

# DIB DIB DIB

ISSUE

35

(34)



"How many times have I told you before  
Tom, you can't keep phoning me at work."

Here we go again. Why do I bother, I ask myself - no-one bothers to read colophons anyway. So I can print what I like, can't I? Good then I can save myself a lot of trouble and copy a welcome start from another issue. Welcome to issue 35 of the wonderzine Dib Dib Dib catering for anything and everything, but mainly for loonies who like to involve themselves in anti-social pastimes of boards, dice, Diplomacy, lots of fantasy, politics, funny little animals and other such rubbish. All typed, formatted, printed, and presented, stamped and addressed by Tom Tweedy (with a little help from Jan as slave labour) of 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Telephone: Amersham (02403) 4513. For all this (and quality as well) it will cost you the ridiculous (meaning small) price of 35p per issue. There, now go out and tell your friends.

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#### EDITORIAL

I HATE starting a new page and a new paragraph. It reminds me of a very apt little cartoon I saw in the latest Gazfinc from Richard Bairstow, where there was this vulture-like bird sat in front of a typewriter thinking. Stupendous things must be said....an editorial to get out....print that could shake the world! The vulture sits with his single digit poised. The air is electric with anticipation, and.... "CLICK!" and the mighty writer is left rummaging on the floor for the eraser!

Yes, that's me alright. The only difference is, I can easily correct any mistakes because I use this computer - any mistakes I notice that is. So what's new this month? Well, not much, I can tell you. The first issue of Flagship came out. Also the latest new-style Games Gazette - but more about these later. No more folds that I can remember. Talking of folds, an ex-editor, of a rather messy one, seems to be thinking of making a comeback of sorts and GMing some Diplomacy games. Richard Sharp has written to Martin Le Fevre wanting to know what he should do about the Diplomacy requests he gets via his Diplomacy book, and asking if it might not be a good idea for him to start GMing their games (see Sharp's letter in the letter column). God forbid that this man should be allowed start again until he's cleared up his debts (as far as I can remember he owes me a fair bit of money). Not that anyone can stop him I suppose if he's a mind to try.

Sure Richard is an excellent, and very often entertaining writer - one has only to see his old 'Bedbug Island' series to see that. And let's get things clear, I don't blame him for the initial messiness of the Dolchstoss fold - going through a divorce is a good enough reason for anyone - but I can't see that ex-editors should be allowed to take on novices when they haven't made any attempt to clear up matters and debts incurred. It'll be interesting to see how Martin handles this one. Last I heard he was hoping to rope Pete Birks in on this, as Pete has been down to many a SharpCon and is reputed to be on friendly terms with said culprit. I wish them both the best of luck.

Actually, talking of the diminutive Birks. I notice in the latest Greatest Hits he thinks prospective editors wanting to start new zines in today's hobby, can't hope to compete against the 'three grand's worth of equipment' that some editors have. I only notice because he happens to mention that I have an Apple/IBM typewriter link-up. It's only a small point really but I don't have an IBM golfball - my Apple is linked to an 'Olympia ESW 103' daisywheel typewriter/printer. Yes, an expensive bit of machinery - but surely it doesn't count for as much as Pete says? I think he's wrong to assume new editors can't 'make it' in today's hobby with second-hand manual equipment (as we did in our day). What of the editor with an actual flair for writing? If he can make his zine more witty, interesting, or reliable than mine, or any other zine, why wouldn't the reading public find it more preferable? (I think I've got you this time, Pete). Mind you he's right about one thing; his argument about duplicators is probably correct. Because of office photocopiers are becoming more common, it's become increasingly more difficult to get hold of a good second-hand duplicator. This being so, I wonder when the second-hand office photocopiers will come on the market for fanzine editors? I must admit I'm tempted, the same as Pete, and I've already started thinking on the lines of a good plain-paper

photocopier. But at what kind of price. Perhaps Pete is right again - this hobby editing lark is getting a bit out of hand. Oh happy days.

Diplomacy gamefees! Why bother with paragraph link-ups say I - just get stuck in and say what has to be said - they'll understand. I've finally decided to do away with the £1 deposit system idea as being impractical. Yes, like other veteran editors it's finally come to my notice just what a bind it is to remember to send the solitary £1 every time someone finishes a game. My memory is not very good at the best of times... eh? See what I mean? So from now on Dib's Diplomacy games will be £2 a shot. You do understand don't you - I need to be able to extract the extra £1 from you legally. Have no fear though, all those that started their games under the deposit system (all those up to and including 'Macha') will still get their £1 deposit back at the end of their games.

Nicky Palmer's new glossy Flagship arrived just the other day. I must say, I'm not too impressed with what I've seen so far. It's early days yet of course; the magazine is young and it may get better, but Nicky has had enough experience now to know what he's doing. I'd have thought he would have tried for a bigger splash, seeing as first impressions DO count; especially in the gaming mag field. So, what was wrong? Basically there seemed to be four major points to the magazine: the artwork, the computer moderated game reports, Rob Chapman's article (which I include Simon Billenness' article in the same category), and the short SF story 'Tribes of Crane'. Rob Chapman's article was superb, and said all the things I ever wanted to say about the Diplomacy game but never could (rats to you Chapman!). The rest left me feeling as if more than just a little was missing from the overall layout. The SF story was rubbish (TSR's Imagine had a much better one that was put down in their dummy issue); the artwork, average to poor; as for the computer moderated game reports, well... try as I might I couldn't seem to separate them - all the reviews read very much like the first one (even though I WAS interested in regards to 'A State of the Art...' in computer-type games). To sum up I'd say if Flagship has to stand any chance in such a competitive market, competing with such as Imagine, then they'll have to dish up a more varied diet.

EUROPEAN WIT v BRITISH HUMOUR.

Nothing from Korad Dolata this time, apart from a short explanation on how most jokes seem to suffer in translation. I find this difficult to believe as Konrad's English is superb... chances are this goes to prove Europeans lack a sense of humour. But read on...

RICHARD WERNICK: (Eastern European Jokes)

A Pole is standing in a long queue outside the meat shop. Suddenly he exclaims: "That's it I've had enough of this, day in, day out, I'm going to shoot General Jarurzelski." An hour later he comes back. "Did you do it then?" asks his friend. "No", he says and spits in disgust, "there's a bloody mile long queue!"

((Not bad. We'll keep that as European then, and try Clive Booth's idea of marks out of ten - 5 out of 10))

Q. What are 20 tank divisions, the cream of the Red Army, doing in Afghanistan?  
A. Looking for the person who invited them!

((Terrible! - only 2 for this. And last from Richard...))

"Here is the latest news. The East Berlin Pole-Vault champion is now the West Berlin pole vault champion!"

((Good grief - Jan reckons I should give this 5 for its age. But I'll give it 4 for cheek.))

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MIDCON '83  
by Robert Lozynskyj

Midcon '83 was held for the third consecutive year at the Royal Angus Hotel in Birmingham. This was my first appearance at this, the premier con, and only my second at any con - the first being Manorcon earlier in the year. Midcon certainly had a lot to live up to if it was to emulate the excellent Manorcon.

We set off, Gareth Cook, Pat Lenihan, Simon Craddock and myself, from London at 3 o'clock Friday afternoon and reached Brum approximately 4.30. It was another half an hour before we located the Hotel. After off-loading the bags in our room - one that was to a high standard with colour T.V., shower, and kettle for tea! - Pat and myself went in search of life. Predictably the bar was already open and a sizable congregation had gathered in its locality, including Richard Walkerdine, Brian Creese, Ken Bain, Geoff Challinger, Niall Litton, and Bill Dove to name just a few. I had come well prepared. I pulled out a map of the Dib game 'Fergus' and dragged Julian Shepley and Richard Bass from the growing ranks to discuss tactics in the game. We then tackled the mighty Piper (name that tune) - the result of the discussion may become evident very soon!

Having sunk a few pints it was time to eat and I decided to join the remnants of the Guildford Mob - Messrs Walkerdine, Bass, Bain, Dove, Richard Bairstow and Ray Miller at dinner in the Hotel restaurant. It was a revelation to hear their plans for Hobby Domination. Unfortunately I have been sworn to secrecy! The meal was excellent - though perhaps a little pricey. It was after this that I made my way to the main hall to take part in the elimination round for the Midcon quiz. It was a written quiz and my team - London North-West Intellectuals with Pat and Simon, struggled badly until Pete Doubleday turned up with a few answers. Quite a number of answers came our way from spies of other teams, taking pity on our handful of replies. In this way we obtained a creditable fifth, but only the top three qualified together with last year's winners for the Saturday night showdown.

It was gone midnight when Nick Kinzett grabbed Pat, John Webley, Paul Oakes and myself for a game of Cosmic Encounter. Nick's enthusiasm, energy and knowledge of games makes it a must for everyone to play a game with him. And so to bed about 3 o'clock in the morning.

After a hearty breakfast, it was to the tables for the highlight of the weekend - the Diplomacy tournament. I found myself as Italy, with Steve Jones (fresh from a thirteen hour game of 1829 that had finished at six in the morning!), as England; Niall Litton, France; Andrew Glynn, Germany; Shaun Derrick, Russia; Simon Billeness, Turkey and Julian Shepley, Austria - John Wilman was the GM. A game played in almost the Diplomacy spirit. An Anglo-French cartel broke down when France stabbed his ally in 1905 after taking Germany out. An Austro-Italian alliance took Turkey out before Austria decided to stab a hapless Italy bogged down by a French attack. At the crucial moment, with Austria leading on nine units, the GM NMR'd Julian exactly as Russia stabbed him! Yes! an NMR in a face to face game! 'Hardman' Wilman stuck by his decision as he had warned Julian that he had one minute to write his orders. Julian never recovered and with Russia racing for victory France and England patched things up, and a three way draw was settled upon with Italy on 4 units and Austria one still left in. A very enjoyable game.

Searching for something else to do I succumbed to Tony Wheatley's pleas for another game of Dip. I played Germany to Tony's Austria, John Wilman's Russia, Derek Caws' England, Julian Shepley's France, Martin-Clifford King's Italy and Simon Craddock's Turkey. Not a game to remember - I went down in 1903! A strong Austro-Russian alliance was held by England to another three way draw.

The Midcon quiz was played during the game with John 'Bamber' Dodds and scoreman Chris Tringham chairing it. Dave Thorby's 'doorbell' buzzer system sorted the men out from the boys, and the final saw last year's winners - Blackmail comprising of Mike Woodhouse, Colin Gamble and Richard Walkerdine - up against the challengers of Howay the Lads with Will Haughan, Keith Pottage and Keith Black. A close event saw Howay the Lads run out worthy winners with Keith

Pottage shining throughout the film questions.

The evening finished with a couple of games of Nuclear War and Hoax with Nick Carter and Steve Gregory to name but two. And so to bed at 3:30 am. Should I add that Tony Wheatley had started another game of Diplomacy with the recently arrived Peter Northcott!

The second round of the Diplomacy saw me as Turkey with Martin Clifford-King as Austria; Mark Lipton as Russia; Pat Cathorp as Italy; David McCraith as Germany; Laurance Green as England and William Pugh as France. The results of the day before and the thought of having to play Turkey was all too much. I ended on one unit with Italy out and the rest sharing a five way draw. My fortune at staying in this game saved me from another game as Tony Wheatley, who had an early exit in the Tournament set up his fifth game of Diplomacy over the weekend!

So to the results in a very close event - only supply centres seperated the winners, we have a new champion in JAMES MILLS - congratulations James.

- 1st James Mills ((Surely this isn't James Mills-Hicks?))
- 2nd Richard Young
- 3rd Bart Huby (the only outright winner during the weekend)
- 4th Shaun Derrick
- 5th Niall Litton
- 6th David Waggett
- 7th David Crichton

Last year's winner, Nick Carter, was given a hard time in the games and never got a look in. (Doesn't do well to make a name for yourself in this hobby!) Tony Wheatley also won a prize for his .....well whatever you want to call it. Many other games were played over to the weekend from the ancient to fantasy and science fiction. Mind you if you wanted a game of '1829' or Civilisation you would have a hard job ousting those 'epics' players, Geoff Hardingham and Keith Loveys from their seats!

My thanks out to the entire Midcon Committee for a very enjoyable weekend and my apologies to all those I did meet but didn't mention above - there were over 120 people there. What more can I say except see you all again next year.

((Thanks for the report Robert, for some time there I was beginning to think I'd have to do without one this year. Please accept this issue free.

So much for face to face Diplomacy Tournaments. Where was Nick Carter, last year's champion - bombed out, eh? I've said all along that finding the REAL champion in a Diplomacy Tournament; someone that could be good enough to win year after year (someone in the class of Rob Chapman, Mike Close and John Norris) - just can't be done over one weekend at a face to face tournament. The only practical way would be to have a play-off tournament over the year by post in various zines - THEN play the finals face to face over the Midcon weekend. I'm sure we'd get a much fairer and more consistent result.))

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And from that keen observer of human behaviour, Big G himself, a scene that all of us has experienced at one time or another; a scene of domestic bliss; people who don't understand our delight in playing games, and the annoying bigmouth wanting to learn what we do with those 'funny little plastic bits'. A much more cynical George from the one that wrote the early Postman's Knock.

SATURDAY MORNING  
by George North

Well, the postman finally arrives and there we are with a handful of lovely bills, the Reader's Digest, a catalogue for wifey and a zine with the Diplomacy moves all worked out. Just what we wanted to keep us busy all morning. So we retire to our workroom at the back of the house and set the board ready for play. It is a large board but a fairly small table, you understand.

Wifey enters with a cup of tea and a saucer and stands watching and waiting.

Then she panics as something starts burning in the kitchen. The panic spreads as we quickly make room for the cup and saucer by easing the board to one side. No the Turkish fleet in Russia and the Russian armies are on the floor. We drink our tea and the place goes back to normal.

We are deep in thought and wondering who best to stab when suddenly the wireless blasts you out of your chair. Tommy has arrived and wants to listen to Tony Blackburn. You turn it down but Tommy turns it up again. You quarrel with Tommy about Tony Blackburn until wifey arrives and there is a knock at the door. Tommy races wifey to open the door and we turn off the wireless.

Auntie Flo and Uncle Ted and that lot have arrived. We pretend not to notice and there is a conversation in the passage. They are unloading and hanging up coats and doing a million things relatives do when they come round as a nice surprise. We are safe for only a few minutes because Uncle Ted has slipped through and approaches the back room.

"Hello there, how is the Snakes and Ladders coming along?" Uncle Ted prides himself on his remarkable wit. "Still playing yourself I see!"

We mutter something unintelligible that sounds like a greeting and otherwise ignore him. He places the ashtray in the North Atlantic and looks around for a chair. He wishes he had his camera with him and we wish he would go away. He wants to know how to play the game and what are these little pointed bits. We are saved because Aunt Flo arrives and tells Ted not to interfere with George while he is playing his games. Ted goes and looks round the garden.

Auntie Flo wants a kiss and suddenly we find baby in our lap. Baby is in our lap and wifey is showing Flo her workroom upstairs. Baby grabs the Italian army that is in Tunis and starts to eat it. We rescue Tunis and give baby its dummy. It is a fair exchange. Now baby drops its dummy and starts to wriggle. We retrieve the dummy and become engrossed in our game again. Baby is playing at throw the dummy on the floor and make us pick it up. We are bigger suckers than baby.

No, we will not pick the dummy up again. Baby starts to howl. Wifey and Auntie Flo come tumbling downstairs like an avalanche and rescue baby. "Did the naughty man make you cry then? Here, baby smack the naughty man then". Auntie Flo bends to pick up the dummy and baby grabs our zine and puts it into its mouth. We grab our zine. Baby has it in a vice-like grip. We lose our front cover and half of page two. We loosen babies grip and take the zine. It is wet and soggy and baby is yelling fit to bust.

"Now look what you done," wifey accuses us.

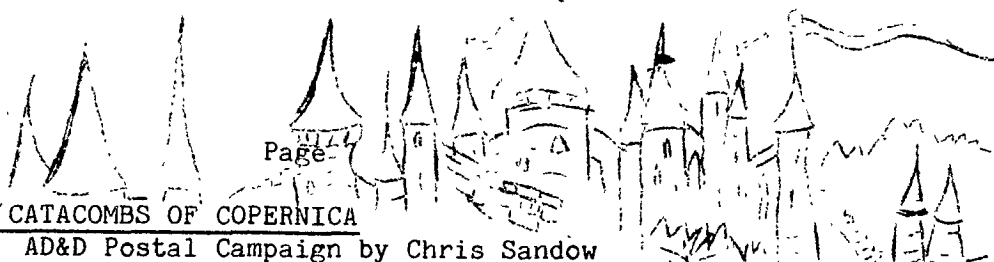
"Yeah, I tore my magazine," we growl back.

Ted meanwhile has left the garden and gone to the car. He returns with a huge dog that wants me for dinner. Ted tells us it will not hurt us. Ted says it is a big old softy. The big old softy is tugging at the leash. Ted admits defeat and says he will leave Bonzo in the garden. Ted disappears.

It is Saturday morning and Diplomacy is out of the question. We will go and watch football in the park, have a pint on the way back and play the old boys at dominoes.

"Ted will go with you," calls wifey, but we are already gone.

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THE CATACOMBS OF COPERNICA  
AD&D Postal Campaign by Chris Sandow

FIRST TURN

Midnight: Day One

From a small tower above the wide, white-stoned portico of the majestic Temple of Soltan a great bell rings out, tolling the hour of midnight over the narrow streets and gable-roofed houses of the city of Copernica.

Scattered throughout the city, making their way along shadowy alley ways and cobbled streets between the crazily-angled walls of stone and timber, are several small bands of adventurers.....

Cadellin Silvelbrow (Simon Craddock)

Cadellin and his band of worthy (?) adventurers enter the Temple of Soltan, where they encounter the singularly pretentious and over-dramatic Aurelius Tremayne, Priest of Soltan and VERY Lawful Good! He shows them the way down to the catacombs - through a rarely used and ancient part of the old temple - and then hurries back to the safety of his temple after leaving Cadellin with a vague and rather enigmatic warning. The party advances along an old corridor and are now examining the vaulted chamber at the corridor's end.....

Sir Guy de Waye (Derek Andrews)

Sir Guy de Waye (good grief!) leads his doughty crew along a path besides the Copernica Canal, and they follow the canal into a tunnel which lead beneath the streets and houses of the city. After a while they come to steps down to the water, and the path comes to an end. However they can see that this is not the end of the road for them.....

Magnus Simonson (Clive Booth)

Fresh out of clerical college and obviously still somewhat naive in matters of adventuring Magnus finds himself talked into being the leader of an odd assortment of characters (who include an elven magic-user of er, QUESTIONABLE gender). As the day begins they are grumbling their way through the over-grown grounds of a derelict old house, a house which they enter with the intention of finding the entrance to the catacombs. Will it be as easy to find as they might like? (Only the DM knows that - and he's not telling.....)

Aina Amarth (Nick Clark)

In a disused graveyard in the North-West of Copernica Aina-Amarthg the Paladin leads his companions in a search for the mausoleum that holds an entrance to the catacombs. They find it - and they also find that it's gates are ajar and that a recently-tro path leads through the graveyard up to it.....

Thorn (George North)

Thorn and his comrades (if anything, a more motley crew than even Magnus Simonson's - but then again what else do you expect from the likes of Clive Booth and George North) ((oh how true, Chris - T.T.)) gather beside an old watch-tower. With some help from Thorn's solid shoulders they open the door and enter to look for a way down to the catacombs...

Randolph (Dave Tant)

Randolph, the Ranger (cute Dave, real cute - what have I done to deserve this??!??) (The D M's despair - a party with names like Drucilla the Druid Thelonious the Thief....need I go on?) and his merry band make their way to the abandoned temple of Helvath-Nar (god of death, darkness and other cheerful things). After reading the rather ominous-sounding notice nailed to the door they enter the dusty and cobwebbed interior of the temple and start scouting around...

PRESS:

SIMON CRADDOCK:

"Feudalism: it's your count that votes"

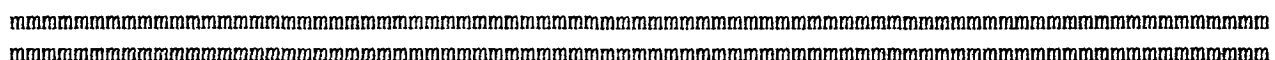
"Whoopee, we're all going to die!" ((Yes, if I have anything to do with it.....))

"O.K. Chris now we've got a party of seven but how many G.P.'s is a Diplomacy set?"

"I'd have had a party of seven dwarves but Snow White's doing her hair" ((That's all right - have Clive's magic-user instead, they'll never notice the difference..))

((Wot nuffink from anyone else? I dunno... Er, I hope Tom doesn't mind me using his double brackets...))

Right, that's the lot for this issue. As it's only the first turn there hasn't been much happening, but don't worry, things will soon hot up! Next time I might also include some more information about Copernica and the World it is in. If anybody's interested. AND LET'S HAVE SOME MORE PRESS PLEASE, PLAYERS!))



LETTERS

ANDREW SMITH:

"Life at the moment is largely hectic with interspersed moments of relative leisure. Well, it is a Sunday morning and I need to relax before putting on my D.J. outfit ((sounds like you should be charging it in a telephone booth!)) + pulling off the next best publicity coup since R. Reagan and Grenada, and spinning some discs for one of the University Hall's of Residence Halloween disco. Are you a disco person, or do you prefer the more laid back stuff?"

((I like all kinds of music. You just try playing heavy rock while I'm in a bad mood - but that's not to say I don't like some of it. It's vice-versa for classical as well - I like it a lot (most that is) but it's not the sort of stuff I'd play to snap my fingers to. As for disco, there again it's okay in its place; at disco dances, parties, and if I generally need hyping up. Surely though this must be the case for everyone? I defy anyone to say: "Classical/Disco/ or Rock, yeuk!" Because I can't see anyone who believes themselves to be reasonably intelligent being that narrow-minded.))

ooOOOoo

STUART BAILEY:

"After hunting frantically but unsuccessfully for my back-copies of the 'Sealed Knot' newsletter, I am forced to admit failure in tracking down the relevant criticisms/savage attacks on Scots and Dragoons - which have been a feature of the letters and articles in the aforementioned publication.

I wanted to bring these to Dib's readership's attention for two reasons. One, to show that not all the Knot can be tarnished with the same brush as Mr Deans and Mearns, both being Scots and Dragoons!!!

The second reason is that I'm dying to find out why, apart from the continual bagpipes and charging around hitting people with swords, it is that the Scots and Dragoons are so, shall we say, 'unpopular'.

You see every time I bring the subject up people seem to turn bright red and can't speak for a couple of hours."

((Hah, this ought to cause a few oaths and rattling of swords. Actually, that's what I thought Sealed Knotters did - run around hitting each other with swords, pikes and things? Otherwise why carry them?

If the Scottish Dragoons are as unpopular as you say, Stuart, then it should prove more than a little interesting when Pete Mearns finally puts through an idea he's recently come up with - that of taking some of his mob down to this D&D adventure castle in Cheshire (named 'The Treasure Trap') for a weekends carousing and general mayhem. Wish I could be there.))



KONRAD DOLATA:

"Re Richard Wernick's letter on the WWII topic: ((issue 32)) I thank you for your defence beneath the letter as his views are too radical. It's right that each general in a war like this one has had some degree of guilt for criminal activities, but as far as the July Conspirators were concerned one has to think of how well-structured the Nazi organisation was. It was something like 'Big Brother' because each area of daily life had become state-controlled through manifold organisations one had to join to live in 'peace' and there even were the so-called 'Bloch-Warte' people instructed to keep their eyes and ears open in every house.

And with a glance at our fellow men today, I would say given a similar government (apart from the crimes involved) many would succumb in order to climb on the social ladder, or even to be able to lead a 'peaceful' life. How else can it be interpreted that there is almost no critical public opinion if one compares the basic structure of our democracies with what people 'who are supposed to have all the political power' make out of this potential."

((Bit of a sweeping statement there, Konrad. Most people today succumb to Government and Cival pressures today because they think their single voice won't count for anything. And any larger groups started up generally attracts the undesirable left and right-wing factions of our society. Not a good thing. Mind you, apathy counts for a largish slice of those who don't want to know.))

KONRAD (CONT.):

"Being no left-winger myself, I can't accept what Richard says about the Organisations in contemporary Germany: To describe the German Citizens Initiative as neo-nazis would be the same as calling Maggie's Conservative government a fascist one.

All they want to do is draw attention to topics which are too often neglected, because the ones who get the most profit out of certain projects (airfields, canals, moterways) simply have so much power as to influence the government - which should represent the people - right?

((Like hell they are - who says governments represent the people!? I don't remember anyone asking me about deploying cruise in Britain, or whether I'd like the death penalty brought back.))

KONRAD (CONT:)

"It's right that sometimes (but what else is broadcast about the work of the Initiatives) radicals try to hide within the peaceful demonstrations to discredit it. But you can't imagine how often forests have been saved which would have been destroyed in order to build any profitable (useless) moterway, factory, which could have been built somewhere else where it would not have made so much damage (but with a somewhat smaller profit).

The Expelees certainly have some revanchistic views, but I would like to know what you would say if Hitler had deported you to the Falklands or any other country? Would you say: Well it's status quo that counts and after all England wasn't that beautiful, so I'll forget about it completely???

And considering the 'Peace Movement/Citizens Initiative as a small number is quite wrong. There are millions of people involved in what they (with all right) think an expression of their democratic rights, and I believe it's very essential work. I don't know how far pollution has crumbled your nature, but in Germany you can't walk through a forest without watching a high degree of trees being destroyed or slowly dying because of industrial emissions.

What have managers done when they were accused of polluting nature by their chimneys? They built higher ones!! Ridiculous!! So it's no longer a German chimney that kills our woods but a French one. Whereas ours kill forests in Austria or Scandinavia. Well done!!

By the way, not knowing much of a foreign country does often lead to prejudices, Richard. The same applies to Germany, when at the time of the Falkland crises many Germans accused Maggie of simply calling upon that typical British nationalism, which secured her a strong hold in government by disguising internal problems (unemployment, economical difficulties) by that 'expensive power politics' which have to be payed by the unemployed.

To let me give you an example of what Richard's letter meant to me, I ask you a similar question in return:-

What has Britain to do in the Falklands?

Isn't the age of colonialism a thing of the past?

Why can't you put up with the fact that Britain isn't no longer a leading nation?

(Not my opinion but what I think to be an equivalent to Richard's comments.)"

((There's not much I can answer to this as I agree with most of Konrad's comments. One thing that did strike me though was Konrad's right-wing stance, with his left-wing views; having a similar disgust for industry, and business ethics in general, as myself. Not that I'll do anything - keep me head in the sand, that's me, and hope the bomb doesn't crisp my rear-end too much. Hmmm, I think it would be better to leave others to answer this.))

oo000oo

BRIAN MOORE:

"StabCon VI: I've got a spare bed available for anyone in exchange for transport to and from the Con over the weekend. So, if a car driver wants to save the cost of B&B..."

((Sounds a fair exchange to me - anyone interested in saving on B&B at StabCon should contact Brian at 87 Pimlott Road, Hall i'th'Wood, Bolton, Lancs, BL1 8TW.))

oo000oo

SIMON CRADDOCK:

"Many happy returns on the 9th assuming that this gets to you by then. ((Thank you, thank you...)) Thanks for issue 33, once again the zine was of its usual high standard and the Postman's Knock II was one of the best articles that I have read for a long while.

Talking of Postmen, our new one has not yet learned to drop the letters when our dog bites them, so for the last few days I have been sitting down with sellotape trying to piece together shredded letters.

If you still have not got your copy of Rapsallion I can let you have mine, which I was handed at Gamesday. I finally got along to Gamesday but only for the Sunday. I seem to make a habit of missing them, last year I was in Wales with a party of schoolgirls and this year I was working on Saturday."

((A party of schoolgirls? No, no, knowing my subscribers I better not go into it. Thanks for the offer of your Rapsallion Simon, but now there's no need; mine arrived a couple of days after Dib went out. Glad you liked PKII though.))

oo000oo

A surprising little note arrived a couple of days ago from a very worried...

MARTIN LE FEVRE:

"To Messrs. Tweedy, Marsden, Kinzett, Wilman, Walkerdine & Creese. As a MLF appointed gang of experienced editors I draw your attention to the enclosed letter from Richard Sharp. As I have no knowledge of the chap and none of the Dolchstoss Fiasco I thought you might like to debate the letter among yourselves or reply with your views for me to take action. It seems on the surface with regard to Richard's REPUTATION to be not a good idea. Who is the best person to dissuade him? Or is a massive rehabilitation programme called for?

If I can get my hands on the letters I'll send everyone a copy of 20yo with a covering letter and I've suggested this to Richard to delay him."

((Accompanying Martin's note was a letter from the man himself.))

RICHARD SHARP:

"Dear Martin,

RICHARD SHARP:

"Dear Martin,

Just found your name in an ageing copy of Mad Policy, wherein the equally ageing Walkerdine mentions you as running the Novice Package System. Reason I'm writing is that I still get a lot of correspondence from people who have (a) found one of the old NGC ads in a diplomacy set or (b) read my book, in which I unwisely published my address. Hitherto I've been passing these on to Tom Tweedy, but it's on my conscience that I really ought to be answering them myself, and today I'm preparing a duplicated letter to do just that.

Most of these blokes want to play in a postal Dip game, so if you are still doing the package I'll send them your name and address. Perhaps you'd let me know as I have a large backlog of unanswered letters and I'd like to clear it quick.

Because some of the people have been waiting a long time for an answer, I'm also intending to offer to run a couple of games. However I don't really think non-zine games are a very good thing, and I shall say so. My motives are just to get people started while their interest is still live. If players later decide they want their game adopted by a zine, and can persuade a GM to take it on, that'll be fine by me.

Anyway I'd be glad to hear from you if you're still doing the job. Oh and is there a Central Gamestart System nowadays?"

((Great eh? God knows what Sharp is up to, as he says, I've been picking the letters up already. I haven't had time to chase him up the last 6 months or so, but he KNOWS I only live round the corner from him. If he was that worried why didn't he contact me - it certainly would make a change! I've already told Martin what I think about Richard starting outside games - and I'm waiting to hear his reply as he says he's going to get Pete Birks to try something (as Pete is on friendly terms with Richard and Blodwyn, Richard's wife). I say if Richard really does feel guilty about not replying 'personally', then let him do his duplicated letter - but insist he pass the novice requests on to the Novice Package Custodian, Martin Le Fevre. Pete?))

oo000oo

MICHAEL BELL:

"I can't understand the provisinal Autumn orders thing, but anyway here they are. ((This should be explained in 'Macha' and perhaps in the editorial)) Thanks for your advice about Mad Policy, NMR!, and Acolyte. Reading them (since I've now got the latest copy of them all) I think Mad Policy is brilliant, ((Hey, steady - Old Man Walkerdine isn't ready for praise such as this!)) NMR! is very good, although I haven't read it all as yet. But the Acolyte, well, I find this zine is far too Upper class for me, ((Upper class? Heh heh)) although Pete Tamlyn is doing a fantastic job of putting it all together.

I find it a very serious zine (know what I mean?) Well there's not enough funny comments. Take your zine for instance I can have a good read and also a good laugh just like Church Mouse, Dave Thomasy's (editor). Well I reckon he's still tops with me for quick witty remarks! but you're coming close."

((Er, was I just complimented? That's what I get for being a gentleman and recommending zines. MP brilliant! I fear the intellectual tastes of this man are more than suspect...))

oo000oo

FRANK DUNN:

"The Prestel/Mailbox Diplomacy is now in full swing and into Fall 1902 after two weeks! Jealous eh? It plays very smoothly too! There's also a cheap Apple modem on the way from Tandata."

((Yes, jealous I am. But I'll still have to wait - it's not the cheap modem I'm after, but a hardline link-up. I hear there can be trouble with acoustic couplers through line interference, etc, so I'm not bothering with them. Anyway, as my son, Stuart is getting the BBC 'B' for Christmas I may wait and link that

up instead. Early days yet.))

oo000co

CATHY CUNNING:

"Could I PLEASE sign up for your next game of Diplomacy? I've even enclosed a £1 note for it and my preference list is below. I know, what a pain eh? But when I saw Martin Allen had signed up I couldn't resist."

((This girl is sick - who in their right mind would want to associate themselves with the likes of Allen? What the heck, I suppose that's the colonial mentality for you. Actually Cathy, the gamefee is £2 - and no discount for your choice in opponents either!))

CATHY (CONT.):

"Besides, I have four games in the States that will end soon, and I don't expect this to fill right away. Also I'm only playing Diplomacy in Denver Glont and I figure I can spread myself around right?

I'll be good I promise; write letters right away, bring sex, violence and drugs."

((Well it was unlikely before, but the game'll certainly fill fast now, won't it! There's an awful lot out there that really are into this writing fast letters routine! This game won't help them. Disgusting I call it.))

That's the end of another Dib lettercolumn. My thanks to all who wrote, and apologies to the readers for it getting a bit heavy in places. Next issue, the Christmas issue will be a bit tight for deadlines, so if you have to get a letter in for publication, please do it quick.

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Wit v Humour (cont'd from Page 3)

GEORGE NORTH:

There was a large party who entered the Catacombs of Copernica and they encountered many dangers until there were only three of them left. And, Yes you guesse it, they were an Englishman, a Scotsman and a Romford man. ((Sorry George, but this sounded better.))

Their party suffering heavy losses it was useless to go on and they did not know the way back. With spirits at a low ebb they suddenly stumbled upon a bottle that was clearly marked "Rub me". Nothing to lose the Englishman rubbed the bottle and a genie appeared.

"I am the genie of the bottle," he cried, "and you are granted three wishes".

The Scotsman took out his pencil and did a little sum and then exclaimed: "Why that is exactly one wish each!" (an unusually clever Scotsman, I forgot to explain) And so it was.

"What do you wish?", asked the Genie to the Englishman.

"Oh I long for the rolling English countryside and the local tavern and my home town".

"Wwhhhocooooooooossh", and the Englishman's wish was granted.

The Scotsman picked up the bottle and the Genie asked him the same question.

"Hoots mon, och aye the nco. I long for the highlands, ye ken and the kilt and the heather and me wee haggis and me ain folks".

"Wwhhhocooooooooossh", and he too disappeared.

"How about you?" the Genie asked the Romford man, "What do you wish for?"

Romfordman thought for a moment and then cried: "To tell you the truth it ain't 'arf lonely 'ere now. I don'arf wish the other two were back!"

((Heh heh, not bad - 9 out 10 for being topical. That's a score of 11 so far for the Europeans, and 9 for us. We'll have to do better than this, lads.))

'Anu' (19810Q)

Spring 1913

## GAME LOOKS LIKELY TO END IN A 3-WAY DRAW

AUSTRIA (Rob Chapman) A(Mos)stands, A(Sev) S A(Mos), A(Ukr) S A(Mos), A(Boh) S A(Gal), A(Gal) S A(Boh), A(Vie) S A(Gal), A(Tyr)stands, A(Pie)stands, A(Ven) S A(Pie), F(TYS)stands, F(Ius) S F(TYS), F(Nap) S F(TYS), F(ION) S F(TYS), F(Alb)stands, A(Rom)stands

FRANCE (Colin Bruce) F(Bre)-MAO, F(Mar) S F(GOL), F(GOL)stands, F(WMS) S F(GOL), F(Tun)stands, F(NAf) S F(Tun), A(Spa)-Gas, A(Bur) S GERMAN A(Mun), A(Bel) S A(Bur)

GERMANY (John Lee) F(BAL)stands, F(Lon)-NTH, A(StP)-Mos, A(Lvn) S A(War), A(War) S A(StP)-Mos, A(Pru) S A(Sil), A(Sil) S A(War), A(Mun) S A(Sil), A(Ruh)-Kie, A(Ber)stands unordered

Retreats: None.

GAME-END PROPOSALS: The proposal last season was defeated - but has been repropoed:-  
3-way draw A/F/G ((Votes for next time please - failure to vote counts as YES))

PRESS:

AUSTRIA:

Yes, the stalemate line is secure. Now - who is going to join me in a 2-way draw...

'Brigida' (19810V)

Autumn 1911

## CONFIDENT RUSSIA STARTS TO LOSE GROUND

FRANCE (William Fisk) \*F(NTH)-NWG, F(Edi) S ITALIAN F(NAO)-Cly, A(Yor)-Lpl, F(MAO)-IRI, A(Hol) S ITALIAN A(Kie), A(Bur)-Mun, A(Ruh) S A(Bur)-Mun, A(Tyr) S A(Bur)-Mun, F(ENC)-NTH

ITALY (Chris Bartrum) F(EMS)-Smy, F(ION)-AEG, F(TYS)-ION, F(NAO)-Cly, \*A(Kie) S FRENCH A(Bur)-Mun, A(Ser)-Bud, A(Tri) S A(Ser)-Bud, A(Ven) S A(Tri), F(WMS) stands unordered

RUSSIA (Martin Allen) F(Cly) S F(NWG)-Edi, F(NWG)-Edi, F(SKA) S F(Nor)-NTH, F(Nor)-NTH, A(Ber)-Kie, A(Den) S A(Ber)-Kie, A(Sil)-Mun, A(Boh) S A(Sil)-Mun, \*A(Bud)-Tri, A(Vie) S A(Bud)-Tri, A(Bul)-Ser, F(Con)-Smy, F(HEL) S A(Ber)-Kie, A(War)-Pru, A(Sev)-Rum

Retreats: FRENCH F(NTH)-Yor; ITALIAN A(Kie) dies (NRP); RUSSIAN A(Bud)-Gal

ENDGAME PROPOSAL: =1st R/F/I ((votes for next time please))

Winter 1911 Adjustments:

FRA: Bre,Par,Por,Spa,Bel,Hol,Lon,Lpl,Edi + Mun	Builds: A(Par)	for 10
ITA: Ven,Rom,Nap,Tun,Tri,Gre,Ser,Bul,Mar,(Mun) + Bud	Builds: A(Rom), A(Nap)	for 10
RUS: Sev,Mos,StP,(Bud),Vie,Den,Swe,Ank,Nor,Smy,Con,Rum,War,Ber,Kie	Disbands A(War)	for 14
		<u>34</u>

PRESS:

RUSSIA - ITALY AND FRANCE:

O.K., this game has gone on long enough. We've put on the best show and now it's time to move on to new pastures. Regardless of the outcome, it was my first and, so far, the best game I've played in. Thank you all.

LUTON AIRPORT - ITALY:

It would help me greatly if you ordered all your units, Chris, as it's more likely I'll make a mistake otherwise. And it can get irritating if a GM keeps making mistakes, don't you think?