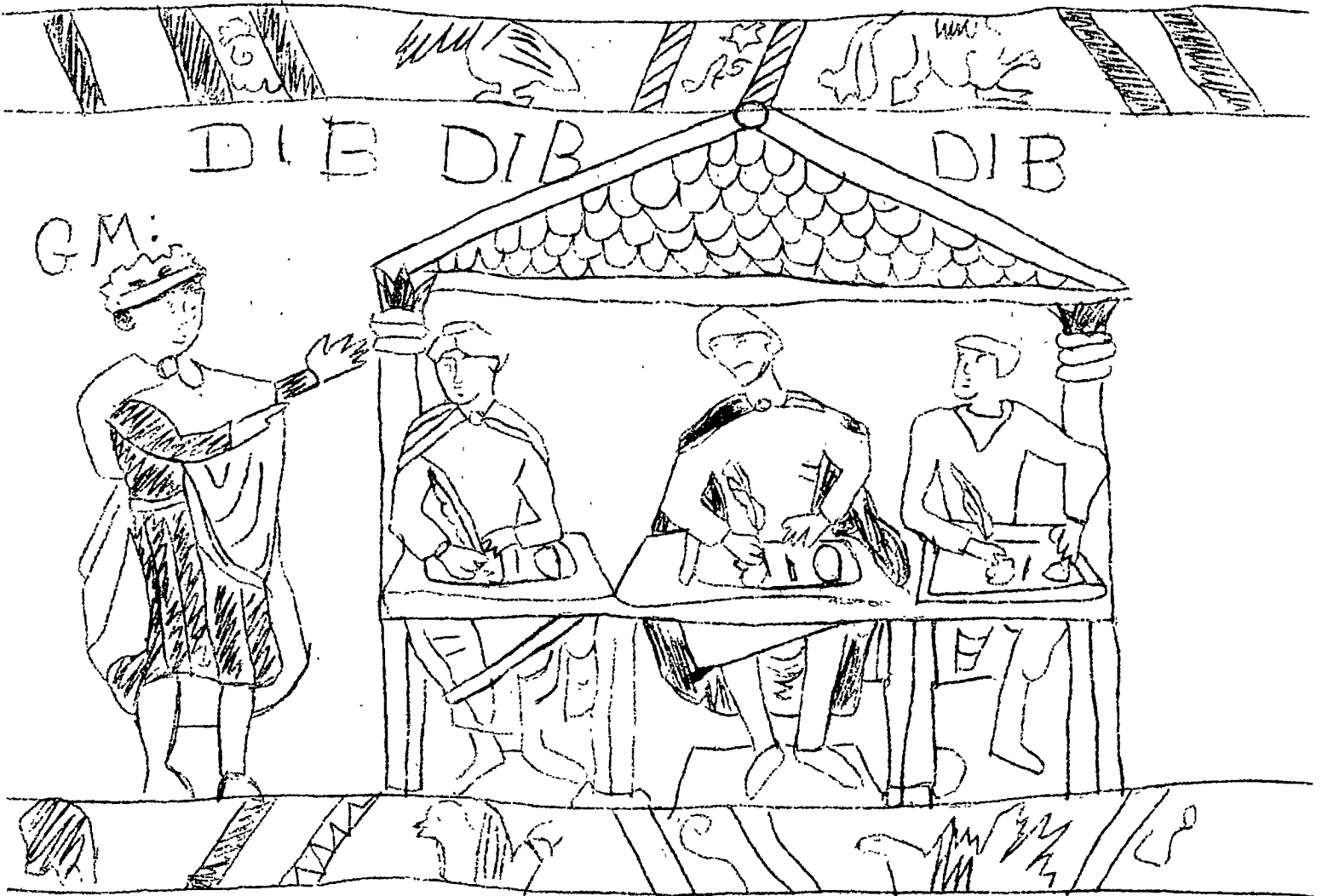


DIB DIB DIB

45

one of the longer established
zines



Welcome to Dib Dib Dib 45 - the not-so-special New Year edition which carries on in the old tradition of games, chat, hoaxes, feuds, and other such ridiculous pastimes. This issue will cost 40p to all those in the UK; and 23p + postage for overseas. Anyone wanting to subscribe, or merely wishes to send more money, send it to me, Tom Tweedy, 29 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 9BD. Tel. 02403 4513

EDITORIAL

Ah, Christmas was a great time - a little quieter than some I've had, but a nice break nevertheless. While I remember let me just thank everyone who sent me Christmas cards (I must have had 200+) and best wishes. Yes, we have made a note of those who did, and the laggards, the scrooges who didn't. Mind you, there were a couple of exceptions who made their excuses, they tried to an' all that, but something cropped up; the postman ate it or something. One such was Richard Sharp, who said:-

"Reason you didn't get a card from us is that you live in Amersham, therefore I left it on the hall table with this letter ((the one in the lettercol)) to await suitable moment for delivery - it's still there. Sorry!"

Typical, eh? What a cheapskate... says he remembered... nearly. He was right on one thing though, I do live in Amersham. I wouldn't mind so much but, knowing Richard, if he DID remember then the card will be tucked away in a draw somewhere ready to send NEXT year! It's easy to see how he can afford his right-wing ideals. But, enough of this banter, I'm getting a bit carried away here... Christmas.

Yes, once again I managed to overdo it: each New Year I swear - recently on a stack of Dib's - NEVER AGAIN! Santa managed to send a lot of presents though. I got Jan what she wanted: a bag of peat, an adjustable spanner and other such useful things she so desperately needed. (You think I'm joking?) Stuart got her something ridiculous like a personalised leather credit-card holder - now she's begging me to fill it using MY cards. This could be a set up... she already has my chequebook (on the ridiculous pretext that I'd spend the money on non-essentials). I got some stuff for my computer, cigars (I have given up smoking but I like a nice cigar after the Christmas dinner and such times), wine, a gold twin-blade razor (very decadent), tapes, books, ZZ Top's 'Eliminator' album, cough cough, um... 'Green Velvet' LP, the usual socks and tie from the mother-in-law (in colours that can blind at night in a thick fog at sixty paces), and last but not least, a genuine replica flintlock pistol (also from the mother-in-law) guaranteed not to rust wherever one might happen to bury it. I'm hoping I don't have to keep hanging it up on the wall every time mother-in-law comes! Actually, I've just thought of a great idea - why don't I put them up as first prize in the Jotto game? I bet Jan won't let me... I'm sure it'd attract a lot of subscribers to play though, don't you think?

HOBBY BITS: Roll up, roll up! John Marsden has decided to run a new ID competition in Ode called, THE 1985 INTIMATE DIPLOMACY KNOCKOUT COMPETITION. (A grand title, eh?) The last such a competition was run by Richard Hucknall in Fall of Eagles - of which, I am proud to say, I won the nice tidy prize of £40! I like ID games, and certainly I was very tempted to enter this one (as it's a cinch that I could win it again). Unfortunately I have too much on my plate at the moment. Still, I wouldn't hesitate in recommending you all play in this one (if you can even get in that is). Sixteen players will be signed up and most of the gamefees will go into a Prize Fund. The fee is £3.50 (£2 will be paid to the winner, and 75p to the losing semi-finalist) therefore First Prize will be, if all places are subscribed, £32, and second prize £12. Non-subscribers to Ode may play, and all those interested (hurry up if you wish to be sure of a place) should send their cheque for £3.50 accompanied by a s.s.a.e. to John Marsden, 17 Church Road, St. Leonards, Hastings, East Sussex, TN37 6EF.

Actually, talking of Ode, John Marsden did a very interesting frequency survey on British zines in his latest issue (62), with Dib coming a very respectable 5.7 - which was about middle of the list. The frequency of the top zine, Dolchstoss, was a very slick 4.25, and frequency of the bottom, Road, was 7.7. John worked it out that the average for 1984 was 5.55 weeks - the reason that Dib was higher than this was because of my long 11 week holdover over the summer break (remember when we had the Dalmatian puppies?). As it was I had an intrim deadline for games anyway so I'm not sure the slowish 5.7 frequency counts. The frequency for Dib last year was 5.13 so, this being the case, I guess that makes for a fairly steady 5 weekly zine considering. Not that it matters much anyway because I'll always muck up my frequency with long deadlines over Christmas and suchlike. Read into the frequency list what you will, but one thing that is interesting is the fact that zine turnaround times seem to be getting longer; when I first entered the hobby zines tended to be 4 weekly, now 5 weekly seems more the norm.

According to Nick Kinzett's Zeeby, MANORCON is on, and will be held at the same place, The Manor House, Northfield, Birmingham - HOWEVER, since Zeeby hit the streets Pete Calcraft has released a Diplomacy Quarterly flyer stating that Manorcon is now most definitely OFF (at least, until the summer time). A possible alternative venue is being looked into for about the 19th-21st July, but more will be put out about this later. Meanwhile the people concerned:-
Cheques (though don't send anything yet) should be made out to 'Universities Diplomacy Tournament' and sent to Richard Walkerdine (Treasurer), 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 6PG.
Organised by Pete Calcraft (Secretary), 13 Ridgeway Road, Long Ashton, Nr. Bristol, BS18 9EX. Tel. 0272 393357
Inquiries and offers to help to Nick Kinzett (Chairman), 11 Daleway Road, Green Lane, Coventry, CV3 6JF. Tel. 0203 414759

ATTENTION FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO PLAY SOPWITH IN DIB - please check Sopwith Waiting List on the back page.

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JOTTO Turn 8

|                  |             |                 |             |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Richard Sharp:   | 8th: 132020 | James Cowie:    | 8th: 242212 |
| George North:    | 8th: NMR!   | Ulf Jiretorn:   | 8th: 414111 |
| Brian Moore:     | 7th: 332120 | Richard Morris: | 8th: NMR!   |
|                  | 8th: 222311 |                 |             |
| Richard Lampard: | 7th: 323113 | Tim Collièu:    | 8th: NMR!   |
|                  | 8th: 121122 |                 |             |
| Nicholas Whyte:  | 8th: 311121 | Richard Downes: | 8th: 122203 |
| Rosie Roberts:   | 8th: 341123 |                 |             |

No-one taking any guesses yet - this game has lasted longer than most. Don't forget, there is a whole £1 prize for the winner of this (subscribers 3 free issues)!

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Richard Downes has sent me issues 5, 6 and 7 of Back to the Dark Ages for a quick perusal (so I can have a laugh at, he says). No need for laughing here, Richard's doing a good job so far of running his games to a 2 week deadline. People are saying, well, this type of fast-turnaround zine has been done before, and it failed because they couldn't sand the strain. Well I think BttDA is different - it's so EASY to produce game adjudications on a computer, correct them, and run them off at the drop of a hat. It's the chat that takes a long time. If Richard can resist and keep that down, there's no reason why he can't continue to run a fast efficient service. Still only 4 pages of computer print, but recommended to those who like fast turnaround games.
 Richard Downes, 79 Caling Croft, New Ash Green, Kent, DA3 8PY.

HINTS FROM A GENTLER AND BYGONE AGE

I've been tempted to do this section for some time now, ever since I came across a very old (published in 1882) delapidated book called 'Consult Me'. It's a gem of a book, and I feel it only fair that I can copy from it even though it goes against Piggott's Law of Fanzines with regards publishing original material. Most of the advice found inside, has I think, long since been lost by most people - which is a crying shame, because some hints, if not useful, are grand indeed. So, without any shame at all, I'll copy faithfully any bits I find as I dip into... A Gentler and Bygone Age.

BEDS, to detect dampness in.

"After having warmed the bed with the pan, place between the sheets a wine or beer glass; if after a few minutes, the glass collects no vapour, it is safe, and vice versa. In all doubtful cases, such as a strange bed, sleep between the blankets."

BEER, Excellent Table:

"On three bushels of malt pour of hot water the third of the quantity you are to use, which is to be thirty-nine gallons. Cover it warm half an hour, then mash, and let it stand two hours and a half more, then set it to drain. When dry add half the remaining water, mash and let it stand half an hour, run that into another tub, and pour the rest of the water on the malt, stir it well, and cover it, letting it infuse a full hour. Run that off, and mix all together. A pound and a half of hops should be infused in water, and be put into the tub for the first running.

Boil the hops with the wort ((malt extract used as a medium for culture of micro-organisms; pertaining I think to the first procedure BEFORE hops and yeast are added - check dictionary)) an hour from the time it first boils. Strain off and cool. If the whole be not cool enough that day to add the yeast, a pail or two of wort may be prepared, and a quart of yeast put to it over night. Before tunning, all the wort should be added together, and thoroughly mixed with the lade-pail. When the wort ceases to work, put a bit of paper on the bung-hole for three days, when it may be safely fastened close. In four weeks the beer will be fit for drinking.

NOTE: Servants should be directed to put a cork into every barrel as soon as the tap is taken out, and to fasten in the vent-peg, the air causing casks to become musty."

And quite right too... Great stuff, eh? Now you know what's been going wrong if your beer hasn't been turning out right and getting all musty.... you forgot the servants!

But seriously, this book has every hint one can think of - ask it anything, from warts through to curing bacon, hams, and cooking... whatever. In fact do that, ask me hints on anything (pertaining to that era of course - flying to the moon doesn't count), and I'll see if there's a recipe or remedy to suit. There's a challenge for you - you never know, an old piece of knowledge, long since forgotten, might help you in brewing that old fashioned beer or whatever that's been stumping you so long. I wonder if it tells you how to make cheese...?

Just received the latest Road with an attached postscript. This seems to carry within it, an implicit threat, that either someone (Challenger and Litton were even named!), lends, or better still, gives Gary a duplicator or dire consequences will ensue! This situation apparently has arisen because Gary's duplicator has developed creases in the silk screen, which according to Gary requires a replacement at some £100 cost. Don't know if your Gestetner is at all

(Cont'd over....)

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like our ancient Gestetner, Gary, but Jan has had the same fault and solved it for 25p, by washing the screen (carefully) and ironing it between two damp cloths. This Heath Robinson repair has lasted 18 months and some 13200 magazines with no sign of the crease. I was surprised to see Gary threaten 'foldur' if no Samaritan appears, however he also says that he's taking over all Question Mark (1?) games, so I don't really think Gary will be so irresponsible as to come to the end of the road now.

LETTERS

DAVID CRAWFORD: "Something I've always intended to ask you is if you play any Diplomacy Variants, and if yes, which is your favourite? To date I have only tried Nuclear Diplomacy in Bill Wrights' zine, Sodder, and think it's a great game. It's particularly satisfying to see the fellow who stabbed you one season getting a couple of his supply centres frazzled with your nukes the next.

Another variant I am going to try to get a zine to run is 'Mobtown'. This variant is based on the gang battles in America during the 1920's and has some interesting little additions to it. I especially like the one which gives you the option of sticking your opponents feet into concrete and chucking him in the river, should you manage to capture them. After the way I've been handled in some of the regular games I'm in, this seems quite a fitting punishment for some I could mention - and I'm certain most people would give their right arm to drop this Tom Tweedy person from the end of a pier! On the other hand, this might be a bit tricky with one arm...

I wonder if you, or any of your subbers have ever seen a game called 'Fast Attack Boats' by Yaquinto Games? It's a war game based on Naval conflict during an Arab/Israeli war and features units of Egypt and Syria on one side and the smaller but more efficient Israeli Navy on the other. The snag is, the producers almost went bust earlier this year, were forced to greatly reduce their range, and unfortunately this was one of the games to get the chop. At best it can be a dodgy affair getting games in Ulster (or at least in Tyrone), and when a game is out of print it's downright impossible. If anyone out there has a copy they would be willing to sell, or know a shop that still has it for sale, I would appreciate it if they would let me know."

((Well, if anyone can help David and has a game to sell, his address is, 14 Kiln Street, Fintona, Co. Tyrone, Northern Ireland, BT78 2BG. Actually this is a good way of buying and selling games. If anyone has any similar ideas of this ilk, let me know and I can advertise what they have to sell, price etc, in the Dibs and Drabs section.

As for variants, to tell you the truth I'm not that keen on them. I have enough problems with the regular Diplomacy game without learning extra rules for others. I seem to feel the same for other standard games e.g. Sopwith. To my mind the original is good enough and anything taken from it, copied etc, I feel is just rip-off. It's a bit like taking Lord of the Rings, changing a few words, giving it a new title, and saying the book is worth reading. Mind you I haven't analysed my feeling towards this to any great extent - I just switch off when I see the word 'variant' and turn the page.

Mind you, having said that, I do have one exception to the rule - and for this I think I have good reason. I find Intimate Diplomacy (a ridiculous name) a marvellous addition to Diplomacy game, merely because of the difficulty in finding other players, and because it has a similar feel to chess - one man pitted against another so to speak. As you can see from the editorial, John Marsden is starting up an ID Tournament in Ode - oh yes I freely admit, I was sorely tempted to put my name down this.))

DAVE BIRD: "I am hoping to move to Dover in a few weeks time. I will still be working for Customs & Excise, but no longer in a VAT office. I always wanted to retire by the coast!

It seems that the Beeb want to make a short series of programmes in the form of a drama about the work in the Department, though I can't see what is so fascinating about drinking tea and playing cards? Perhaps they will give me a bit part as a Collector, as no-one ever sees them, apart from on the golf courses!

In my capacity as Accomodation Officer at Harlow VAT office, perhaps I could put some HMSO stationary your way for a small consideration?! Mind you, apart from 600 toilet rolls which we didn't want, we seem to be short of just about everything else."

((Listen here, Bird, are you trying to insinuate that Dib should be printed on low quality loo paper? Most zines might well end up in the loo, but by hell I'll make the uncivilised blackguards who try it suffer, by using stiff fullscap paper. I should say! Best of luck in your new, er, job? - possibly as a superstar.))

CUTHBERT ELBOW (alias Richard 'The Book' Sharp): "I see you've resorted to the ancient device of inventing characters to write silly letters to you - Walkerdine came up with one called 'Knee', for God's sake. 'Dave Bird' is a bit more realistic, though 'Fred Insect' would have been more mellifluous. I like being called 'pedantic', of course, recognizing it as a word used by the uneducated to describe their betters. But why does your character need a supervisor? Is he dangerous? ((More than likely... but no more so than other Dib subscribers, I would think.))

On, on. Rachel Roberts, far from being a figment of my imagination, is a distinguished actress, and I congratulate you on obtaining this up-market subscriber. To retaliate, I have sent a free copy to Clint Eastwood, but have not yet had a reply. I note that you have also heard from her namesake, Rosie Roberts - I have lots more of these intellectuals on my books, and will gladly make them available to you at 50p a shot, to give Dib a bit of that academic firepower it so demonstrably lacks.

((Yes yes, I did make a mistake (well actually it was Jan) and I really must apologise to Rosie for getting her name wrong and allowing the mistake to go unnoticed - most ill-mannered of me. Also, I agree, it was very nice of you to point Rosie in my direction - it seems you knew a select magazine when saw one and realised that she would fit in quite well. As to any other reason you might have for handing over such an intellectual, I can only hazard a guess at - perhaps there was a feeling of guilt that she might become smothered under the rather weighty prose within the dusty pages of your infamous rag? Perhaps I should charge you 50p for using Dib to give Rosie a breath of fresh air?

As for 'inventing characters, well you might be right there, I wouldn't put it past Walkerdine to invent his whole subscribership (perhaps even the whole hobby), however, I feel I'm safe in saying that the whole of Dib's subscribership is real. Sometimes only too real. I'll admit there have been times when I've doubted names myself - take for example the one you chose, 'Dave Bird'... when he first wrote to me he signed his name 'D. Bird'. I was sure this was going to turn out to be 'Dicky Bird'. As for Luke Clutterbuck, well, we'll not mention him will we - or more to the point, for a keen sense of humour, with cutting remarks, how about Dick Sharp, Private Investigator.))

RICHARD (CONT.): "I didn't bother to react to your Ethiopian ramblings, but I suppose it's my duty to point out the obvious, as no one else has. The reason all those people are dying of famine in Ethiopia is the same reason that all those other people die unnatural deaths every year in every African country but one - namely that these countries are ruled by ignorant, greedy savages. Ethiopia is worse off than most, having had only a very short period of European rule (and then only Italians). The responsibility for all this suffering rests partly with the previous generation of criminals (Gandhi and so on) who agitated for an independence they were unfit to receive, partly with the weak European governments that gave in to them, and partly with the United States, which used unscrupulous bullying to ensure that no one should have colonies except themselves and the Russians."

((It seems silly to say that a country can die because of its independence, when it's a cause most countries fight to obtain and hold. England has always fought for independence; even when it's for other countries. So where does one draw the line for self-rule - can the governing body not be greedy or unscrupulous? Hell, if so I think that cuts out most of the governments. No, independence may well be part of the trouble, but it seems to me to get a country into the state Ethiopia is in now, it also needs a weak government for fringe elements to prey on.))

LUKE CLUTTERBUCK: "I don't know how you do it but your zine always makes it here well in time for me to do my diploming and send off my moves, while the other two to which I subscribe never make it in time for the former and sometimes not for the latter. Keep up the good work!!

I realise that it may be a little late, but I'd like to make some comments about your Ethiopian controversy. Picture this: someone comes home, makes a cup of coffee, takes a chocolate biscuit from the tin and sits down with DDD 44 or the 10 O' clock news or Le Monde or Pravda or the Washington Post or the Sydney Morning Herald or whatever and hears about Ethiopia or Nali or any one of the 150 odd polygot states misleadingly lumped together as 'The Third World'.

Picture that this someone is the 1 in a thousand who asks the perennial question 'why?' Thus they begin a journey down a long, long mental road that inevitably leads back to that innocuous coffee, the biscuit and its tin. Because to drink coffee is to encourage importers to rip off farmers who rip off the land and create a desert. So when Tim Collieu says that 99% of the population can do nothing about it, he is quite wrong. You could start by not buying coffee, cocoa and tin.

You might say "won't this make them poorer?" But the land no longer used to produce these cash crops etc for the West and the East could then be used to grow what they need: rice, wheat and so on. Now, ridiculously, these agricultural nations have to import food to feed their own people. To do this they must borrow without hope of re-payment. This hurts not only them but the banks that lend them the money, our banks, our savings, our economic backbone. The superpowers sell arms to their undemocratic governments true, but so does Britain, France and Germany. And the rest of us like Australia, Bulgaria and Canada do nothing to stop them. It is a multi- billion dollar game, essential to the prosperity of those nations. The 'New Internationalist' has published the estimate that the amount necessary to clothe, feed, shelter and educate everyone in the world is equal to the amount spent on arms in two weeks!

So if the 'Third World' wanted to start tomorrow to feed its people it could do it - easily - but at the cost of defaulting on all their bank loans and by rejecting the market for arms. The result in the West would be the worst depression in history. A depression where thousands of Britons would starve to death each day.

But it goes deeper than that. At the moment there are literally thousands of tons of plutonium floating about looking for a place to live (or half-live) out their days. It isn't hard to envisage time when one of these desperate starving nations makes a bomb out of some of this garbage and says "Look, either you gives us a million tons of grain by tomorrow or there will be no Southampton."

So giving aid to Ethiopia is not a charity. It is an imperative. Not only a moral imperative but one for anyone of us who chooses life over death."

((Yes, I've heard about this Third World bomb theory before, and it sounds more than plausible. Mind you this only goes to prove my point, that it's the person with the big stick who gets to be heard above the others. From my point of view, if it means going without my coffee, tinned food, and other such tin associated items, just so an Ethiopian family can have more children... forget it! I'll wait and take my chances with the bomb. After nine months of famine I was sickened to see TV pictures of a mother feeding a newborn baby, and saying she felt 'weak' - just what the HELL is that baby going to feel in a couple of weeks

time?! I don't care a shit for the idiot grownups.... but those poor kids... trekking for miles for food. Yes, THEY need help. But enough of this, on to something calmer....))

ANDREW SMITH: "Things have been settled down a bit after the end of term, so here goes with what seems to be a long-overdue letter (ah, those pangs of conscience....). My life has been busy and complicated by being quite ill recently. This meant tablets from the doc. and more money to Norman Fowler. Makes me sick, I mean fancy having to pay to be ill?

A couple of political points here - the Welfare State is a failed and hideously expensive experiment. It's a bit like the world Banking System which keeps on pumping money and more money into 3rd world countries as loans. They've got to the stage where they can't call a halt - successive governments keep pumping money into a thing that needs completely rethinking. But they are committed to the concept of the welfare state (and its associated rights), and for them suddenly to go back on that commitment would cost a political party a lot of Brownie points.

Similarly, the sooner a party will admit to having to have policies to face the post-industrial age, the sooner I'll be happy. There's seemingly just no admitting to it, however - any party that grabs these two nettles gets my vote!

Ethiopia - hmm, well, I can't help feeling that we must be a bit responsible for it all seeing as how 'developed' world science/health care means that it's not just the fittest who survive any longer.... But to Nuke them?! - well I understand the sentiments, but can't help feeling there's another moral here.

I agree wholeheartedly with Mrs Thatcher's denial of VAT to the famine relief agencies from the Band Aid record. Its all very creditable, but a bit turgid to say the least. But then again, it was all done in London in 24 hours. Now I understand why artists need to go to remote sun drenched islands for a couple of months before they can come up with anything decent!!!!"

((The Welfare State is the best thing that ever happened to this country. No way would I like things to revert completely to the American way of medical help, as in our Private sector. Having the choice of National Health or going Private is fine, I'm all for that, but it would be very difficult for the ordinary family to begin to afford compulsory Private medicine without some sort of repayment scheme or insurance. Even then, what about long term or recurring illnesses? We have good hospitals, good equipment, and good nurses. What we don't have is enough nurses to staff the hospitals and use the equipment. I was at Stoke Mandeville Hospital the other day - the brand NEW one - and found it to be completely understaffed, to the point of being almost empty, with thousands of pounds worth of unused, untouched new equipment stored away until such time as was needed, which seemed unlikely in the present circumstances, or how to use them could be worked out. I saw one poor nurse struggling on how to work out the jacking up of a new type of bed. I asked her the way to the X-Ray Department... she didn't know! I thought, what a waste of facilities. And they talk of cutting the prescription list... stupid.))

GIL VON GAVEL: "Now I should really give you some thoughts on the miner's strike, but it's 00.05, I've got to find the Walamaysia Gazette in my mess, to write my orders; do a chemistry prep which was due in last week; and sleep. Still, I'd better say something, before the strike's over - though the government doesn't appear to be too interested in ending it, all of a sudden - if you want to know more, read last week's New Statesman.

Alright, so hold the view, that because the strikers are not going to work voluntarily they are to blame for their hardship, while others (employed and unemployed) suffer hardships, about which they appear to be unable to do anything. ((Many have lost their jobs because of the miner's strike)) However, as I see it, the miner's are striking against among other things, unemployment. They are showing the government, that it cannot simply do what it likes with people who want to work. Even if all four million unemployed staged a protest, they could probably not damage the

government as much as 100-140 thousand miners are doing at the moment. As several striking miners put it, when visiting Germany: "Our fight is the fight of all workers." ((Not, I note, of the unemployed))

One problem in you, and others, not understanding my, and others viewpoint, is that true reasons of the strike are not clear enough for you. There's lots of talk about 'uneconomic' pits, but that's a blind alley. In fact, the strike is partly against the future redundancies (through automation) - like in the steel industry ("McGregor strikes again!") and more importantly to get the government to create a proper energy strategy, with coal as the main source. There are many reasons that would speak for coal being used as main energy source (I'll elaborate on this point next time if you want - but not now, since it's coming onto 1.00 and there's still the bloody chemistry), which far outweighs the governments counter arguments. Namely that energy is dependent on a large workforce. Meanwhile, as ever, the rich get richer and the poor poorer."

((Well I can point you wrong there for a start: if energy is NOT dependent on a large workforce if it can be automated. But you say you'll fight against automation because of "future redundancies through automation". This seems daft - what happens if other countries can sell it to us cheaper because they are automated? Will our consumers want to buy cheaper, or British? Will you even give the consumer a choice, or will all the cheap stuff be boycotted? Yes, I know the stock union answer to that one - if we try and buy cheap, boy, THEN we'll see some strikes, won't we? Your arguments against automation sounds exactly the same as the Luddite argument against machinery and the Industrial Revolution. You can't stop progress however noble your cause or however hard you try - striking to do so will just slow it down, IT WON'T STOP IT.

As for uneconomical mines, this seems to me part and parcel of the same problem - one can't invent jobs where there are none. So there's a few more years in the mine left... what then? Will the mining community move then? How EMPTY does a mine have to be before a miner will turn his hand to something else? It's like trying to say, "When I grow up I want to be an oblong nut maker." What if no-one wants oblong nuts, am I within my right to say, tough, invent me a job, it's my right as a working man? You can't take it from me, if I don't have a job in one place I'll move to somewhere else to find one. And it's no use saying there is none - the Coal Board have stated they'll re-locate or re-train any miner at an uneconomical pit. Or have I got that wrong as well? If it was up to me I'd turn the uneconomical pits over to the community anyway and let them see how to make it pay - and last!))

VICTOR HALL: "Yes well, I suppose I was having a bit of a dig at the London Police, although I expect it's much the same in most other big cities, where crime is high and largely successful. The Police in these areas then obviously have a more difficult job, and it must put quite a strain on people's temperament to deal with continuous problems, some of them petty and some of them not so.

However, it was their choice to do the job and from some of the Police I've met in West Ham I'd question whether they were doing the right thing. Some of them are incredibly impatient and others just don't seem to be bothered. Even worse though, are the one or two policeman I've met who seem to relish the thought of violence. I well remember a policeman I met whilst telling at a local by-election. It was obvious from our conversation that the only part of his work he enjoyed was the violent parts, everything else was boring. To use his own words: "There's nothing I enjoy more than putting the boot in at football matches."

Having said all that I will say that generally I agree that the police force do a good job, but much depends on where you live and how much work the Police have to do.

In Byfleet, which is a small Surrey village the local policeman still goes round on his bicycle and pops in for a cup of tea. I haven't met anyone there who doesn't think he does a good job but then the crime in Byfleet is pretty petty, there isn't much to do."

((Ah yes, the good old British bobby on his bicycle - how fondly we remember

him. Well all I can say to this, Victor, is that there's good and bad in everything. They say with city policemen, you get the police you deserve - you get tough with the police, they'll get tough to cope with you. Anyway, when it comes to the choice of being booted by a football hooligan, or having a policeman boot him, I know which I'd choose. Also, I don't behave like a hooligan or villan, so the chances are greatly in my favour that the violent policemen won't pick on me.))

And just to finish off, a nice non-political piece....

NICK CLARK (written on his new word processor): "I was interested to read your comments on the books by Piers Anthony, because I have been reading another series of his, namely 'Split Infinity', a trilogy which is well worth a read, but not worth re-reading, if you get my drift.

However, I didn't really think that the 'Battle Circle' was all that good. I read all the books a year or so ago, and recently re-read them when they were re-released. They didn't really say anything, and like Stephen Donaldson, he went on too long.

Speaking on re-released books, I was gladdened to see a new copy of 'Bill the Galactic Hero' in my local book shop - this is one of Harry Harrison's better books, and well worth a look."

((Thanks, I'll keep an eye open for the Split Enfinity trilogy, and Bill the Galactic hero. I'm surprised you didn't like Battle Circle though - but then, I never really try to read anything into my books, but just like them for the escapism, adventure, mystery or technical detail. Stephen Donaldson, I admit did go on a bit, nevertheless at times the graphic details of marauding urviles, blood red landscapes, and SUPERB heroes (it was a sad loss to see the death of Foamfollower and other such great characters) was at times brilliant. Hellfire, Donaldson goes through fully fledged characters like other people go through tissues.))

That's it then for another issue - it looks as though I've prattled on more than I wanted to in places. Ah well, it's the fault of you lot; shouldn't start me off (especially after my couple of glasses of Johnny Walker). My thanks to all those who wrote though, you're a grand lot and no mistake. Wot? I was going to say, no Clutterbuck gems to finish off? Well, he writes the interesting loony bits to Cathy Cunning now, you know, her that's 5 foot 2, with the afro hairstyle (well it looked that way to me, Cathy!) - now thinks he's much too good for this rag and only writes serious stuff. Mike Close is getting like that too (no, I don't mean the afro hairdo!).

~~~~~

SOPWITH ENDGAME STATEMENT - 'CURLEW' (T037DD) - THE PINK PANTHER (Richard Downes)

I joined the game for Turn 9 when Konrad Dolata unfortunately had to drop out. The plane had 1 DGE left so I did not really expect to live long. However...

Turn 9: Arrived just in time to see Lt. Janno Vorg plummet out of the sky. Does anyone know what has become of Sgt. Steve Williams, as he suddenly dropped out of many games across the hobby.

Turn 10: Nurg and Bluebottle both blew each other up, leaving just Cousey and myself to battle it out. I quite unexpectedly found myself in the final.

Turn 11: Not a lot happened except I missed the runway.

Turn 12: Amazingly I gunned Cousey down thus emerging as the victor having been on 1 point of damage all the time.

This was the first time I had ever played Sopwith and despite a few slight misunderstandings with the rules I enjoyed it. My thanks to Tom and the other players - sorry I won. I don't know that I actually deserved it!

((Thanks for taking over Konrad's position as standby, Richard - it was much appreciated. Sorry, I don't know what points you scored - though I do remember it was 4 points + 5 for killing Cousey the last time in Turn 12 = 9 points altogether. That's all, wasn't it?))

~~~~~

'Kevin' (1983DI)

Spring 1908

GERMANY COMES BACK WITH A VENGEANCE - ONLY A TWO-PLAYER GAME NOW

ENGLAND (Richard Wernick) MWR! Has: F(StP-nc), F(Lpl)
 GERMANY (Victor Hall) A(Sil) S A(Mun)-Boh, A(Mun)-Boh, A(Yor)-Lpl, A(Spa)-Mar, F(SKA) S
 F(Den)-Swe, F(Den)-Swe, F(ENC)-Wal, F(NTH)-Nor, F(TYS) S A(Tus)-Rom,
 A(Tus)-Rom, A(Mar)-Bur, A(Tyr) S A(Ven)-Tri, A(Ven)-Tri
 RUSSIA (R.J. Lampard) A(Swe)-Nor, A(War)-Pru, A(Mos)-War, A(Rum)-Gal, A(Sev)-Rum, A(Vie) S
 A(Tri)-Tyr, A(Tri)-Tyr, A(Alb)-Tri, A(Bul)-Ser, A(Arm)-Ank, A(Smy) S
 A(Arm)-Ank
 TURKEY (Anarchy) Has: A(Gre), F(Ank), F(Tun), A(Nap), A(Rom), F(Con)

Retreats: GERMAN A(Tyr)-Pie; RUSSIAN A(Swe)-Fin; TURKISH F(Ank) dies; TURKISH A(Rom) dies

PRESS:

LUTON AIRPORT: Who will be the victor.... Victor? Just a joke lads...

'Lamfhada' (1983EE)

Autumn 1906

RUSSIA APPEARS TO GIVE AWAY SWEDEN - IS THE PRESSURE GETTING TOO MUCH FOR HIM?

AUSTRIA (Janes Cowie) A(Alb) S A(Ser)-Gre, A(Ser)-Gre, A(Vie) S A(Bud)-Tri, A(Bud)-Tri
 ENGLAND (David Crawford) F(NTH)-Lon, A(Edi)-Lpl
 FRANCE (Alan Sharples) A(Hol) S A(Bel), A(Bel) S A(Hol), A(Bur) S A(Bel), F(Lpl)stands,
 F(ENC)-Lon, F(SKA)-Swe, A(Pic) S A(Bur), [[F(NAO)-NWG]] ((NO SUCH UNIT)),
 F(NWG) stands unordered
 GERMANY (R.J. Lampard) A(Mun)-Bur, A(Ruh)-Hol, A(Kie) S A(Ruh)-Hol
 ITALY (Paul Donley) F(ION)-Gre, F(TYS)-ION, A(Ven)-Apu, A(Tyr)-Ven
 RUSSIA (Mike Close) A(Sev)-Ukr, F(Arm)-BLA, A(Rum)-Bul, A(Gal)-Rum, A(Mos)-StP, F(BAR)-NWG,
 F(Nor)-SKA, F(Den)-SKA
 TURKEY (Simon Craddock) *A(Gre) S F(Bul-sc), A(Con) S F(Bul-sc), F(Bul-sc) S A(Gre), F(BLA)-Ank,
 F(EMS)-AEG

Retreats: TURKISH A(Gre) disbands

Winter 1906 Adjustments:

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| AUS: Bud,Vie,Tri,Ser + Gre | Builds: A(Bud) for 5 |
| ENG: Lon,Edi | No Change for 2 |
| FRA: Par,Mar,Bre,Spa,Por,Bel,Lpl,Hol + Swe | Builds: F(Bre) for 9 |
| GER: Ber,Mun,Kie | No Change for 3 |
| ITA: Ven,Rom,Nap,Tun | No Change for 4 |
| RUS: StP,Mos,War,(Swe),Nor,Sev,Den,Rum | Disbands A(Rum) for 7 |
| TUR: Smy,Con,Ank,Bul,(Gre) | No Change for 4 |

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PRESS:

Austria - Russia: Sorry, but I got scared.

France - Italy: Sorry for not answering your last letter. I will write to you as soon as I have seen this adjudication. If you are not at the last address you gave me could you give me a ring on 0229

29460?

Italy - Austria: You'd better have kept your word this time or I won't be pleased.Austria - Italy: Sorry but I couldn't trust you. ((Oh dear))To Everybody (even the English) From a Scot: Happy New Year.'Macha' (1983EN)Autumn 1906

WHILST FRANCE SLIPS COMFORTABLY INTO ST. PETERSBURG ITALY SHAPES UP TO HOLD HIM IN THE SOUTH

ENGLAND (Anarchy) Has: F(Lon), F(Lpl)

FRANCE (Bill Haygarth) F(BAR) C A(Pic)-StP, F(NWG) C A(Pic)-StP, F(NTH) C A(Pic)-StP, F(ENC) C A(Pic)-StP, A(Pic)-StP, F(Wal)stands, A(Hol) S A(Kie), A(Mun) S A(Kie), A(Kie) S A(Mun), A(Ruh) S A(Mun), A(Bur) S A(Mun)

ITALY (Alan Frost) A(Tyr)-Pie, A(Boh) S A(Vie)-Tyr, A(Vie)-Tyr, A(Bud)stands, F(AEG) S F(Bul-sc)-Con, F(Bul-sc)-Con, F(Gre)-Bul-sc, A(Ser) S F(Gre)-Bul-sc, F(ION)-TYS

RUSSIA (Steve Rennie) A(War)-Mos, [[A(Sil) S ITALIAW A(Boh)-Mun]], A(Ber) S F(Den)-Kie, F(Den)-Kie, A(Rum)stands, A(Pru)-Lvn, F(BLA) S A(Arm)-Ank, A(Arm)-Ank

TURKEY (Ulf Jiretorn) F(Smy) S A(Ank)-Con, A(Ank)-Con, F(Con)-BLA

Retreats: None.Winter 1906 Adjustments:

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------|
| ENG: Lon,Lpl | No Change | for 2 |
| FRA: Par,Mar,Por,Bel,Spa,Bre,Mun,Hol,Edi,Nor,Kie + StP | Builds: A(Bre) | for 12 |
| ITA: Ven,Rom,Nap,Tun,Vie,Tri,Bud,Ser,Gre + Bul | Builds: F(Nap) | for 10 |
| RUS: (StP),Mos,War,Sev,Rum,Ber,Swe,Den | Disbands A(Rum) | for 7 |
| TUR: Con,Smy,Ank,(Bul) | No Change | for 3 |
| | | <u>34</u> |

PRESS:LUTON AIRPORT - Stuart: Sorry, the moves cannot be accepted because you/England went into Anarchy after two successive NMR's.France - Russia: It was your choice. Here I come.Turkey - Russia: I don't seem to get through to you. I'll say it once more. Your centres are falling into the hands of France, one by one. ((Sorry Ulf, I had to edit the rest of this 'press' on the grounds that it could have been sent as a letter. It was, after all, a rather large piece of what might be to some, boring diploming. The press section is not really intended for letters.))Italy - France: Sorry, darling, I've found another man. Your dinner's in the oven.Russia - Turkey: My mistake was to attack you in the first place. Now that I'm committed to attacking you I have to finish the job, otherwise I'll never be able to get Italy to attack France.France - Italy: Never mind. What I've promised, I've promised.'Nuada' (1984BN)Autumn 1903

AUSTRIA TRIES TO BUILD IN OCCUPIED SC AND ITALY FORGETS ONE - A STRANGE GAME

AUSTRIA (John Cavanagh) F(ADS)-ION, F(Gre) S F(ADS)-ION, A(Vie)-Tri, A(Bul)-Rum, A(Ser) S A(Bul)-Rum, A(Bud) S A(Bul)-Rum

ENGLAND (Martin Allen) NMR! Has: F(NWG), F(Edi), F(ENC)

FRANCE (Paul Morton) NMR! Has: A(Pic), A(Par), A(Gas), *F(Spa-sc)

GERMANY (Mike Close) A(Bel)-Yor, F(NTH) C A(Bel)-Yor, F(HEL) S F(NTH), F(Den)-Swe, A(Ruh)-Bel, A(Bur)-Gas

ITALY (R.J. Lampard) A(Pie) S A(Mar), F(MAO)-Spa-nc, A(Mar) S F(MAO)-Spa-nc, F(Ven)-Tri, *F(ION)stands

RUSSIA (Cathy Cunning) A(StP) S F(Swe)-Nor, F(Swe)-Nor, A(Nor)-Fin, A(War)-Mos, *A(Rum) S AUSTRIAN A(Bul), F(Sev)-Arm

TURKEY (Chris Sandow) NMR! Has: F(AEG), A(Con), F(BLA)

Retreats: FRENCH F(Spa-sc) dies; ITALIAN F(ION) dies (NRO); RUSSIAN A(Rum) cruelly slaughtered by nasty Austrians.

COA: Martin Allen, 24 Kennett Road, Headington, Oxford.

Winter 1903 Adjustments:

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| AUS: Bud,Vie,Tri,Ser,Bul,Gre + Rum | No build ordered for 7 (1 SHORT) |
| ENG: Lon,Lpl,Edi,(Nor) | No Change for 3 |
| FRA: Bre,Par,Por,(Spa) | No Change for 3 |
| GER: Mun,Ber,Kie,Den,Hol,Bel + Swe | Builds: A(Ber) for 7 |
| ITA: Rom,Ven,Nap,Mar,Tun + Spa | Builds: F(Nap) for 6 (1 SHORT) |
| RUS: Mos,War,StP,Sev,(Rum),(Swe) + Nor | No Change for 5 |
| TUR: Smy,Ank,Con | No Change for 3 |

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PRESS:

LUTON AIRPORT: Sorry, the heading last time should have read 'Germany attacks on two fronts'.

Moscow - Budapest: Are we friends now?

Russia - World: "France attacks on two fronts?" I think, "France tries to cover his ass" is a much better description. ((Okay, OKAY! I said it was Germany already, didn't I? Anyway, Cathy, 'ass'...? This IS a family mag you know! Blasted colonials and their slang...))

Moscow - Tweedybird: Can I say that in this zine? (('Ass'...? well, okay, yes - 'Tweedybird'? NO!!

Whatever will my fans think - they look up to me with something akin to hero worship y'know? And talking of worship...))

Moscow - Berlin: How can I worship thee? Let me count the ways... (I'm still thinking, maybe next time). ((Hooey! I'd give yourself longer than that!))

'Olwen' (1984B0)

Pre-Spring 1905

This game is held over until next issue because I understand Kenny didn't get to hear about the resurrection of Russia - apologies for the cock-up, but it's not entirely my fault (Nicholas left it until the last minute to tell me about Kenny) - unless you can call my being soft-hearted a fault. I have orders on file from everyone - these can be changed at any time.

COA: Colin Pickard, 90 Polden Street, Bridgewater, Somerset, TA6 5EW.

PRESS:

LUTON AIRPORT - All: Because of certain circumstances regarding Christmas mail I felt I had to reinstate Nicholas and the Russian units - I'm sorry if this had caused any inconvenience.

LUTON AIRPORT - England: Check page 9 of the rulebook under Civil Disorder - as you NMR'd that season I had to make a choice.

LUTON AIRPORT - Italy: Nick, could you please remember to put 'Stanley Hill AVENUE' as my address - without the 'Avenue' it's possible I may not always receive your orders in time, because they get delivered to another address.

Turkey - LUTON AIRPORT: Do you realise that if we had the same political set up as India, Mark Thatcher could be our next prime minister. ((Some might say, could he make any more of a balls-up than today's state of affairs?))

Russia: Call me Lazarus!

'Pryderi' (1984DA)

Spring 1904

TURKS FALL BACK UNDER PRESSURE FROM AN ALLIED RUSSIAN & AUSTRIAN PUSH

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| AUSTRIA (Pete Mason) | A(Ser)-Bul, A(Gre) S A(Ser)-Bul, A(Bud)-Tri, A(Vie) S A(Bud)-Tri, F(Tri)-Alb |
| ENGLAND (Ralph Parker) | F(Lon)-NTH |
| FRANCE (John Piggott) | F(Cly)-Edi, A(Lpl)-Yor, F(Bre)-ENC, <u>A(Bel)-Ruh</u> , <u>A(Bur)-Ruh</u> , F(Mar)-GOL, F(WMS)-Tun |
| GERMANY (Nick Hoyle) | A(Hol)stands, F(HEL)-NTH, F(Den) S F(HEL)-NTH, F(Kie)-HEL, A(Mun)stands |
| ITALY (Mike Pollard) | F(ION)-TYS, F(EMS)-ION, A(Tyr)-Pie, A(Ven) S A(Tyr)-Pie |

RUSSIA (David Crawford) F(Swe)-BAL, A(Nor) S A(Fin)-Swe, A(Fin)-Swe, A(Sev)-Arm, F(BLA) S A(Sev)-Arm, F(Rum) S AUSTRIAN A(Ser)-Bul

TURKEY (Iain Forsyth) *F(Bul-sc)stands, A(Con) S F(Bul-sc), F(Ank)-BLA, A(Smy)-Arm

Retreats: TURKISH F(Bul-sc)-AEG

COA: Ralph Baker, St. Cathrines College, Cambridge, CB2 1EL.

PRESS:

Puce-en-lit: Time to look at those in the running in the Bedbug Poll, as announced last issue.

The chances of the first Bedbug (B1) initially appear to be good, though his toe-ragging became a bit tedious after a while. After a dull start, B2 has improved: it could indeed justifiably be asserted that Tweedy's organ is a 'right Bolognese'. ((My organ has never been described in quite that way before.)) B3 (The Original and Genuine) is as authentic as a Mona Lisa straight off the production line in Taiwan. B4 (Canvey Island) is no more than a red herring to disguise grenouille's active participation in the Bedbugs. B5 (Quadii) should not be allowed to cloud the issue: he is merely B1 in a regenerated form. Which just leaves me, clearly the most sophisticated. I eat frogs for breakfast and don't write books on Diplomacy.

All you have to do is name the different Bedbugs. First prize is a complete set of back-issues of Ethil the Frog. After all, don't want to encourage too many people to enter, do we? ((Oh you are so right - it might start the madman writing again!))

Turkey - Italy: Don't want to worry you unnecessarily, but I see a Piggott looming over your shoulder... ((Ah well, once one sees Piggotts looming over one's shoulder, that's when you know it's time to lay off the drink. I once saw a green Piggott - horrible it was; sort of, yes you guessed it, froglike. Need I say more?))

LUTON AIRPORT - Iain: Hope your job hunting went well.

'Quadii' (1984??)

Spring 1903

AUSTRIA/GERMANY/RUSSIA, ITALY/TURKEY? - STRANGE BEDFELLOWS MAKE FOR AN INTERESTING GAME

AUSTRIA (James Steele) F(Gre) S RUSSIAN F(Rum)-Bul-ec, A(Ser) S RUSSIAN F(Rum)-Bul-ec, A(Alb) S F(Gre), A(Tri)-Ven, A(Bud)-Tri

ENGLAND (Piers Shepperson) F(Lon)-NTH, F(ENG) S F(Lon)-NTH, F(NTH)-HEL, [[A(Bel) S FRENCH A(Bur)-Ruh]], *F(Nor)-SKA

FRANCE (Alan Powis) F(MAO)-NAO, F(WMS)-MAO, A(Bur)stands, A(Gas)-Bre, A(Pic)-Bre

GERMANY (Richard Wernick) F(Den)stands, A(Mun)stands, A(Hol)stands, A(Ruh) S A(Hol), F(SKA) S RUSSIAN F(Swe)-Nor

ITALY (Martin Clifford-King) F(ION)-TYS, A(Apu)stands, A(Ven)stands, F(AEG) S TURKISH A(Bul)

RUSSIA (Richard Downes) F(Swe)-Nor, A(StP)-Fin, A(Lvn)-Mos, A(Ukr)-Sev, F(BLA) S A(Ukr)-Sev, F(Rum)-Bul-ec

TURKEY (R.J. Lampard) A(Bul)stands, A(Con) S A(Bul), A(Ank) S A(Con), A(Arm) S A(Ank)

Retreats: ENGLISH F(Nor)-NWG

PRESS:

Bedbug Island (Autumn 1902): There are some disturbing rumours around that I am not the real Bedbug. Well I'm writing this with the flu at 1.30 under the blankets - if that's not a real bedbug I don't know what is. Onto Quadii: I see Luton Airport had a good run up to Christmas. Since all was not plain sailing with his adjudication. Obviously the Christmas festivities affected the error concening Russia's acquisition of Norway. England of course cut the German support from SKA (this sort of error would never occur in Dolchstoss (advert)). Looking around, Turkey is looking more and more vulnerable. Why on earth did he not build a fleet? Four armies is ridiculous. Poor Austria gets taught a lesson and Italy is left out in the cold with no friends. France really must decide who to attack and not dilly dally about. England and Germany both look in relatively strong position, and I tend to favour the latter.

Ladbugs: 6-1 Russia, 7-1 Germany, Austria, 15-2 England, 8-1 France, 10-1 Italy, 25-1 Turkey. P.S. Votes on who I am next time. If you guess correctly then I'll stop bothering you all!

Paris - Bedbug Island: I know what would be more logical cut off. Since you obviously don't know