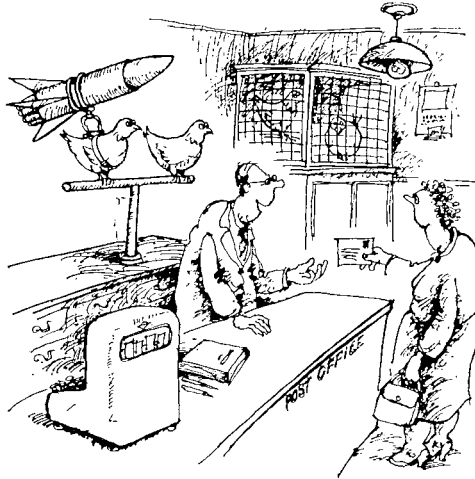


ET AL THE FROG

CANVEY ISLAND HORROR !!
Full details inside



"First or second class?"

SIR WILLIAM RYLAND on the future of the Post Office.....

"One of the ideas we have been studying is to get people to come to the main post office to pick up their own mail, but for various reasons I don't think this will be ideal. For a start, there's the immense cost of getting the mail to the post office in the first place. Personally, I'd like to see the public going to see people they think may have written to them, so that they can pick up the letters direct at source. Similarly, it would ease the overloaded phone service if you all dropped in on people you want to talk to and had a direct chat with them. There would only be a small charge for this, of course, except during peak hours."

This is ETHIL THE FROG 21, a behind-schedule issue of a usually four-weekly postal Diplomacy fanzine edited and published by the newly-bearded John Piggott from his sparkling new address: 32 Munsterburg Road, Canvey Island, Essex. Steakburgers by Unger Meats, runner beans by Bird's Eye, usquebaugh by Bell's. Epatant! Printed by Rod Rivers, Hanway Print Centre, 106 Essex Road, London N.1. Ethil is available for contributions, trade, or subscription: 25p per issue (37²p for foreign airmail), which is slightly too low - rather than raise the price I may organize a sales drive later in the year. All back issues are available at the regular price, except for issue 17. Tel: 01-928 9222 ext. 2332 during office hours.

SUBSCRIBERS: I regret that my present labour-saving way of mailing the zine does not permit me to write your credit rating on your copy of Ethil. Instead, look at your envelope: after your name there's a number which is the last issue you'll get on your present subscription. If it's '21' or less, please renew your sub. (I've just spent £12 on 1000 envelopes, so I hope some of you send in some quick cash!)

DEADLINE: Friday (9 am) 6 October, 1978

After setting the deadline a week later than usual, to allow for post-Eurocon apathy and a chance to set my affairs in order, I am sitting down to type this issue of Ethil a further seven days after that! Six weeks between issues is the longest I've ever taken, and I have no intention of doing it again. Ever. Famous last words...

So what happened? Well, at 11 am on Saturday, September 2, when I would normally expect to be sitting down hard at work on the game reports, I was actually sitting with Tony Crouch and his fiancée Laura in Tony's Transit van, being moved, bag and baggage, to Canvey Island! Readers may care to draw the obvious conclusion... the fact that Davidson is now working in Chiswick (next-door to Ealing) did not affect my decision to move in any way (though those who know Davidson will say it ought to have done).

While I've been typing this issue Pat has been busy doing other things. We haven't got in each other's way at all. She's been ironing, and ironing, and ironing... (I told her not to bother with my shirts for the moment, but she insisted. Well, how was she to know there were seventeen of them?)

The production of future issues will be organized a bit better here, I hope. Pat is getting more and more interested in the hobby, I'm glad to say. Indeed, last Sunday she received her first snub at the hands of a prominent Diplomacy player; readers of Filibuster received an expurgated account of the event in the latest issue of Baird and Palmer's organ. Here, now, are the true, horrifying facts.

Pat and I had been wandering around the market (actually, we were looking for coat hangers, but that's another story), and purely by chance we passed the Oysterfleet, a Free House in Knightswick Road. 'Ah!' I said, and dragged Pat in its general direction. The entrance was blocked by a large articulated lorry, but we squeezed past it.

I bought the drinks. The bar boasted a huge array of keg beers - about ten of them - all on top pressure. Right at the end of the row was a hand pump dispensing Shepherd Neame's Master Brew, so that's what I had (it was quite nice, in fact). I got lager for Pat. Returning towards the entrance, I found her sitting next to an elderly gentleman wearing a brown T-shirt, brown drainpipe trousers two inches too long for him, and a cloth cap. His hair was cropped short, punk-style.

I ignored the ruffian and sat down next to my lady love. How could I express the depth of my feelings towards this beautiful tulip of a girl? Finally I spoke.

'Darling,' I said.

Pat tossed her adorable head so that one of her ears passed close to my nose; I caught the aroma of Glenfiddich. Then her soft lips parted, to utter those words that only true lovers know: 'Yes, darling?'

Waves of joy flooded through me as I threw myself upon my sweetheart, but somehow the words wouldn't come. Overwhelmed by a feeling of loving and of being loved, I could only say, 'Nothing, darling. Only darling, darling.'

The bilious old gentleman, who hitherto had been scowling into his Younger's Tartan in silence, got up, mumbled something like, 'Ah, quel un affaire des Stoats,' and retired to the Gents. An unpleasant sound of retching ensued.

But I like to think it was just a coincidence.

Turning, now, to even less pleasant subjects than half the editorial team of Filibuster, I have to report a piece of scandal concerning young Openshaw. When I first revealed the

existence of a Patsy in my life, the editor of Whiskey Mac (for it is he) noted that Canvey Island is quite near to Southend, where he lives. It certainly is; indeed, when I catch the train home of an evening, it passes through Upminster (where Ian Lee lives), and after I get off at Benfleet the train carries on to Southend.

Now, it's an astonishing fact that, although the cost of my monthly season ticket has risen from £20 to £53 since I moved down here, I can actually live more cheaply in Canvey than I could in Ealing. (Students of the Housing Act, 1974, may care to explain this, paying particular attention to the sum of £1367.10, which is the amount of money I paid in just under two years for the use of one room plus shared toilet and bathroom in 15 Freeland Road.) However, the saving is diminished by the bus journey from Munsterburg Road to the station: for a round trip of 5½ miles it costs a minimum of 42p daily. I therefore decided it would be a good idea to bring my bicycle down here from Oxford, where it has lived lo! these ten years, and Pat twisted my arm to make sure I actually did bring it down. (I am still as dilatory as ever...)

Well, anyway, after two guard's vans and a six-mile dash across London in Bank Holiday traffic conditions (the roads were virtually deserted, for which I was thankful, but Roy Taylor is no longer the only hobby member to have gone the wrong way down a one-way street past the Old Bailey) the Piggott velocipede duly arrived on Canvey. The following morning we saddled up at 7.30 am (no, don't laugh - it isn't funny!!) and twenty minutes later chained up our machines outside the station.

The thief, when he came, was quite decent about it. He didn't want the whole bike. All he wanted was the back wheel, and that's what he took. It's astounding... he must have stood there, in plain view, with the traffic thundering past, unscrewing it with a spanner. And on the first day too!

So I'm out £18 for a new wheel, tyre, inner tube, sprocket wheel... including 26p for a rim tape. When Openshaw wrote his spiel he said I would soon feel the effect of being in close association with people from Southend. I now see what he meant.

I've received an advert for the Las Vegas International Diplomacy Tournament, organized by David N Grabar, 4346 E Armel Court, Las Vegas, NV 69110, USA. This will take place on May 26/27/28, 1979. 49 players are needed; the entry fee is \$200 apiece (which will pay for accommodation and meals as well as the prize fund) and the prize fund will contain about \$4000, to be distributed among the leading players in a manner to be decided by a vote among the players at a later date.

I have three comments to make. The first is that I don't think the tourney will take place at all: the American Diplomacy players who participate regularly in the hobby are the sort of people who cavil at entry fees of \$200 (only Dave Johnson, of those I know, might be willing to enter) while professional gamblers would not normally play Diplomacy and would be unwilling to learn it for a 'mere' four grand. Secondly, a 'democratic' vote is a lousy way to decide how money is distributed, and in this case it smacks of weak leadership on the part of the organizer. Thirdly, and most damning of all, I trust that all participants (if the event does go ahead) will realize that the tourney will be won by a member of the most efficient large cartel - as 7 games will be played, the winning cartel will contain 8-14 members.

Eurocon went off very well, thank you very much; the only bad aspect was poor old Richard's illness, which cast a shadow over the entire proceedings. I visited him once as he lay in hospital in Bazas; he looked really fed up lying there, plate of tinned peas and glass of undrinkable wine at his side, when we arrived, but he soon perked up when a game of Bridge was mooted and initiated. He got depressed again when, for about 20 hands on the trot, I never got less than 15 points and he never got more than 6... Desperately bad luck to get sick on one's holiday, of course; it was doubly so in Richard's case, as it turned out, because he'd contracted his disease in England but it had not broken out until three days after his holiday started.

I could write a lot more, but memory grows faint - anyway, I've got to take this to Rod Rivers tomorrow, and I can't possibly type an extra four pages in the time I have left. (Unlike Crouch or Palmer (N), I have to sleep at nights.) If you want to know more about what went on, read Greatest Hits 47.

Anyway, I can't reveal the truth about those trainee teachers we met in that cafe in Captieux, because Pat will be reading this...

Please don't forget: all orders should be sent to me at my NEW ADDRESS:
32 Munsterburg Road, Canvey Island, Essex.

Letters

DON TURNBULL So you did go to Eurocon after all. Dammit, you didn't have to announce to the world that I took a bet with Sharp, did you? That means I will have to settle up. Though before doing so, mind, I shall want proof absolute that you were in France (or wherever the gathering was) for the time in question. Photographs of you and Peter Charlton being thrown, drunk, into a French prison will satisfy me on this score.

(I know a photograph just of you in such circumstances would do just as well, but I can't see such an event taking place without Charlton playing a leading role in the drama.)

Now, dammit Piggott, I take enormous exception to the remarks about my pinball ability in EtP 20.

Point the first: My expertise has been observed by grave, serious onlookers - Dave Tant (who would doubt the word of such an obviously respectable gentleman?), Bill Howard (ditto) and Tom Kassel (to add international verification) among others.

Point the second: The pub in question is (or at least was) in Poynton, Cheshire. If I thought you had the slightest idea where Poynton (or even Cheshire, come to that) was, I would even arrange a meeting there when we both happen to be north of Watford.

Point the third: You err on the challenge. The matter first arose in Courier 47B on 1 February 1974, when I laid down the glove. There was utter silence from you until 10 September 1974 when you accused me (quite falsely) of altering a press release in the Foundation game; my comment in Courier 49E, dated 31 October 1974, was '... you really will have to take up the challenge... so we can see who is right...'

Conclusion: You are deliberately warping the truth and vilifying my name in public (if 'vilifying' is the word I want) in order to cast a smokescreen over the fact that, despite our co-existence in Cambridge for some time, you have failed to respond to my challenge for a period of over 4 years! Now let this be the last word on the subject until you respond in the way a gentleman - even a gentleman who has fallen under the spell of the fair sex - should. Name your machine and your neutral referee and I will consider the conditions.

((Well, I've been wandering around the house for an hour now, biting my nails,



"We've never been on a hovercraft before, so we'd appreciate it if the pilot made a special effort not to crash."

knocking back alternate mouthfuls of coffee and Drambuie, wondering how to reply to this dismaying and impertinent missive. Aaah, it's no good - I shall have to refill my glass yet again, and recharge the percolator...

(((Later) That's better. I shall be drunkenly alert for hours. It is, of course, very heartening to see someone retaining an interest in pinball at an age when most people would be expecting a birthday telegram from the Queen... but I can't help thinking Don is biting off more than he can chew (even with the new, improved bionic dentures he has just received from a marvellous NES). After complex and protracted investigations I am now able to reveal exactly what happened in that pub in Poynton. The three observers Don mentions were kept very busy: Dave sellotaped Don's fingers to the flipper buttons to preserve the illusion, then held him upright by brute force long enough to preserve the illusion that a real game had taken place (Dave's back has still not recovered); Bill stood behind the machine manipulating the score dials; and Tom remained outside, defending Don's electrified wheelchair from the depredations of traffic wardens.

((I say, Bah! Turnbull, and Bah! again. I hereby invite Pete Birks to nominate a neutral pub, with machine, and we'll arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient

DIPLOMACY MAP QUIZ

Although the nutritional advantages of an occasional Map Quiz are well known, they are often ignored by the experienced player who thinks them too easy. Think again! This one centres on the all-too-often ignored Minor Provinces (MPs), those land provinces which are not supply centres. Unless you are a beginner the entire quiz should be done without the aid of a map.

- 1 Which country or countries do not have exactly three MPs within their imperial boundaries?
- 2 Name the pair of MPs such that armies in them can exchange places by virtue of the fact that they are connected by two one-fleet convoy routes?
- 3 What MP is connected to more bodies of water than supply centres?
- 4 Which four MPs are each connected to three other MPs?
- 5 What two coastal MPs share a common border, yet a fleet going from one to the other would require a minimum of 4 moves?
- 6 Same as Question 2, but one convoy route requires 2 fleets, and the other, 3 fleets.
- 7 Name both pairs of MPs which have a common coastline.
- 8 What MP is connected to two home centres and also two neutrals?
- 9 What bodies of water have no MPs attached to them?
- 10 What landlocked MP is connected to three home centres of the same country (ie, is a 'gateway province')?
- 11 What MP borders on the home centres of three countries?
- 12 What home centres border on the largest number of MPs?
- 13 Which coastal MP is connected to three home centres of one country and to a neutral?
- 14 What MP is connected to two neutrals and yet is very rarely entered in Spring 1901?
- 15 What MP borders on no neutrals or supply centres of another country, yet is very commonly entered in Spring 1901?
- 16 Which MP does not appear as an answer to any of the above questions?

(Reprinted from Diplomacy Digest 12; originally appeared in Centurion 38 (Sept. 1977). Answers on page 6)

date to thrash this problem out once and for all. My present form is excellent, as usual - while I was in France I dismissed Ovens and Prévot with contemptuous ease - so you have been warned!))



KEITH BLACK Many thanks for EtF 20; I enclose a cheque...

My main grumble with Ethil is that you persist in delaying the mailing of some copies to me. The most recent example is issue 18, sent with EtF 19 (also with EtF 17, but for that emergency issue I can forgive you). While I accept that non-players do not receive the high priority due to players, I had hoped for preferential treatment when you choose to pad out the zine with choice extracts from my letters to you! This habit which afflicts you (and by no means you alone) is especially galling when it is realized that any postage saved by this block-mailing procedure goes straight into your pocket, because your

charging system does not feature a separate postage element.

But enough of grumbling. I'm only complaining because I am impatient to read the zine, which seems to get better with each passing deadline. This, and the continuing non-appearance of Enigma, have prompted the aforementioned rash transfer of cash.

In particular, I must compliment you on: the high standard of your cartoons (nicked, no doubt - but new to me); the discussion of Lucifer's Hammer (which I might have contributed to, had I received EtF 18 earlier - but at least I agreed with your opinions of who wrote what); the amazing quality of your editorials, especially EtF 20's 'Spacefillers between the Ears'; your ability to achieve all this whilst undergoing a major upheaval in your social life which seems to be the talking point of half the hobby.

In fact, I'm still chortling over the experimental research station cartoon.

I normally read, or at least skim through, all of Ethil. Thus I would have

read your GM comments/mini-editorial without the signpost in the main editorial. You make a number of points, firstly concerning naming games (an irrelevancy, I agree), secondly concerning Agar's memory and the merits of Sanham's character (also irrelevant), and thirdly concerning the hobby's attitude towards newcomers. This last is by far the most important 'controversial' item in the zine. I doubt if you would find many new publishers (people like Agar, Openshaw and Tringham) to agree that we have enough players already. Take Agar's Pigmy, for example: he recently complained that 'although the number of Pigmy subscribers continues to grow (currently around 80), I seem to be attracting established players who are happy to sub, but because they're already in some games they do not start any new ones.' This is a shame, as Pigmy is a fine little zine which could go places given sufficient support. It means that new publishers have no option but to try and attract new blood, in the form of beginners who find the cliquishness of hard-core zines like Ethil and Dolchstoss a bit off-putting.

The danger is that many of these newcomers will decide that the hobby doesn't interest them, and drop out, quite possibly from their first game. This might have the effect of condemning new zines to a long wait in the second division, because experienced players wouldn't want to play in them while there is a risk that their games will be spoiled by dropouts.

The only solution must be to educate the newcomers, so that they see all that the hobby can offer very early on. Thus we may avoid unnecessary wastage, and perhaps help those who don't belong to realize this before they put their names down for too many games. However, I don't believe we will ever be able to eliminate entirely unfortunate cases such as that of Peter Sanham.

So what form should this education take? The most commonly proffered suggestion, a 'newcomers package', has been tried before with some success. For myself, I found Pete Swanson's The Tangled Web we Weave most enlightening; I don't think it showed me anything I wouldn't have discovered myself within a year, though it certainly speeded up the learning process. Nor do I think it helped prevent me from being disillusioned with the hobby - sympathetic publishers took care of that - but it answered many questions before I even knew enough to ask them.

It is perhaps instructive that such packages have only been produced on an individual basis. Okay, so T2W was

produced for the IDA but it was produced by the determination of Pete Swanson. As far as I know the NGC has never even come close to producing something similar.

It is clear that the most effective way to make such a package available is through the same mechanism which organizes central gamestarts for newcomers. The best alternative (which could also work in parallel) is for each publisher to hold a stock of the packages and to advertise their availability in each issue. Idealistic, perhaps, but if a job is worth doing...

In practise, nothing like this will happen. There is too much work involved, and too much apathy in the hobby. Who can blame John C Piggott when he holds himself aloof, confident that the quality and impenetrability of his zine will keep him well supplied with subbers of the required calibre? It is up to those new publishers like Agar, aided perhaps by people like myself who are sympathetic to both camps, to do what they can before they, too, succumb to the prevalent air of laissez-faire. Exit in a cloud of cynicism.

((I think that in the past many people have assumed it's part of the job of the NGC Committee or IDA/UK Big List of Names to produce a novice package if the hobby at large feels the need for one. I know that when I was General Secretary we all felt too harassed and fed-up to show any enthusiasm at the prospect of taking on yet more extra work!

((In the latest Pigmy (16) Stephen Agar reveals that he intends to publish

DIPLOMACY MAP QUIZ - ANSWERS

- 1 Turkey
- 2 Apulia and Albania
- 3 North Africa
- 4 Galicia, Silesia, Bohemia, Burgundy
- 5 Syria and Armenia
- 6 Wales and Clyde
- 7 Prussia/Livonia, Piedmont/Tuscany
- 8 Ruhr
- 9 Aegean Sea, Skagerrak, Barents Sea, Heligoland Bight
- 10 Ukraine
- 11 Tyrolia
- 12 Warsaw and Munich (5 each)
- 13 Gascony
- 14 Finland
- 15 Yorkshire
- 16 Picardy

How well did you do? And did you enjoy the quiz?

package quite soon - at the moment he's looking for contributions and suggestions. I wonder if he'll manage to be brutally objective. In his position I'd probably make dozens of enemies by saying what I actually thought about such zines as Leviathan and Whiskey Mac! I wish him the best of luck, anyway: he'll need it.

((Despite the pleasure and interest which it will give to the people who receive it, I still think Stephen's novice package is a basically unnecessary item. As Keith says, it won't teach people anything which they wouldn't eventually find out by other means, and meanwhile preparing it is going to cost Stephen a lot in terms of time and energy, commodities which could be put to better use elsewhere. Like making sure that games in Pigmy don't take three months to get off the ground after the start is announced, for instance.))



JOHN MILLER I cannot agree with your 'let them sink or swim' attitude - this is a pretty friendly hobby (believe it or not!) and I would tend to feel some compulsion to assist people in finding their feet more easily than did I, though of course I wouldn't go so far as to try 'to keep surplus people in the hobby if they want to leave.' I agree that we do have enough people to sustain the hobby for a good few years, but owing to what I suppose is a certain pride in the hobby I'm always willing to spread the word to people who I feel have the right kind of qualities for them to enjoy the hobby also.

((I'm not suggesting that we ignore new members completely; but help is better given on an individual basis rather than wholesale spoon-feeding through a lengthy, generally available publication. I'm sure any decent GM is willing to help new players find their feet in the hobby.))

I can advise you that Kedge Neuman's 'The Great Years' is being (slowly, painfully) playtested in no less esteemed an organ than Sauce of the Nile. This correspondent is playing Rohan. I believe Kedge is going to make some alterations to the balance (Mordor is too strong, of course) but apart from that it's quite a good game - and I'm no variants buff, I assure you!

((Three people have criticised me for choosing Third Age II as the variant to be run in Ethil - 'if you must try Tolkien, why not use X?' they cry. Unfortunately,

each chose a different X! So Third Age II stands. Of course, an over-strong Mordor is a common feature of all Tolkien games, and the problem's even worse in the ones which stress realism (remember, in the books Mordor had a stunning military superiority, and would have won if it weren't for the hobbits' underhand trick. There really ought to be a Tolkien variant featuring a 'Gollum' piece). I'm not sure that this matters too much: the trick is for the GM to cast an inept tactician as Sauron, then while he flounders around the other powers are all in with a chance.

((John's mini-zine Mr Gladgrind now has a circulation of about 20, and the first 'mainstream' game may start soon. This is good news.))



GEOFF CHALLINGER I'd like to back up your points on variants. I think they, and the role-playing games, are mutually exclusive; but don't forget that the role-players filled the gaps left by the variant zines when they folded. Equally, I think any resurgence in the variant scene will only be in response to a decline in the popularity of the role-players. It won't act as a trigger.

But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try and hurry things along a bit.

Scanning through, it seems a fairly thin Ethil. The Brenton Ver Floeg bit was a bit obvious. I was quite surprised to see you even printing strategy articles. Do you still have a copy of the piss-take article, I think by Edi Birsan, which took off the old Ethil's strategy articles? That would be well worth a reprint, surely.

((You're probably thinking of the "Ruritania" piece - it was actually written by John Lettice and I reprinted it last year (Ethil 6.))



MARTIN STYLER Did you see that account of a game of 'Sympathy and Antipathy' in the latest Pigmy? Well, I've thought of a closer-to-reality outdoor version, a game of chance with a human factor. One stands at a suitable street corner accompanied by one's opponent, and the two participants then take turns to bet on the likelihood of consecutive passers-by having the same skin pigmentation. For example, Contestant Openshaw, on seeing

(Turn to page 20)

((The continued (and unexplained) absence of Fetlock has been giving your Editor much pain during the past few weeks. No doubt he's having such a great time living it up in lurid luxurious Lambeth that he's just forgotten the many millions of Ethil readers who hang on his every word. Fortunately, I have obtained a replacement from a rival zine; pray silence, therefore, for....))

Ford Popular

Well, here we are in our new residence and, though it pains me grievously, I must say that the accommodation is far from palatial - a long, long way from the luxuries of Filibuster. Still, I'll do my best in my allocated corner of the coalshed provided that my host, Piggott, takes immediate steps to evict the foul-smelling Fetlock. The Frog I can stand, but not that THING.

The farewell party at Baird's was a great success - to which my foresight in having previously incarcerated Fux with the Dobermans (Dobermänner?) contributed all. Unfortunately, he devoured the whole pack.

Notables thronged the Baird mansion to bid our hero farewell and, as this was an occasion when copious measures of alcohol could fittingly be quaffed, my memories of the three days of the wake are a little blurred. However, I distinctly remember several incidents, among which...

Little Birksy's bland acceptance of the loss of some 650 Guineas at Poker. No expletives - and the demeanour of a Muggerridge. Splendid!

Several hundred Diplomacy games with a standing cast of the same seven players (Willis, Taylor and five Karma Leaguers). Each game, remarkably, terminated as a 7-way draw in 1901.

Piggott arrived on his 1943 Raleigh 'Utility' cycle and refused to enter until the footman had removed his clips and laid the red carpet.

A twenty-strong group of Crouches admiring each other's hats.

The Margrave of Amersham and the Chalfonts locked in torrid embrace with Barbara Castle to the voluptuous strains of 'The CWS Footwear Band play West Bromwich Albion'.

Wakefield trailing the Beckenham milkman's horse through the reception suite, with pail over his arm and shovel darting almost as quickly as Colonel Glyn Palmer slopped ale into his capacious underbelly (Palmer's, that is).

Hammon touting elocution lessons. (No-one would give him any.)

The nadir was undoubtedly the three days of intermittent exchanges between Day-Day and the Cissbury Kid. These went something like this...

CN (Fussily) "Dear me, there's a foul smell of a sudden. Have you perchance suffered an accident, Steve?"

SD (Indignantly) "Of course bloody not!"

CN (Later) (Confidingly) "No wish to offend, dear fellow, but the fact that the offending and all-pervading odour seems to be centralized on your person would seem indicative of temporary bowel malfunctioning."

SD (More indignantly) "Gawd, I keep tellin' you. I ain't done nothin'."

CN (The next day) (Andante moderato) "Far be it for me to be suspicious, valued and trusty friend, but the stench around you is almost audible. Are you quite sure you have not inadvertently fouled yourself, perhaps in an attempt to emulate the forte of the lately departed Morris?"

SD (Now aroused) "No, no, no! For the nth sodding time, no!"

CN (The following day, or day 3) (Firmly) "Stephen, I regret the necessity to doubt your bland, open-faced assurances, but kindly be so good as to remove your Moss Bros trousers in order, once and for all, to permit verification of your assertions regarding the pristine state of your John L Sullivans."
(SD removes kecks, revealing..... AAARRGH!)

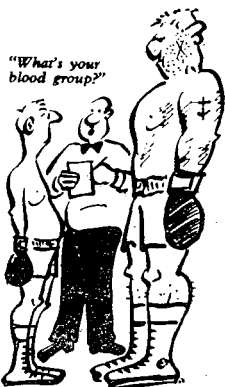
CN (Recoiling in horror, his face hideously distorted - or rather, even more hideously distorted) "White man lie! Wot dat dere den?! You said you hadn't - Oh god, how could you? Sob, sob..."

SD (Astonished innocence) "Eh? Oh, I thought you meant this week."

(With apologies to Wakefield for stealing his usual subject matter)

~~ADD SODDING~~

GAME REPORTS



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GAME FOUR 1977-EE Diplomacy Spring 1908

We have one vote against the proposed ending, so on we go....

TURKEY (Cliff Kennedy): F(ION)-TYS S by F(Nap); F(Gre)-ION S by F(AEG); F(Smy)-EMS; A(Sev)-Mos; A(StP)-Lvn; A(Gal)-Sil S by A(Fru); A(Vie)-Tyr S by A(Boh) & A(Tri); A(Alb) S A(Tri); A(Con)-Rum C by F(BLA).

ITALY (Roy Taylor): A(Ber)-Mun; A(Mun)-Tyr; F(ADR)-Ven; A(Ven)-Rom; F(Tun) S French F(WMS)-TYS.

FRANCE (Norman Williams): F(BAR)-StP:nc S by F(Nwy); F(Swe)-Fin; A(Ruh) stands; A(Kie) stands S by A(Den); A(Bur)-Mun; A(Par)-Gas; A(Spa) stands; F(Ere)-MAC; F(Mar)-GoL; F(WMS)-TYS; A(Pie) S Italian A(Mun)-Tyr.

Abdul - Paris: Sorry to hear about your accident with the zip. Perhaps it might be opportune to mention that there are still a number of vacancies in my seraglio for men in your present position!

Abdul's Book of Famous Quotations: 'The great difference between England and Ireland is that in England you can say what you like so long as you do the right thing; in Ireland you can do what you like so long as you say the right thing.'

'Always behave like a duck - keep calm and unruffled on the surface, but paddle like the devil underneath.' Lord Brabazon of Tara (Very applicable to my present position in this game! Abdul).

Kampala (Hub o' de Universe): It me again - de whole wurld sayin' he bin away in de wilderness two munts. Where he bin? What he bin up to?

De troof is, de cirkerlashun shatterin' absence ain't got nuthin' t' do wid bein' in de wilderness altho' it ain't fer want o' tryin' seein' de wilderness am currently full o' de Italian brudders an' de mad blood-lustin' Turks who, by failin' t' fall back on all fronts, commitin' a crime o' such maggernitood it leavin' A Hitler at de post. You all knowin' I bin up de front lendin' de Italian brudders a hand an' dat ain't no pickernick.

Anyway, de wurld still turmin' on de hub - here am de latest amazin' reverlashuns.

Mundee - Fust off, I like t' thank Miz Lillian fo' fillin' in. Me an' her like dat, an' any time sonny Jim got any spare foreign aid, he knowin' where t' go. He de best president since Kennedy gettin' de chop - it lookin' like he de best president before de nex' Kennedy gettin' de chop too.

Toosdee - We got de Furks sewn up, wid any luck it gonna be over by December an' dis

country gonna have a genuine hero. Ain't no use jus' takin' over de British property; man wants to git in de history books, he gotta win de world war. Bit tough on Turkey but he dam' lucky I don't celebrate Xmas.

Wensdee - Wurld takin' anudder great leap forward dis week wid bungin' de atrocious M Shaw in clink; wid a bit o' luck he gonna rot dere. Nuthin' like a bit o' rottin' t' teach people dere place. Seemin' like only yesterday he tryin' t' bribe me wid a copy o' Wot Car wid free gift of a feeler guage. Only trouble bein' de free feeler guage ain't workin' - all you gittin' is de smack in de eye.

Thursdee - Letter from Roy Taylor: "I'm sorry I haven't written earlier but I've been in hospital. The doctor says the symptoms were rather like yellow fever but I haven't been exposed to anything like that. All I've had is a letter from a Mr Abdul." Hum. It well known de sanitary conditions in Italy leavin' a lot t' be desired, speshully Venice - can't go more 'n hunnerd yards widdout seein' de overflowin' drains floodin' de streets.

Frynday - It time t' reveal de noo secret weapon on account of how some mad bugger leavin' de laboratory door open an' de poperlace o' Entebbe droppin' like flies. De symptoms o' de plague startin' wid de viktim's goin' around in threes, breakin' down an' usually bein' full up.

We gonna call it London Transport.

BDC 41-I 1974-N Diplomacy Spring 1923

GERMANY (Richard Sharp): A(Mun) stands.

RUSSIA (Roland Prévot): A(StP)-Fin; A(Mos)-StP S by A(Lvn); A(War)-Sil; A(Bud)-Gal; A(Pru) stands; A(Ber) & A(Boh) S German A(Mun).

TURKEY (Robert Correll): A(Pie)-Mar; A(Tyr) stands; F(Tus)-TYS; A(Ven) S A(Tyr); F(WMS)-Spa:ac S by F(GoL); F(NAF)-MAO; F(Tun)-WMS; A(Ser), F(AEG) & F(ION) stand.

FRANCE (Dave Johnson): A(Fin)-StP; A(Swe)-Den; F(Nwy)-BAR; F(Den)-BAL; F(NTH)-Nwy; A(Kie) MS A(Ruh); F(Bre) S F(MAO); A(Par)-Pic; A(Bur) S A(Mar); A(Mar) MS F(Spa:sc); F(Gas) & F(MAO) S F(Spa:sc).

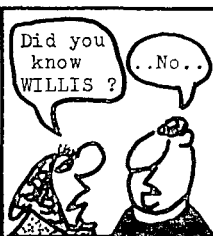
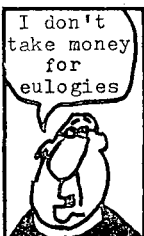
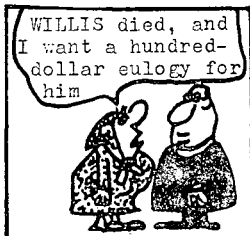
One player voted against the proposal for a 4-way draw. You may guess who he is....

Paris: Kaiser Sharp is even more talented than the adoring world had ever imagined! How clearly his anus enunciated the observation that the ultimate stalemate had been achieved! 'Twas clearly an independent feat, without recourse to any cerebral involvement - or perhaps he thought the rest of us would duly (dully?) accept the definitive pronouncement from on ~~high~~ low.

Sorry, sire, but do you mind if we play on just a bit longer? At least, until Russia's fine Tsar Roland deigns to accept the hospitable, fun-loving bayerische Stadt München in exchange for the worthless, frozen St Petersburg, which must inevitably yield to even a band of frogs if they are sufficiently determined.

Nein, Herr Sharp. Alles ist nicht fertig, obs vielleicht für Sie.

The world awaits the three-way draw our venerable (vulnerable) associate sought so hard to arrange. But, instead of G-F-T, it seems certain to be R-F-T. The President of France would find that honourable and acceptable, and hereby proposes that such be put to vote immediately upon the departure of our stale mate who prattles on about stalemates which don't exist.



GAME NINE 1978-BN Diplomacy Spring 1904

All the players seem to have noticed the mistake I made last issue in retreating the dislodged Austrian A(Bud) to Gal. It couldn't retreat anyw here, of course; and because of its annihilation the F(Ven) should not have been removed as I reported. Aaaagh...

ENGLAND (Tadek Jarski): F(Swe)-BAL; F(Nwy)-NTH; A(Bel)-Hol S by F(Kie); A(Lon)-Wal; F(StP:nc) stands; F(ENC)-MAO; F(Lpl)-IRI; A(Edi) stands.

GERMANY (Ian Gibson): A(Hol)-Bel S by A(Ruh).

RUSSIA (Terry Hill): NMR! Has: A(Gal), A(Mos).

TURKEY (Paul Openshaw): A(Rum)-Ukr S by A(Sev); A(Bul)-Rum S by F(BLA); A(Con)-Bul; F(Smy)-AEG.

AUSTRIA (Sellick Davies): F(Ven)-Apu; A(Vie)-Tri.

ITALY (Ian Macdonald): A(Alb)-Apu C by F(ION); A(Ser) S A(Tri); A(Bud)-Vie S by A(Tri); F(Rom)-TYS S by F(Tun).

FRANCE (George Kingston): A(Bur)-Ruh S by A(Mun); A(Pie)-Ven S by A(Tyr); F(Mar)-CoL; F(WMS) stands.

Retreats: German A(Hol) annihilated, A(Ruh) disbanded. Austrian F(Ven) disbanded, A(Vie)-Boh.

Public Service: Fed up with Piggott cocking up retreats and builds? Then play in Whiskey Mac, the reliable zine.

Ethil the Frog: Yeah, you can rely on Openshaw to make a hash of things.

France - World: Due to the lack of Austria-Hungary, President la femme in Paris said that the attention of the French government has turned now to the domination of Turkey once the small matter of Italy has been cleared up.

Dear George: Congratulations on your forthcoming wedding and best wishes for the future. In view of your predicament I decided not to stab you. ---Tadek.

Ethil the Frog: George Kingston will move to 84 Burnthill Rd, Glengormley, Co Antrim BT36 8HF on September 11. Marriage? Hah, I sympathize. Ian Macdonald will return to Aberdeen on October 2.

•

GAME ELEVEN 1978-?? Diplomacy Autumn 1901

ENGLAND (Stephen Agar): A(Wal)-Bel C by F(ENC); F(NTH)-Nwy.

GERMANY (Alan Watson): F(Den)-Swe; A(Kie)-Hol; A(Mun)-Bur.

RUSSIA (Chris Side): F(StP:sc)-GoB; A(Gal)-Vie; F(Sev)-Rum S by A(Ukr).

TURKEY (Peter Tassell): A(Con)-Bul; A(Bul)-Ser; F(Ank)-BLA.

AUSTRIA (Barry McManus): A(Rum)-Ser; A(Tri)-Bud; F(Alb)-Gre.

ITALY (Tadek Jarski/Sellick Davies): F(ION)-Alb; A(Ven)-Tri S by A(Tyr).

FRANCE (John Marsden): A(Par)-Bre; A(Spa) stands; F(MAO)-Por.

Retreat: Austrian A(Rum) disbanded.

E: 5 bases: Lon, Lpl, Edi, .Bel, .Nwy. Builds F(Edi), A(Lon).

G: 5 bases: Kie, Mun, Ber, .Hol, .Swe. Builds A(Mun), A(Kie).

R: 6 bases: StP, Mos, War, Sev, .Vie, .Rum. Builds F(Sev), A(War).

T: 4 bases: Con, Ank, Smy, .Bul. Builds A(Smy).

A: 2 bases: ~~Tri~~, ~~Vie~~, Bud, .Gre. No change!

I: 4 bases: Ven, Rom, Nap, .Tri. Builds A(Ven).

F: 5 bases: Bre, Par, Mar, .Spa, .Por. Builds F(Mar), A(Par).

Address change: John Marsden to 6 Mauldeth Road West, Manchester, M20 9WB.

GAME SIX 1977-GO Diplomacy Spring 1907

ENGLAND (Phil Stimpson): F(Spa:sc)-Mar; F(WMS)-TYS; F(Bre)-Gas; F(Lpl)-MAO;
A(Lon)-Bre C by F(ENC); A(Wal) stands,
GERMANY (Stuart Dagger): F(StP:nc) stands; A(Ber)-Pru; A(Lvn) S A(War);
A(War) MS A(Sil); A(Mun) S A(Sil); A(Kie) S A(Mun); A(Bur) S English F(Spa:sc)-Mar.
RUSSIA (Andy Tringham): A(Sev) MS A(Mos).
TURKEY (anarchy): Has: F(Smy).
AUSTRIA (Brian Williams): F(Apu) stands; A(Ven)-Rom; A(Ank)-Arm; F(BLA)-Con;
A(Rum) S A(Ukr); A(Ukr) MS A(Gal); A(Vie) & A(Boh) S A(Gal); A(Tyr) S A(Boh);
A(Pie)-Mar.
ITALY (anarchy): Has: F(ION), F(Nap).
FRANCE (Andy Norman): F(IRI)-MAO; A(Mar)-Spa S by A(Por).

A five-way draw has been proposed again - please vote next time. Phil Stimpson has moved to 1 Mayfield Cottages, Haslemere Rd, Witley, Surrey (Tel: Wormley 2136).

GAME TEN 1978-?? Diplomacy Spring 1903

ENGLAND (John Balson): F(Hol)-Kie; A(Nwy)-Fin; A(Lon)-Nwy C by F(NTH), S by F(StP:nc);
F(Edi)-NWG.
GERMANY (Alan Watson): F(Den) S A(Kie); A(Mun)-Bur; A(Ruh)-Hol S by A(Kie).
RUSSIA (Barry McManus): F(Swe)-Den; A(Ukr)-Sev S by A(Mos).
TURKEY (Tom Tweedy): A(Sev) MS A(Rum); F(Bul:ec)-BLA; A(Con)-Bul S by F(AEG);
A(Ank)-Arm.
AUSTRIA (Pete Birks): F(Gre) S Turkish F(AEG)-ION; A(Vie)-Tyr S by A(Tri);
A(Bud) S A(Tri); A(Ser) S F(Gre).
ITALY (Phil Dyson): F(TYS)-GoL; F(ION)-Tun; A(Tyr)-Ven S by A(Pie).
FRANCE (Alan Bustany): F(WMS)-Tun; F(Bre)-MAO; A(Gas)-Bur S by A(Mar);
A(Bur)-Ruh S by A(Bel).

•Retreat: English F(Hol)-HEL.

Alan Bustany will be unavailable from 13-27 September; he then moves to E9 Adrian House, 56a Grange Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DH.

Germany - England: Playing Diplomacy with you is like wearing a contraceptive - one gets the feeling of pleasure and security whilst being screwed! ((Heard it...))

Germany - France: It takes two to tango, so if we really must waltz around Burgundy I'll lead the way, OK?

Germany - Russia: Another fine mess you've got me into, Stanley

GAME TWELVE 1978-?? Diplomacy Spring 1901

ENGLAND (Andy Tringham): F(Edi)-NWG; F(Lon)-NTH; A(Lpl)-Yor.
GERMANY (Andy Davidson): F(Kie)-Den; A(Ber)-Kie; A(Mun)-Ruh.
RUSSIA (Paul McGivern): F(StP:sc)-GoB; F(Sev)-BLA; A(Mos)-StP; A(War)-Gal.
TURKEY (Martin Styler): F(Ank)-BLA; A(Con)-Bul; A(Smy)-Con.
AUSTRIA (Gary Silk): A(Bud)-Ser; A(Vie)-Bud; F(Tri) stands.
ITALY (Cliff Kennedy): A(Ven)-Tyr; A(Rom)-Ven; F(Nap)-ION.
FRANCE (Tom Davies): A(Par)-Bur S by A(Mar); F(Bre)-MAO.

Address change: Andy Davidson, c/o Marks & Spencer Ltd, 272 Gunnersbury Ave, London W4. (Tel: 01-994 3636 x 231) Martin Styler is also on the move - he'll be in London for four months - but has no address yet. No doubt mail sent to Birmingham will catch up with him. (Give me a ring for a lunchtime drink if you've got time, Martin.)

France - Italy Your flimsy tissue of lies will not affect my friendship with the glorious Kaiser!

France - Germany: Your flimsy tissue of lies will not affect my friendship with the glorious Duce!

France - Turkey: Hullo. It is raining here. What is the weather like with you?

Luigi - Germany & Austria: Sorry about that. Italian troops are notoriously bad at reading signposts - they should in fact have turned west to Piedmont!

CIVIL SERVICE GAME 1977-JE Diplomacy

I have one final statement, which I'll print next time; anyone else who wants to say anything should send it in pronto.

Tony Crouch has been questioning my decision to end the game, on the grounds that nobody actually voted in favour of the proposal. I rather sympathize with him; however, a GM must obey the rules, and nobody could say I haven't made it perfectly clear in previous issues of Ethil that silence implies consent to a game-end proposal. So I'm afraid the result must stand.

NGC 217 1977-EX Diplomacy Autumn 1907

ENGLAND (Geoff Hardingham): F(ENC)-Lon; F(NAO)-NWG S by F(Edi)..

GERMANY (anarchy) Has: A(Mun)

RUSSIA (Gary Silk): A(Ber) S French A(Ruh)-Mun; A(Den)-Kie; F(NWG)-Edi S by F(NTH); F(HEL) S F(NPH); A(War)-Mos. S by A(StP).

TURKEY (Patrick Thompson): A(Mos) S Italian A(Gal)-War; F(Sev)-BLA; A(Arm)-Sev; F(Con)-AEG; A(Smy)-Con.

ITALY (John Marsden): A(Ven)-Pie S by A(Tyr); A(Boh) S German A(Mun); A(Gal)-War; A(Ukr) S Turkish A(Mos); A(Rum)-Bul; F(Bul:sc)-Gre; F(ADR)-Ven; F(Rom)-Tus; F(Naf)-WMS; F(TYS)-GoL.

FRANCE (Terry Hill): NMR! Has: F(Hol), A(Ruh), F(Bre), F(MAO), A(Tus), A(Pie)., F(GoL).

•Retreats: English F(Edi)-Cly. Russian A(War)-Ivn. French A(Pie) disbanded.

E: 2 bases: Lon, Lpl, ~~Edi~~. Removes F(NAO).

G: 1 base: Mun. No change.

R: 7 bases: StP, ~~Waf~~, Swe, Nwy, Den, Kie, Ber, •Edi. No change.

T: 5 bases: Con, Smy, Ank, Sev, Mos. No change.

I: 12 bases: Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun, Tri, Ser, Bul, Vie, Bud, Rum, Gre, •War. Builds F(Nap).

F: 7 bases: Bre, Par, Mar, Spa, Por, Bel, Hol. One unit short.

Address change: John Marsden to 6 Mauldeth Road West, Manchester, M20 9WB.

Turkey - France: Thanks for your letter, although I can't help you.

Munich: The President of Italy received a rapturous welcome on his official visit here today. Speaking at a banquet in his honour he reaffirmed Italian support for the independent city. 'The people of Italy are firmly behind the just and proper fight of this fine city against the invading French. May you long keep up the struggle!' he declaimed. ((NB - a unit in anarchy can be supported. It is assumed to accept support which is in its own interest, preventing it from being destroyed.))

Italy - Turkey: Best of luck. I shall assume you will do what you said unless I hear otherwise.

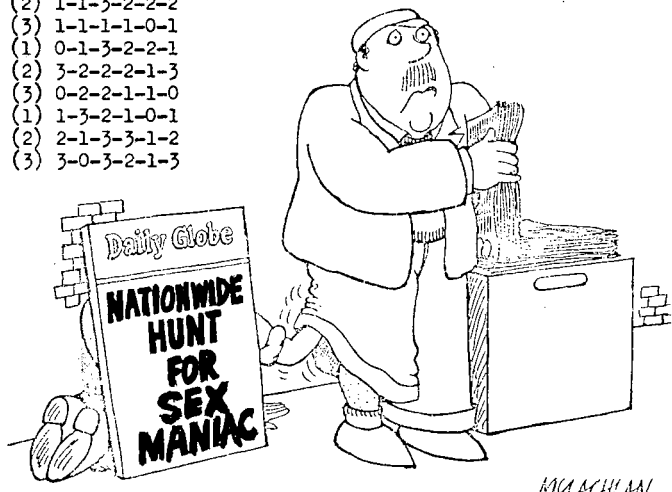
Jotto II - Turns 1-3

- Phil Bass (1) 2-3-2-3-2-2
(2) 3-1-3-2-0-2
(3) 1-2-1-1-2-2
- Mike Close (1) 2-1-2-1-1-2
(2) 0-1-1-0-1-2
(3) 2-1-2-1-1-1
- Paul Hurtley (1) 1-1-3-0-1-2
(2) 3-2-1-3-3-2
(3) 1-2-2-1-1-2
- Cliff Kennedy (1) 1-1-2-1-1-2
(2) 1-1-1-0-0-2
(3) 1-2-3-0-3-2
- Roland Prevot (1) 3-2-2-1-3-4
(2) 0-3-1-1-1-0
(3) 2-1-1-3-0-1
- Gary Silk (1) 1-3-2-1-2-1
(2) 1-1-3-2-2-2
(3) 1-1-1-1-0-1
- Patrick Thompson (1) 0-1-3-2-2-1
(2) 3-2-2-2-1-3
(3) 0-2-2-1-1-0
- Tom Tweedy (1) 1-3-2-1-0-1
(2) 2-1-3-3-1-2
(3) 3-0-3-2-1-3

"Curse you, Piggott!" (writes Patrick Thompson).
 "Word 2 was not GUINEA, it was ROUNCE - it must have been (sob, sob). All the rest I had - or had guessed correctly. No matter; I have returned to claim my rightful winnings. This time I shall show no mercy."

He didn't, either. Nor did many other players from the first Ethil Jotto: seven of these, plus newcomer Phil Bass, make up a respectable enough field, bigger than I'd expected. The prize fund is £3.20.

If anyone else wants to join in and swell the prize money they will be welcome. New players should send four words by the next deadline; the existing eight players should send one. I printed the rules in issue 20.



McLACHLAN

GAME THIRTEEN 1978-?? Diplomacy START

- ENGLAND: Geoff Challenger, 57 Cheviot Road, Little Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey
- GERMANY: Allan Owens, Officers Mess, RAF Bishopscaurt, BPP0 801
- RUSSIA: Andy Norman, 32 Ashdown Drive, Walton, Chesterfield, Derbyshire
- TURKEY: Ian Gibson, 19 St Nicholas Road, Wildmill, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan CF31 1RT
- AUSTRIA: Mike Harding, 4 Weymouth Road, Cheriton, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4HT
- ITALY: Malcolm Shaw, The Elsie Abbot, 9 Broadhurst Rd, London NW6
- FRANCE: Keith Black, 196 Main Street, Thornton, Leicestershire

Spring 1901 orders by the next deadline, please - and may Game 13 be lucky for some!

WAITING LISZT (the new musical typo...)

Regular Diplomacy (Game 14): Nobody! To join, send your game fee of £1.50 together with your application (I changed my mind about closing my lists).

Third Age II: I hope the first game will start next issue. Game fee £1; Mordor, £2. As it's been so long since I first mooted this variant, would everyone please reaffirm their interest if they want to play - at the moment my official roster is empty! Intending players should state whether or not they are willing to play Mordor. Note that I want some good press writers...

Jotto: See the top of this page. Game fee 50p: 40p for the prize fund and 10p for your GM's bottomless coffers. Unlimited places available.

GAME SEVEN 1977-GV Diplomacy Spring 1906

I'm afraid that my lust-induced lack of sleep induced two errors of some importance into last season's game report. First, Tunis actually belongs to France, so he built an extra F(Bre) for 11 and Italy disbanded F(ION) for 2. Secondly, I contrived to misinterpret Germany's conditional builds; he actually wanted F(Kie), not A(Mun). O dear.... Let's hope for a better performance this time...

GERMANY (Roger Collins): F(SKA)-NTH S by F(Lon); F(Kie)-Den; A(Pru)-Ber; A(Boh)-Mun; A(Vie)-Tyr; A(Gal)-Sil; F(BAR)-Nwy; A(War) stands.

RUSSIA (Rick O'Fee): A(StP) S A(Mos); A(Mos) MS A(Sev).

TURKEY (Horst John): A(Arm)-Sev S by F(BLA); A(Con) stands.

AUSTRIA (Norman Nathan): F(Apu)-Ven S by F(Tri); A(Bul) stands S by A(Gre); A(Rum) S Russian A(Sev); A(Bud) stands.

ITALY (Tom Davies): A(Pie)-Rom S by A(Ven).

FRANCE (Simon Dally): A(Mar)-Pie; A(Bur)-Ruh; A(Par)-Bur; F(ENC)-Lon; F(Bre)-ENC; F(Edi)-NTH; A(Bel)-Hol; A(Swe)_S_Russian_A(StP)-Nwy; F(TYS)-Nap S by F(Rom); F(Tun)-ION.

•Retreat: Italian A(Ven) disbanded.

Italy - Rest of World (except France): I apologize to (nearly) all the players for what appeared to be an NMR last season.

Italy - France: Poot!

QM: Rick O'Fee is on holiday and the orders above were submitted by James, with apologies for the lack of Russian diplomacy this season.

GAME EIGHT 1977-JF Diplomacy Autumn 1905

ENGLAND (Paul Hurtley): A(Den)-Edi C by F(NTH); F(Swe)-Den; A(Wal)-Lon; F(Lpl) stands.

RUSSIA (Alan Watson): F(Nwy) S French F(Bel)-NTH; A(Gal)-War S by A(Mos); A(StP) S A(Mos).

TURKEY (Terry Hill): NMR! Has: A(Ukr), A(Sev), F(Rum), A(Bul), F(Con), F(AEG).

AUSTRIA (Chris Tringham): F(Tri) stands S by A(Ser) & A(Bud).

ITALY (Gary Silk): A(Vie)-Bud; F(Alb)-ION; A(Tyr)-Tri S by F(ADR) & A(Ven); A(Boh)-Vie.

FRANCE (James O'Fee): F(Bel)-NTH; A(Hol) S A(Kie); A(Ber)-Sil S by A(Mun); A(Kie) & A(Bur) S A(Mun); F(ENC)-Lon; F(IRI)-Lpl S by F(NAO); A(Yor)-Edi.

•Retreats: English F(NTH) & F(Lpl) disbanded. Austrian F(Tri)-Alb.

E: 3 bases: Lon, ~~Lpl~~, ~~Edi~~, Den, Swe. No change.

R: 4 bases: StP, Mos, War, Nwy. No change.

T: 6 bases: Con, Ank, Smy, Bul, Rum, Sev. No change.

A: 2 bases: Bud, Ser, ~~Tri~~. Removes A(Bud).

I: 7 bases: Ven, Rom, Nap, Tun, Gre, Vie, •Tri. Builds F(Nap).

F: 12 bases: Bre, Par, Mar, Spa, Por, Bel, Hol, Kie, Mun, Ber, •Lpl, •Edi.
Builds F(Mar), A(Par).

I have received another game-end proposal: 1 F-T-I draw, 4 R-A-I draw. Votes next time please. Note that when I say 'votes next time please' that's exactly what I mean. Not silence, not apathy.

Russia - Italy: I know I'm a dumb bunny not ordering properly last season - it's these Irishmen, you know...

Last issue two proposals for a concession to Russia were submitted. Proposal 'B' was slung out by the electorate, with two players voting against it, but the other one met with general approval. So the result of this game is a win for Russia in Autumn 1907, with England second, Italy third and France fourth. Congratulations to Chris Tringham - your first win, sir, I believe.

I'll print the supply centre chart and final statements next time. If you want to say anything, it would help if you could get it in a few days early.

LETTERS (From page 7)

Joe Smith (white), bets 50p. But, alas, the next passerby is Awomi Bangwa (brown) and so Openshaw loses his 50p.

To produce some variation, the location can be altered. If Handsworth, Birmingham was chosen then there would be a slight bias in favour of darker pigments. The scope is endless. It could provide a whole new sport for the unemployed millions. I have already applied for the copyright. I might not have to start work after all!

((Tsk, tsk. Surely this contravenes the ridiculous Race Relations Act, you naughty boy! Still, I'm glad to see Paul Openshaw losing his 50p.))



GEOFF CHALLINGER (earlier) I'm surprised at your lack of understanding of why some people give up the hobby for women. It's not a question of exchanging one mainstay of life for another. In fact I'm sorry for anyone who holds Diplomacy as a mainstay. It's just as you have found yourself, that attitudes tend to get warped to the point where your attitudes are diluted by those of your wife/woman. You're finding this with dirty washing just as you will with Diplomacy, and presumably your alteration in attitudes is mirrored by changes in Pat's attitudes.

Hence, if you are not very committed to Diplomacy, or if you are faced with active displeasure by your woman, then the resulting dilution will probably prove fatal. I hope that the mix of your keenness and Pat's curiosity will continue to keep Ethil

on the road!

On more mundane topics, I note that Ethil is rising in the lists of long-running zines. The coming issue is number 67 (46 plus 21). How does this rate against the other contenders? I noticed this when glancing again at RJW's final work - MP 73. Only another 6 issues to go!

((Only two British zines have now published more issues than me - Courier (up to 169) and 1901 (101) - apart from MP. The Dolchstoss which is overdue as I type this paragraph is also issue 67, so I'm in the process of overhauling Richard. Excellent! Of zines which are still being produced, the next contenders in the longevity stakes are Greatest Hits (47) and Chimaera (46).

((Oh, I forgot Don Turnbull's BDC Journal, which also reached 169 issues in the space of only two years by the simple expedient of putting each game report in a separate issue. If I did that I'd have reached 200 by now.

((As for 'mainstays of life', I think you misunderstood the point I was trying to make in my Ethil 19 editorial... mostly because I chose the wrong word. What I meant was that if something is important enough for you to spend upwards of 10, 15, 20 hours a week on it, then it seems curious to ditch it all just because you've found something different. (If you've found something better, of course, it's another kettle of fish - but then the hobby can be dismissed as a mere sex-surrogate, and we're on to 'mainstay' in its true sense.) But of course, I'm not going to fold Ethil. In fact, I've enjoyed typing this in my new surroundings.))

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