

Number six in a field of six, it's:

MAD POLICY

ISSUE NUMBER 2

MP comes, via a rather shoddy duplicator, from the typewriter of Richard J. Walkerdine of "Cheriton", 15 Crouch Oak Lane, Addlestone, Surrey. It costs 5P per issue (including postage) plus a 25P game fee, or is available for trade with similar zines. Today is Monday, September 4th, 1972.

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A Crisis Overcome

A few days after the appearance of issue 1 two of the players decided that they couldn't after all spare the time to play, and asked me to replace them. Fortunately standby players had already started to appear, so replacements were arranged and the other players informed, and the game continues uninterrupted. I realise this was only possible because the players concerned let me know what was going on, but nevertheless I consider it a justification of the standby player system (Don Turnbull please note!). Let it also serve to show the benefit of players keeping the GM informed of what's happening, it's the only way the game can be kept running smoothly.

For details of the new line-up plus an address change see the game report on page 2.

One Ring To Rule Them All

Tolkien fans seem to be doing rather well this month. First of all there was John Piggott offering games of Third Age in Ethil the Frog. The first game was filled in a week (with yours truly getting Rhovanion) and there are now four names on the waiting list for the second!

Then there were the strange rumours about a party in honour of a certain Mr. B. Baggins of The Shire. A location somewhere in Beaconsfield was mentioned which I hope can be found at the appointed hour. My wife suggested that all we have to do is ask the first Hobbit we see to direct us, but I think we'll just head in the direction of Gandalf's firework display!

The British Diplomacy Club

I don't know why but last issue, when I gave details of all the other zines and their game openings, I completely forgot to mention the BDC. This is strange because I'm playing in one of its games. Anyway to put the record straight the British Diplomacy Club charges 60P per year for membership plus a 50P joining fee. It offers regular games at £1.00 plus 30 SAE's (i.e. £1.60). The organiser is Graeme Levin who can be found at P.O. Box 4, London, N6 4DF. All but one of its games are run by Don Turnbull, the odd man out being BDC4 which is GM'd by Hartley Patterson in War Bulletin.

The BDC has been coming in for quite a bit of criticism lately, largely because of the prices it charges, but this has been explained by the amount of advertising it conducts and things now seem to be quietening down again. And if anyone thinks I am going to stir things up again they're wrong. There will be no feuding in this zine, at least not in only its second issue. You'll have to wait until about issue ten for that!

Now turn the page for a bit of action.

"A" Game (1972??) -- Spring 1901

First of all the new players and addresses:

GERMANY is now being played by Andrew Waldie, 312 Broughty Ferry Road, Dundee DD4 7NT.

TURKEY is now being played by Stewart Buckingham, 48 Dundonald Road, Wembleton, SW19 3QN.

Also Nigel Evans, who plays Austria, is now living at 16 Castle Road, Weybridge, Surrey.

And now let's get on with the game.

Apulia Argus: The production of "war" medals ceased today when stocks of putty ran out.

British Medical Journal: "And what of the Turk? Is he not the sick man of Europe?"

German Independent Newsletter (G.I.N.): Kaiser Lothar Ober-Twitten (K.L.O.T.) today announced that Germany will end its 269 year prohibition period and enter into an orgy of wine. In the Kaisers own words, "a b.....good booze up!". The German Armed Forces (G.A.F.) reacted to this announcement by inebriating themselves and crossing the border into Denmark to impress upon the Danish (Double Underlined) people the benefits of ~~good~~ alcohol.

London: The Secret Police today carried out a sudden raid on the HQ of the British Balloon Corporation at Weybridge, after reports that foreign spies were working there.

Wiener Allgemeine: MOBILISATION! Following the breakdown of negotiations aimed at a non-aggression pact with Turkey, the government today announced complete mobilisation of the armed forces. This move, described as precautionary, was to forestall Turkish invasion of the Balkans. In this traditionally Austro-Hungarian sphere of influence, requests for protection have been obtained from Albania and Serbia. We shall be happy to help our friends.

AUSTRIA (Evans): A Bud - Ser, A Vie - Tri, F Tri - Alb.

ENGLAND (Morrison): A Lpl - Wal, F Edi - Nth, F Lon - Eng.

FRANCE (Williams): A Mar - Spa, A Par - Bur, F Bre - MAO.

GERMANY (Waldie): A Ber - Kie, A Mun - Ruh, F Kie - Den.

ITALY (Meadon): A Rom - Ven, A Ven - Pie, F Nap - Ion.

RUSSIA (Shaw): A Mos - Ukr, A War stands, F Sev - Bla, F StP(S) - GoB.

TURKEY (Buckingham): A Con - Bul, A Smy - Con, F Ank - Bla.

Standby players for this game are John Piggott and Andy Davidson.

Deadline for Autumn, 1901 moves and Winter builds is FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND.

Nice to see a bit of war already.

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Letters

JOHN PIGGOTT made some encouraging remarks about issue 1 and then went on to talk about my use of the prophetic build system:

"Rod Walker will probably bombard you with propaganda telling you to take the Winter build period separately. He considers that players have a right to know what the position is before they give build orders. But, in my opinion, there aren't usually many possibilities for the results of one's moves which will seriously affect one's build orders. Speaking personally, I find that my builds, if any, are dictated by my general policy and I don't usually have to list more than one alternative, if that,

Of course, this is also an excellent way of ensuring that no diplomacy takes place prior to the adjudication of the Winter orders. This is, after all, what it says in the Rulebook, which we pretend to follow."

((Thank you for your comments John. I haven't played in enough games to be able to judge which is the better system in practice, but I'm working on the assumption that most people would prefer a game to take something just over a year rather than two years or so, which really makes the prophetic system a necessity.))

DON TURNBULL also welcomed me to the ranks of postal Diplomacy GMs and then went on to discuss several topics:

"Just a few comments, from someone who has been in this game too long for his own sanity, in the distant hope that they may be of use to you:-

1. Don't lose money in this business, particularly by expanding the zine and not upping the sub. I lost over £30 in the first year of ALBION, and have only just got square again. It's too tempting, that's the real trouble. However, if you do some arithmetic, you won't break even on 5p per issue and 25p game fee, unless you get the stencils or paper or both free. Some Americans charge by the page, with just this fear in the back of their minds.
2. Pity all the players are not from Surrey - it would be something of a record. Have you thought about a telephone game? I don't think it has been tried in this country yet.
3. Asking for builds with autumn orders does speed things up a bit, but has the disadvantage of not allowing the builds themselves to be the subject of negotiations. I think they have an equal right to orders in this respect, but that's only my opinion.
4. How are you going to judge when you need a stand-by? i.e. how are you going to be sure that the former player has actually dropped out? I don't know the answer to this one, and never will. As you know, I don't put in stand-by players, because by the time a player has obviously dropped out, he usually presents his replacement with a completely lost cause. However, if stand-by players don't pay a game fee, that's reasonable enough. Once I ruled a player in anarchy, only to find an irate letter from him the next week saying that he had paid his game fee, had been called away suddenly on business, and what the hell did I think I was playing at? One reason why I never adopted stand-by players.
5. MP will get a plug in the next ALBION - promise! By the way, plots are hatching which may save my most curious magazine and increase the circulation (though probably not the number of games). More in the next issue."

((I'm grateful to you Don for a very interesting letter. Let me reply to your comments in order.

Actually I did a very careful costing of this project at the very start. I don't get stencils or paper free but I do buy them in bulk, which is quite cheap. Add to this the fact that I'm only using low quality paper, as you can see, and I reckon that I can just about break even on a 4-page zine with a circulation of 18 (I'm up to 15 so far), on a 6-page zine with a circulation of 25 and on an 8-page zine with about 30.

I hadn't thought about a telephone game until you mentioned it but it

does sound like a good idea. See the announcement below for more details.

The subject of builds with Autumn orders has, I think, been covered quite well in John Piggotts letter and my reply to it.

As far as standby players are concerned I think the first article on Page 1 is justification enough. What kind of game would have resulted in Courier if two players had dropped out in the first year? As for knowing when I need a standby, surely the house rules make this quite clear. If a player misses two moves in succession he is judged to have dropped out and the standby takes over. Everybody who subscribes to MP will receive a copy of the rules so they will all be aware of the position. After that it's up to them to let me know what's going on before it happens. If there are good reasons why they can't send in the next two sets of moves fair enough, I'll try to help them out. But if they say nothing at all then I don't see how they can expect me to have any sympathy for them.

I'm pleased to hear the hopeful news about Albion. Its disappearance would surely leave a gap in the Dippy world impossible to fill.))

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Diplomaphone

This peculiar name was inspired by Don Turnbills remark about Diplomacy by telephone. I've given the idea a bit of thought lately and come to the conclusion that it might just work. The players will have to come from one area of course or 'phone bills will be astronomical. John Meadon has already expressed interest in the idea so will anyone living in Surrey who is interested please write to me with their ideas on deadlines and any other problems that are likely to crop up. Just to complicate matters I'm not on the phone at home, but I can be reached at the office so any calls to the GM will have to be made during working hours, Monday to Friday.

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Waiting Lists

REGULAR: Andy Davidson (of course), Andrew Waldie.
DIPLOMAPHONE: John Meadon.

Players! Don't forget the deadline, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND.

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"Who's this fellow Hannibal, I've been reading so much about?" Asked Pippin as he lit another pipe-full of Longbottom Leaf.

"Never mind him." Said Gandalf. "He doesn't enter your age. Now help me translate this message from Rhovanion. Though if

MAD POLICY 2, from

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makes sense to you, you're a better wizard than I am!"