

The Cunning Plan 117


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DEADLINE = FRIDAY 5th DEC 2003

Your Credit is: 

TCP Waiting lists:

Note: Players should submit a preference list for any game on offer.

Std Diplomacy: 7 Wanted.

Gunboat Dip: Got 1 and 6 more Wanted.

Kraken: (GM Jeremy Tullet) Neil Duncan, Doug McClure, Pete Mason and Nigel Pepper - couple more maniacs needed.... please, come on, we wanna get started!

TCP: Sorry folks, but this time due to a death in the family of my printer, I have had to go somewhere else at short notice. It was a bit more expensive, so I have had to share this cost with you. Hope this does not cause too many 'outraged of Watford' letters.

TCP 117 Ed's Bit

Zine poll - 2003:

Yes - it's that time of year again and with only about three zines left in the hobby, never were TCP's chances of victory better! But its all down to you guys. If you want to see TCP stumble on for another year, vote early, vote often! The criteria are;

List up to ten zine in order of preference, which have been published in the UK. They must have had at least four issues in 2003.

The deadline is: 31/12/03.

The pollster is;

John Harrington, 1 Churchbury Close, Enfield, Middx, EN1 3UW.

Email: zinepoll@fbgames.co.uk

Good-bye - again:

Well, my second, shorter tenure at the AA has finally come to a close. Where as it could be argued that first time around I had over-stayed my welcome by a large margin - it was not true this time. The fact is that the task I was called into do was not completed and I was given barely a weeks notice. In that time I prepared all the documentation, outlining everything I had done and what was still left to do. Given that I was dealing with customer complaints since April, when I left originally, which had not been dealt with in six months. As I pushed off for the last time my confidence that stuff would be dealt with was zero.

I was a little peeved that I still had a week or two of post-redundancy time left. I drew this to the attention of the management and they said that they wanted to keep that it reserve - should I be needed back for an emergency! Bloody cheek. So now I am looking for something, anything and hope that they have a bloody emergency - then I can tell them to sod off!

Spanking Yanks:

I have becoming aware of my increasingly vitriolic outbursts against the Yanks. I'm a bit worried that I might be going slightly strange, so I am going to resolve to be less hostile from now. (Please bear in mind that what you may read in TCP was written before - I always do the eds bit last.)

Spying Yanks:

I justify this bit because it's a Yank vs Yank bit! I refer to the 'outing' of a CIA operative by some-one at the Whitehouse, who was not happy with a former US Ambassadors report on Saddam's attempts to get Nuke stuff for Niger. Of course, the paperwork for this was forged and the bloke reported the 'no substance in the claim' finding. In shades of the Dr David Kelly affair, the blokes CIA agent wife was named. This obviously put her at risk and probably anyone she'd ever met over the past ten years. It strikes me that such an act if done by an American is treason and it beggars belief that a so called patriot could behave in this way.

On a sad personal note:

My uncle died at the start of October. Whilst he had been ill most of his life, none of his many ailments were life-threatening as such, so it did come as a bit of a shock. All my other uncles died when I was young, this one was the last and my fathers brother ta boot, so rather sad really. It is also poignant that with the exception of my Mum and a couple of Aunts, it is MY generation that is in the firing line from here on in. Very sobering I can tell you.

Film stuff:

I recently saw a couple of notorious films from the late 60's/early 70's which I was aware of, but had not seen before. The first, "Straw Dogs" was, well, weird. I did not like it at all - partly due to the unpleasant violence, but mostly due to the 'estranged' relationship between the husband and wife main characters. I did not feel much for them at all. And as for hubby driving off with the murdering paedophile in the end?! Well - there's liberal and there's buggar me backwards liberal!

The other one was "Clockwork Orange". Yeah - I know that most of you will groan, having seen it at the time may be, or abroad, or on video or where ever, but I had not. Once again, there was some unpleasant violence, but I found this a far superior film, very well made. Ok, so it did look a little dated, but I felt it stood the test of time well. I found the 'language' of the narrator and main character to be an excellent device for getting across his 'world view'. I can also understand why Stanley Kubrick feared that the actions of the gangs would be copied by nutters everywhere.

And whilst we're on nasty violence - I also decided to go and watch "Kill Bill". Initially I was going to give it a miss, not being into gore-fest's. However, recent reviews suggested that the violence was often hidden by being done cartoon-style or in B&W. It also got the thumbs up, so I decided to risk it. Can I just say that 'some' of the aggro is partially sanitized, but by far and away the biggest lot is raw and bloody. It is a well made film and Ulma is a fantastic actress - I probably will see the second part just to find out how it ends, but... Well, it's this pre-occupation that film-makers have for assassins! I had been given the impression that Ulma was just an ordinary woman, wronged on her wedding day, who gets trained and seeks revenge. No my friend, she too is an assassin, possibility retired. Is it not possible to have an action movie without having the main character bean assassin?

Finally - I also watched that "28 Days Later" jobbie. I was impressed by how good the film was, given the lower budget than most Hollywood offerings, (this was a Brit film). Again it had more than its fair share of red paint, but it was the psychological stuff towards the end which was scarier than the slash and burn in the first part. It was not without its problems mind - how do these zombie madmen know who are the normal people to attack and who are the zombie madmen to co-operate with?

Post card from Mount Doom:

I have duly finished reading all the LotR books and so I now have an expectation about what should be in the last film. On balance, I feel that the first two films have been good representations of

the books, given all the ifs, buts and ands that need to be taken into consideration. Anyway, I did enjoy the books, although I would observe that they are not easy going by any stretch of the imagination. But I have done it and so next time some-one twitters on about "The army of the dead" I'll know what they are talking about.

My youngest daughter has commanded me to read "Harry Potter" now, half way thru' number two, I have to say there are a lot more laughs!

Dissertation update:

You could be forgiven for thinking that on the strength of the last few paragraphs, that I have done bugger all but watch films, read books (and of course put TCP together). But I have continued work on the dissertation. I have done a whole bunch of interviews and have about 3 or 4 left to do. After that, I will be able to finish the analysis and the report. I look to be still on for the Xmas deadline anyway.

Happy Halloween:

This comes in two parts. The first being the Halloween punk gig I went to, on the Saturday before Halloween. I personally did not dress up myself, preferring the pay the extra £1 and go as an old man instead. However, there were a great many weird and wonderful creatures there. Three worthy of mention were the "666" cheerleader, the 'Bunny girl' and the 'fairy' all were suitably ghouled up and somehow looked more effective than the 'witch' and 'zombie' types. All local bands of course, but superb stuff, one of the best gigs I have ever been to.

Part two sprung out of my attempt to satisfy my two younger daughters craving for the "Werewolf" game. I set up a 'games night' with them, two of my older daughters and some of their friends. It was pretty disasterous - with teenage type scraps, excessive drinking and tantrums - and this was the older ones not the little ones. I remarked to Katy (aged 13) the next day that perhaps we should have a games night with friends of her own age, it might work better. Not one to let the grass grow under her feet, Katy ran with the idea and before we knew where we were, we were signed up for a Halloween party with 11-13 year olds itching to play the wretched ww game! Since I have the big, old, haunted house, 25SH was the chosen venue. Michelle and I waited until after 31st Oct and were able to pick up a bunch of cheapo decoration things to add some atmosphere and away we went. I suppose it was more a sort of "Eastern Orthodox Halloween" party as we held it a week after the actual one - but what the heck.

Obviously it was chaotic, but the young'uns were fairly enthusiastic about it. No-one got in a huff about being hung or eaten, which were my main fears. I did however observe the difference between my two, who have been playing board games of all sorts since they were tiny and their peers who had only been exposed to the odd family board game. I am convinced that playing board games is an excellent educational experience.

Next deadline:

It's a bit quick I know, but I want to try and squeeze it out before Xmas and I have to fit in with the printer etc. We'll have a longer deadline next time!

DEADLINE: FRIDAY 5th DECEMBER 2003

Con Corner

South Hants Hobby meet: Is set for Sunday 12th Oct 2003 at around 10 o'clock at Richards. Contact me for further details.

North Hants Hobby meet: I'll try and arrange something for next month.

MidCon: 14th - 16th Nov, Thistle Birmingham City Hotel. £12 registration fee to Jeremy Tullett, 7 Midland Place, Derby, DE1 2RR.

OxCon: Jan 24th and 25th 2004. With Dip on Saturday and Settlers and Lost Cities on the Sunday, at The Mitre on the High Street. Contact: Richard.huzzey@st-annes.ox.ac.uk

THE TCP 117 LETTER COL

TCP: First off - a big apology. After moaning about the lack of letter col stuff last time, a (rightly) offended writer pointed out that I had not bothered to use his letter! So sorry to Colin Hobbs, who will kick off the col this time.

Colin Hobbs (academic attack):

I would like to reply to Mr Frost. He is quite wrong about academic uniform. A number of staff, I think about half, at my school hadn't been to university. They had been to teacher training college. They were still entitled to black gowns and mortar boards. The only difference is that they were not entitled to university hoods. These were only worn on 'Speech Day'.

Our maths teacher, Mr Gordon, (he was known as Boo-Boo for some reason) was quite proud of the fact he hadn't been to university. He always wore his black gown. He used to keep the black-board duster in the pocket of his gown. Even the 18 year old German student teacher wore a black gown.

TCP: Colin, I have to say, it sounds like you used to go to 'Hogwarts'? In my school, I remember a few of the teachers wearing black gowns, but I don't recall seeing a mortar board thingy.

Colin continues:

Have you been watching "That'll teach them", the TV programme where 16 year olds spend four weeks in a 1950's style school? Only the Head Master had a mortar Board in that.

TCP: I've not seen the programme myself and to be quite honest, I've slightly lost the plot about where the 'black gown' debate came from now? Was it an 'old-fashioned' thing? In which case the 1950's style school prog tends to support that notion.

More Colin and the bore on terrorism:

Mike Donmett is wrong that Bush had decided to attack Iraq before Sept 11th. The US government was following a very insular policy before that. Indeed they were actively extricating

themselves from their foreign obligations. Iraq was attacked solely because the Iraqi government didn't send commiserations after the attack on the twin towers. Even the Taliban regime expressed its sorrow. Saddam Hussein openly gloated. The mystery is why Blair gave Bush a blank cheque at their meeting in sept last year and why he resisted many opportunities to extricate himself from this obligation.

TCP: I had not heard the 'lack of sorrow' story myself, but it makes as much sense as anything else I have heard on the issue. Iraq, or rather Saddam prior to 9/11 is definitely a mystery to me. There was (allegedly) sanctions in place and yet the ordinary people were in dire need, whilst Saddam gets his gold taps for his palaces?! What kind of sanctions list was being used? In the years since the end of the first Gulf war, could the US not have gotten rid of Saddam - if there had really wanted to? I believe they could have, but didn't because it suited them better to have him being perpetually humiliated and dangling on a string. Perhaps 9/11 was the sign that the US homeland could be hit and so they opted to destroy him to free themselves up for the real action?

John Wilman (on the boring Romans):

I would have thought that most battle fought by the Romans were fairly boring, since they always fought in the same way. I wonder though if some of the battles fought on English soil could be fitted into the format of the "Time Commanders"? The best part about them was that sometimes factions turned up late, weren't sure which side to fight on, or changed sides half way through! Great fun.

TCP: Definitely. My hope is that the TC prog will look at a greater variety of time periods as well as sides. No doubt the computer could be programmed with the fiddle factor(s) regarding the actions of various elements.

More John (on other stuff):

An observation I came up with entirely by myself, without recourse to the internet, was:

"Only in Hollywood do automated buildings try to kill you."

TCP: Indeed. And I recall, as a child, my parents and elder brother bemoaning the fact that there was always an American actor in the lead of some film. They had it lucky, these days, not only do they take the lead, but they play Americans too. (eg. U75).

And the final John:

What are you doing frequenting the Job centre? Like the NHS, they exist to provide employment for the unemployable. A man of your caliber should be head-hunted!

TCP: Very kind of you John - but I fear the Marketing world is awash with younger, more attractive candidates than myself. I'm sure something will turn up soon and then I will be able to relax a bit.

Steve Cox (on junk mail):

If you scrutinise the front cover of TCP 116 as carefully as I did in my search for further clues to the meaning of life, you will notice the number 80652 just above the attention grabbing figure of 88% (with its subliminal message of wide open eyes and ooh-shaped lips). Does anyone know what this is there for? Most of my mail carries a similar number, different from yours but always the same, whether the source is my bank, the gas board (is there such a thing any more?), the Royal Opera House or one of those kindly junk mail companies. It therefore can't be a customer number or an account number, or even a gullibility rating. In fact it seems unlikely to be anything that relates to me in particular, since five digits isn't enough to make everyone unique, and if it has something to do with where I live, my post code is surely specific enough for that? I see this number so often that I can recall it more easily than most of my innumerable PIN's. Perhaps I should start using it as the basis for my PIN's, in fact. What do you think?

TCP: In my working life at the AA, I did have fun with that magical number. Many a complaining customer wrote in noting that it was the same on AA literature as Lloyds bank etc etc and thus proof of a conspiracy between all big organisations sharing mailing lists and the like. The figure is called a "Mailsort code" and it comes to you courtesy of the Post Office. You would have thought that the weird and wonderful postcode (combined with your house number) would be all that was needed, but for some bizarre reason, best known to themselves, the Post Office have the mailsort code. I believe that a mailsort code of say 'nnnnn' is roughly the equivalent to say, RG21 8?? - more or less, give or take.

The funny bit is that Downing Street has a mailsort code of '06660'!

Richard Williams (about time - commanders):

As for 'Time Commanders': I noticed that it was on, but at the start of the series clashed with something else that took priority. However, I have watched the past few weeks and see that it is to move to Monday nights. (It'll be 15 mins shorter).

I agree that it's a shame that all the battles seem to be 300 years either side of the year 0, but maybe that's what the computer is set up to do. I have played in minor tournaments with forces from that period, using figures, (not a computer) with DBA rules, which cover this period. I assume from what I have seen that the computer is working on a similar basis. The elephants appear to be far more useful on TV, as do the javelin throwers. It's not a period I am overly keen on, but other I play with enjoy it. So the fact I have done a number of battles of that period, make the programme interesting to me.

TCP: It's gonna be 15 mins shorter you say? I wonder what they are gonna leave out! It's a pity, cos I felt it was just about right. My main bone of contention, (apart from the Roman obsession) is the almost dismissive way the actual events are rushed through. The Sandhurst bloke is particularly irritating in almost literally throwing the bits about! Now unless Hannibal really had elephants that

could fly at around 500 mph - I think the stupid bastard should just step us through the actual battle at a reasonable pace where you can follow what went on.

Tony Sait wades in on the topic:

Time Generals. Sorry chaps, not up there in list of best programmes. I watched the first one and was quite taken by the format, the enthusiasm, the computer graphics, and the fact that was actually something on the tele which was about one of my favorite subjects, and not a bunch of foul mouthed yobs living in a real house (like, er, do we need reality TV when the girl across the road and her boyfriend provides it every weekend at 0200 on a Sunday morning). Bonus for me was that the programme was followed at 21.00 by the Industrial Marvels programmes and something else even later (plus Saturday channel 5 had WW1, followed by Tony Robinson's series about the Caesars and then the excellent two-part play about Hitler's rise to power... at last there was TV to watch and be absorbed. Couldn't last. The second TG I saw was surprisingly like the first, and by the third I was tiring of hundreds of computer animated horses tails twitching in uniform whilst thousands of perfectly formed barbarian warriors trundled around a battlefield having been "released" (the major tactic of the team) - not a scar, malformed limb or tooth missing from any of them. Must have had good dentists and doctors in 220 AD. The fact that the participants had hardly heard of the Romans let alone Carthage or Caledonians didn't endear them to me either, and weren't there any wars in ancient times without Romans? What about Sparta, Assyria, the Egyptians etc etc. 'nuff said, I didn't watch the last few programmes. On the other hand the two parter about Hitler's rise to power was fascinating, and they gave both a good historical account and a well dramatized presentation. (Shame the "good guy" printer/publisher was played by a typical clean-cut all American lad, but that's the only way to sell programmes to the Yanks these days). The way Hitler was portrayed showed how well he could manipulate people, make them feel good about what they were doing and overlook the "little" bad things... like slaughtering thousands of innocent Jews and other "undesirables". Chilling stuff.

TCP: Did not see the Hitler thing, so can't really say anything about it. I would agree with most of your observations about TG, it is certainly not perfect, but it is at least associated with the game playing hobby of ours.

What about a Reality TV show where seven yobbo's get to play diplomacy?

More Tony change of topic:

Game End statements. Mega apologies to you and especially to the other contestants in D108 and Titanic. Indeed, shame on me. I usually do GESs at the end of games but this time around the timing was all wrong in that I had zillions of other games on, was working full time (a bit of a novelty) on computers all day - not teaching other to use them but actually sitting in front of the damn things and bashing away at them - so by the time I got home it was enough to check the e-mails, do the orders for live games and then get away from them. I promise to do GES for Raspberry and Sharp when they end in 5 years time as I'll probably be retired by then. Now, whilst on the point of games... what is the average number of zines and games that people are in at any one time. I'll start...5 Zines (TCP, Sprouts,

ODE, FWTDR, Minstrel) 1 e-zine - TBNS plus Dip2000 e-dip site. Games 8 Dip incl 2 gunboat and one e-dip; 3 Railway Rivals ; 6 18xx ; and a few assorted all-player games. Is this too much for an old codger like me, and could this be why I never see my kids any more, and my wife thinks I fritter away the best years of my life sitting at a computer (rather than watching TV ?!!). What I am saying, Neil, is that I won't be on a new waiting list until a few other punch ups have subsided... especially the e-dip, three week strict deadlines are almost too much for me - and having to wade through 75 junk e-mails a day is a real pain in the butt... I will investigate changing e-mail address in the new year - new year/new start etc etc

TCP: Yeah - I was surprised that you didn't do a GES and I sorta reminded everyone, but there you go. Your shopping list of games sounds like mine about five years ago! Whilst I see more zines than you - I am actually only playing in one, TCP and only playing three games! I just don't have the time or inclination at present. I am however intending to sign up for one more Std Dip game, somewhere, probably in the new year. I believe that it will probably be my last postal Dip game and I would just like to know that before hand.

I'll just take this opportunity to apologise to Allan Gordon for (accidentally) misleading him over John Colledge and TBNS. I said that it no longer existed, but I assume from Tony's list that he does still do something of an electronic nature. So I fear Allan, you will have to step into the 20th cent and get an electronic computational device in order to check him out.

Richard Young (Frostie baiting - again):

First, to suggest to Alan that I had, in fact, thought all the argument through about whether empires were good or not... I just didn't bother with the crap: otherwise what would he have left to contribute? And, to rebuff another, this time implicit suggestion, I do know the difference between 'establish' and 'maintain' and, therefore, I did mean Empires maintained by violence. I'd like anyone to find me any empire which did not require violence to maintain itself from external or - probably more significantly - internal "difficulties".

Now on to the 'substance' of Alan's argument. Firstly, is there any justification in saying empires reduce chaos? Acceptably, they limit the state v state war which would normally have existed if not for the Imperial super-state, but don't eradicate local conflict. And, as previously mentioned, imperial forces are constantly at work suppressing internal conflict; and not just police forces. The Romans were constantly at war internally; as were the Austrians, and - we tend to forget or ignore - the British. Also, much of the interstate war which the Empire suppressed comes back post-empire with a vengeance as nations seek to assert their 'identity' again. Empires appear to reduce chaos by appearing to prevent conflict, whereas the reality is that the conflict is still there, but of a different nature.

TCP: Richard - ignoring Empires for a moment: did you know that there are some

museums that would probably give you a decent price for your quills and supply of papyrus parchment paper? Probably enough to get you a PC?!

Richard ignores the rude interrupt to continue:

Secondly, I'm not sure I ever claimed that empires result in the destruction of another country. Very rarely does that happen, except where one Empire a previous Empire absolutely. The only example I can think of are the ancient Middle-Eastern Empires - the Assyrians, Babylonian, Medes et al. However, the fall of Empires always accompanied by the collapse of the mother country, either economically, or politically or both. Britain is still here, but not as a major political or economic force, certainly not as in the "pre-Empire" days. Turkey is not the state that ruled the Ottoman Empire by any stretch of the imagination; and no sensible comparison can be made between modern Austria and the state at the heart of the Habsburg Empire! And Rome? A major city today? Which international establishment refers to Rome before acting?

Thirdly, Alan seems to suggest that the British Empire brought peace to war-torn Africa. Perhaps, unfairly, I get a feeling of the superiority of white civilization over black civilization in Alan's thinking. The suggestion that the Boers were an African tribe rather than a transplanted European culture, for instance, with a longer history than the Zulu tribe. The Zulu's are actually a nation - an accumulation of tribes under a common culture. The Boers were (are?) European settlers. But, anyway, my argument over the affect of the global Empires on African and Asian civilization was the imposition of the nation-state. In Europe it doesn't really work; in Africa and to a seemingly lesser extent, Asia it is farcical because the states set up comprised of any number of nationalities and nations themselves spread over any number of states. The Imperialists left bureaucrats in charge for god's sakes!

TCP: Firstly - did you see that prog about the Zulu war and Rorkes Rift, end of Oct? Very interesting and paints a very different picture to the one painted by the film "Zulu". The British commander was not the best guy to have had in charge. Secondly: The bizarre way 'states' were set up in Africa always seemed to me to be a recipe for disaster. What were those guys thinking? Did they have zero idea about human nature?

More Richard - finally...:

Finally - at least, in answer to Alan - is the destruction of cultures a bad thing? Let's see: Afghanistan - imposition of Communism? Failed. Imposition of Islamic fundamentalism? Failed. Imposition of democracy - failed once: now? Africa - imposition of competing religions: Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam? Results: wars - oh, just like Europe, then? Actually, the biggest crime many people think of when it comes time Empires is the destruction of native cultures. Personally, it's the rape of the subject 'countries' resources, the prevention of equal rights, etc, that worries me more. The imposition of a foreign culture just helps to add to the destruction of nationality: it's another tool, and, after all, it doesn't work because it only suppresses nationality.

I want to comment on this idea of an "American Empire" again. I actually struggle to see it. The main argument seems to be that it is established by economic means, furthered by cultural and enforced by military. Reality, however, points to a World Economy, not an American Empire. This isn't just a question of terms, either.

TCP: Sorry Richard - how can you struggle to see a developing American Empire? I know its one of those, "can't see the woods for the trees things" isn't it? The evidence that the 'world' is being moulded into a shape that benefits American interests is too extensive to list.

And more Richard:

The World Economy is the driving force behind globalization, not the USA. America is an insular society, (on the whole) self-sufficient. It doesn't need Middle East oil, a third world work force, military outposts in Europe, Africa and Asia. The reason they all exist is because corporate interests that govern much of the world need them, and America can provide them.

TCP: Richard - I think you are confusing cause and effect here and I think some of your assertions about what America does or does not need are just plain wrong. We have in Bush, almost the archetype 'corporate' American president. American corporate culture (also allegedly Christian) thinks its find for the 'top' management to earn 400-500 times the minimum wage many of the lower workers get. Over the last 50-60 years we have seen much evil around the world, sometimes the Americans have got involved, sometimes they have not. Where they have, it has been done for their own interests, not that of the unfortunate locals. Richard - I'm not sure that I can bring myself to type up any more of your views on globalization - my gritted teeth are beginning to crack and shatter! So let's move on to lighter matters...

More Richard new topic:

Onto lighter issues. You're free to rid us of most of the above, Neil, if you're bored. I got bored half-way through but then decided to continue anyway. Apparently I've about 20 years of being a grumpy old man ahead of me and I intend to use it!

TCP: Phew! I kinda had to chop it, but not because of boredom, more rage - but I'm glad you've given me permission to chop as and when...

And now Richard talks crap:

I looked up "crap". Apparently from the Middle English "crappe" = chaff. The bit you don't use, a pretty scientific idea for faeces, I guess. The dictionary I used managed to spoil it by describing crap as "excrement" which it isn't, except in the loose, common-usage term. Still, not to be picky (it'd only smell bad!) Not sure where "crapper" derives, though I guess it could just as easily be because of Mr Crapper as "the place where one craps." Oh, as a kid we were expected to call crap "busy" or "bizzy" (?) Don't know why.

Anyway, on a roll I looked up "shit" and found it comes from Old English "scitan" = to defecate. So I guess shit is a more established phrase than crap. I also looked up some of the shit-related phrases and saw, happily, that linked with shit was bullshit, which my dictionary said, "See under Bull", quite right.

TCP: In common with this column, I can't quite remember how the subject came about, but cheers for the enlightenment. And whilst we are talking about enlightenment - I need some right now; In the film, "Matrix reloaded" there is the 'Merovingeon' character who has opted for French as his language of choice. He says that French is great for cursing and then proceeds to, one assumes, curse in French. Can anyone tell me what exactly he says?

And the final Richard:

And finally-ish, I'd like to recommend a book called, "The Man in the High Castle" by Philip K Dick. I picked it up because I knew the author, (bit of a SF legend), was the writer of "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sleep?" (The basis for "Blade Runner"). And because I like alternative history books. I may have mentioned Jasper Fforde's "Thursday Next" series - probably "The Eyre Affair", but I also read Jon Courtenay Grimwood's books. I think the purely academic exercise of "What if..." histories are pretty enjoyable, if pretty useless. Anyway, "The man in the High Castle" is set in an America that lost WWII. It's split into three states: The USA ruled by Nazi Germany, (with Goebbels as Reich's Chancellor); the Rocky Mountain States, an independent, but toothless strip of free states; and the Pacific states of America, governed by Imperial Japan. There are two premises for America's defeat; one being that Roosevelt was assassinated and didn't get his third term; the other that the US Navy got caught at Pearl Harbour. It's an interesting read and Dick extrapolates the effect on America of Japanese culture pretty well.

TCP: I am not a great fan of 'fiction' as you know, but the "What if..." sort of thing does appeal to me and I may well check some of these books out. I have now finished the Lord of the Rings and my youngest daughter has got me reading, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" right now. It's a pretty light read which is a bit of a relief coming after "Strangename son of Strangename from the country of Strangeland did strangethings to the strangebeast of strangeness..." But I've probably talked about that in the editorial.

Mr Gordon beats the strike to lower the tone:

I hate to come down to Frosties level, but..... When I was nobbut little lad, the family word for a jobbie was a 'purt'... god knows why. In later years, I had to abandon this as nobody else knew what the hell I was talking about, so I adopted the more common labels. Regardless of which you choose, as everybody knows, the article has to be split into two categories... 'sinkers' and 'floaters'. The latter are a real bugger. You can't leave them to soak (the lady-friend might pop in unexpectedly), so it takes three or four flushes to finally get rid of the obstinate sods. I suppose the short answer is not to eat so much puffed wheat!

Brilliant relevant one-liner from "Grumpy old men" - "Food is just shit waiting to happen."

TCP: The other Al(1)an has recommended this "Grumpy old men" prog - it looks like I'm gonna have to check it out!

I have had an unfortunate run-in with a floater some years ago and yes, on the very day I was expecting to entertain a new young lady. The bastard would just not go for love nor money. I was a desperate man. How desperate? Well, what seemed like a good idea at the time, but what is really crazy, was to use an air pistol to try and sink the blighter and thus flush the holed carcase away. But the pellets merely got lodged in the Levantine body and the beast mocked me by refusing to die. My final plan however, did work. A fair amount of spread out toilet tissue placed on top, followed by a bucket of water carried the thing off to a watery grave, thus saving my blushes. Where would we be without bodily functions hey?

And more Allan:

Have to admit to being a saddo like Neil and watching 'Time Commanders'... but in my defense, it's only for a bloody good chuckle. The graphics programmers have created 'them' (Romans and 'Us' (thicko Barbarians), so it stands to reason that mostly they're not going to be bothered with any battles not featuring these permutations.

One source of titter, is the total ineptitude of the live 'team'. I've yet to hear anyone ask in-depth questions about terrain or distance (especially range of weapons), or what sort of shit the opposition have. They also have the god-given advantage of being able to soar like a bird and see the battlefield in plan (something real generals would have given the eye-teeth of a slave for), but scarcely anyone yet has though this a good thing. I do have some sympathy for the bank clerks in as much as the on-screen visuals are totally confusing and distorted... "Oops! - there's a hidden Legion rapidly approaching from off-stage left. Sorry, too late! - you've been annihilated!!"

TCP: Firstly - I have to say Allan that I do very it very much as a laugh and entertainment rather than serious history. Secondly - I do not know this, but suspect it to be the case; the 'game' and thus the filming is very much longer than the hour - 45mins we see on the prog. I imagine that the team have asked more questions than we see. Bear in mind that the programme makers are out to entertain and it would not surprise me to learn that they are happy to portray the team as dicks if it makes good TV. I suppose that the same goes for the overhead view(s) and other stuff. The prog gives the team a minute or two to learn about their own sides weapons and troops, one imagines that the real generals had had years to learn about such things.

Still more Allan:

But the real side-splitting hoot are the graphics themselves... horse with necks twice as long as their bodies, and with synchronized tail-swishes (they also died stiff-legged, which knocks me out)... infantry hacking away at

empty space, and then reeling from a blow struck by a foe on the far side of the melee (also, into thin air)... the totally gob-smacking ability of troops to walk on water! - JC could sue the programmers for copyright infringement!... and best of all, the massed hordes are to-a-pimple identical clones - a couple of mothers produced umpty-thousand fighting men with a day or two!

'History per se', it certainly is not - but great for a laff.

TCP: For a computer-luddite you are being a little unfair. All your observations about the graphics are true - but again one imagines that this is a new (experimental) series, with a limited budget. Should the thing prove popular, perhaps future series would have more 'state of the art' graphics. I think the thing is supposed to be played at a higher tactical level, not the individual. Thus the actually melee is to give viewers and players just a 'flavour' of the thing.

One development I would like to see, would be two human teams playing each other! They might prove to be more entertaining.

And the final Allan:

Mrs Sait has a magic voice.

TCP: Hello - looks like Tony might have found an Achilles heel with which to wrinkle out all his arch-rivals cunning plans...

Alan Frost (tory taunting:

The Kamikaze Tories are about to elect a new nonentity for a leader. Only Michael Howard has put his name forward as yet. I can't see him making a big difference. The silly thing is that William Hague is now probably mature and experienced enough to do a good job but, having been picked too soon, he's lost. Only Ken Clarke stands a chance. At least people have heard of Howard. I predict that, as usual, some total unknown will put himself forward. Then Clarke will join in. The vote will be split and, in the end, the nonentity will be elected because Clarke's and Howard's supporters won't vote for the direct rival. Abandon hope. Two more terms of Labour doing nothing but raise taxes and increase bureaucracy. (It's now impossible to park at one hospital, where I tried to visit my aunt the other day, having travelled 100 miles to do so. They extra secretarial staff have taken over most of the visitor parking spaces. And this is a modern, highly regarded teaching hospital which is in a leafy suburb, not a city centre. There are now more clerical staff in hospitals than there are patients, mainly to service the artificial targets set by the government.)

TCP: I too assumed a 'rival' would emerge, but one didn't and Howard waltzed in. I found Howard one of the most odious of the old Thatch crew. I would have preferred just about anyone but him. Not cos I like the Tories, but I hate to see Blair so woefully unopposed.

And more Alan on racist police:

I see that some policemen have been shown to be racist. What a surprise. Personally, I found far more disturbing the fact that they could be

filmed when off-duty and in private and that the video could be used as evidence for them to lose their jobs. What you say to your mates isn't quite the same as what you'd say in public. Nor is it a true guide to your actual behaviour. Big Brother and the Thought Police are alive and well but nobody seems to care. I think it's a disgrace.

Of course, they were racist. You can't help how you feel. The question is, were they aware of it and would they make allowances for it in dealing with members of ethnic minorities? That, after all, is what true anti-racism is about. We're all racist to some extent, whatever our ethnicity, and if you think differently, you're deluding yourself. Don't believe me? OK then, it turns out that something like one in 6 South Africans is HIV positive. (Well, the black ones, anyway) How much do you care? How much more would you care if it was 1 in 6 British? (and not just because your chances of bonking a black South African are minimal) If you can honestly say that you'd care equally, then you're closer to the saints than I am (or else South African) but, since you have no racism in your soul, it makes you a lesser man than me because I fight against it in myself, while you don't. (That's called "sophistry", in case you're looking for a counter-argument, Gihan.)

That the policemen acknowledged their racism in private is surely admirable. They show excellent self-awareness. If anyone thinks that those few were alone in their attitudes, think again. It's what I've been saying all along: many, perhaps most, ordinary white Britons, feel uncomfortable about ethnic minorities. While mostly they accept the presence of those minorities because they have no choice and, in any case, are decent people who try not to upset their fellow human beings, whatever they think of them, they can't help what they believe, however false the basis of their beliefs. Realising that is the first step to fighting racism.

Mind you, I've come to the conclusion that I'm not intrinsically racist. It's more a question of snobbery. Put an Asian doctor alongside an English doctor and, as long as I can understand what the Asian is saying (and that's a matter of convenience and is no different from some Scotch git-not racism, here. Scotch is a nationality, not a race) I really genuinely have no preference unless one has bigger tits. Asian doctor and English lager-lout? No contest. English lager lout and Asian lager lout? Ah, well, there you have it. (But, stereotypically, Asians aren't lager-louts.)

TCP: I did not see the actual prog itself, but just the clips on the news. I suspect that the problem was because the 'attitude' did manifest itself as behaviour. One guy said that he let off a white woman, whilst heavily penalising an Asian guy for the same offence. Whilst I know it's a long shot, surely we have to aim for a policeforce which does exercise the rules in a fair way.

Ok, so a person acknowledging an 'attitude' or a weakness is admirable, but what about the next step; the 'why do I feel this way?'

More Alan the noo':

Speaking of Scotch gits, I recently had to speak to my mother's bank for her, because she's rather deaf. The call centre was obviously in Scotland. "Can your mother use a pen?" asked the S.G. "Yes," I said. After all, she's deaf, not bloody disabled, I didn't say, being polite. A little later, since the context was credit cards, I suddenly realised what the SG was on about. (in the immortal words of Rolf, Can you see what it is, yet?) "Oh, a PIN." And then I apologised, saying that I must be deaf, too. Why did I apologise? It was his fault for speaking non-standard English. More important, it was the fault of the bank (HSBC, so they didn't even have the excuse of being Scotch themselves). It's said that Scotch accents, like Scouse(!), are more friendly, so call centres are often sited there. How bloody stupid can you get? Actually, my mother has problems with pin numbers, so it's a good job I worked it out but why should I have to?

TCP: Indeed - communication is pretty damn important. During my recent return to work at the AA, the Centrica driven plan to outsource telephone centres to the Indian subcontinent really kicked off. I saw a marked rise (from zero) in the number of complaints from people getting calls from people they could not understand! One imagines that a normal cold-caller would have been politely, but firmly turned away and that would have been the end of the matter. However, not a significant number are resulting in people requesting an "opt out" out of all marketing activity. These opt-outs are forever. I wondered when the calculations were made to save money by taking call centres abroad, did they factor in the potential lost income from customers who can never be marketed to again? I suspect not.

And more Alan:

Anybody been watching *Grumpy Old Men*? Frightening, isn't it? I agree with nearly all of it, you won't be surprised to hear. Most worrying, though, is that I used to think all these guys were younger than me.

TCP: I've not seen it myself - dunno if anyone else out there has?

Alan (big boned) Frost again:

Just looked at TCP. Wobble-bottom? No, I don't think I ever really made it into that category, although I did once buy a pair of 38" waist trousers which I now have to bunch up under my belt. I have a lot of sympathy with seriously fat people, though. They aren't intrinsically especially ugly (which isn't to say that I find them beautiful, either) but the problem is that, so often, they are scruffy, too. It may be impossible to get fashionable clothes when you're huge but it's still possibly to be stylish. (There is a big difference, although it escapes most Britons. Just compare the appearance of British tourists with any others next time you're abroad. It makes me ashamed and that's not something I like. It's not that Johnny Foreigner spends more on his clothes. It just that he knows what suits him and isn't mindlessly governed by the latest trends.) Most fatties give the impression that they really couldn't care less about their appearance. Maybe it's a defence mechanism: "I'm not really unsightly. It's just these

clothes." but, as I've said before, unwillingness to conform to standards of dress is an insult to people around you because it shows you don't care about your effect on them.

TCP: I used the phrase, 'wobble-bottom' not as a term of abuse, but because it came from a humorous sketch from the "Not the Nine O'clock News" prog of yesteryear. I was just trying to provoke you in case any of my other provocative stuff hadn't worked.

And the final Alan:

9.45 on a Sunday night and the bloody mindless turds are still letting off their industrial strength explosives. 2.30 am on Saturday morning was real fun. I like fireworks but at one time it was a single night of the year and it was actually illegal to let them off at any other time without a special licence. I suspect it may still be but the police have got better things to do, such as re-loading their traffic cameras. In fact, when I were a lad, if November 5th fell on a Sunday, bonfire night was postponed to Monday. Now it's a fucking week-long barrage and there's never a weekend goes by without some twat having a birthday party with enough gunpowder to equip HMS Victory. We have panoramic view from our front widow and can watch them burning it away. I don't know how they afford it. Or why. Once the novelty value goes, there's not much point. There are only so many things that you can do with fireworks (stick them up the perpetrators' arses would be favourite) and when you've seen one, you've seen them all.

TCP: Yes - it does seem never-ending. I too like fireworks in moderation, but I have to say that even as a child I felt that the whole Guy Fawkes thing was a bit suspect. Well anyway, your mate Blair might stomp on it in time for next year!

TCP: That'll do. No end joke this time, but what follows is a newspaper cutting, (which I gather came off the net). It is my way of explaining my own predisposition to get my words wrong;

.....

Check your splleign

GEORGE Bernard Shaw once claimed that the word "ghoti" should be the correct spelling of fish. Using normal English spelling — the "gh" sound of "rough" would be the first consonant, followed by the "o" sound of "women", and the "ti" sound of "motion". But in fact, spelling doesn't really matter. Cehck tih out.

Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is that the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit plcae. The rset can be a total mses and you can still raed it wouthit porbelm. Tih is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Booldy amzanig, huh?

SNOT 52

Duncan Autumn 1905

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Vick Hall)

A(Bud) - Ser (FAILED, DISLODGED - DISBANDS); A(Ser) - Bul (FAILED); F(NAf) - MAO

ENGLAND (Gihan Bandaranaike)

F(Den) - Swe; A(Nwy) s F(Den) - Swe; F(NTH) - Den (FAILED); F(NWG) - NTH (FAILED); F(ENG) - MAO

FRANCE (Jeremy Tullett)

A(Bre) Stands; F(Spa) sc S ITALIAN F(Naf) - MAO; A(Por) Stands; A(Bur) Stands; F(GoL) Stands

GERMANY (Alan Frost)

F(Hol) s A(Bel); A(Bel) s F(Hol)

ITALY (Andrew Greco)

F(Tun) Stands; F(TYS) Stands; A(Rom) - Ven; A(Tri) s RUSSIAN A(Vie) - Bud (MISORDER)

RUSSIA (Colin Hobbs)

A(Mos) - StP; A(Swe) s F(Kie) - Den (DISLODGED TO Fin); F(Kie) - Den (FAILED); A(Ber) - Kie (FAILED); A(Ruh) - Mun;

A(Gal) - Bud; F(Sev) - Arm; A(Rum) s AUSTRIAN A(Ser) - Bul; A(Vie) s A(Gal) - Bud

TURKEY (Neil Duncan)

F(Bul) ec - BLA; A(Gre) - Bul; A(Con) s A(Gre) - Bul; F(AEG) s A(Gre) - Bul; F(Alb) - Gre

Autumn 1905 Adjustments:

A: +Ser, -Tri, -Bud, -Vie,

= 1; disbands A(Ser)

E: +Swe, Nwy, Den, Edi, Lon, Lpl,

= 6; Tries to build A(Nwy)! 1 build short

F: Bre, Spa, Por, Mar, Par,

= 5; N/C

G: Hol, Bel,

= 2; N/C

I: Tun, Ven, +Tri, Rom, Nap,

= 5; Build F(Nap)

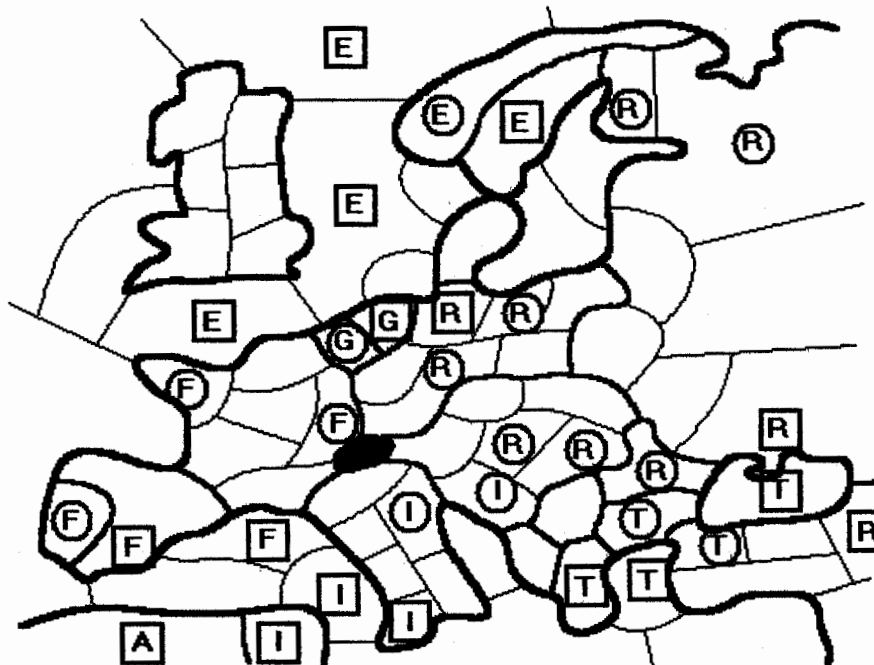
R: StP, Kie, Ber, Mun, +Bud, Rum, +Vie, Sev, Mos, War, -Swe,

= 10; Build F(Sev)

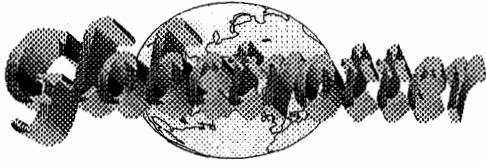
T: Bul, Con, Gre, Smy, Ank, -Ser,

= 5; N/C

Press: SG-France: I did email you that your A05 orders looked remarkably similar to your S05 ones but...



James Hardy @ 71 Bonchurch Drive, Liverpool, L15 4PW.
james.hardy@cdms.co.uk or james.hardy@breathemail.net
0151 734 0667 or 0777 5588920



Shaun Derrick, 313 Woodway Lane, Walsgrave,
Coventry CV2 2AP
Tel. 024 76 618922
Email: shaun.derrick@tmguk.com
TCP 117

MACHIAVELLI

VALOIS Autumn 1461
Note: Only one small error last timr. Income for Turks should have been 24½d.
I may have been a little premature in thinking this game could end soon!!

AUSTRIA: John Marsden, 91 Westwood Avenue,
Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 9RS
Expenditure: Spend 3d on Famine relief in Turin
Treasury: 5½

EMA(Prov)-Turi, A(Tyro) S EMA Prov-Turi, F(Mode) std

Home: -AUST, -HUNG, TYRO, -Cari, Swis, AVIG, MARS, Prov
Conq: SALU, Cors, GENO, MODE, TURI
Cities: 9

Adjustments: Add income to treasury: 5½+29=34½
Maintain all units and build G(Tyro), A(Prov) = 18d
Treasury remaining: 16½d

NAPLES: Neil Duncan, 25 Sarum Hill, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 8SS
Expenditure: Unable to repay debt so is Assassinated! All units frozen. Rebellion in Bari, Aqvi, Tivo, Arez, Herz, Sien, Flor, Croa (Owes 23d in Spr 63). May not borrow money again.
Treasury: 0d

F(LAD), F(Anco), A(Croa)*(Retreat Slav), A(Roma)*(Retreat Urbi), A(Flor), EMA(Carn) all stand

Home: NAPL, BARI, MESS, -PALE, Aqvi, Capu, Otra, Sale, Patr, ROME, PERU, Spol, -Roma, ANCO, -BOLO, Urbi
Conq: Tivo, AREZ, , Bosn, Herz, SIEN, FLOR, -Croa, Carn, Slav
Cities: 10

Adjustments: Add income to treasury: 0+40½=40½
Maintain all units and build A(Peru), A(Rome), G(Anco) = 30d
Treasury remaining: 10½d

TURKS: Steve Cox, 71 Hazelhurst Crescent, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1XB
Expenditure: Treasury: 1d

F(Sard)-WMS, A(Pisa) S Naples A Flor, F(Dalm)-Croa(sc), A(Ragu)-Alba

Home: TUNI, ALBA, DURA, -Bosn. -Herz
Conq: PISA, PALE, PIOM, SAVO, Dalm, Sard, RAGU, Croa
Cities: 11

Adjustments: Add Income to Treasury: 1+24½=25½d
Maintain all units and build F(Dura), EMA(Tuni) = 21d
Treasury remaining: 4½d

TCP 117

Nov'2003

VENICE: Mike Pollard, 1a Cochrane Road, LONDON SW19 3QP
Expenditure: 0 (Owes 27d Sum 62 & 11d Spr 63)
Treasury: 0

EMA(Pavi)-Mont, A(Como)-Mila, A(Aust)-Hung, A(Friu)-Carn, A(Bolo) S F UAD-Roma, F(UAD)-Roma, F(LGN)-UAD

Home: VENI, -DALM, PADU, TREV, -Berg, Bres, Friu, Istr, Vero, Vice
Conq: FERR, Cari, TREN, -Slav, CREM, MANT, BOLO, MILA, Parm, Pian, Forn, MONT, -TURI, PAVI, AUST, Hung, Roma
Cities: 13
Adjustments: Add Income to Treasury: 0+39=39d
Maintain all units and build A(Trev) = 27d
Treasury remaining: 12d

Famine: Removed

PAX BRITANNICA

Run on the following website...
www.geocities.com/shaunderrickuk/PaxBuk.html
Britain: John Guthrie
France: Doug Massie replaced by Brad Martin
Germany: Ned McIver
Italy: Keith Bowen
Japan: Michael Parkhurst
Russia: Albert Boada
USA: Kevin Street

1884

Congress finally got an agreement that Tanganyika and Kamerun were to be co-dominions. Britain trades away Cape Colony to the USA in return for Influence in Panama (looking at building a canal!?) and a co-dominion in Ashantee.

1888

More Italian Irredentist pressure and Australia goes into unrest – a headache for Britian.
The USA extends its newly acquired South African colonies by adding Orange River Free State. France expands into the Saharan desert areas and into Rhodesia which conflicts with British influence there. Germany takes Madagascar and Somalia; Russia begins to extend his empire by invading Korea, Formosa and Turcomania, the former two may need some tough negotiations with Britain and Japan.
Italy is quietly building a useful empire and adds a co-dominion in Hindoostan with British consent!
Lots of Casus Belli to resolve!

COLONIAL DIPLOMACY

FIJI

1900

BRITISH: Alan Poulter, Dolphin Cottage, Dolphingstone, East Lothian EH33 1NH (email: groggnard@groggnard.com)
F(PG) MS F(ARA.S), F(Mad)-GOM, F(WIO) MS F(Cey), A(Ben) MS A(Nep), A(Kar) MS A(Pun)

page 11

CHINA: John Wilman, 12 Ladybridge Street,
Arbroath DD11 1AR (email: jgwilman@lineone.net)
A(Akm) S A Kra-Omsk, A(Kra)-Omsk, A(Kam)-
Kag, A(Tib) S A Kam-Kag, A(Ass)-Sik, A(Sik)-Uru,
A(Ran)-U.Bur, A(Ban)-N.Sam, A(Nan)-Lan, A(Pek)-
Mon, A(Sha)-Mac, F(Ton)-SCS, Fcan-Nan

DUTCH: Chris Latimer, 79 Chapel Street, Pelsall,
Walsall WS3 4LW (email: private_joke@hotmail.com)
F(GOM)-Mad, F(EIO)-Cey, F(SIO)-WIO, F(BOB) S
British A Ben, F(Java)-JS, A(Sum) std, F(HK) S F
SCS, F(Coc)-Cam, F(GOS)-Banec, F(MP) S F For,
F(For) S F SCS, F(Aden) std, F(SCS) std unordered

JAPAN: Steve Cox, 71 Hazelhurst Crescent, Horsham,
West Sussex RH12 1XB (email:
Coxsteve@btopenworld.com)
A(Sak)-Vla, F(OS)-UP, F(UP)-ECS, F(ECS)-Nan,
F(Kyu) S F UP-ECS

RUSSIA John Stratford, 27 Farrar Court, The Old
Schoolhouse, Leeds LS13 3SP (email:
john.stratford@freemans.com)

F(Rum)-Con, A(Mos)-Ore, A(Bok)-Tas, A(Tas)-Kir,
A(Afg)-Kam, A(Omsk)-Kra*, A(Uru)-Kra, A(Mon)-
Pek, A(Mac) S A Mon-Pek, A(P.Art) S A Mac,
F(YS)-Sha

TURKEY: John Marsden, 91 Westwood Avenue,
Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 9RS (email:
jandcmarsden@iclway.co.uk)
F(Bag)-PG, F(Shi) S F Bag-PG, A(Per) std, A(Ara)-
Syr, A(Arm)-Ang, A(Egy)-Sud

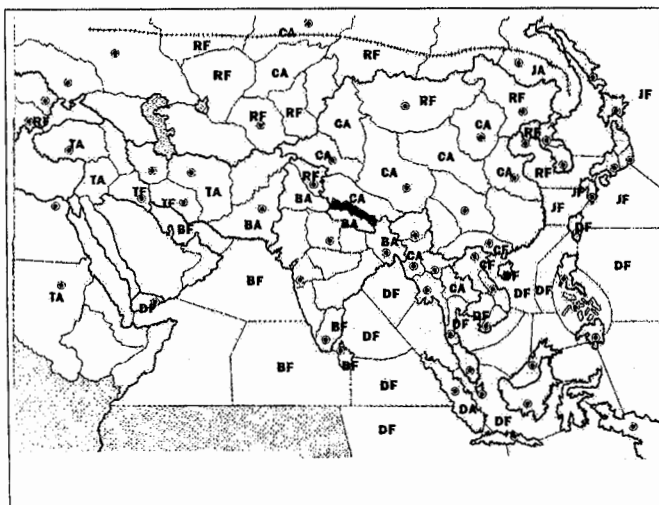
Retreats: Russian A(Omsk)-Perm

PRESS

China-Japan: So, it's toys out of the pram time? Bet
I can throw mine further.

China-Russia: See, that's how you stab in this game.
Tie up all your units in a long convoy that fails!

China-Dutch: Note that long convoy idea, it might
come in handy one day.



Kingmaker

ZACHARIUS

GM: Sorry, no map this time – tight on time!!

Autumn 1459

Quick key:

NOBLE/Office/Title/Bishop (Troop strength, Commons
votes, Lords votes, City, Towns or Castles owned)
Extra troops in certain areas shown in { } e.g. {2}50 is
50 normal troops and 200 extra according to card.
Extra Commons votes shown {C?} for Offices and Titles
with cities or towns attached.

Relationship matrix... (Friendly, Neutral or Hostile)

	ND	JM	JS	JT	AP
ND	xx	N	H	F	N
JM	H	xx	N	N	F
JS	F	H	xx	F	H
JT	H	N	N	xx	N
AP	N	N	F	H	xx

Neil Duncan: 'The Knights who say Nee'

(TKWSN) 25 Sarum Hill, Basingstoke, Hants RG21
8SS (neil.duncan4@ntlworld.com)

PERCY (100, C2, L3, Alnwick, Cockermouth) /
Treasurer of England (50, Wallingford, Beaumaris)

GREY (20, L1, Chillingham, Rockingham) / Le Swan
Ship of Berwick

HERBERT (10, L1, Llanstephen) / Bristol (C4) / Le
Michael Ship of Bristol

HOLLAND (20, L1, Kimbolton, Compton)

Edmund of Rutland

George of Clarence

Commons: 6 Lords: 6

Percy Beaumaris std

Grey Bristol std

**Herbert & Edmund of Rutland / George of
Clarence** Beaumaris std

Holland OXF-NHS-BED-Kimbolton

Le Michael Bristol std

Le Swan Beaumaris std

Crown Cards: 8

John Marsden: (ODE) 91 Westwood Avenue,
Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 9RS (email:
jandcmarsden@iclway.co.uk)

FITZALAN (30, C1, L2, Arundel, Chirk) / Le Lucas,
Ship of Whitby

POLE (30, C1, L2, Wingfield) / Scots Archers (20) /
Archbishop of York ({30}, L5, York(C4)) / Flemish
Crossbowmen(20)

HASTINGS (10, L1, Tutbury) / Earl of Kent (C1) /
Scots Archers (20)

Richard of York (Sandal, Stokesay)

Faction ownership: Kenilworth

Commons: 7{27} Lords: 10{20}

Pole & Richard of York(King Richard III)

Wingfield-SUF-NOR-LIN

Fitzalan Wingfield-SUF-NOR-LIN

Hastings Wingfield-SUF-NOR-LIN

Le Lucas Caister-GER-DOG-WAS-Ravenser

Crown Cards: 4

John Stratford: 'The Blue Oyster Faction' (BOF)27 Farrar Court, The Old Schoolhouse, Leeds LS13 3SP
(email: john.stratford@freemans.com)

BERKELEY (10, L1, Berekeley) / Earl of Worcester(30, C1) / Lieutenant of Ireland ({2}50) / Archbishop of Canterbury (L7, Canterbury{C3}) / Saxons (10) / Le Rose, Ship of Plymouth
CLIFFORD (10, L1, Conisborough) / Bishop of Lincoln (L2, Lincoln{C3}) / Flemish Crossbowmen (20) / Saxons(10) / Leicester (C3)
Audley (L1, Tickhill)
Scrope (L1, Masham)
 Commons: 10 Lords: 13

Berkeley WOR-GLO-SOM-DEV**Clifford** WOR-GLO-SOM-DEV**Audley** WOR-GLO-SOM-DEV**Scrope** WOR-GLO-SOM-DEV**Le Rose** Preston

Crown Cards: 5 Event Cards: 1 Writ

Jeremy Tullett: Might is Right (MIR) 7 Midland

Place, Derby DE1 2RR email:

Jeremy.D.Tullett@btinternet.com

Commons: 0 Lords: 0

No nobles in play

Crown Cards: 9 Event Cards: 2 Writ

Alan Poulter: 'The Falcon Faction' (TFF) Dolphin Cottage, Dolphingstone, East Lothian EH33 1NH(email: grogard@grogard.com)**TALBOT**(30, C1, L2, Ludlow) / Const of Dover Castle(50, Dover)**NEVILLE**(50 C3, L4, Ogmore, Richmond, Warwick, Raby) / Chamberlain Co. Pal. Chester({2}50, Rhuddlan, Chester)**BOURCHIER** (10, L1, Pleshy) / Duke of Exeter (20, L1, Exeter {C3}) / Admiral of England (50, Lynn {C3}, Southampton {C3}, Le Margaret & Le Christopher), Burgundian Crossbowmen (30)**Edward of Lancaster****Faction ownership:** Harlech

Commons: 16 Lords: 8

Talbot & Margaret of Anjou board Le Margaret**Neville & Edward of Lancaster** board Le Christopher**Bourchier** boards Le Margaret**Le Margaret** Penzance-ATL-SEV-Cardiff**Le Christopher** Penzance-ATL-SEV-Cardiff

Crown Cards: 4 Event cards: 1 Writ

Combat: None

Winter 1459**Event:** Peasant Revolt. Archbishop of Canterbury (Berkeley) to Canterbury. No others in play**Storms at Sea:** No-one at sea**Extra Plague:** None**Chancery:** 8 cards – Const Tower of London, Earl of Essex, Earl of Westmorland, Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster, Warden of the Northern Marches, Chancellor of England, Warden of the Cinque Ports, Earl of Salisbury**Crown Cards:** Two left to Neil and John M**Royal Heirs: In order of succession****House of Lancaster**

1. Margaret of Anjou with TFF in Cardiff
2. Edward of Lancaster with TFF in Cardiff

House of York

1. Richard III (Duke of York) with ODE in Lincolnshire
2. Edmund of Rutland with TKWSN in Beaumaris
3. George of Clarence with TKWSN in Beaumaris

Ship capacities are all 100 except Le Trinity and Le George which are 150. Admiral of England's ships have a capacity of 200.

Some additional information:**Capacities for Cities, Towns and castles...****Cities:** Unlimited capacity / 300 garrison**Towns:** 400 capacity / 200 garrison**Royal Castle:** 300 capacity / 200 garrison**Castle:** 300 capacity / 100 garrison**SOURCE OF THE NILE**

I am opening a waiting list for Source of the Nile. I have considered this for some time as it is a game I like, but other people don't seem keen to play – perhaps because it doesn't promote player interactivity as much as most other games. However, with the seeming lack of communication in postal games these days, I think this is ideally suited to postal play.

The game is open to between 4 and 8 players. I would run it on 3 if that is all I could get.

Some, perhaps many, of you will know the game.

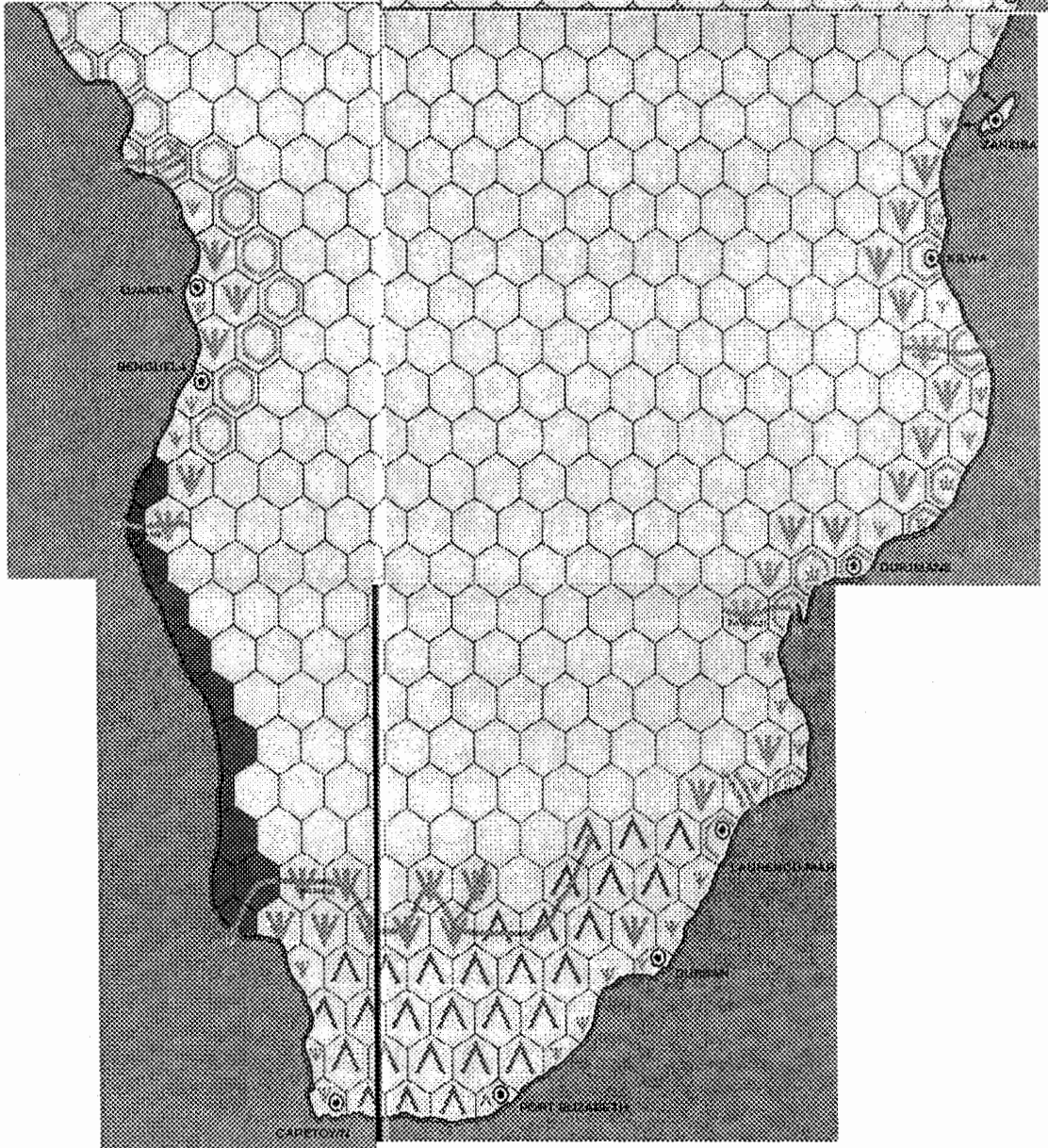
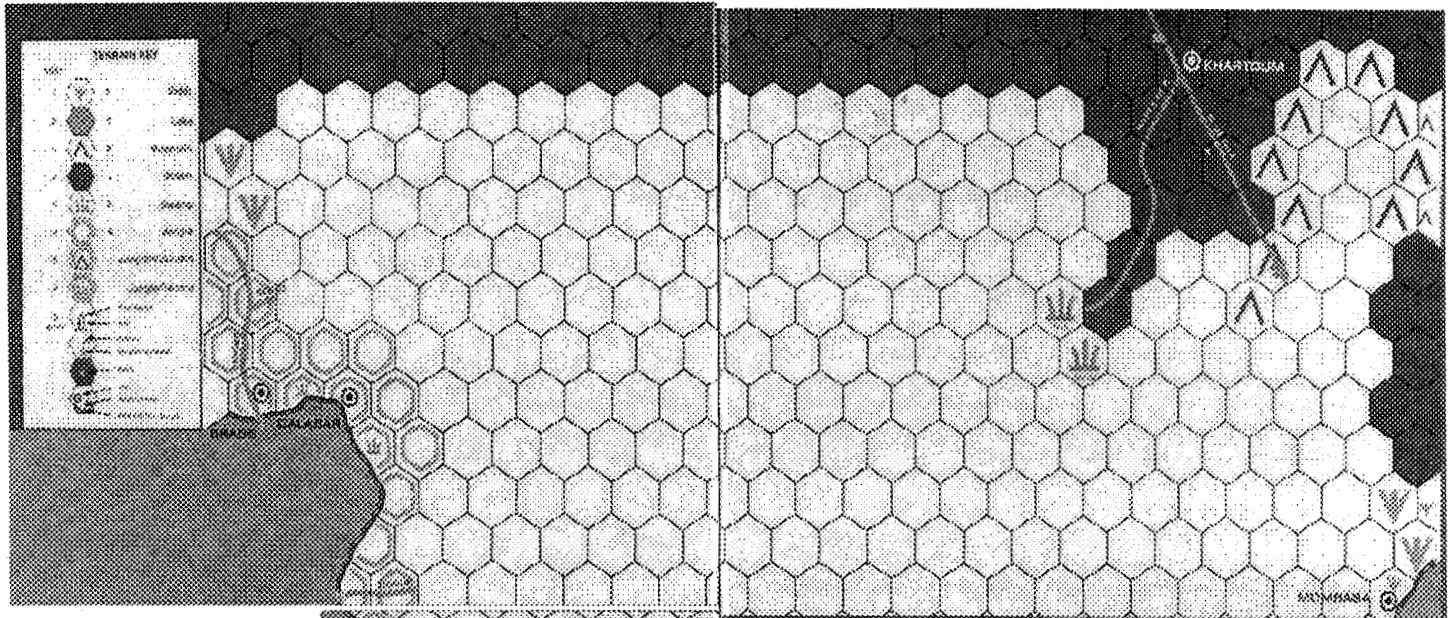
Each player takes the part of an explorer in Africa starting with a nearly blank map – see copy on following page. Each explorer endeavours to

discover as much of Africa as he can, then get back to Europe to publish his findings – publishing is the way to gain victory points. Of course it isn't easy exploring Africa with so many natives and animals that can throw you off course. In most of the games I have played an explorer who survives more than one expedition is doing well!

Perhaps one of the downsides to the game is the luck element, there is much die rolling and card drawing to obtain results. Most of this will be done by me, subject to the conditional orders received from players. As the rules are a few pages long, anyone who is interested, please let me know and I will email them a copy.

Each turn players will get a colour copy of the map to show the extent of exploration so far.

Bye!



The Games Section

Raspberry - Std Dip – not Au08

GM = Neil Duncan(Biggles) BN: 02 BB

Biggles – All: This was going to be one of those judgement calls, in the view of the chaotic nature of the postal strikes. I am missing a set of orders from a normally very reliable player. I don't want to spoil the game and since the next deadline is pretty close, I'll give them the benefit of the doubt and hold over. Sorry to everyone about this.

Sharp – Std Dip – Sp 1903

GM = Neil Duncan(Biggles)

Austria (Richard Young): A(Mos) S TURK A(Bul) – Sev{nso}, F(Alb) S TURK F(AEG) – ION{nso}, A(Tri) S A(Rum) – Ser, A(Rum) – Ser, A(Vie) – Bud.

England (Nigel Pepper): F(Lon) – NTH, F(NTH) – Nwy, A(Lpl) – Yor, F(Nwy) – StPnc.

France (Andrew Bryce): A(Par) – Bur, A(Spa) – Mar, F(MAO) – Por, F(ENG) – MAO.

Germany (Mike Dommett): F(BAL) – Swe, F(Den) S F(BAL) – Swe, A(Bur) – Gas, A(Mun) – Bur, A(Bel) – Pic, A(Ruh) – Bel.

Italy (Tony Sait): A(Pie) S FRENCH A(Spa) – Mar, A(Tun) – Apu, F(ION) C A(Tun) – Apu, F(TYS) – MAO.

Russia (John Wilman): A(Fin) S F(Swe) – Nwy, F(Swe) – Nwy, F(Sev) – BLA, A(Gal) – War.

Turkey (Allan Gordon): A(Bul) – Rum, F(BLA) S A(Bul) – Rum, A(Gre) – Ser, F(AEG) – Gre, F(Con) – Smy.

RETREATS: none.

PRESS:

The Oracle : And out of the confusion in the north there shall arise amighty canker that shall bring dark ruin to all it contacts.

Austria - Italy : Patience

Austria(Govt) - Turkey : Hope the order was correct in the end!

Austria - Anyone : Ow! What was that?

Ger (gov) - Eng (gov): have we got our act together?

Roll over beethoven, and let the turk have his fill.

Resistance is increasing in holy russia and the invadia can expect to join sweden and france in being destroyed.

Toni the Ice-cream Seller. Climbing out of the water of Bari harbour, Toni looked around for his erstwhile

business partner. Naturally, Luigi was no where to be seen. This may have been because he was still in Athens waiting at the "convention of Islamic Fundamentalists" for Toni to arrive with his cargo of 99s and Mivvis. However, the large Turkish looking gentlemen that had been firing cannons and howitzers at them off the coast of Corinth rather pointed to a different concept. Luigi had deliberately tried to lure him into a trap. The problem was, what was he going to do now. As mobile phones would not be invented for another 80 years, Toni made his way to the local post office to try and communicate with his partner. After ten minutes of frantic hand waving and three games of charades, he remembered he was in Italy and the postmaster probably spoke the same language as him... he reached for the 'phone...

The Gorgon: The snakes on her head bit angrily at her own hideous face in self-mortification. She had allowed herself to be distracted. It was messy – and she hates mess. It was time to go fourth and create some new rock-formations.

Umm Qasr - Gunboat – Sp 1903

GM = Neil Duncan(Biggles)

Austria (Lil' Corporal): A(Gal) – Rum, A(Bud) S A(Gal) – Rum, A(Ser) S A(Gal) – Rum, F(Bulsc) S TURK A(Con) – Smy{illegal}, F(Gre) S F(Bulsc), A(Vie) – Tri.

England (Bush's Poodle): F(Nwy) S GERMAN F(Swe){unit moving}, F(NTH) S F(Lon) – ENG, F(Lon) – ENG, A(Yor) – Lon.

France (Tadpole): F(Gas) – MAO, F(ENG) – Pic, A(Par) S A(Bur), A(Bur) hold.

Germany (The Black Watch): A(Mun) S A(Kie) – Ruh, A(Ber) – Swe, A(Kie) – Ruh, A(Bel) – Pic, A(Hol) – Bel, F(BAL) C A(Ber) – Swe, F(Swe) – SKA.

Italy (Lampedusa): F(ION) – ADR, F(TYS) – ION, A(Tyr) – Tri, A(Tun) hold.

Russia (Tattytoo): A(War) S A(Mos) – Ukr, A(Mos) – Ukr, A(Sev) – Arm, A(Smy) S A(Sev) – Arm, F(Rum) – BLA, F(StPsc) hold.

Turkey (Euro Champ): A(Con) – Smy, A(Ank) S A(Con) – Smy.

RETREATS: FRENCH F(ENG) – Bre.
RUSSIAN A(Smy) - Syr.

PRESS:

Lil' Corporal – Lampedusa. I have some sympathy with TT in his urging you to "get stuck in". However as it is my borders around which you are shilly-shallying, I'd like

some indication as to where you may consider getting stuck.

Lil' Corporal – Euro Champ. See, the Bulgarians welcomed us with open arms – or at least the ones we didn't slaughter did.

Lil' Corporal – Tattytoo I have to admit to not being too bothered by Turkish armies at the moment, and caring even less about fleets around the Anatolia region.

Lil' Corporal – Black Watch I assume the press Hun-Cossack wasn't from you last time, as I see "Lpl and Lon" as slightly disingenuous when you have 5 armies and only two fleets – both of the in the Baltic area !

Lil' Corporal – Bush's Poodle I'm afraid taking on the pseudonym of "Williams" will land you in a bigger heap of pooh than that you have just managed to dig yourself out of. And don't end sentences with a preposition. Or start with a conjunction. Bugger, that's my sentence, not yours...

Lil' Corporal – Tadpole No letters ? That is probably because this is an e-mail only game. Some people really don't have a clue, do they ?

Poodle - Watch, Black : My army to belguim in fall 1903, agreed.

Poodle to France: Just covering my frontiers, not hostile to you.

Poodle to Russia - Have I gone for you? NO I haven't. if I see your fleet in Bothnia I will know what to expect.

Poodle to Italy: Your place at the world cup will be best served by thrashing Wales.

Puddle – All: Anyone notice how big the Krauts are getting? Tadpole: I think I made a mistake in Au'01.

Tadpole – Poodle: If I'm still in the Ditch come Autumn, I will support you into Bel... if I'm in the shit come Autumn, work it out for yourself!

Germany – England: Bel is yours, I hope you have taken the Channel this time. Convoy an army into Bel in the Autumn and then on to France! Please attack StP in the Autumn.

Germany – Italy: Holiday in France.

Germany – Russia: Friends?

Lampedusa - Lil' Corp: It was more a question of when than if. Please take it as a compliment - I only do this because your march east seems unstoppable.

Lampedusa - TT: The old government are hanging from the lamposts, the new lot may be hinting at a different foreign policy.

Lampedusa - Tadpole: You'll note where I've chosen not to send my fleets. If you're looking for friends, consider someone without 5 armies on your border.

Lampedusa - Black Watch: And jolly fine armies they are too.

Lampedusa - Lil' Corp: And if those jolly fine armies make a serious move east then I'd want to bury the hatchet (or perhaps that's 'withdraw the stiletto')

Russia – England: No, no – you've got it all wrong. Rabbits are vegetarians. It should be, "Eat rabbit, you monkey".

Russia – Turkey: Imposter! I've seen Euro Champs in action. They don't play like that!!

Eurochamp - All : Haha! Good one guys! Now, seriously, let me play.

Eurochamp - Tattytoo : We need to work together to stop the Austrian.

Eurochamp - Lampedusa : Do you want this powerful an Austria on your borders?

Turkey - Austria : Is that all you've got?

Eurochamp - Biggles : Oh, bugger!

Extra Eds Bit

Ok – I have a bit of a gap here, so let's check the list of topics for mindless chatter. Right, whilst it's still sorta current(ish). This gay bishop affair in the Anglican church in the USA. (No this is not another Yank bashing piece). What I don't understand in all this is why does the gay guy actually want to be a bishop of even a member of an organisation which is largely opposed to homosexuality? All Christian faiths seem to be against the practise, from the "spawn of the devil" brigade, to the "love the sinner, hate the sin" mob? Isn't an extreme example, a black guy jointing the KKK, or me joining the tory party!?

Next – did any of you see that John Simpson special report on the 'friendly fire' incident in Northern Iraq during the war. Definitely far more horrifying than any blood fest film you can think of simply because it was real. For me it certainly captured the raw panic and emotion of the moment. I was also very impressed with the bravery of these reporters in deadly situations.

Damn – you can tell I was not prepared for such a big gap to fill! Ok, the Soham murder trial. Right, it is still ongoing, I know and I am not on the jury, so I only know what I have read in the Independent/Guardian and seen on the news. But I have to say that I don't see how Ian Huntley's (lawyer) can possibly defend him? Ok, so it's human nature to slip into 'denial' to avoid an unpleasant outcome, but does the point not come where it's better to just hold your hands up and say, "Fair cop- but society is to blame..."? I can not even begin to imagine the thought processes that occurred resulting in the deaths of two young children. Likewise, I can not even begin to imagine the agony the families must be going through. Unbelievable.

Finally – I shall share with you some of the weird and wonderful music that has helped contribute to this issue;

Limbizkit – Results may vary.

The Misnomer – Send me a white feather.

(local Basingstoke pop punk mob).

hc3way split EP featuring, The Leftbehinds, Fellthru and Eyeless in Gaza. (Another local production.)

Plus of course Marilyn Manson and Sepultura who are still high on my 'shit hot' list.