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Ethil the frog

ISSUE NUMBER 9.

29 June, 1972

Here it comes again from John Piggott, 17 Monmouth Road, Oxford, OX1 4TD, U.K. Duplication by Ian Maule Corflu courtesy of Phil Jones. Ethil is still available, despite the best efforts of the Hannibal Fan Club, for trade, convincing begging letters, or money (10/50p inland or surface mail to Europe, 10/70p airmail to Europe, or 4/51 airmail, 8/51 third class elsewhere. U.S. citizens may pay in dollar bills). This is Tapeworm Production No. 12.

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What is the BDC up to, anyway?

You know, Graeme Levin's British Diplomacy Club doesn't seem to be going anyplace. I'm afraid that as a national organisation devoted to the bringing together of interested people, it has some serious shortcomings.

The BDC offers its members two main things a magazine, the Backstabber, and the opportunity to play in postal Diplomacy games. Let us examine each in turn.

First, the Diplomatic Backstabber (to give the BDC's official organ its full title). This publication has so far seen only two issues as I write this (28/6/72), so it's perhaps unfair to judge it too harshly at this stage, but I must confess that at present it leaves me singularly unmoved. The main part of it consists of a list of members' names, addresses and phone numbers -- all very laudable, I'm sure, but the trouble is, it contains just about nothing else! Issue 2 does contain a special offer enabling BDC members to get 'Go For Broke' and 'Take the Brain' sets at slightly reduced prices, but nothing else of interest -- and I wonder how many members have taken advantage of the offers? The layout of this pamphlet also leaves much to be desired. I hesitate to say this for obvious reasons, but where general looks are concerned, War Bulletin and Ethil beat the Backstabber hands down. And these latter two publications also contain more (certainly, at least, in WB's case) things of interest to read. . such as articles on the playing of Diplomacy (we are interested in this, aren't we?) and other bits and pieces.

One year's supply of Backstabbers (about 12 issues, it seems) costs 60p, plus a joining fee of 50p for new members. One year of Ethil (18 issues) costs 90p, and the same quantity of War Bulletin is 72p. I suggest that the 'independent' magazines give more to read for their price than does the BDC.

Of course, the BDC also organises postal Diplomacy games, and likewise the independent mags. And here we independents have one big advantage: we all have a resident gamesmaster. The BDC doesn't. It appoints the gamesmaster for its games, who adjudicates and communicates the results of moves independently from the rest of the BDC. The present BDC GM is Don Turnbull, the most experienced GM in Britain and also the one who makes the most few mistakes. All very well, but Don is not possessed of infinite energy, and there will eventually come a time when Don will not be able to take on any more games.

The independent magazines don't have this problem. Each individual editor/GM decides just how many games he can cope with. He is under no obligation to start a new game at any time, even though he has seven

(Continued on page 4)

'A' Game (1972K) -- Autumn 1904

ENGLAND (Jones). A Wal-Yor, F Cly S (German) Lpl-Edi.

GERMANY (A. Davidson). A Lpl-Edi S by F Nth; A Den-Swe S by F Ska,
A Sil-War; A Mun-Sil; A Lon stands.

RUSSIA (Jeffery) A Edi stand* S by F Nrg; F Bar-Nwy S by A Swe*;
A StP-Lvn; A Arm-Sev; A Sev-Mos; A Con stand;
F Ank stand.

AUSTRIA (Robertson): A Rum S A Bul, A Bul S A Rum; A Rom S F Nap;
F Nap S A Rom; A Tyr-Pie S by A Ven; A Tri-Vie;
A Gre stands.

ITALY (Maule). F TyS-Tun; A Apu-Ven.

FRANCE (D. Christanson) F WMS-Tun; F Spa(S)-GoL, A Mar-Pie;
A Gas-Spa, A Par-Bur.

*Retreats: Russian A Edi annihilated.
Russian A Swe annihilated.

ENGLAND.... Eliminated. All units removed.

GERMANY.... 11 bases Mun, Den, Kie, Ber, Hol, Bel, Lpl, Lon, Edi, War,
Swe. Build A Mun, A Kie and A Ber. Enters 1905 one
unit short.

RUSSIA..... 7 bases: StP, Mos, Sev, Nwy, Ank, Con, Smy. No change.

AUSTRIA.... 10 bases: Tri, Vie, Bud, Ser, Gre, Bul, Rum, Nap, Rom, Ven.
Build F Tri and A Bud.

ITALY..... 1 base: Tun. Removes A Apu.

FRANCE..... 5 bases Bre, Par, Mar, Spa, Por. No change.

Press releases -- see page 6.

'B' Game (Abstraction -- 1972Kco) -- November/December 1914

~~ENGLAND-(Stuärt):~~ ~~F HBS-Nrg~~, ~~F Bel-Hol S by F Ang~~; F Nwy stand.

GERMANY (Davis): A Obe-Mar; A Ber-Mun* S by A Kie; F Hol-Bel*;
F Den-Swe.

RUSSIA (Feintuck) A Pru-Ber S by A Dre; A Swe-Den, F Bal-Kie;
F Ode-WBS S by F EBS; A Cau-Arm.

TURKEY (Maule): F Lib-Mas; A Con boards F Aeg -- A/F Aeg-CMS;
A Bul-Con*; A Sin-Cic, F WBS-Sin

AUSTRIA (D. Christanson). A Mac-Con; A Ser-Bul S by A Rum;
A Tyr-Zur, A Mun S (Russian) Bal-Kie;
A Gre, A Cro, F Zar all stand.

ITALY (Jeffery) A Ven-Alb FF by F Adr; A Tus-Ven S by A Pie;
F Tun-WMS S by F Mor.

FRANCE (A. Davidson): F And-WMS S by F SAO; A Bur S A Mar; A Lor-Ruh;
A Cat boards F GoL -- A/F GoL-TyS -- A TyS dis Sic;
A Mar S A Bur.

*Retreats: German A Ber annihilated.
German F Hol annihilated.
Turkish A Bul annihilated.

ENGLAND... 8 bases. Ply, Lon, Lpl, Edi, Ire, Nwy, Bel, Hol. Build
F Ply, F Lpl, A Lon and A Edi'

GERMANY.... 2 bases Kie, Den. Remove A Obe (GM's choice).

RUSSIA..... 8 bases: Ark, StP, Mos, War, Ode, Swe, Dre, Ber. Build F StP.

TURKEY..... 5 bases: Con, Sin, Dam, Smy, Egy. No change.

AUSTRIA.... 10 bases: Zar, Pec, Bud, Vie, Mun, Zur, Gre, Ser, Rum, Bul.
Build A Bud & A Vie.

ITALY..... 5 bases: Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun, Mor. Remove A Alb.

FRANCE..... 8 bases Brc, Par, Lyo, Mar, And, Cas, Por, Sic. Build A Lyo.

Press releases -- see page 6.

'D' Game (1972??) -- Autumn 1901

ENGLAND (I.Lawson): F Lon-Eng A Yor-Nwy C by F Nth
 GERMANY (Jones): F Den-Swe, A Kie-Hol; A Ruh-Bel.
 RUSSIA (Shaw): A Ukr-Rum S by F Sev, A War-Gal, F GoB-Swe
 TURKEY (Oliver): A Bul-Rum; A Con-Bul; F Ank-Bla
 AUSTRIA (A.Davidson): A Vie-Gal; A Ser S (Turkish) Bul-Rum;
 F Alb-Gre
 ITALY (Waldie): A Apu-Tun C by F Ion; A Ven stands
 FRANCE (Hemmings): A Bur-Bel; A Spa-Por; F Bre-Eng.

*Retreats: none.

ENGLAND..... 4 bases: Lon, Lpl, Edi, Nwy. Build F Lpl.
 GERMANY..... 5 bases: Ber, Kie, Mun, Hol, Den. Build A Mun, A Ber.
 RUSSIA. 4 bases: StP, Mos, War, Sev. No change.
 TURKEY.. ... 4 bases: Con, Ank, Smy, Bul. Build F Ank.
 AUSTRIA..... 5 bases: Tri, Bud, Vie, Ser, Gre. Build A Bud, A Tri.
 ITALY..... 4 bases: Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun. Build F Nap.
 FRANCE..... 4 bases: Mar, Par, Bre, Por. Build A Mar.

Press releases -- see page 7.

'C' Game (1972BK) -- Autumn 1902

ENGLAND (Taylor) F Nrg-Bar, A Yor-Nwy C by F Nth & S by F Ska.
 GERMANY (Maule): A Lvn-StP; A Den-Swe S by F Bal; A Kie-Ruh,
 A Mun-Sil.
 RUSSIA (B.Davidson): A Nwy-Swe* S by F GoB, A War-Mos; A Gal-Vie;
 F Rum stands.
 TURKEY (Jeffery) A Gre stand*, F Bul(S)-Aeg; A Con-Bul; A Ank-Con,
 F Aeg-EMS.
 AUSTRIA (M.Christianson): F Alb-Gre, A Bud-Ser; A Vie-Bud.
 ITALY (Davis) F Ion S (Austrian) Alb-Gre; A Pie S A Tus,
 A Tus S A Pie, A Apu stands.
 FRANCE (Bell): A Spa-NAf C by F MAO, F GoL-TyS, A Par-Bur;
A Mar-Pie

*Retreats: Russian A Nwy-Fin.
 Turkish A Gre annihilated

ENGLAND..... 5 bases: Lon, Lpl, Edi, Bel, Nwy. Build A Lon.
 GERMANY..... 6 bases: Ber, Kie, Mun, Den, Hol, StP. Build A Mun.
 RUSSIA. 5 bases: Mos, Vie, War, Sev, Rum. No change.
 TURKEY . . . 4 bases: Con, Ank, Smy, Bul. No change
 AUSTRIA. ... 4 bases: Bud, Tri, Ser, Gre. Build A Tri.
 ITALY. . . . 4 bases: Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun. No change.
 FRANCE .. 5 bases: Bre, Par, Mar, Spa, Por. No change.

Press releases -- see page 7

BDC (continued from page 1)

or more players wishing him to. The BDC, however, must commence new games as long as there is a demand, unless it is to lose all credibility with its members, because one of the published purposes of the BDC is to provide postal games for those who require them. So what does the BDC do when Don decides he's had enough? Easy, you may answer, just engage another gamesmaster.

This may not be as easy as it sounds. While being a GM is by no means an arduous task, it does have the disadvantage of tying one down a little. It can be a bloody nuisance at times, and I suspect most BDC members won't be prepared to take on the task, or (worse) may take on a game and, six months later, disappear, leaving the game 'orphaned'. The other 'independent' GM's, like myself, would surely be prepared to help out -- but we have other commitments besides postal Diplomacy. I am at this very minute being forced to limit the number of games running in Ethil because I have other activities, and I'm by no means the only one taking this course.

Thus, lack of a resident gamesmaster, together with its avowed intention, could be a big stumbling block for the BDC. But don't think it's the only one, because it isn't. It could be interesting to compare gamecosts for the magazines and for the BDC. WB has a 25p game fee, in addition to 4p per issue subscription. Ethil has a 5p subscription, but no game fee for the first game. The BDC game fee is a staggering £1.60 (£1 + 20 SAE's)!

For a Ethil game to cost as much as one organised by the BDC, therefore, the game must continue (with you still in it!) till at least Autumn 1916. For a War Bulletin game the season is even later: Autumn 1917. Yet the average game finishes in 1911 or 1912 -- and, usually, about three players are eliminated before the end of the game.

A fair number of Diplomacy players are still at school, and to these ~~people even 50p, the sum I suggest for an Ethil subscription, is a lot of~~ money. The average student (another large chunk of the gaming population) isn't too wealthy either. Given a choice between playing (and paying for!) a BDC game and a game in one of the independent magazines... well, you can guess which one I'd go for.

Incidentally (and I apologise in advance if this sounds unduly bitchy, but I think it's important), where does all the money go in the BDC? It appears that it takes in a lot more revenue per member than do the independent zines, yet it doesn't appear to offer any more. Oh, to be sure, now that we've increased in size Ethil is running at a slight loss, but it ain't that much! The inevitable conclusion (aside from the unsavoury notion that Graeme Levin is pocketing the excess himself, something I don't want to believe, even) is that the profits, such as they are, are being ploughed back in to help pay for the advertising. Well, it's no use advertising unless you've got a decent product to show to potential members -- after all, they are being asked to pay hard cash for the privilege of belonging to the Club! And, at the moment, I feel that the BDC is not offering enough.

Let's face it, any of the independent Dippyazines could kill the BDC stone dead, simply by distributing sample copies to each member and showing them the advantages (financial and otherwise) of being involved with them rather than the BDC. This was, I confess, the original idea I had of publishing the bumper issue 8 -- I had planned to ask Ian to run off about 120 copies (our usual print run is presently 60) and I refrained from doing this and sending one to each BDC member only when I realised (a) that it would cost me about three quid, and (b) that I didn't want that many players. But it's a thing the BDC might well bear in mind. If this sounds uncomfortably like blackmail, let me assure you it's not meant that way. I want to see the BDC be a success, but I'm afraid it won't be as long as it keeps its present form. There's more to postal Diplomacy than address lists and fancy stationery.

Hey, Hartley, here's our fifth game starting'

Yes, friends, yet another new regular game is spawned by this ever-active Frog. The new game, which is logically but unimaginatively designated 'E' game till such time as Rod Walker assigns a Boardman number and informs us of what it is, will be played according to the 1971 Rulebook and the Ethil House Rules. (I may reprint these fairly soon, so if there are any suggestions as to additions or alterations, I'd appreciate having them in the near future).

'E' game players are as follows -

ENGLAND Ian Maule, 59 Windsor Tce, South Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne,
NE3 1YL.

GERMANY: Martin Mellish, 16 Walnut Lane, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire.

RUSSIA: Dave Douglass, 32 Rosewood Tce, Howden, Wallsend, Northumberland
NE28 OAF

TURKEY. Henry P. Pijohn, 78 Blandford Road, Chirton Grange, North
Shields, Northumberland NE29 8NX

AUSTRIA Roy Lawson, 11 Prestwick Avenue, Felixstowc, Suffolk.

ITALY: Ian Lawson, 11 Prestwick Avenue, Felixstowe, Suffolk.

FRANCE Richard Walkerdine, "Cheriton", 15 Crouch Oak Lane, Addlestone,
Surrey.

The two Lawson brothers live in the same house... they may even be related. Great care will be necessary on the part of the other players when communicating with one of these two, for there is no limit to the fiendish skulduggery of which they are capable. It will be particularly interesting for me to see whether they trust one another enough to send both their orders in the same envelope -- but this will be priveleged information which I cannot divulge to anyone' Heh, heh.

Lists are now open for another regular game, which I'll provisionally call 'F'. This will be the last regular game I shall start, probably until at least June 1973. So get in quick if you want it, batmen.

Could those members of 'E' game who are eligible please cough up 25p each at some stage? Ta

Another happy event

I have before me a copy of Der Krieg 1, from Graham Jeffery, 8 Rusholme Road, London SW15 3JZ. It consists of two very thin pieces of quarto paper, neatly spirit dupered in three colours. Also enclosed were Graham's house rules on a seperate sheet -- these bear not a small resemblance to Ethil's, which is just as well since it makes things a lot easier for fools like Andy Davidson who's now in five zines at once.

Graham's first issue announces the start of a regular game. Lists are open for further regular and Origins games. There's also a bit outlining DK's future policy. This mag's nowhere near as good as Ethil, of course (did you really expect me to pretend objectivity, Graham, after giving me a lousy country like Italy?), but it's a nice good-looking job and certainly augurs well for future issues; I hcreby commend it to your attention.

And another ..

Preccdent, Harry Bell's proposed 'zine, reports that three players have joined so far. While not overly enthusiastic about their idea, which was expounded upon at length in the advertisement last issue, I must confess to being interested to find out how it will turn out. Roll up, people.

P R E S S R E L E A S E S'A' Game

Bohemia (Clarion): German troops were observed massed on the borders in Munich and Silesia this week, and a strongly worded editorial asked if perhaps Berlin newspapers had declared war on Austria as well as Russia, without the knowledge of the German government. Fears were relieved when Tyrolia was graced with the presence of the 7th Division of Reserve Latrine Diggers and Cookhouse Orderlies.

Liverpool (Govnt): Thanks for the war.

Official reply to statements issued by the Turkish Underground Press
The assertion that Turkey will rise again has been fulfilled. The Czar, recently returned from a trip through paratime, has announced that he is successfully leading the Turks to a glorious victory.

The Kremlin (Govnt): Observers view with alarm the growing cloud in the west. An ultimatum has been issued; if any of the following conditions are fulfilled, war will ensue

1. An attack made or aided by any unit of the German armed forces upon any Russian unit.

2. Occupation or attempted occupation of Russian soil, or of soil of any neutral territory under Russian control.

3. Continued German occupation of the neutral zones of Prussia and Silesia.

The unit at present stationed in Silesia must vacate the province as an act of good faith this Autumn. Failure to do so will cause Germany to incur the wrath of the combined Austrian and Russian war machines.

Let it also be known that any attack upon our mutual neighbour, Austria-Hungary, will also be viewed as an act of war.

Kaiser, you are warned! The solution rests in your hands.

Cambridge: That strange smell infesting Jesus College, reported last issue, has not dispersed despite the removal of the culinary delights of T6. They are therefore exonerated from all blame, and a fresh search for the true source of the effluvium has been instituted. This was found to be lcc2. Not daring to approach themselves, the Proctors sent forth their trusty Bulldogs, garbed in asbestos suits. On opening the door they were almost buried in a heap of baked bean tins, liberally coated with the rotting remains of their detestable contents, said to be the staple diet of the occupant. The Bulldogs are doing as well as could be expected.

Andromeda: We are coming. We will rule all. We shall conquer. Nothing, not even the Runts, can stand in our way!

Rome ('Private Eye'): Admiral Patchvlenska's force, laid up in harbour at Naples, were expected to arrive here last week. Fortifications hastily erected on the shore were overrun by an Austrian army from the rear.

Sale Rumours that a former university student is attempting to sell encyclopaedias in this area have not yet been denied.

The Kremlin (later): Germany has not heeded our warning! We are forced, therefore, to issue a formal declaration of war. We warn the Kaiser that no mercy will be shown -- our only end is the total destruction of the Reich.

War cannot now be avoided or halted. The Kaiser has shown clearly just how irresponsible he is.

'B' Game

Stockholm Following the exhaustion of all Swedish pornographic products, it is rumoured that the Russian army is shortly to visit Denmark in order to satisfy the needs of the Vulgar Boatmen. (Pun courtesy of the Russian Ministry for Suppression of Humour).

Rome (Govnt): The Italian nation will now fight to the last man, following the signing of a treaty with Japan recently ..

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Versailles Saboteurs have successfully managed to destroy the Palace. Serves Nappy right for being so extravagant. It is regretted that the tyrant was not in residence at the time.

London (radio interview): Wcee-ee-ll, David, I thought that the Russian attack on Germany was a great success, I think Turkey will be next, and Roy MacFarland is the best centre-half in Britain, and Derby County are the----- (muffled sounds of strangulation)

'C' Game

Throughout the World "And on the third day, He rose again." These are words from the texts of Kammunism, the new religion based on the teachings of Kami Kazzec.

Born the son of a metalworker, He had a lowly upbringing. However, He rose to great heights in the Turkish Air Force, and led the overthrow of the dictatorial Emir. Just before the recent election, He died, and returned to His disciples, sending them forth into the world to spread the Good News of Kammunism.

Zheleznodorozhnyy: "Curse you, Black Baron!"

Fleet Street: A new publication has recently caused quite a stir among intellectual circles. In it, the editor advocates the reconstruction of the recent European war. Selling on a wide basis has been successful, and few copies remain. Hurry! hurry!

Galveo Henry Pijohn wishes it to be generally known that he is for real, but would dissociate himself from remarks which may later be made in this magazine by the inimitable Henry P. Pijohn.

'D' Game

Tunis: The Camel Fair and International Camel Dung Conference is now in full swing, following the arrival of the Italian representative. He was greeted at the quayside by cheering peasants, who waved palm fronds and threw camel dung and olives in the traditional manner. Unfortunately, he is allergic to olives, and he slipped and fell in the dung and was severely bruised by the palm fronds. We ~~will~~ ~~will~~ hope he will enjoy the rest of his stay just as much.

London (Govt) The Home Secretary announced today that there is a possibility of the Kaiser visiting our country soon. That our nation should be visited by such a great Teutonic Emperor is indeed a great honour.

Moscow (Peasants' Herald and Information Letter): The Czar was reported today to have had a violent fit, and it is feared in the court that he might start declaring war upon certain other nations which, he said, were "trying to starve me, the b-----s". The court Physicians stated that the fit was caused by withdrawal symptoms from caviar, complicating his illness which occurred soon after the news about Galicia in the Spring. We hope he will recover soon.

The fleet in the Gulf of Bothnia has found no salt-water sturgeon, and due to the presence of a German fleet, was refused entry into Sweden, to consult fishermen and scientists there. As a result, the fleet has little but vodka to live on, and the sailors are becoming drunk, seasick and irritable. They might become violent if something is not done soon.

Rome (Govnt). The results of the recent presidential election are now available. They are: Benito Gussolini (Il Duce), 1 vote, Giovanni Pigoti, 0 votes. Signor Pigoti, rumours have it, is complaining quite unreasonably that it is unfair that Il Duce is the only person in Italy who is allowed to vote. In protest at the result, students have blown up a statue of our national hero Garibaldi. In protest at this, loyalists have blown up the students.

Meanwhile, Il Duce has received a welcome of ~~flowers~~ flowers thrown at him by the people of Tunis, as he landed to inaugurate his great development plan. He found the Tunisian Government so corrupt that he decided to annexe the country into the most Glorious Italian Empire. One Tunisian seemed to like this idea, and Il Duce therefore justifies his action by showing that one Tunisian out of one Tunisian agrees to the idea of Italian annexation.

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Apulia F.C. have agreed to play in a friendly match with Tunis Dynamo. The score will be Apulia 16, Tunis 0. There is a strange rumour going around which says this match will be fixed.

Jersey. It was reported yeaterday that an English flect and a French fleet both did five circuits of Sark before returning to their home waters. This strange behaviour was also noticed about six months ago round Alderney. We are completely mystified.

Bergen: An English Army arrived this morning severely damaged, after having been convoyed through a shoal of swordfish in the Long Forties. Fortunately, the cargo of whisky was not harmed.

Waiting Lists

'F' Regular: Tom Durrhoan, Robert Alexander, Bruce Davidson.
 Abstraction: Harry Bell, Phil Jones, Robert Alexander
 Twin-Earth: Graham Jeffery, Michel Feron, Phil Jones.

Standby players

'A': Jeff Oliver, Andrew Waldie
 'B': none
 'C': Andrew Waldie, Jeff Oliver
 'D': Harry Bell
 'E': Harry Bell

We could do
with some more!

Summer is 1cumen in....

....and all over the country people are leaving their homes and going off on holiday to various exotic places and Bognor, which is all summer is good for, anyway. Be sure to let me know when you go away, so that I'll be able to let the other players know of your absence and won't waste money writing letters that won't be answered. And remember to get your moves in while you're cancelling the milk and going round to the neighbours to ask them to feed your pet gerbils. OK!

Phil Shaw will be away from July 10 to July 24: mail will be forwarded, however, and apart from a slight delay it will be business as usual. Fred Hemmings is trotting off to Trieste for the European SF convention (I think -- or is it the Film Festival?) and won't be doing too much writing in the near future. The actual con is in the second week in July -- but Fred's got to go there and come back as well, and that'll take time!

Deadline will be Saturday, July 15, 1972. Don't be late....

"I do wish these editors
 wouldn't keep putting words
 into my mouth."

---Hannibal.

ETHIL THE FROG 9

from

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 U.K.

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** ANOTHER NEW GAME STARTS -- SEE PAGE 7!