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This is GREATEST HITS VOLUME TWO, one of the better NGC zines. It is produced by the ever-working Pete Birks, of 39 Handforth Road London S79 9LL, England. Cost is 5½p plus postage, or 15p plus postage to Yanks. Print Run is 60, and today's date is 5.12.74.



Well here I am again, with yet another issue. This GH should be considerably bigger than last time, what with two game starts, some incredible letters, and a report on the poker-meeting chez Walkerdine.

Some of the more perceptive readers will have noticed a cartoon at the top of the page. I hope it comes out, it took me bloody hours to draw. There are more of these masterpieces inside. (If any moron is unaware of the identity of the above character, may I inform them that it is, of course, Edi Birsan). Talking of Edi, I can now reveal the name of the lunatic who actually voted for him in the Calhamer Awards. (To people who have not seen the results, Edi Birsan received only one vote out of 125 in the 'meritorious service' category, won by our very own Richard Walkerdine.) I bet you all thought that it was Edi himself, didn't you? Well your wrong. It was Nicky Palmer, editor of Battleground, cuckoozine to Welchstoss. A traitor in the midst, huh, Richard? Other notable events in the last month were my annihilation of Sharp at Barts. I played him 17 times in an evening, winning 12-5, and that was after being 2-0 down. As for Morris, I think 6-3 was the score.

Cheripokon on November 9th was rather disappointing, really, especially when compared to the previous meeting at Sharp's, owing to the fact that schoolboy Pete Swanson (2½), Ellie Nye, and Claire Walkerdine were playing. Not that I don't enjoy playing poker with them, but they were not up to the stake standard of Dave Johnson and Adrian 'legs' Baird. They insisted on this baby poker of a 50p maximum raise. This resulted in pots being cut down from the £25 average at Sharp's to about £5. Other players in the early evening were Allan Ovens, Brian Yare, Richard Walkerdine and Plague. Nye, Swanson, the Walkerdines, and Ellie were soon in dire straits. By one o'clock, (when Sharp deigned to arrive, wearing a tie he must have been drunk) the players were Allan Ovens, the Nyes, Sharp, Yare, and myself. Things got fractionally more exciting, with Sharp losing to two...

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straight flushes in the hour! Poor man, hee-hee.

By 4.30 a.m. Yare had won his £20 and disappeared. I, of course, was the only other person in profit, with Sharp insisting on giving me money almost every other hand. By half past five Wilkerdine insisted on chucking me out, along with all the other yobs. I retired about £17 in the black, my second highest ever profit in a night. Apart from Yare, all of the others were slightly down. Sharp, to my immense gratification, lost £6.

Just a small afterthought on poker. I played another game the following Wednesday, at the University, and won another £9. Perhaps I should take it up as a profession.....

The next meeting could be at Duncan Morriss's but this, at the time of writing, is unconfirmed. Since I'm publicising ftf meetings, I may as well give a plug to an event at Norman Nathan's on Saturday January 18th. From 3p.m. to midnight, with beds for a few to stay overnight. I shall be there, as will many other famous names in postal diplomacy, (Herbert Woodkinde, Henry Piddock, Eric/Blake, Richard Sharp, Morris maynap, perhaps even Yare! Of course, if that is the case I shall not attend).

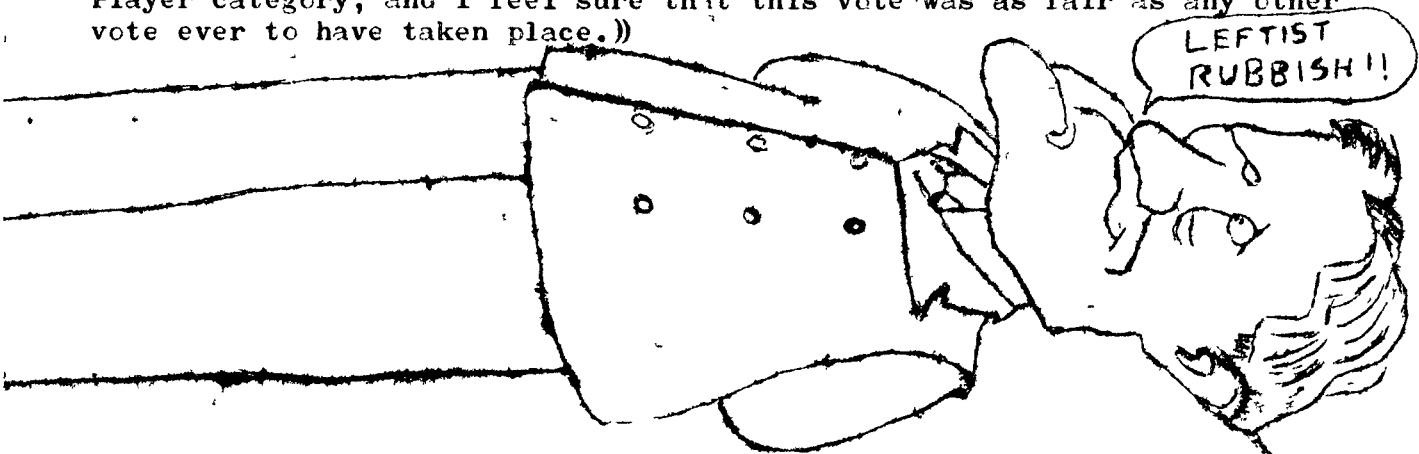
LETTERS

JOHN ~~WILL~~ PIGGOTT You've missed the point about the Calhamer awards. Of course you had to shove in all the usual tripe about 'politics' and 'democracy': but what's that got to do with what is only a trivial popularity contest with no concrete benefit for the winner apart from the egoboo involved? Damn all, obviously.

Fact the IDA emphatically is not going to encourage the splitting of the awards by regions in the forthcoming years, a motion to regionalise the awards failing to pass in the council a couple of months ago. You can't blame some of the Yanks for getting upset, of course; it's curious that the voices clamouring now in support of the clearly insane Sharp were a year ago the most vocal in their "American domination" inspired opposition to the IDA.

((Hmm, quite a few points there that need answering. Firstly, if I've missed the point about the Calhamer awards, as you tell me I have, why do you not tell me what the actual point is? My article simply tried to explain why the awards went the way that they did, and also to aim some flak at those maniacs who keep telling me what I should base my vote on. How you can claim that the manoeuvring by the British before the voting and the reactions of the Americans after the voting was not 'political' absolutely defeats me. Since, however, philosophers have been trying to answer the question 'What is politics?' for the last two thousand years, we'll just have to agree to differ on that point.))

((It was the day after printing that I received the issue of Queen Victoria's Funeral, which stated that the motion to regionalise the awards had been defeated. I am thankful that people like Nicky Ulanov have a majority over insane megalomaniacs like Edi Birsan. As to your last sentence, I am afraid that your statement is untrue. I, for one, have always supported the establishment of the IDA in Britain and will continue to do so, but I have been frightened by the attitude taken by some Americans over the result. The votes have showed that it was not the electioneering of Sharp that won the awards. It was the apathy of the Americans, with only slightly more votes cast on the other side of the Atlantic than were cast here, out of a far larger Diplomacy-playing population. Many British votes obviously went to Americans, especially in the 'Best Player' category, and I feel sure that this vote was as fair as any other vote ever to have taken place.))



ANDREW WALDIE I would hope that one feature of GH (forgive the abbreviation but it saves ink,) would be a lively letter column, similar to the one that used to flourish in Ethil. I feel that there is a great need for such a thing and at the moment only Bellicus is trying to fulfill it. But Bellicus' LoC column is rather limited in its scope and I think an NGC zine such as yours would promote a wider range of opinion. It would have to be a regular letter column as well, not just the occasional thing that occurs in 1901, Hannibal, Dolchstoss, etc. Mind you these zines have become more or less set in their ways and it is difficult for them to find either time or space to fit in letters. You, on the other hand, Pete, are starting fresh, and as such have the perfect opportunity to start a letter column. I sincerely hope that you don't waste it.

Judging from a letter that you wrote in CJ a while back, on the subject of education, I would assume that you are interested in politics or at least political thinking. I know that politics is a thorny subject for most diplomacy players, (though for the life of me I can't understand why), but would you consider promoting political arguments in your zine, perhaps adding your own comment? I know that I would probably send you screeds of comment and end-up boring everyone to tears, but you can prevent that by viciously editing what I say if I overdo the length! I don't mind and it would teach me to be a bit more concise! Well, I'll let you mull over that one.

See you've written a bit about the Calhaver awards. Well I agree with you entirely that Richard Sharp's attitude was completely in line with the political nature of democracy. However I can't sympathise with him when he starts accusing the Yanks of going off in a huff. Doesn't he realise that their outrage at Britain winning all the awards (bar two) is exactly the same as the feeling he felt (i.e. outrage at the Yanks winning all the awards!) when he decided to take action in the first place! If Sharp's reaction is acceptable then so is the American reaction. In short, what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and if Richard doesn't want to accept the consequences of his action then he shouldn't have taken it in the first place. Calling Edi Birsan a "condescending creep" just because he happens to disagree with him, (yet recognises his point of view) doesn't do Richard, or anybody, much good as far as I can see.

Glad to see your attack on Haven and company. That's the trouble with those liberals; they've got so hooked on the notion of being objective, "of using your intellect", that they've forgotten the value of good old-fashioned "gut reaction" (or prejudice) when it's used with self-control. I sometimes feel that liberals are ashamed of human emotion; but of course it's an over-reaction to the horrors caused by uncontrolled prejudice. To be balanced you've got to use both intellect and emotion, and to deny the value of either is sheer folly.

((Thanks, Andrew, for a very interesting letter. I think that I'd better take each section in turn, since there are a number of points that I would like to take issue about.))

((It looks as though I am going to have a letter column whether I want it or not. What with Piggott and Waldie sending in letters after a very short first issue. I agree with you, Andrew, when you say that no zine has filled the hole that Ethil left. A letter column, I think, is one of the most interesting parts of any zine, so I would therefore hope that it does become a regular feature. I can only have a letter column if people write to me, though, so if anyone else out there has anything to say on any subject at all (and I mean anything), then please send me a long letter. Oh, I would prefer it to be controversial.))

((You are quite correct in assuming that I am interested in politics, Andrew. That is the subject that I am studying at University, along with economics. I suppose that I had better tell all of you that my political bias, unlike most diplomacy players, is to the left, although I am not a supporter of the present Labour Party. Their actions over the Taverne case, and their opposition (at least in the rank and file) to the EEC, make it impossible for me to support them at a general election. I am in favour of nationalising the pharmaceutical industry, and of the eventual phasing out of private education. I also feel that the last two periods of Tory Government (1951-1964 & 1970-1974) have been the main reason that Britain is in the economical mess that it finds itself in. The economic mismanagement of Barber and the chronic rule of Churchill, Eden, Macmillan, Home, and Heath, has resulted in the fall of Britain from a level which it could

quite easily have maintained.)

((Hmm, I seem to have wandered away from the point of your letter, Andrew, sorry about that. To return, then to the Calhamer awards. I must admit that I am sometimes ashamed of human emotion when it comes to making decisions which I feel should be objective. Colour prejudice is the obvious example. Who can claim that they have not, at some time, practised some form of colour prejudice? Very few people, I should think. However much I may be against prejudice, I admit that it exists, and that I practise it myself. I am not, as you seem to be doing, trying to justify "gut reaction" or any other such phraseology which euphemises an act based on emotion rather than intellect. I think if the world were full of people who could evaluate every decision on its merits, the world could be a far happier place; a bit boring, perhaps, but wouldn't that be a small price to pay for a peaceful world?))

((I like your point about Sharp's reaction to the Calhamer awards being identical to the American reaction. I suppose that you could draw a comparison between Edi Birsan and Richard Sharp, although I am not sure that Richard was that pleased! He seems to have the same opinion about American organisations, and is convinced that the IDA is going to take over British Diplomacy, or some such nonsense. Here I must declare my own point of view. I am neither pro nor anti IDA. I do feel, however, that there should be greater links between American and British Diplomacy, and as such I think that the International Diplomacy Association has a lot to offer. I do not care if, as Richard claims, the IDA is not international, but American-dominated. I would, however, be badly upset if, as a result of Edi Birsan's actions in the States, and Richard's actions over here, have the result that American and British Diplomacy no longer communicate. It is for this reason that I have joined the IDA. It might be of interest to some of you to know that the IDA is far less restrictive over its publications than the NGC. The IDA handbook (80p, available from Pete Swanson, 6 Welford Place, Wimbledon, SW19, London) and Diplomacy World which is heavily subsidised, are both available to non-IDA members. Technically, however, an NGC zine is not. Dolchstoss, which is heavily subsidised by the annual member's subscription, should, I feel, be sold to non-NGC members at its true value. I also intend to sell GH to anybody who wants to buy it. I shall also trade with non-NGC members who publish zines. This applies more to American trades than British ones. I feel that I am doing just as much for the NGC as they are doing for me. I am not 'employed' by the NGC, and they will not order me around.))

PETER GREIG: Who is Calhamer, anyway?

((Well, Peter, Allan B. Calhamer, for all his sins, invented the game of Diplomacy way back in the 1950's. May God forgive him.))

~~STUART DAGGER: I agree with you that, with the exception of Dolchstoss,~~

NGC zines are players only affairs. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but there is probably room for another of more general interest and if Greatest Hits is to develop along these lines, I would be interested in subbing.

I am surprised that you consider that the press in Mad Policy is "brilliant". For me Conrad von Metzke's stuff isn't amusing, while those pages of identical drivel from Terry Knowles give me a pain in the arse. Unless he shuts up soon I shan't be renewing my subscription. For really good press you should read War Bulletin, and that brings me to my second point. Please don't make Will Haven's mistake of assuming that a long zine is automatically a good one. For all that, War Bulletin is only 25%-50% of Bellicus in size, and is a much more welcome arrival on my doormat than is Bellicus. I enjoy the letters and the (largely irrational) rantings in the first part of Bellicus, but then we get onto Elsinor, which makes Terry Knowles look almost readable!

((I suppose press must be a matter of opinion, because I love both Conrad's and Terry's press. (To all you non Mad Policy subscribers, it costs 3½p plus postage, until January, when it will be 5p, and it comes from our beloved Richard J. Walkerdine, 'Cheriton', 15 Crouch Cak Lane Addlestone, Surrey). I certainly hope that you don't stop subscribing just because you do not like somebody's press. You can always not read it.))

