singing to the song now playing.)

I give you all my cash
That's all I do-oo
And if I had more cash
You'd take that too-oo

I hate you.

I give you everything
Reluctantly-y
The money that I bring
I bring for thee-ee

And I hate you...

Larry: Your personal feelings don't mean diddlysquat to me. You've paid your money, now you can stay here and play Diplomacy. The game begins as soon as we have enough payers, er, players.

Judy: Speaking of payers, Larry, I see you aren't wearing glasses any more. Did you get lenses?

Larry: Huh? Uh, yeah, I...

Judy: Then I assume you've paid your contax?

Larry (pulling Judy close to him and singing softly to the music):

Listen!

Do you want to know a secret?

Do you promise not to tell?

Oh-o-o-oh

Closer!

Let me whisper in your ear

Say the words you long to hear,

"I pay taxes too!"

Oo-oo-oo-oo-oo...

(He flips a penny into the basket. Then another knock sounds at the door, and while Tro and Judy are distracted he stealthily takes back the penny and pockets it. At the door is Eric Ozog.)

Eric: Greetings one, greetings all!

Larry: Well, if it isn't Mr. Diplomacy by Moonlight himself.

Judy: Howdy, Mr. Moonlight!

Eric: Not any more, dearie. The ol' zine is out of production these days. (He shuts off the light.) I've been sticking to Diplomacy by Candlelight. More romantic, Cathy says, and...

Larry (turning the light back on): By candlelight, eh? You'd better pay your waxtax.

Eric: Oh, you and your stupid taxes. If I wasn't so gentle and mellow, I'd...I'd... I'd argue with you! (He starts singing...)

When I get older, losing my hair *

Many years from now,

Will you still be charging me a tax to play?

Are you gonna force me to pay?

If I am in this destitute state

Must this be my fate?

Will you still need me,

Will you still bleed me

When I'm sixty-eight?

You'll be ninety-two

And if you say the word

I'll pay tax to you.

I could be handy, work all my life

Send my pay to you.

You could find a way to waste it all, I know,

Every day my money you'll blow!

If I complain just charge me a fine,

Take whatever's mine!

Will you still need me,

Will you still bleed me

When I'm sixty-nine?

Every summer we could hold a dipcon in your house and

Proceeds go to you.

We shall scrimp and save.

Doomies will pay your fee:

Eric, Chuff, and Dave!

Send me a post card, drop me a line
When my money's due.
Indicate precisely what I'm spozed to pay,
Yours sincerely, Wasting Away.
If I should try to get in for free
Quadruple my fee.
Will you still need me,
Will you still bleed me
When I'm seventy?

(Everyone is quiet for a few seconds as the song ends. Then...)

Tro: Sounds like Eric's asking you a question, Larry. How long will you be taxing us?

Larry (singing as a new song comes on):

Who knows how long I'll tax you?
You know I always will.
Will you pay for all your lifetime?
If you want to play, you will.

For if I never taxed you
You'd never play a game,
But it doesn't really matter,
I will tax you just the same.

Tax you forever, and forever,
Tax you in all my plans.
Tax you whenever you play England,
Tax you when you play France.

And when at last I break you
Your cries will fill the air,
Scream it loud so I can hear you,
I'm so sleasy when I'm near you,
For the tax you pay endears you to me
Oh, you know, you will

You will!

Eric: Boy, Larry, you're bad! I'm gonna tell my mummy on you! (As he says this another knock sounds at the door. Larry opens it, and everyone screams in utter horror. At the door is a mummy-like figure cloaked in reams and reams of paper. Tro is the first to gather his wits.)

Tro: M-my God! What is that?
(The mummy says nothing, but enters the room and begins peeling the paper off itself and tossing the scraps on the floor.)

Eric (in fear): Mummy mia!
(The mummy remains silent, but continues peeling. Judy, suspicious, picks up one of the scraps of paper.)

Judy (reading out loud): "...XII.3, paragraph 4, second sentence. Units must be properly labeled or the order will fail." (She throws down the paper hard and stares at the mummy.) I'll be...it's Brucie!

Tro: In disguise!

Eric: With houserules! (All three of them start singing to the song now playing.)

Picture yourself in a game in a dipzine
With BRUX as your GM and Tro your ally
Everyone smiles as you screw up your orders
And BRUX gets incredibly high.

Forty-page issues appear at your door
 Waiting to blow you away
 Look for your ally for all his support
 And he's gone!

Bruce in disguise with house rules!
 Bruce in disguise with house rules!
 Bruce in disguise with house rules!
 Ahhhhhh, ahhhhh...

Picture yourself going to an ombudsman
 Who rules in your favor, your spirits are high
 Somebody grabs you and strangles you slowly
 A GM with blood in his eye.

Bruce in disguise with house rules!
 Bruce in disguise with house rules!
 Bruce in disguise with house rules!

Ahhhhhhh, ahhhhhhh...

Larry: So it's you, BRUX. How come you're all dressed up like that? Did you come here to play fantasy games, or what?

BRUX: Well, no, but...

Larry: Because you'll have to pay a Gygax tax, you know.

BRUX: I don't have any money on me. (But as he says this, a dollar bill shows out the bottom of his shirttail.)

Larry: Fork it over, BRUX.

BRUX: Look, I'll mail you the money when I get home. I...

Larry: No, Bruce, that won't do. (He stretches his open hand in front of BRUX's face just as the song "All My Loving" starts to play.)

BRUX (singing):

Close your hand or I'll slay you
 Tomorrow I'll pay you,
 Remember I owe it to you.
 When I get home tomorrow
 I'll pay what I borrowed,
 And I'll send all my money to you.

I'll pretend I'm just lending
 The money I'm sending,
 And hope it arrives postage due.
 When I get back to Dalton
 I won't be defaultin'
 'Cause I'll send all my money to you.

All my money, I will send to you.
 All my money, Larry I'll be true.

Larry: So you don't have any money to pay now, eh BRUX?

BRUX: Gosh, Larry, I had a whole wad but I seem to have lost it.

Larry: So you can't pay me anything till you get home, eh BRUX?

BRUX (struggling to keep the money hidden inside his shirt): No, I can't.

Larry (sarcastically): Yeah, yeah, yeah.

BRUX: I'm serious, Larry, I...

Larry: Yeah, yeah, yeah. (A new song starts playing.)

Larry (singing):

You think you lost your cash
Well I saw it yesterday-ee-ay
I know you've got a stash
And you're gonna have to pay-ee-ay
Because I'll tax you
And you know that must be bad.
I'll tax you
And you know that you've been had.

I'll tax you YEAH, YEAH, YEAH!
I'll tax you YEAH, YEAH, YEAH!
And with a tax like that
You know you should be mad.

You say your money's lost
But you hid it all away-ee-ay
You know there's extra cost
'Cause you're trying not to pay-ee-ay
I said I'll tax you
And you know that must be bad.
I'll tax you
And you know that you've been had.

I'll tax you YEAH, YEAH, YEAH!
I'll tax you YEAH, YEAH, YEAH!
And with a tax like that
You know you should be mad.

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH, YEAH...

(As the song ends, several dollar bills flutter out of BRUX's shirt despite his desperate attempts to keep them in.)

BRUX: I tell you I don't have any...oh, never mind. Here's your money. (He puts all the loose money in the basket.)

Larry: I need another dollar.

BRUX: Why? I just paid my tax.

Larry: Right. So now you have to pay a taxtax!

BRUX: Oh, for cripeakes. (He puts another dollar in the basket.)

Larry: Thank you, BRUX.

Joan: Yeah, thanks, BRUX. And bunny foo foo. (Joan Extrom has appeared out of nowhere, holding a little pig.)

Larry (startled): Hey! How did she get in here?

Eric: She came in through the bathroom window. I saw her standing there.

Larry: I should have known better. Get back!

Joan: Tell me why.

Larry: Because.

Joan (turning to leave): No reply! I don't want to spoil the party...

BRUX: She's leaving home. Let it be!

Larry: Oh, all right. (He picks up a hammer and some nails and plywood, and heads toward the bathroom.) I'm fixing a hole. Make sure she pays.

(For a split second, not understanding, Joan was quizzical.)

Judy (singing softly but sarcastically): Bang, bang, Taxwell's silver hammer came down upon her head...

BRUX: Cool it, Judy, he'll hear you.

Joan's Pig: Oink.

Eric: Hey! What's that? Samantha?

Joan: It's a pig, silly. You coming to Lepercon, Orczog?

I need to, I need to, I need to
I need to make you pay.
Then you can stay all day.
Until you do I'm telling you so you'll understand.

Michel, from Bel,
Pay your tax or fly right back to Bel, my Michel.
Michel, from Bel,
Je veux seulement votre l'argent belle, my Michel.

I will say the only words I know
That you'll understand, my Michel.

(Michel tosses a few francs into the basket.)

Larry: See? He knows that it's futile to argue.

Tro: How much have you collected so far, Larry?

Larry: Let me count. (He starts pulling dollar bills out of the basket one by one, fondling each one lovingly as he counts.) Number one, number two, number three...

Tro: Forget it. You don't have to count the whole basket.

Larry: Number six, number seven, number eight...

Tro: Larry, really...

Larry: Number nine, number nine, number nine...

BRUX: He's loopy as a fruit loop, Tro. Just leave him.

Larry: Number nine, number nine, number nine...

Judy: I want to know when we're going to play. There are seven of us here now.

BRUX: I think we'll have to forget about Larry. He's...busy. He might as well be reading the Cyclic Article. Let's wait till another player shows up.

Larry: Number nine, number nine, number nine...

(The lights dim and for a couple of minutes the whole room revolves in cyclic motion. Then the song ends, the lights brighten, the room becomes stationary after revolution #9, Larry finally shuts up *, and a George Harrison tune starts playing just as a radiant young lady steps to the door.)

BRUX (singing):

My Sweet Lord!
I really wanna see you
I really wanna be with you
I really wanna see you, Lord,
So come in and join the fun
My Sweet Lord!...

Alex (entering the room): Tubular, man! *

Larry: So this is Alex, eh? Are you all ready to play Diplomacy, sweets? *

Alex: Like, totally! *

Larry (pushing the basket in Alex's face): Like, you'll have to pay your Grody-to-the-max tax.

Alex: Like, I don't have any money.

BRUX: Don't you dare make Her Majesty leave or I'll wring your neck!

Larry (singing to the music):

Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl and I'd love to let her stay all day.
Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl but she doesn't have a lot to pay.
I wanna tell her that I love her a lot, but I gotta get a pocket full of dimes,
Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl, some day her money will be mine, oh yeah,
Some day her money will be mine.

BRUX: You know, Larry, you're a hard-ass. Here, take this. (He puts a dime in the basket for Alex and gives Larry a dirty look. Alex sits down with the others.)

Larry: Gee, Alex, I've been reading your columns in Voice of Doom and wondering how you got involved in this hobby to begin with. You seem so...different.

Joan (to herself): Look who's talking...

BRUX: Should we tell him the whole story, Al?

Alex (nodding): Ob-la-de, ob la-da!

BRUX and Alex (singing):

Brucie is a teacher in the Greenville School,
Alex is a student in his class.
Brucie says to Alex, girl your prose are cool,
And Alex says this as he writes her out a pass:

Ob-la-de, ob-la da, school goes on, blah
La, la, la, la school goes on.
Ob-la-de, ob-la-da, school goes on, blah
La, la, la, la school goes on.

Writing for a zine is never done with ease,
Brucie lets the children try their hands.
Alex writes an article called "Soggy Peas"
And then the mail pours in, saying from her fans:

Ob-la-de, ob-la-da, write some more, please
La, la, la, la write some more!
Ob-la-de, ob-la-da, write some more, please
La, la, la, la write some more!

In a couple of years they have built a zine, sweet zine,
With many good times to laugh about,
Did Brucie and Alex Lord.

Hey, happy ever after in the hobby place,
Brucie has a job now at G.E.
Alex stays at home and does her pretty face,
And sometimes she still writes her column for VD.

Ob-la-de, ob-la-da, Dip goes on, yeah
La, la, la, la Dip goes on.
Ob-la-de, ob-la-da, Dip goes on, yeah
La, la, la, la Dip goes on.

And if you want some fun (ha ha ha ha)
Play ob-la-Dip-la-da! (ha ha ha)

Tro: That's a very touching story, dear. What's your phone number?

Alex: You know my name, look up the number.

Judy: Speaking of playing ob-la-Dip-la-da, why don't we get ob-la-started-la-da?
Larry can stand there and caress his money while the rest of us play.

Alex: But I've never played before!

BRUX: The better to stab you with, my dear. *

Alex: My, what big teeth you have!

BRUX: The better to...

Joan (quickly): And I've only just begun my first game.

Eric (rubbing his hands together): Boy, the women are gonna be easy pickings tonight!

Joan: Wait'll I tell Cathy...

Eric: I want you, she's so heavy. * (All except Larry set up the Diplomacy board and get ready to play.)

Larry: Here's some potato chips and doughnuts. Just be sure to pay your snaxtax.
 (He leaves the room before anyone has a chance to object.)

Alex: Boy, this guy means business, doesn't he?

Larry (from the bedroom): ~~EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEK!~~ (He comes running back into the living room and starts jumping up and down, gesturing wildly.)

Judy: What's the matter, Larry? Why are you screaming and running around like such a maniac?

BRUX: God, and this guy's from San Diego, too. How did I ever leave him out of the Zoo issue?

Larry (singing): Mean Mr. Maston sleeps in my bed, looks like he's dead...

(A knock on the door interrupts Larry. Standing in the doorway is John Boardman's wife, Perdita.)

Tro (under his breath): Lovely Perdita, meter maid...

Perdita: Howdy doody, folks. * John sent me here to make sure that you all weren't producing any forgeries.

Larry: Who, us? You're a long way from home, Perdita.

Perdita: You betcha! I've traveled all the way across the Great Big United States of America.

Larry: So how did you get here?

Perdita: I'm afraid of flying. I took the train.

Larry (holding out the basket): Here. Better pay your traxtax.

Perdita: Well, I can't pay you the fifty dollars I have for my return ticket, but I've got a spare sixty here in my pocketbook you can have.

Larry (wide-eyed): You can't pay the fifty, but you can part with the sixty? Why?

Perdita: Because it isn't fare. By the way, I don't think anyone else here knows me except through the pages of Graustark. Can you give me a personal introduction?

Larry: Why, certainly! (He starts singing to the song which has just begun playing.)

It was twenty years ago last May
 Doktor Boardmann started postal play
 It's been growing more exciting all the while
 And it's guaranteed to raise a smile
 So may I introduce to you
 The gal you've known for all these years
 Doktor Boardmann's Only Graustark Fan!

Perdita:

I'm Doktor Boardmann's Only Graustark Fan
 I know you don't enjoy the zine
 Doktor Boardmann's Only Graustark Fan
 The oldest zine you've ever seen!
 Doktor Boardmann's Only, Doktor Boardmann's Only
 Doktor Boardmann's Only Graustark Fan!

It's terrible to be here,
 It's certainly a drag,
 You're such a bunch of renegades
 I'd hate to take you home with me,
 I'd hate to take you home.

I don't really wanna stop the show
 But I thought you might like to know
 That the Doktor thinks you all are queers
 And he's felt that way for twenty years!
 So now I'm introduced to you
 You silly little bunch of queers
 I'm Doktor Boardmann's Only Graustark Fan!

S I L L - Y Q U E E R S...

Larry: What would you think if I charged you a tax,
 Would you stand up and walk out on me?
 Lend me a ten and I won't give it back,
 And I'll try not to show it's for me,
 Oh, I get rich with a little help from my friends,
 Oh, I'm a bitch with a little help from my friends,
 No, I don't leave a little stitch for my friends.

Larry: What do I do when someone doesn't pay?
Eric: Does it worry you to send him home?
Larry: How do I feel when I send him away?
Eric: Are you sad because you're all alone?

Larry: No, I get rich with a little help from my friends,
 Oh, I'm a bitch with a little help from my friends,
 No, I don't leave a little stitch for my friends.

All: Do you need any money?
Larry: I need some money from you.
All: Could it be any money?
Larry: No, only your twenties will do.

Joan: Would you believe in a tax the first game?
Larry: Yes, I'm certain that I get it every time.
Joan: What would you feel, would you feel any shame?
Larry: No, I ruthlessly take every dime.

Oh, I get rich with a little help from my friends,
 Oh, I'm a bitch with a little help from my friends,
 No, I don't leave a little stitch for my friends.

Perdita: Well, you aren't getting the rest of my money. I'm going back to Brooklyn.

Larry: When you get home, would you give Kathy a call and ask her when she's coming?

Perdita: I don't think she's going to make it, Larry. When I left New York she was busy picketing Shea Stadium.

Larry (puzzled): Why?

Perdita: It seems that the Mets are planning to bench her favorite outfielder. You should see the sign she's carrying.

Larry: What does it say?

Perdita (singing as she backs out the door): Strawberry Fields Forever! (She leaves.)

Tro: OK, let's get started. Who's playing what country? Here, Eric, you draw first.

Eric: I hope I don't get Russia. I always get Russia. (He draws the white army.)
 Oh, well. Back in the U.S.S.R.

BRUX: I've got England.

Alex: Light blue!

Joan: That's France, love. I've got Italy. In my first game -- yech! (And all the others draw, and the game begins.)

BRUX (to Alex, silently in a corner of the room): Listen, dear, I can help you win this game as France. Just keep the peace with me and...

Larry (overhearing): Keep the peace, eh? You two are gonna have to pay a paxtax!

Alex: Wait a minute, I didn't agree to Brucie's proposal. I never agree to Brucie's proposals!

BRUX (under his breath): Where did I put those goddamn asterisks...

Alex: Besides, I thought this hobby was supposed to be for fun. Since when do we have to pay a tax to play in a game? Why are you behaving in this bellicose way? I'm just a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl and I just want to play this game. I can't afford to support your silly projects and proposals. I just came here to have fun!

(Larry is stunned into silence by this tirade. Everyone in the room is staring at him.)

Larry (shocked): She...she doesn't want to pay a diptax? Imagine that!

(A John Lennon song starts to play on the tape.)

Alex (singing):

Imagine there's no diptax
It isn't hard to do,
Imagine there's no money
Oh then what would you do?
Imagine all these people
Playing Dip for free
Oh...

You may say I'm a cheapskate
But I'm not the only one.
I hope some day you will join us
And we'll play our games for fun.

All except Larry:

Imagine there's no diptax
No fees for anyone,
No polls or silly projects
A hobby just for fun!
Imagine all these people
In total anarchy
Oh...

You may say that you'll tax us
But you are the only one.
We hope some day you will join us
And we'll play our games for fun.

Larry (red-faced): Well...I think I'll go finish up this issue of Xenogogic and let you folks play your game. *

BRUX: So, how's your issue coming along, Larry? Gonna hit 150 pages again? Fancy that!

Larry: I just might. This issue is going to contain the results of my latest Peeriproject -- the Hobby Personality Matrix.

BRUX: The what?

Larry: The Hobby Personality Matrix. I drew a 100 by 100 grid and listed the hundred most prominent hobby personalities both across and down. Then in each little square, I wrote a number from 0 to 10, determined by the quality of the relationship between the two people whose row and column cross at that square. For instance, where Rod's row crosses Boardman's column, I've written a zero. Eric and Cathy got a nine...

BRUX: Were there any tens?

Larry: Just a couple. Your row and the houserules column. My row and my column.

BRUX: I don't mean to sound too eager, but may I read Alex's Column?

Larry: You'll be getting it soon. This issue's gonna stretch across the universe.
(He starts singing...)

Words are flowing out like endless drivel on a paper page,
They slither, jumble, tumble on their way into the magazine.
Slews of boring verbiage are drifting from my open mouth,
Possessing and caressing me.

Jee-ee-sus Christ Almi-igh-ty!

Ooooooooooh

No one's gonna read my zine,
No one's gonna read my zine!
No one's gonna read my zine,
No one's gonna read my zine!

Fifty-six page poll results to tell how seven people voted,
 Endless editorials that say nothing at all.
 Sounds of laughter from the hobby ringing through my open ears
 Inciting and inviting me.

Jee-ee-sus Christ Almi-igh-ty!

Ooooooooooh

No one's gonna read my zine,

No one's gonna read my zine!

No one's gonna read my zine,

No one's gonna read my zine!

Jee-ee-sus Christ Almi-igh-ty!

Jee-ee-sus Christ Almi-igh-ty!...

(At the end of the song there is another knock on the door. Larry answers it, and standing there is Gary Coughlan, dressed in a postman's outfit, delivering the mail.)

Gary: Sorry, Larry, nothing for y'all today.

Larry: Well, why did you knock on my door, then?

Gary: Oh, y'all know Ah just have to show up at every con. (He turns to leave.)

Larry (singing):

Stop! Wait a minute Mr. Postman,

Wai-ai-ait, Mr. Postman!

Please Mr. Postman, look and see!

If there's some money in the mail for me.

I've been standing here waiting Mr. Postman

So-o impatiently

Not for a card, nor for a letter,

But for a check that is made out to me-ee...

Gary (checking his mail sack again): Well shut my mouth, there is some stuff for y'all. Six zines and three subzines! And...this. (He pulls out a small envelope and hands it to Larry.)

Larry (opening the envelope): There's only one dollar in here. Baa! Baa! Sheesh! *

Alex: What did you say?

Larry: I said, "Baa! Baa! Sheesh!"

Alex: Real men don't bleat sheesh.

Tro: I guess she told you. You must not be a real man.

Larry (angrily): Shut up or you'll be nowhere, man!

Tro: Oh, all right. You're a real man. A real Peeriman! (He starts singing.)

He's a real Peeriman

Sitting on his Peerican

Making all his Peeriplans

For nobody.

Doesn't have a thing to do

Sits there raking in his due

He is not a bit like you

Or me.

Peeriman, please listen,

There is something you're missin',

Peeriman, the hobby

Ain't at your command.

He's as mean as he can be

Charges everyone a fee

He is not a bit like me

Or you.

Larry: Folks, if you keep it up I'm going to start thinking that the hobby doesn't support all my projects a hundred per cent.* Now stop it or I'll sue you!

Gary: Y'all can't sue me, Ah'm yore mailman.

Larry: Right you are. I can Sue Judy here, because she's a female man. But you're just a mail man, so I'll have to Bill you.

Gary: If y'all insist. Ah'll pay yore bill. (He hands Larry some money.)

Larry: And here, deliver these issues of Xenogogic for me when you leave. (He gives a stack of zines to Gary, then looks down and notices that the money Gary gave him is Confederate.)

Larry (singing and pointing to the stack of Xenos);

You never give me your money,
You only give me your funny paper!
We're in the middle of negotiations,
So get lost!

Boy! You're gonna carry that weight
Carry that weight, a long time!
Boy! You're gonna carry that weight
Carry that weight, a long time!

Gary (singing):

You never give us our choices,
You only give us yore dumb invoices!
And then you publish all these funny noises,
What bullshit!

Boah! Ah will not carry that weight
Carry that weight, for no time!
Boah! Ah will not carry that weight
Carry that weight, for no time!

(And he dumps the stack of zines at Larry's feet and leaves.)

BRUX: Come on, folks, back to the game. Let's see what happened in Spring '01.

Alex, I hope you kept our alliance.

Alex: Brucie, dear, remember all that homework you used to give me?

BRUX: Uh, oh... (He looks at the Spring orders and starts to sing to the song now playing.)

I once stabbed a girl,
Or should I say,
She once stabbed me.

She showed me her moves,
I howled with glee,
Norwegian Sea!

She told me she'd go to the Channel and started to cough,
I told her I wouldn't and ordered Fleet London to North.

← ((amb!))

And when Spring was played,
I was dismayed,
She had stabbed me.

So I was alone,
Poor little me,
Norwegian Sea!

Alex: Poor baby. I just had to put the moves on you, Brucie! *

BRUX: Yeah, but did you have to do it in a Diplomacy game?

Tro: But how could she stab you? All her units remained static!

Michel: Mais oui!

BRUX: She used static attacks. Look it up in the Lexicon some day.

Michel: Mais oui!

Alex: Those are my static attacks tactics. *

Michel: Mais oui!

Larry: Looks like she'll have to pay a static attacks tactics tax!

Michel: Mais oui...kill you?

(A new song comes on, and this time Tro, Michel, Judy, Joan, BRUX, Eric, and Alex all stand up and sing in unison.)

All except Larry:

When I find myself in games of Dippy
 Brother Larry comes to me,
 Speaking words of wisdom,
 "Pay your fee-ee!"

And in my hour of darkness
 He is standing right in front of me,
 Speaking words of wisdom,
 "Pay your fee-ee!"

Pay your fee, pay your fee-ee,
 Pay your fee-ee-ee, pay your fee.
 Whispered words of wisdom,
 "Pay your fee-ee!"

And when the broken-hearted people
 Playing in dipdom agree,
 There will be a diptax,
 "Pay your fee-ee!"

I wake up to the sound of Larry
 Making all this noise at me,
 Standing with his hand out,
 "Pay your fee-ee!"

Pay your fee, pay your fee-ee,
 Pay your fee-ee-ee, pay your fee.
 Why is he in dipdom?
 "Pay your fee-ee!"

BRUX: Folks, let's end this game. I don't want to win anyway. * Let's vote on a draw.

Larry: Burying the hatchet in 1901? If you're gonna vote, you'll all have to pay a poll tax.

Eric: We're gonna bury this hatchet, Buster...right in your back! (He picks up a hatchet and chases Larry out the front door, upsetting the wicker basket and sending the money flying all over the room. All of the others join in the chase except for Joan, who remains quietly seated in the living room.)

Joan (to herself): ...not even to protect myself from getting screwed...

Larry (faintly, from the street): Wait a minute! Wait! You didn't pay your axtax...

Joan (looking at the scattered money and singing with the music):

And in the end,
 The friends you break
 Are equal to the tax you take...

THE END

The Gossip Column

From Chuff Afflerbach (11/20/83):

Dear Publisher,

I hadn't given up, but I had begun to wonder. Had you dittoed yourself into a coma? Then the Bekins van pulled up and the movers wheeled in what I knew could only be the Fourth Anniversary Issue of The Voice of Doom. Really, Bruce, "third class" sounds so tacky -- don't you think "book rate" would have been more appropriate?

Well, your mega-zine has been my constant companion for the past week. And boy, did I have some explaining to do! My next-door neighbor who watched it arrive called you "manic." My colleagues at work asked if it was a book manuscript. People even tried to read it over my shoulder on the BART train. To all I gave my very best sales pitch for Diplomacy in general and VD in particular. I got a lot of sympathetic looks, anyway.

So after slogging through 170 pages, my overall reaction is a hearty "worth waiting for!" Next up are a few specific comments. I wonder if anyone else took notes as they read. And will there be any multiple choice on the exam?

Page 1: I've always been partial to Afflerbetical Order, even in reverse.

Pages 4-22: Skipped the houserules. Why go looking for trouble?

Page 23: I joined the hobby just in time to miss the 1981 convention at the Dunfey in San Mateo. Now I find out I've been missing them every year. Hey, you guys, I'm right here on the other side of the Bay! Whose mailing list do I have to get on to hear about these things? ((Write to Don Del Grande, address in the annish.))

Pages 29, 33: Bravo! More marvelous press pieces. Very pretty...but can they fight?

Page 41: Well said, Alex. And well deserved. All things must pass.

Page 51: First Alex, now Billy. A watershed issue, indeed. We even learn where BRUX got his name.

On the same subject, I would like to clarify the common misconception that I was named by a Bohemian with a head cold. I, too, have a story to tell, but I'm saving it for a special occasion. Like maybe a Dipcon at the Dunfey.

Pages 63-68: Since I don't know a do-loop from a fruit-loop, why did I read this entire article ((Real Programmers Don't Use PASCAL))? For one thing it was either that or the houserules (No! Anything but the houserules!). But it's also a case of "know thine enemy."

To be honest, I'm something of a neo-Luddite. You know those cranes with the giant electromagnets they use at auto wrecking yards? I'm gonna get me one of those babies and drive it down El Camino Real, smack-dab in the heart of Silicon Valley. Swinging that magnet left over Control Data, right over Intel, back again over Osborne, Eagle, Apple -- one hard core core dump. Big Brother is ungood! Down with Big Brother!

Page 85: The majority of readers polled say you've avoided controversy well, but you go and disagree. Anything-for-a-controversy BRUX! Don't you just love him?

Page 102: Ah, Mr. Kelley's remarks about acne, obesity, and the simply weird. Nothing wrong or unusual about people gathering together "to feel comfortable in the presence of those like themselves." Sounds like human nature to me. Face it -- the only reason any of us (John included) play with each other is because we got tired of playing with ourselves. The question can be argued as to whether the playing or the acne came first. But no need to make the circle a vicious one.

Pages 121-123 ((the Judy Winsome interview)): I love a good hoax. But the fact that "Judy" lived in S.F. should have been a tipoff that there was something odd about her. Real women don't play Dip. Now let's find out who this "Kathy Byrne" really is...

Page 125: Ig Lew is so ((illegible)) I get ((illegible)) every time I read his stuff. One of the most ((illegible)) in the hobby today!

Page 129: Apocryphal or not, Greg's story needs a footnote. LBJ's daughters were named Lucy and Linda. Sorry, no Lydia. At first I couldn't believe that a Real Texan could make a mistake as blatant as that, but then I read Greg is from

Houston. Oh, well. I spent three months there myself, but only because I missed my off-ramp.

Now, Greg, here's a chance to redeem yourself: what was Lady Bird's real name? One free VD to the first Doomie to send BRUX the answer.

Page 143: You know, Bruce, your writing is as good as any in this zine -- nay, in the hobby! I always find your play-of-the-game articles well-thought-out and cleverly-written. The Ionian Intrusion, How Not to Get a Puppet, Variations on the Powers, all excellent reading. Even the short story!

But on your Inverse Function piece I've got to call you out. You claim the most effective application of your formula "letters divided by games" is to quit playing games. Well, I'm no math major and I certainly don't have a masters in education. But believe you me, when Sister Gertrude pounds something into you in the third grade, it stays pounded. "Division by zero is meaningless!" Write that 1,000 times, Brucie, so you don't forget it. Negotiation without Diplomacy is meaningless.

Page 167: Is it mere coincidence that my article arrived with uncanceled stamps? Clearly the Postal Service is intent on entrapping us. So as a precaution, I'm returning them to you. Lead us not into temptation, okay, Bruce?

Page 170: It's all becoming a blur. Didn't you mention somewhere that you used a "foot stapler"? Why do I think this would make a hilarious cartoon by Mark Paul?

Page 170: What's this? I barely finish #85 and already #86 is here...

Once upon a deadline dreary, while I pondered, loathe and leery,
Over many a curious volume from the diplomatic corps,
Suddenly there came a flutter, at my door the pages clutter.

"Again The Voice of Doom," I shudder, "flapping at my chamber door!"

How much longer can it issue, reams of diplomatic lore?

Quoth the BRUX-bird, "Evermore!"

Loved it!

Chuff

((Letters like this one made it all worthwhile! Glad you enjoyed it.

Uh, folks, this is not the mid-monthly I promised containing all your letters, so keep your eyes peeled still. Doomie of the Year results coming soon too, and oodles of other assorted garbage-type things.

Congratulations to Jake and Sue Halverstadt, who just celebrated their third wedding anniversary; and to Steve and Daf Langley, who will be celebrating their first a year from now (hyork, hyork).

"Down with Big Erother!" Chuff cries as we enter 1984. Talk about bravado... My New Year's resolution is to keep VD a funzine. So smile, everyone!))

BRUX

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