



# DEAD CENTRE

Incorporating HT 10

## Sour grapes edition

### EDITORIAL

### FAST BUCK

A word from your proprietor.

A certain other 'zine producer suggested that as a result of the antics in GYL/2, there would be hard feelings towards a certain person named Robert Horrobin.

I would like to take the opportunity to point out that this is unequivocally true.

How such a person can display such blatant ruthlessness astounds me.

Only last month, I offered to let him buy me 6 pints of best bitter, and this is how he repays me.

I even gave him my last Rolo.

Having said that, I must make one point perfectly clear to my good friend Mr Horrobin - If he sets so much as one extra foot on to Russian soil, there will not be a kebab house in the country free of my tyranny.

Of that he can rely.

News of a stunning scandal has reached us concerning a prominent civil servant.

The man in question, a man with the rather shifty name of Olive Buckman (sorry Clive), is reputed to have drafted the initial plans to dissolve the welfare state by 1989.

In fact he has been seen on numerous occasions in the dining company of secretary of state for antisocial services Mr Norman Fowlup.

Apparently Mr Fowlup is rather smitten with this new Guru's philosophies, and has recommended that he be given permanent-secretary status.

The main source of scandal is the fact that Buckman, 25 is a paid-up member of the Liberal Party.

I regret to say that due to major obstacles (his threatening to cut off my dole money), I was unable to secure an interview with this man.

William Beveridge is 99.

Clive Buckman has told me that the YL Ecology group has established a greater level of influence over YL council.

As a result, the YL executive now consists of 100% recycled members.

In the pub the other night, I drifted onto the subject of ballet dancing.

Somebody said that he wondered why there were no Irish ballet dancers.

I gave this a great deal of analysis, and came to the conclusion that one cannot get the tights over one's wellies.

Written and edited with some brilliance by Mark Holliday, 85, Thornham Street, Greenwich, London SE10 9SB.

### HO HUM ....

(Overheard on platform C Waterloo station the other day):

Man: "...you commin' out with me tonight then?"

Woman: "...all depends really. are you payin'?"

Man: "Well I thought we'd go dutch."

Woman: "That's a bit of a cheek."

Man: "Well - you earn the same as I do I think."

Woman: "Yeh...but your a bloke, aren't you."

And some say that women would never indulge in sexist opportunism.



The Post Office took 4 weeks!!

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# Coffee Break

Simon Yoggart talks with Dr Milton Fluid, deposed Ugandan premier.

Yo: "Dr Fluid, may I offer my deepest comiseration regarding recent developments in your country."

Fl: "If you so wish Simon....may I call you Simon?"

Yo: "Er, while you're holding that machette, you can call me what you like sir."

Fl: "Glad to see that de good sense is prevailin'."

Yo: "Sir, at the beginning of your regime, you promised that this would spell a new era for Uganda. What happened to this era?"

Fl: "I cut dem all off man."

Yo: "It has been alleged that your loyal troops were ill-disciplined, and violent. Would you like to comment?"

Fl: "Dis has bin grossly exaggerated. Sure my men were a bit high-spirited. Dey needed to let deir hair down a bit. Dey may have practised de odd ritual killin', but it was all good clean fun."

Yo: "Some opposition politicians have suggested before their deaths, that you sought to exterminate members of all rival tribes. Is this true?"

Fl: "Quite categorically no. My own tribe, the Oomagoilies has always bin de most peace-lovin' people. We only kill on two occasions - when it is day, and when it is night."

Yo: "Amnesty International have speculated that your regime was even more tyrannous than Idi Amins....is this true do you think?"

Fl: "Well as I was sayin' to de last Amnesty African observer before his tragic accident, dis is pure rumour."

Yo: "Sir, do you think that you will ever return to Uganda?"

Fl: "Of course dis is a highly speculative question. It all depends on de state of de present junta. If dey should come to de senses and see dat my expertise and mine alone can be de saviour of de country, den dey may be beggin' me to return."

Yo: "Do you intend to remain in Kenya for the time being, or do you intend moving on?"

Fl: "Actually I will be commin' to de British Isles for de sabbatical leave shortly. I'm thinkin' of joinin' de Islinton Labour party."

Yo: "Do you think they'll admit you?"

Fl: "I'm seein' no reason why not. We seem to be havin' lots in common."

Yo: "How will you adapt to a British diet; all things considered?"

Fl: "Since de privatisation of many hospital caterin' services, I hear that de Charin' Cross Hospital does a good line in de cockroach casserole."

Yo: "Mr, er sorry Dr, were you by any chance trying to take the....

(cont.p61)

## Culture Spot

With Bernard Manning.

Hello everybody. I thought that this week I'd tell you of one of my most touching memories.

A few years ago, a good friend of mine (yes I did have one) was on his death-bed. Being Jewish, death to him consisted of a large family gathering. When the gates of St. Peter drew near, his wife of 45 years sat beside him. He whispered, "Maria? Is that you?" "Yes my love it is I." She replied.

His twin daughters, Nina and Julia sat the other side: "Julia, Nina, is that you next to me?" He uttered. "Yes Papa, it is we." They replied.

His brother Abraham stood above him. "Abraham. Is that you there?" He said. "Yes it is Aaron my beloved brother." Was the reply.

He then faintly whispered the name of his only son Isaac. "Isaac. Are you with me my boy?" "Yes I am dear Papa." He answered.

The old man suddenly rose upright in his bed, and with all the force in the world he shouted: "then who's minding the bloody shop then?"

On a lighter note, I did witness a strange conversation the other day.

A bunch of bikers were gathering at the local cafe, when all of a sudden, a young female biker approached them.

She asked the leader if she could join up with them. He replied: "well that all depends. Have you ever been picked up by the Fuzz?"

"No.....but I've been swung around by the nipples." she answered.

Daily Maxwell TV editor Tony Pratt has asked me to point out that Lou Grant is a programme on Channel Four, not as many readers believed a new Liberal scheme in the Borough of Richmond.

BC

## Mailbox

Sir,

Re. a discussion we had in a public house many months ago.

You mentioned that perhaps NLYL should consider changing its name to something else.

Something else doesn't seem a good name to me, but never mind.

Personally I would consider changing it to Crufts, as it already has so many old dogs in it.

What do you think?

Yours.

Alf Ratkinson, Eltham.

Sir,

It has come to my attention that you've been alleging that certain things were not in order regarding my junket to Moscow.

The stockings that I wore under my trousers were due solely to the cold weather in Moscow.

They were not, as you so strongly put it, a means of being co-opted as a WRVS delegate.

All I can say on the matter is that the rumour was absolute Bolshoi's and next time we meet, you can await a kick in the Balalaika's.

I remain,

Dylan Harris, Bedford.

Sir,

So nice to see that yet another piece of the free press is turning out uncensored material free of editorial prejudices, political pressure and propaganda.

Could you tell me how I can go about doing this?

Regards,

Mike Cooper, C/O  
Youth Office, Whitehall

Sir,

May I commend you on your excellent piece in July's issue of Bulldog. It was an inspiration to us all.

Yours,

Bert Bullyboy, Hackney

(You said you wouldn't blow my cover you bastard.)

## Twaddle

With Dennis Norden.

D'you remember those occasions where you share a hotel room with someone, and they proceed to lecture you on the ethics of a neo-physical, transcendental society based on accrimonious, aesthetic laws of genocidal impudence?

Impudence where only the local drug-pusher with his Open University degree in Asbestosis can possibly decipher what's going on.

Neither can I.

Still it has its bright spots. It saves me the job of reading Hacking times which is where the hotel bore gets it all from.

Seriously though, I'm convinced that the local pimps deliberately plant a bore in respectable traveller's bedrooms, so that they'll get so bored, the idea of poking some scrubber seems quite good.

Another great suspicion that I have, is that the EEC geographical department drafts its maps of the UK by sending groups of French tourists after certain gullible-looking locals on the belief that they can be directed anywhere.

Of course this is a fallacy.

If you are like myself, you grab hold of every slimy little frog, and direct them to the local doss-house.

As a result, I suspect that the French know more about Salvation Army hostels than anybody in Britain.

Yet another curiosity is the way scots piss-artists always make sure that they've grabbed hold of somebody before they throw-up the evenings beer.

Have you ever thought to yourself, "how is this drunken old git able to ramble on incessantly for hours and get paid an enormous salary for doing it?"

You're not alone.

## Quick Flash!

Police reports suggest that the hunt for the Avery Hill Flasher are hotting up.

Eltham police have issued a description of a man in his early-thirties, wearing a rugby T-shirt with trainers and sporting a repulsive black beard.

Even from a distance of 50 yards, an eye-witness ms Kathy Smith 24 of Greenwich said: "god....he was a really horrid-looking character. he had the kind of breath that confirms ones beliefs that we do have alternatives to the nuclear deterrent. the other peculiarity was that he seemed to think that he was leader of the Liberal party. He looked like one of those social workers who knock at your door, smile a lot, then take your baby away from you."

Police superintendant Nick Quota said: "If this man should show his face in an election anywhere, then we will not be slow in apprehending him."

Under current laws, certain elements of this report had to be cut.

Usual fiver for info.

Certain feminist wimmin have mentioned that I write little on wimmins issues.

However, one thing this month has bugged me.

It's cockroaches.

I'm convinced that they must be the most sexist creatures on Earth.

After all, who's ever heard of a Henroach?



# FINANCE

With our business correspondent,  
Penny Shares-Index.

Q.I'm a 35 year-old married man with 2 children,a mortgage,a car on HP,many small debts and a bankrupt business.

The bank has frozen my account,the car is being repossessed,my house is being seized and I have no appreciable assets - can you suggest a solution?

A.Yes.I strongly suggest that you consider registering as a name at Lloyds.

Q.I have £465,000 in savings which I have accrued as being a typical working man on my national average salary rate that so many people we are told earn, but one never seems to meet.

Can you suggest a place for it?

A.Yes.For piece of mind,place the cash in Banke Bundersuisse,A/C number 23233232.Mention my name when paying.

Q.I have some perfectly innocent and honestly obtained bullion with some name called Brinks-Mat on it.

Do you recommend a place?

A.The best place at present is the Bank of Bilbailey,offering a full amnesty upon maturity.Details are obtainable from Thomas Cook.

Q.I have a retirement nest-egg.I've thought several different investments,but have done nothing - any suggestions?

A.If partial to speculation,the new Botham-Keach Bond offers a potentially high return,dealing in the undeclared securities market.

It must be remembered though that value can fall as well as rise.Details can be obtained from:col.Domingo Lopez, Peruvian Embassy,anywhere.An easier alternative is acquiring direct from any person in Leicester Square Gents after 11pm.

## OUND?

YL Assembly organiser Phil Rimmer has asked me to mention that he still has a few places left for YL delegates.

For those wanting basic crash accomodation,he can supply you with a cardboard box lined with a copy of the Sun.If lined with the Guardian,a surcharge will apply.

For those who require transport, ring Clive on 01-305-0604,where he can loan you his very own hoop and stick.

Dead Centre and Hacking Times has considered the idea of another fund-raising game,however given that one has more chance of seeing an Ethiopian Gout sufferer than a YL with cash,it hardly seems worth it really.

Recipe of the month.

Croydon Casserole,by Graem Peters.

1LB chopped Pork.

½LB aubergines,diced.

½LB Courgettes,sliced.

10z garlic salt.

1oz turmeric.

1oz ginger.

8oz tin prunes,drained.

2 tbsp peanut butter.

2 tbsp curry powder,hot Madras.

2 tbsp oil

½LB bean curd.

Fry all food together in oil,add bean curd and spices and simmer for 10 minutes.

Place in casserole dish and leave for one hour gas mark 2.

Garnish with apricots.

I've been informed once again,that the Saudi Arabian sheep-shagging championship is being held this weekend at the dorchester Hotel.

All Muslims (Shia & Suni) will be welcome to compete.

# IT'S WOY!

DEAD CENTRE presents its annual guest essay.  
presented this year by Woy Jenkins.

D'you know,I had to struggle to fight my way up to my present position of member of parliament for Glasgow Headbanger.I had to get this funny old pen-pushing number with some quango called EEC.

A funny quango.It had all these foreign chappies.They spent most of their time with the froggies working out these quotas of lamb.The froggy agriculture commissioner grabbed a deal that allowed them to flog about 450 million tonnes of mutton per year to us.We the british were given the privilege of selling them about 6½ ounces.

A fair deal I'd say After all,free market trading is one of the most fundamental aspects of EEC.

One of the great pleasures of EEC life,were the dealings with french farmers.A wonderful breed of person,they so much enjoy their playful little games such as 'bomb the juggernaut' and kick the driver.

It is quite wrong to claim that the french are anti-british.They just feel that on whatever they undertake,they should look after number one and to hell with the grievances of les Anglais.

The french are full of genuinely decent people.I personally met one of these during Dunkirk.I believe that he was the only frenchman to be killed by a bullet in the chest.Anyway apart from their habit of exercising their lavatorial habits in just about any public place,they're a very discreet race.They only copulate publically after 6pm,and always do it with a polite smile on their faces.

I once went to Greece as an observer of the general elections.The problem was that we all knew which generals were going to be elected.

For all of the events that have moulded my life,the lost significant was that of forming the SDP (socially demented prats).This was a jolly good idea really.Our main backers,Grants of St.James's have returned record profits.Fortune permitting,my private member's bill introducing nuclear-powered wine-box's will be introduced during the next parliamentary session.The Central Beaujolais Generating Board is just another example of the SDP's creative approach to new enterprise.After the next general election,bot one wine-taster will be without a lively remunerative job.

I hope to contribute to next-years essay,where mr Robert Maxwell will endeavor to explain his sadness at mass-redundancy,before gulping five jars of caviar.His piece de resistance is to belch violently before vomiting over the potted plants.

Next month,Hackney Council's public relations department explains the benefits of a nuclear-free bus-stop.

# STORY

Tale Ends.

'The Old sod of Lochnagar' by yours truly.

Once upon a time, there was this funny monster thingy that jumped out of the loch. It looked a bit like some Greek chappy that dressed himself up in naval uniforms and followed Royal processions in his spare time.

His appearance was akin to that odd creature, the aardvark. This creature was clever though. It even managed to graduate from the Royal Navy, as it received top honours from the Admiralty.

The graduation ceremony for top graduates, is the renowned Gong Bang. (I said gong bang kiddies.)

Then at the age of thirty, he met this delightful young lady called Liz. From the first moment he clapped eyes on her, he thought: "Blimey, she'd keep me in kebabs for life I bet," so he became acquainted.

One thing led to another, and eventually they married. Their wedding reception was a joy to behold. Noticing that the Co-Op in Neasden would not be big enough, they booked Gloucestershire. At the wedding toast, the groom was heard to say: "darling, where's the bottle opener?" The bride replied: "I think it's his day off dear."

This was certainly not the end of their joy - far more was to come. They became parents for the first time. The boy was a difficult birth, giving many anxious moments to the parents. At his birth, the baby's appearance assumed the look of the F.A. Cup. He has changed very little to this day.

The monster was the most remarkable physiological specimen imaginable. After this first birth, they soon learned that they were to become parents again. This time they gave birth to a horse. A fine specimen, it was auctioned at the Newmarket sales, receiving a £10m bid as a yearling, only to be withdrawn from sale.

By this time, they'd certainly acquired the feel for this breeding lark. Two followed in quick succession. One became much like his father, but for the fact that he possessed an abnormal mating instinct. The mating ritual entailed swinging from helicopters and unzipping his fly.

The younger one held a peculiarly low I.Q., but showed great resourcefulness in getting to Cambridge on grades that Thames polytechnic would reject.

The monster was a stern creature. One day when his eldest son approached him, he raised the child aloft and shouted, "Charlie (for it was he) how many times have I told you that the Earl Spencer is a very important person indeed? The fact that he is a privy councillor does not mean that he is in charge of the Royal lavatories."

Many years have lapsed since then, but the stern old monster still can be seen trailing behind his beloved dragon whom he has served so faithfully all these years.

Charlie can still be seen at Wembley every May, being presented to the winning team captain. The filly was to win many a gold medal, ridden by a man called Mark Phillips. The youngest son has taken a job teaching Maori's to piss-straight and the other one has the biggest chopper in the business.

FINISH ---- Phew

## THE SHAME OF IT ALL

Cultural devotees remarked that this organ is somewhat devoid of anything incisive and profound.

Therefore Greed International Plc, in association with Associated Toiletpapers is pleased to announce a future event.

Associated Toiletpapers life-president, mr Dylan Harris, 65, announces his annual lecture on the state of microprocessors in relation to the sub-standard formulated policies within the context of the subjective influences of the macro-economic structure surrounding modern Europe.

I for my part will give lessons on how to escape from lectures to the nearest pub without being observed.

Greed International feels that under the circumstances, it could not let this issue pass without giving a mention to mr Bob Bunting.

Mr Bunting, sacked recently for not living in Acton, was a loyal and respected party hack, whose sterling efforts for the furthering of radical liberalism received an uncourteous reward, (i.e. the boot).

It seems sad that, a group campaigning to democratise society, should find itself subject to the oligarchical whims of as repugnant a faction as those in Acton.

It will be interesting to see whom or what Acton League of Young Liberal's put in Bob's place.

Watch this space for further news.

## GEOG SPORT SPOT

Great countie's of the UK.

This month: Actonshire.

Area: 5 square miles.

Population: 65,000.

Capital: 31, Newton Avenue.

Lord Great Chieftrain High Sherriff, mr Delix Fodds, CV, RSVP, CUNT, MGM, NLXL, TCSSER. BALD, EGO, (enough adulation Ed.)

## DID YOU KNOW ---?

Princess Michael of Kent is known as Marie Celeste, as loads of people must have been aboard, but nobody's ever found them.

Three men accused of severe cruelty to animals were yesterday found guilty on the charges of intent to cause unnecessary suffering, malicious wounding and unlawful killing.

The jury took just 36 days to find the men guilty.

In his summing-up, the judge mr Justice Once said: "Never in my long and extremely well-paid career have I witnessed such grotesque treatment of living creatures. To take healthy dogs and boil them in oil was utterly horrendous. Therefore I feel it is my duty to inflict a very stiff sentence upon you - you will go to prison for 3½ hours. However, in light of the fact that you have promised not to do it again, I will suspend it for 8 years. Let that be a lesson to all three of you."

The ring leader, a mr Delix Fodds, 45 of Acton, west London said afterwards: "The judge's sentence was severe to say the least. I'M innocent I tell you."

Accomplice mr Mike Foreskin of the same address said: "I don't know what my lord and master said, but I agree with him totally."

The other minion, mr Andy Refuse (same address) added: "I'm stunned. I only shaved the dogs in order to obtain the raw materials for a new toupee for my lord and master."

Jackie Charlton's verdict p.61

↑  
UP THEIRS

## LISTEN YOU BUMS!

DEAD CENTRE'S latest flop-project is for a team to run in the London marathon.

If YOU want to try your arm at a jog, then please contact me.

I would like to emphasize that I am being most serious about all this.

Proceeds would go to the PDSA.

### FOUR BASING SHOCKER.

By our narcotics correspondent, Linus upanother.

Concern mounts over the epidemic spread in narcotics use in the Irish Republic.

The latest craze in Dublin is the practice of sniffing selotape.

One user, wishing not to be identified is Mr Patrick C'Bomb, 27 of no fixed abode. He later said: "Hondootedly the current wide use odd socks cunnilingus band-aid Nosferatu Delix Podds fucking up of the present National case of sacking anyone you don't like is attributable to the long penis of the Jersey cow. This of course can be alleviated by the bugging of Heinz beans ad hock stickleback conservation by means of heptathletes immense thigh's throughout the coming fiscal year."



Greenwich Borough Liberal Association requires applications for the post of PPC Eltham

We wont actually consider them, but we will read them before slinging them in the bin.

For your pointless application, write with cv to: somebody, somewhere, Eltham. GBLA is an unequal opportunities employer.

## Frank The Wank

Featuring our new guest columnist, Mr Frank Chapple (sorry Lord).

Cor blimey stone the bleedin' crows. I went to Ibiza for me bleedin' holiday, and when I got back, that scots git from the railways started some bleedin' industrial action.

Well I ask you. That's the thing about bleedin' unions. They think that they can go on @'%'&£ strike to obtain the things that they want. The bleedin' Commie poofers should piss orf back to Russia where they belong.

There's only one way to deal with these bastards - abolish unions.

NEXT MONTH - How I'd Run Lambeth.

## Full Stop!

An extra word from your editor.

In light of the current success of Mr Clive Buckman in that epitomy of acute thespianic masterpieces 'Rambo', I'd like to congratulate him on his achievements in promoting piece (or peace).

The fact that he outshone both myself and the editor of Hacking Times does not mean that jealousy is involved.

Just because he gained the part in the audition, it doesn't mean I have no admiration either.

The producer just felt that under the circumstances, the part should go to an established tough-guy rather than to an international sex-symbol, thus excluding Mr Harris and myself.

Congratulations are in order to Dylan Harris and Bob Horrible for last months Hacking Times.

I was sceptical, and did not believe that they could find a guaranteed cure for insomnia - clearly I was wrong.

Apologies.

## Help at Hand

Last month we posted a questionnaire asking people to write-in inquiring on anything they need to know.

The enquirers asked for anonymity, so I will respect this.

We've answered all enquiries to the best of our ability, and to further respect anonymity we will only print the answers. They are as follows:

- a) Only when the train is moving.
- b) It IS physically possible if one is double-jointed.
- c) One CAN fill them with helium and fly them.
- e) It's not the size that counts, so much as what you do with it.
- f) I do know my alphabet.
- h) try Duracell batteries, perhaps you aren't using the right ones.
- i) No you're not alone - this happens frequently in public schools.
- j) I suggest you paint it blue and join the police force.
- k) Whatever your mate told you, superglue is far more dangerous than vaseline.
- l) The G-spot is not something that you buy in MFI.

more tips next month.

## PLAGIARIST'S



"We'll have the consomme, the lobster and an extra large portion of grovelling servility"



"This IS a theme pub - the theme is getting drunk!"

NO JOBS



## Just 5.....OK?

In light of DEAD CENTRE's success with the Garden Gnome assassination squad, I'd like to follow this up with a revolutionary new package designed to transform society here in Britain and ultimately all over the globe.

The demands we would make to present regime are simplicity itself.

Our five-point plan would be:

- 1) Abolition of work and industry, thereby preventing consequential stigma from the employment ethic.
- 2) Production of 'zines to be given special enterprise status and a government grant (but only if it is initialled DC.)
- 3) Complete ban on watching Miriam Stoppard.
- 4) Forcibly employ Young Socialists on Bacteriology research.
- 5) Immediate execution of Mary C'Hara without trial.

The complete ban on watching Miriam Stoppard may seem harsh, but just think about it a little.

## Just Wining

By our Austrian correspondent,  
Horst Schidt.

Widespread panic has broken out, as new worries concerning Austrian export products came to light.

In tests carried out at the University of Essex yesterday, scientists have tested several particular brands of anti-freeze discovering that many of them possessed traces of wine.

Austrian Trade minister Boris Reisling offered his resignation, but this was turned down as he must make many more cock-ups before he does this.

Hans Krankl is 32.

## Great Sayings Of The 20<sup>th</sup> Century

"as Mrs Thatcher said, there are thousands of jobs going begging in London; but I ask you: who wants to go begging in London?"  
(David Frost, TVS)

"certainly when I was young, I went through a very liberal kind of phase. The trouble was, all the liberals I met seemed to be armchair thinkers. Not being much of a thinker myself, I kind of lurched toward the Conservative party."  
(Jeremy Hanley MP)

"I can't say I've ever seen the need for public libraries. If I want to read a book, I can jolly well buy one."  
(Eric Morley)

## HARK.

This month's guest poet is Her Royal Highness Princess Michael of Kent.

Me (written recently)

I am no German General,  
I am no cat with claws,  
But when the yanks come visiting,  
I'm quick to drop my (con.p61)

## Weather

Forecast for September 2nd 6am  
by Jack Scott.

It looks as though there will be a bit of cloudy weather in the morning, followed by lots of sun afterwards.

Then there could be some rain, followed up with hail and very heavy thunder.

Later in the night, it could be rather mild and pleasant, unless it gets wet and cold. There may also be strong winds, but on the other hand there might not be.



"'Ere Doris. I told you that Penguin should never have let the Green Goddess write that sex-manual didn't I."

**HOME VIDEOS**

**201 THE SORCERESS**  
(18) 82 Minutes  
An age undreamed of... An age of fantasy and magic... of swords, & sorceresses! £11.95.

**202 ONE DARK NIGHT**  
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A crypt is a place where the dead are laid to rest... or are they? £11.95.

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90 Minutes Over 30 smash hits from the 50's and 60's. Cliff Richard, Billy Fury, & many more of the Rock 'n' Roll greats. £11.95.

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177, Greenvale Road,  
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Remember this hallowed organs great motto: if it's grossly offensive, we'll print it.

## Hacking Times 10

'The zine so deep in the gutter it makes The Sun shine'

## Edithing

I can only groval about the extreme lateness of this edition of HT, although by the looks of things no one has actually noticed. Apologies in particular go to contributors, since the delay in HT naturally has resulted in a delay in angry mobs chasing them down into their own particular hell. Sorry, Mark, I know you like that kind of thing, along with piebald donkeys and albino carrots.

In future, what I intend to do is to ensure that this kind of problem does not have a similiar effect on the 'zine; a similiar situation will result in a shrunkan zine containing only game reports and any contributions which are directly printable (such as DC). If you're wondering: good holidays don't half depress me when they end.

The only other semi-serious thing I want to mention is to appeal for articles on real life hacking; preferably one side of personal anecdotes. If you have carried out a particularly brilliant carve that you want to share with the whole world (well, a tiny little bit of it), or are even willing to admit to being the victom of someone elses' brilliant manouvering, write in and I'll publish it. For the sake of HT itself, all such articles will be acompanyed by a little sentence pointing out HT doesn't actually have anything to do with it, so Libel writs are sent to the authors instead.

If you want an index you'll have to produce it yourself. I'm fed up with such a ridiculous level of organisation. You'll want game reports without errors next.

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## Some letters

Jim Robertson:

Myself: I'm sorry I lost your letter, Jim, I particularly wanted to publish it. However, in answer to your points: (i) that point doesn't apply because people are no longer burnt alive in England for being witches; (ii) I'm sure you're right; (iii) no, Mark Holiday is not a stuffed Guinness bottle; (iv) twist it inside out, paint it yellow and stuff it down a drain; (v) 42, and (vi) they mine oil to burn, not drink, although I'm sure that if you tried hard enough, you could brew a'pleasent'drink, and sell it to the French as beer.

James Wall: Thanx for ish 9 of HT, a zine which always seems to be a good read, a numerous zine and fiendishly regular. How unlike our dear I.S.O.S. going through a transition period at the moment and will not appear again until October. Put me down for Cline-9.

Myself: (i) Regular? REGULAR?? HT is about as regular as a Mummy's period. Thanx for the positive bits, tho' - I assume you mean the Hole in the Centre. You're in Cline-9; and, for the benifit of other readers, James produces his own zine called In Search Of Space.

Keith Loveys: ((a PS to a letter)) I'm slightly surprised at your including the yearbook questionnaire - on principle I won't fill one in as I consider the country of origin question to be totally uncalled for.

Myself: I didn't actually give the thing much thought when I included it. Comments, anyone?

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D E A D L I N E

14

N O V E M B E R

~~14~~ t h

~~14~~ ~~1985~~

1 9 8 5.

Send all orders and communications, except for GYL/11, to Dylan Harris, at 2 Gresham Court, Kimbolton Road, Bedford, MK40 2PG.

The Thirtieth Day of July

Hitchen Times

3 Roundwood Grove,  
Brentwood,  
Essex.  
CM13 2NE

Dear Dylan,

This is an special "inspiration lacking" letter from one of your band ( a rubber one ? ) of subbers .I really should apologise for deliberately misspelling the name of you publication at the top of the page, but I won't !.If you were to produce an Cabinet Reshuffle special of HT you could call it Sacking Times (no ho ,very funny) but you are unlikely to that I guess.

Somewhere ( I can't even spell on a word processor ! ) in the last ishue of HT you asked for articles from your subbers on just about any subject we felt like writing about.I would like to write an artical or so, but at present I cannot think of anything remotely boring let alone interesting to right about. However I do have a few seeds germinating inside my mind ( sounds painful) here are the ideas that I have had, tell me what you think of them:

- a) The death of Edward II , a very nasty experience
- b) Top 10 forms of TORTURE ! (he, he; Sadistic times ?)
- c) I Spy guide to EXECUTIONS ! ( who said I am depraved)
- d) How to lose at Diplomacy (an unvaluable thesis )
- e) The History of Albania (incredibly dull)

If you do like the idea of any of the above then please say and I will see what drivell I can churn out .Anything I woul:d do will takea fair bit of time though and in the end would probably be utter dross ,but who gives a damn ?.

I would like to GM a game also !.Howabout the magnificent and glorious Finchley Central ( I am quite serious about this ! ) if you could get enough people interested.If you do need a GM then I am always willing to do the job, so beer me in mind if something ales you !, always get straight to the pint !.

If you have any vacancies left for the Scrabble then could you put on the list for that , thanks.

This has been a rambling, discourse with lots of gaps to fill the space and I expect there will be a large piece of emptiness at the bottom of the page, that is my idea for a front cover, I think it would be pretty striking especially if you washed it in a proprietry band of wahing powder first !.

*Chris Ramage*

→ Votes PLEASE ←

FRENCH LINES BROKEN BY THE ALLIANCE  
Chaos as Napoleon has a lie in

Austria (Graem Titmouse): F Apu-ION, A Boh-Tyr, A Ven-Rom (FAILS), Builds: A Tri.  
England (chaos): has A Yor, F HEL, F Den.  
France (Paul Titmouse): NMR! (probably kept awake by the fear of being kept awake  
and changing nappies): has F Tun, F Rom, F Nap, A Pie, A Ruh, A Bur, A Par,  
F ENC, F NTH, F BAL, F NRW, A Mun.  
Germany (chaos): has A Ber. (FAILS)  
Russia (Bob Titmouse): A Sil-Mun (FAILS), F BAR-Nwy, F GOB-BAL, A Nwy-Swe.  
Turkey (Clive Titmouse): A Alb HOLD, A Gre HOLD, F ION-TYS, F AEG s AUSTRIAN  
F Apu-ION, F Con-Smy, F BLA HOLDS, A Gal-Boh, A Rum-Gal, A Mos-Lvn.

## State of the game

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Austria: Vie Bud Tri Ven                                    | - 4  |
| England: Lpl Edi Den  | - 3  |
| France: Bre Par Mar Spa Por Tun Bel Hol Nap Mun Kie Rom Lon | - 13 |
| Germany: Ber  | - 1  |
| Russia: StP Swe Nwy War                                     | - 4  |
| Turkey: Ank Smy Con Gre Bul Rum Mos Sev Ser                 | - 9  |

Press

In the interests of keeping to the spirit of my holiday, all press has been  
censored for being counter revolutionary propaganda (ok, so I lost it).

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## GYL/2

I have received a request for a double deadline, which I have to accept given  
the reasons. Naturally, I will accept any revisions from orders, and, in one or  
two cases, some orders in the first place.

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## GYL/3

More bl\* sted double deadlines. Mind you, the request was probably fortunate,  
since I seem to have lost Austrias orders. (Clive submitted them for GYL/1, so  
where on Earth have I put his GYL/3 orders?).

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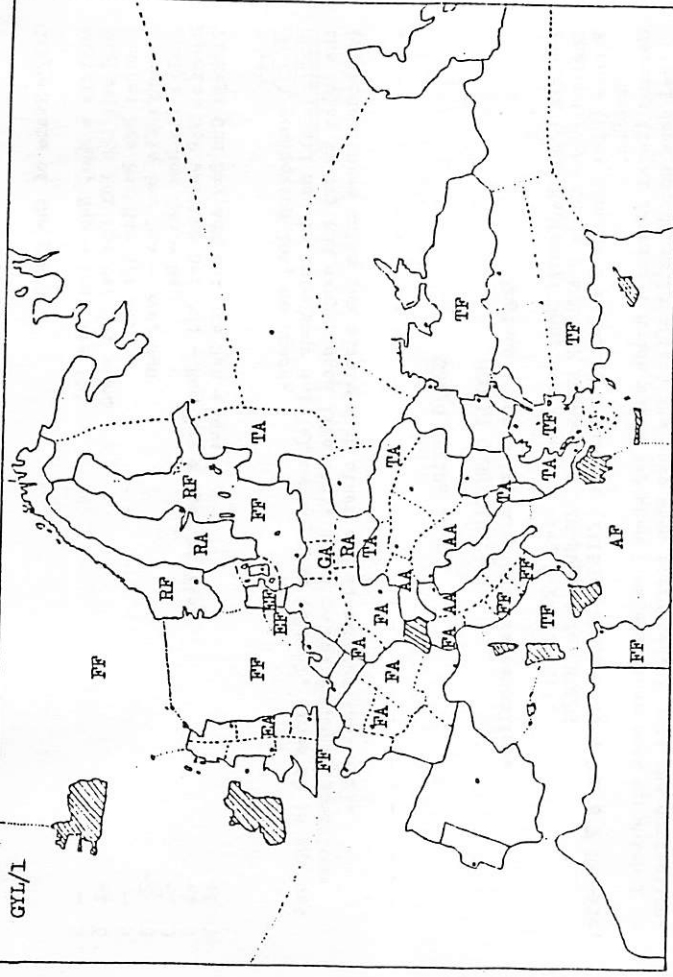
## GYL/5 Autumn 1903

POWERS ON THE EDGE ENGAGE IN ALL OUT WAR WITH EACH OTHER  
Central powers confused

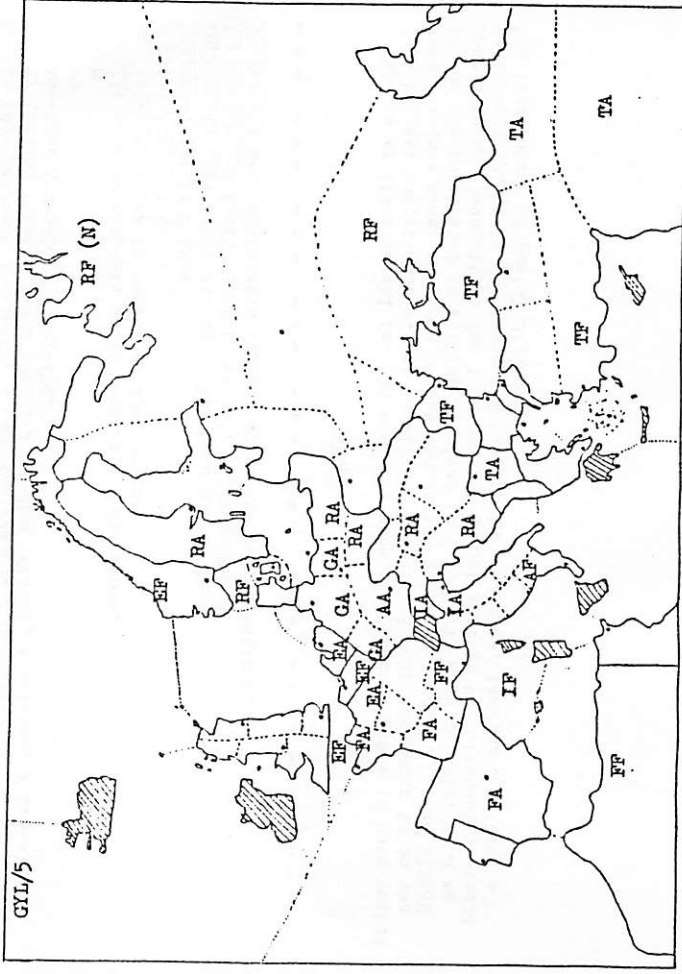
Austria (Mike Harskin): A Mun s RUSSIAN A Sil, F ION-Nap.  
England (Ralph Atkinson): F NTH-Nwy, [A Hol-Bel], [F Bel-Hol], F ENC c A Lon-  
Pic, A Lon-Pic. No Build ordered, one due.  
France (Janet Redfern): A Por-Spa, A Spa-Gas, F Mar-GOL (FAILS), F Naf-WMS (FAILS),  
A Bre HOLD.  
Germany (Paul Wiggin): NMR, has A Kie, A Ber, A Ruh. F Swe zapped, NRO.  
Italy (chaos): Phil Challis NMRed again, leaving A Tyr, A Ven, F GOL. F WMS removed  
by the CM following the fall of Naples.  
Russia (Dave Hewitt): F Sev HOLDS, A Tri HOLDS, F SKA s A Nwy-Swe, A Nwy-Swe,  
A Vie-Bud (FAILS), A Sil s AUSTRIAN A Mun, A Pru-Ber (FAILS). Builds F StP(N).  
Turkey (John Lamb): F Bul(E)-Rum, A Ank-Arm, A Ser-Bud (FAILS), F Con-BLA, A Arm-  
Syr. Builds F Smy.



GVL/1



GVL/5



# GYL/5 State of the game:

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Austria + Mun, Nap - Tri, Vie (!)                   | - 2  |
| England: Lon Edi Yor Bel Hol + Nwy                  | +1 6 |
| France: Bre Par Mar Spa Por                         | - 5  |
| Germany: Kie Ber Den - Swe, Mun                     | -2 3 |
| Italy: Ven Rom Tun - Nap                            | -1 3 |
| Russia: StP War Mos Sev Bud - Rum Nwy + Swe Tri Vie | +1 8 |
| Turkey: Con Smy Ank Bul Gre Ser + Rum               | +1 7 |

## Press

GM-All you boring lot, no press.

GM-England: I had to rule your Hol Bel manouvering illegal, since it is against the rules to try and swap pieces like that. Units cannot exchange positions (although three units can circle each other and so exchange that way).

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GYL/8 Spring 1903

## MOSTLY CONSOLIDATION

England invests in Christmas Tree-supplies.

Austria (John Redfern): NMR, has A Ser, A Vie, F Tun, F Tri.  
 England (John Cox): F NTH s F NRW-Nwy, F NRW-Nwy, A Yor HOLDS.  
 France (Mike Hanns): F MAO-Gas, A Mar-Bur (FAILS), F GOL-TYS, A Par s F Bre-Pic, F Bre-Pic.  
 Germany (Derek Jackson): house rules say when I make another cock up which I feel does not directly affect the game when corrected, I make the correction. I failed to point out Germany built F Kie last round, but he did. My GMing of this game is appalling; I intend to arrange another, better GM for you ASAP. Anyway: F Nwy-Swe, F BAL s F Nwy-Swe, A Bel-Pic (FAILS), A Bur s A Bel-Pic (CUT), A Ruh s A Bur, A Pru-Lvn, F Kie HOLDS.  
 Italy (chaos): has A Vie, A Rom and F Nap still.  
 Russia (Bob Reeves): A Gal-Ukr, A War-Mos (FAILS), F GOB-StP(S).  
 Turkey (Gordon Prest): F Rum HOLDS, A Sev-Mos (FAILS), A Bul-Gre, F Gre-Alb, A Ank-Arm, A Con-Bul, F Smy-AEG.

## Press

GM-All: note my comments about Germany's F Kie above.

England-World: Tea in Norway at 4pm, chaps?

England-Austria: Bully

England-Germany: PigDog

Turkey-Austria: Sorry old chap. You know how it is.

Turkey-France: April fool! I was only kidding. Ho,ho!

GM-Turkey: see DoctorDeath replies to answer your questions.

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GYL/9.

This is my final appeal for players. The game eight rescue seems to have worked (one NMR is, unfortunately, not at all bad for HT). I very much want to do the same for game nine, so those people who want a game can have it. Please PLEASE if you are interested in getting involved in (another?) game quickly, send me your name as a substitute for this game. I do not want it to collapse; it would be especially unfair for those new players in game nine, leaving them with a bad impressions of postal Diplomacy.

'A swift Adieu to France, perhaps? It begins to look like it.'

Austria (Bob Reeves): A Cal-War, A Ser s F Alb-Gre, F Alb-Gre.  
 England (Kevin Elliot): A Yor-Nwy, F NTH c A Yor-Nwy, F ENC-Bre.  
 France (Mark Jordan): A Bur destination unordered (NRO), zapped. A Spa HOLD,  
 F MAO\_Por, [[A Par s ENGLISH F Nth-Bel]] (move didn't occur).  
 Germany (John Denniston): A Ruh s A Mun-Bur, A Mun-Bur, F Den HOLD.  
 Italy (Ian Musgrove): A Pie-Mar, A Tus-Pie, F Tyr-Tun.  
 Russia (Brian Millington): A Ukr s F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Sev, F Sev-Rum, F GOB-Swe.  
 Turkey (Dylan Harris): A Bul-Gre (FAILS), A Con-Bul (FAILS), F Ank-BLA.

#### Supply Centres::

#### Changes

| Originals                         | Changes              |    |          |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----|----------|
| Austria: Vie Bud Tri              | + Ser, Gre, War      | +3 | =6       |
| England: Lon Edi Lpl              | + Nwy Bre            | +2 | =5       |
| France: Par Mar Bre               | - Mar, Bre + Spa Por | 0  | =3       |
| Germany: Ber Kie Mun              | + Den                | +1 | =4       |
| Italy: Rom Ven Nap                | + Tun Mar            | +2 | =5       |
| Russia: StP Mos Sev War           | - War + Rum Swe      | +1 | =5       |
| Turkey: Con Ank Smy               | + Bul                | +1 | =4       |
| Remaining neutral are Hol and Bel |                      |    | <u>2</u> |
|                                   |                      |    | 34       |

#### Builds and sorrows

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Austria: F Tri, A Bud, A Vie                       | =6 units  |
| England: A Lon F Lpl                               | =5 units  |
| France: A Par (one unit zapped)                    | =3 units  |
| Germany: A Kie                                     | =4 units  |
| Italy: see note below: two builds due in Aut 1902! | =3 units  |
| Russia: A Mos                                      | =5 units  |
| Turkey: F Smy                                      | =4 units. |

CCM-all: Please note, gentlemen, that you can only build in your original supply centres. This means that, unfortunately, the Italian builds which were ordered were illegal, and so had to be rejected.

England-Germany: Look left

England-France: Look right

England-Belgium: Look out! (Mary Whitehouse writes: "I am disgusted that you allow dirty words like "Belgium" - yuk - in your publication")

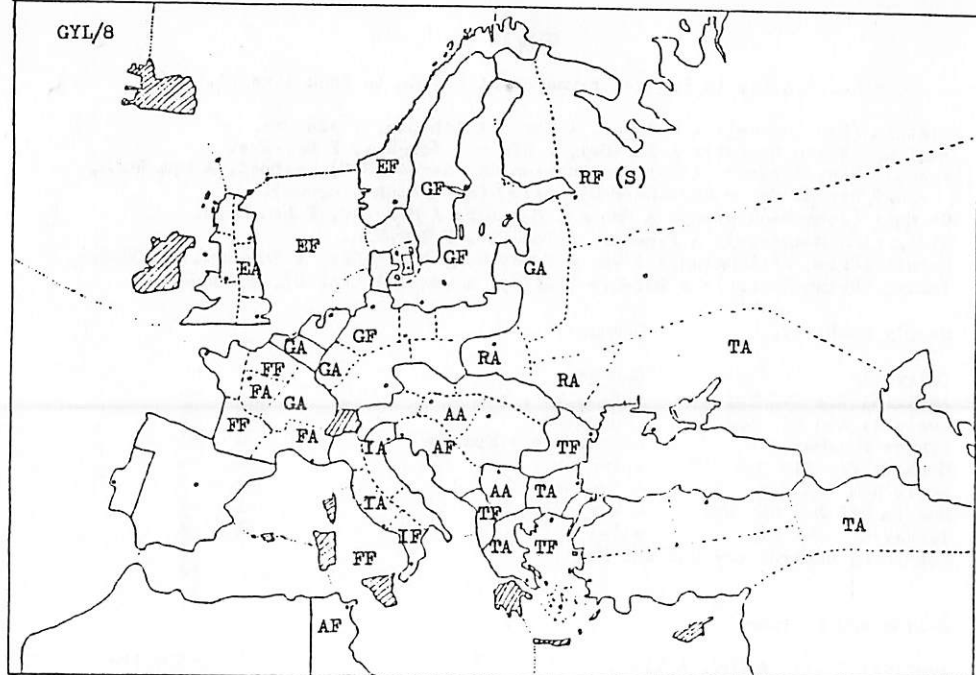
England-Russia: Where are you heading?

Your GM is: Tony Ross, 110 Leaming Road, Coventry, CV3 6JY (0203 412947).

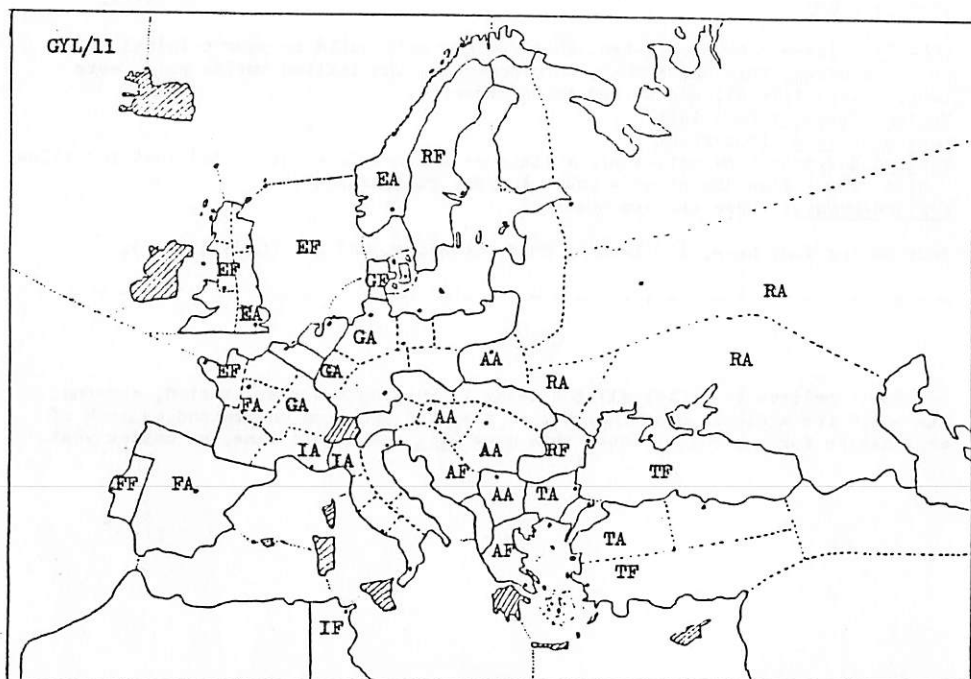
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I don't believe it. After all the delay in getting the game started, someone has asked for a double deadline. Ok, so they had problems understand my lack of explanation for the rules. Look, this game will start next time, no matter what.

GYL/8



GYL/11



GYL/13

Bob Horrible: NMR!

I think this gives Martin Powell scope for some extra-ordinary play.

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GYL/14

Someone up there definitely hates me. I have all but FRANCE on order, who has requested a double deadline because he was on holiday. I have to grant it.

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GYL/15

Alan Glaum is Asia, not Thrace. His phone number is 01-237-9330. Dave Hewitt can be found on 0202-863562. I have sent everyone copies of the rules now, having forgotten in three of the four cases last time round!

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Gamestarts

GYL/16 is a game of Scrabble! This has slightly surprised me, since most of my waiting lists are currently fairly static; whereas Scrabble has taken only a couple of issues to start.

To remind you how to play: unlike face to face Scrabble, each player has exactly the same letters, which (s)he uses to compose a word according to the rules. Each player scores the points for her/his word, but the word that goes on the board is the highest scoring word. The hand the players play the next round with is the new hand of the highest scoring player. The game will be played using the Penguin paperback dictionary, because that's the one I've got, and will last for twelve rounds. Letters will be allocated randomly from the set associated with the English version of Scrabble, excluding those already on the board.

I will print a pretty picture of the board each round, and would print one now to remind you what it looks like if it wasn't for the minor problem that I haven't drawn it yet. Don't forget to specify word position with your orders. The game starts in the usual way.

Players are: Alan Glaum, Sue Wiggin, Nigel Gordon, Jan Higgs, Kieth Loveys, and Chris Ramage. I can't see any need to negotiate, so I won't publish addresses. I hope you don't mind.

Your letters are:

? + - - + ? ? + - - + ? ? + - - + ? ? + - - + ? ? + - - + ?

DEADLINE

Wednesday 14 November  
14th November 1985

RUPERT BEAR AND THE NUCLEAR FUEL REPROCESSING PLANT  
(The Nutscale tapes)

One sunny morning Rupert and his chum Edward Elephant were walking along the little path just outside Nutwood looking for horse chestnuts that they could give to their Mummies when they noticed a little stream of water running across their path. Rupert saw something shiny glinting in the water and knelt down to have a good look.

"I say Edward! Look at the size of the fish in this stream. They're absolute whoppers, aren't they! I'll just pop back to my house and ask Daddy if I can use my little fishing rod today. I hope he says yes!"

"Hang on, Rupert. Stop paddling in the water and let's check it for radioactivity."

"Golly, what fun! Did you bring your Geiger Counter with you?"

Suddenly, with a hoarse shout, an immaculately attired human ran down the path, leapt over the stream and came to a halt before the two startled lads.

"Gosh!" said Rupert. "Who are you?"

"You mean to say you don't know who I am? Look at this!" The figure began to prance up and down in front of the chums. He limped badly. "Doesn't that tell you?"

"Oh yes, you're Gyllan Paris, aren't you?" said Edward. "The well known rat catcher, child-molester, schoolgirl diesel, structural engineer, space pilot, politician, criminal, debtor, musician and anti-pope campaigner? I've always wanted to meet you. Hows things?"

"No time for small talk is there? Have you wankers being drinking that fucking water?"

Rupert looked shocked, and he was. "If my Mummy heard you talking like that she'd wash your mouth out with soap and water - and jolly nasty soap it is as well, its one of those carbolic soaps that ..."

"Hang on, Rupert." said Edward. "Whats Gyllan Paris doing here?"

"Well, I was being persued by those diabolic Death Droids, because I'd been framed by a door, and I had to get out of the room I was in, so I nicked a copy of the Boys Own Book of Nuclear Power Plants, from a passing boy, and quickly knocked up an Atomic Fuel Reprocessing Plant, the resultant radiation of which fried the rather simplistic technology of the droids. The plant's just back there, if you lads want to have a look round it, but I came down when I say you two paddling in one of my discharges."

There was a brief pause.

"That sounds rude, doesn't it, Edward?"

"It sounds very rude indeed, Rupert. I think we ought to teach this chappie a lesson in manners. Have you got some of your Mummy's soap with you?"

"Yes I have. Its a good thing I always carry some around with me wherever I go, you never know when you'll find a use for it!"

"You're quite right, Rupert" said Edward. "Look, I'll grab his legs, you knee him in the groin and when he's yelling, fill his mouth thoroughly with water and then give him the works with the carbolics."

continued after the waiting lists ...



## Waiting lists

With the exception of Scrabble, these waiting lists have hardly moved. I will make a special effort to get players for some of them over the next couple of months, but if they remain static for much longer some will have to be cut.

Dippy Jeremy Cox.

Cline-9 (GM Pete Mason): Bob Reeves, Geoff Kemp, Dylan Harris, Kevin Elliot and John Denniston. Unfortunately, Tony Ross has dropped out. ~~3~~ wanted.

Definateive Mercator: Bob Horrible, Kevin Elliot, Clive Buckman, Bob Reeves, Martin Powell, Kieth Loveys, David Hewitt, Jon Cox. 5 wanted.

Machiavelli: Mark Holiday, Ralph Atkinson, Phil Rimmer, Phil Hardy, Dave Hewitt, Jon Cox. 2 wanted. Will these people tell me if they would prefer to play a variant with fewer players?

RR (GM Alan Glaum): Peter Ladyani, Martin Powell, Kieth Loveys, myself. Gamestart next issue, if Peter wants to continue subscribing.

Scrabble: empty, but a gamestart has occurred!

Mayday: someone volunteered, but I can't find the letter. Oooops.

Next issue: Imperiator, a game by Ralph Atkinson, and Circus Maximus, a game by someone else. Both are set in the Roman Empire.

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### Variant Bank

I have received, out of the blue, two letters from the variant bank, which seems to be becoming active again. Included was an interesting booklet, the "Diplomacy Variant Handbook", which is an introduction to the concepts involved. Since Andrew Poole said I could reprint articles from it, I will do so when the inclination takes me.

The handbook contains the latest introduction to variants, the Regular Diplomacy Supplement, the UKVB (United Kingdom Variant Bank) package, the booklet "All about Diplomacy Variants", and a few other items. It costs 50p (including postage) and is available from Andrew Pool at 27 Holmfield Avenue East, Braunstone, Leicester LE3 3FD, or from the current custodian of the variant bank, Geoff Kemp of 23 Raygill, Wilnecote, Tamworth, Staffs, B77 4TY.

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### SHITEWRITE III → continued

"Righty ho, Edward! Ready when you are!"

Gylla n screamed as he felt Edwards trunk wrap itself around his legs. "No, no, get off me you little brats, hey, oh no, no, don't hit me there, I'm rather sensitive, no, ARRRrGGH!!, rffrghhff,sp,splutter, cough, wheeze, oh, oh, my gog, my god, you little bas - hey, what are you doing, hey, hey, don't do that, that water's highly radioacti...arRRRGCGHHH!!!"

To be continued.

The GM adds: not all the words in the above article may be included as words in a game of Scrabble. This is to ensure that any young eyes casting the looks across the pages of this illustrious publication will not be corrupted by the impure thoughts of some of its more depraved players. This applies particularly to poor students, easily perverted into raving, foaming monstrosities.

Doctor Death writes ...

While the Alliance conferences were certainly good for me, in that they both did what I wanted, I feel it would be pointless to describe them here since you will have read about them in the press. However, I can share with you one of my more private joys which I can fulfill especially at conferences.

I enjoy short, succinct poetry, and the best place to find it is in the form of four line dedications in memory of some departed friend or lover, on tombstones in graveyards. Conferences give me a wonderful opportunity to explore new yards for some beautiful verses about the people buried in them. The problem is, of course, that during the daylight hours I have to be in the halls responding to the endless pre-planned debates, so I can only follow up my poetic interests early in the morning or late at night. Not being an early riser, this means that surprised delegates could find me wandering around graveyards at midnight, with a touch in my hand, often stopping and examining gravestones, sometimes having to dig down a little bit to find hidden words.

Still, I'd better get on with the advice session; most of which comes from Gordon Prest:

Gordon Prest: 1. Can a unit that has just being built move immediately?  
2. Whats this retreat business? I don't quite understand.  
3. How can a fleet move from Sweden to Norway without encountering Denmark.

Dr. Death: 1. No. Technically, units are built in the Winter season, which, for the sake of ease, and convenience, is added on to the end of autumn in the postal game. 3. They share a common coast: furthermore, it would be inconsistent to allow an army to move from Sweden to Norway (and vice versa) without letting a fleet do so. A fleet going from London to Yorkshire does not have to do so by going via the North Sea, so a fleet going from Norway to Sweden should not have to go via Denmark.

Retreats are a way of allowing a unit to escape from a location in which it cannot stay. If a unit in, say, Berlin, which is not supported, is subject to a supported attack from elsewhere, then the invaders succeed in occupying Berlin. The unit that was originally there can either be disbanded, or can retreat after the other units have invaded. It can only retreat to a location not affected by battle, it cannot go to the location from which its attackers came, nor to a location in which a battle occurred. Since the retreat occurs after the normal movement, players can send in a list of possible retreat locations for one of their units they suspect may be attacked. This way, it is actually possible to occupy a supply centre after someone else has moved out of it, before the next round of movement. If no retreats are specified, then a unit successfully attacked must disband.

I would like to thank Tom Tweedy (of DibDibDib) and Nick Kinzett (of Zeeby) for their support in the judgement of Dylan against Kevin Elliot in the last HT. This is, as to be expected, yet more evidence that you should always trust someone who is in authority because they are in authority, since that person has to behave responsibly to gain authority, and so will always make the best possible decisions in the circumstances. Dylan, being gamesmaster and so the authority about events in the game, must have been write.

## FROGS WANDERING DIARY

### TUESDAY

I'm sure that someone up there has it in for me. Why else should I be lumbered with the loonies every time I get on the tube? On the way home from work this evening I wandered onto the train at Vauxhall underground only to be confronted by a dirty grinning nutter who was slowly clearing the complete carriage of passengers. I thought 'why me?', and tried to hide myself in the corner. Fortunately, the nutter stayed on the now empty carriage when I got off at Victoria, and I breathed a sigh of relief. On the district line from Victoria, I was standing beside a suited gentleman, who suddenly started talking to the carriage at large with things like 'makes you wonder why we work, eh chaps?', and 'bit chilly for the time of year, eh chaps?'. The bloke was a class 1 loony. And he was standing beside me. I suddenly became totally engrossed in the tube map of the district line between Chiswick Park and Richmond. I was almost tempted to escape at Gloucester Road, but stayed the distance to Hammersmith, just to prove I wasn't going to be intimidated by any bugger, even if he was a complete demented loony.

I've been following the various letters in the Standard on the topic of personal stereos on the tube. There has also been a great deal written about people with smelly under-arms who by standing in crowded tubes obviously cause discomfort to all around by smelling alot. It occurred to me that the lowest form of life must be a B.O.-ridden junkie on a very crowded and sweaty tube, listening to a personal stereo too loud. One suggestion I saw in the paper for getting rid of people who listen to their Walkmans too loud, was to get a very strong magnet, and apply it to the tape in the personal stereo, thus rendering it useless. If anyone did that to me, I'd kill the bastard. There would be no sense in being polite. I'd just hit them with their sodding magnet.

Maybe when I sit beside people on the tube, they think 'oh God, not another loony'. I'd never considered that before.

### WEDNESDAY

We had another of our wonderful mid-summer parties at work today. It being the mid-summer we had to have the bloody thing outside. Well it lasted about 10 minutes outside. We all decided to repair inside when the third bowl of crisps went flying towards the Thames in the force 9 gale. We all disappeared up to the recreation room with bottles and cans and the last bowl of crisps.

The night slowly went downhill after that as 4 people started playing pool, and 3 people went back to their office to carry on working. No-one had remembered to bring any cassettes, and the only one that could be found was in the boot of someones car, and was 'Great Sporting Theme Tunes'. There is something very strange about being at a mid-summer party that should have been held outside, but couldn't because of the blizzard conditions, and ending up playing pool with the dregs who hadn't decided to do a couple of hours overtime, whilst listening to the theme tune to 'Match of the Day'. Still I sought solace in the 6 cans of Stella I'd brought along, and so after a while I was too pissed to give a damn anyway. By the end of the night I was dancing to the 'Crown Green Bowling' theme tune. All in all a great night.

#### THURSDAY

Our whole section went down the pub this lunch-time for a celebration drink. We were celebrating Thursday. Today we decided to go down to the Goose and Firkin, and sup afew pints of Bruces fine ales. After about 3 pints of Borough bitter followed by afew more of Dogbolter, I was in no state for work, not alone walking, breathing and standing up. So we all sat in the office for the hour that was left for working by the time we'd staggered back from the pub, just chatting and singing and throwing the waste paper bin around. I do enjoy hard working afternoons like todays.

#### FRIDAY

Another lunch-time of booze and jollity today. It seemed like a logical end to a particularly drunken week. The fact that I'd sloped off from a birthday celebration in one pub to another where I could get pissed by myself didn't really make an awful lot of difference. I was sitting there quietly minding my own business, supping my third pint of Guinness, when the bloke beside me launched into a comparison of the pub I was in, to a tube train in the morning. 'Like the bleeding tube this, ain't it ?', he said poking me gently with his dirty finger. 'All reading their papers and ignoring each-other, eh?' The fact that I'd just spent about an hour reading my paper and ignoring everyone didn't come into it. So I put the paper down, and thought, 'why not - lets be friendly to the old sod'. And so I started chatting to him. And all the old bastard wanted was a bloody argument. He started as soon as my paper hit the table, and it was obvious I was going to listen to him. As I had a full pint in front of me, he knew he had a captive audience for at least 15 minutes. He took great delight in telling me about his stay in prison for GBH, and armed robbery. I drunk my pint of Guinness in less than 5 minutes, and consequently left the pub belching a great deal, and with hiccups. Bastard. If it's not on the tube that I get cornered by sodding loonies, it's in the pubs. And it doesn't seem to happen to anyone else.

## SATURDAY

Another marvellous summery Saturday that would make a storm in February appear mild. I wandered down to Hammersmith library this morning to have a gentle browse around. As I queued to return my books, I noticed 'Wilt on High', Tom Sharpe's latest offering, had just been returned and was sitting waiting to be placed back on the shelves. I thought, 'bugger me - must try and get that'. As it always happens in situations like this, I was stuck in a huge queue, and was convinced that everyone else in the queue had the same idea as me - that is to get their hands on the Tom Sharpe book. As it took longer and longer to get served the more convinced I was that there was a hoard of people rushing around Hammersmith library looking for the trolley on which the book had been placed prior to being put back on the shelf. So by the time I finally got served, I was in a state of great agitation, and made a complete prick of myself by sprinting around the library looking for this sodding book. I found the trolley, and the book was still sitting there. At this point I noticed that there wasn't a crowd of demented Tom Sharpe fans running around the library in a frenzied state. Well there had been one. Me.

## SUNDAY

Sunday come round again. Considering we have two free days a week, it seems such a shame that one of them needs to be Sunday. You can't go shopping, or to the theatre, and the pubs are only open for a fraction of the time they are every other day. What a day. Today, I bought an Observer, and repaired to the local Fullers pub to attempt to do the crossword. So there I sat for the first ten minutes, apparently deep in thought staring at the paper. The next ten minutes were spent scribbling every conceivable anagram I could find, and the final ten minutes pretending to the rest of the pub that I never really intended doing the bloody crossword in the first place. Usually, I try work out alot of the solutions first, preferably before leaving the house, and then fill them in down the pub, or on the train, or anywhere in public where people can gasp in amazement at my superior intellect. Not often though.

## MONDAY

Alot of people arrived back from holiday today. We had long discussions on who'd had the highest rainfall, or how many colds had been caught. It makes one appreciate the English summer. So having not seen some people for a couple of weeks made it a perfect excuse to go down the pub at lunch for a few pints, and a game of darts. I'm sure that the more I play darts the worse I get. I think it applies to all the people I play with as well, since we only had two games in an hour today, and both games ended with everyone requiring double 1. In the end we decided the winner would be the first person to score more than 20 with 3 darts. That took another 20 minutes, so it was the first person to get 3 darts in the board. I won. Close game though.

## From Russia in love

Nothing like a bit of corn to start a fun article, and we musn't let little things like reality interfere with romance, must we. To be honest, this piece should have been entitled "From Russia with a hole in my shoe", but since I went to Russia with a hole in my shoe, I don't think it quite fits. So why this title? Read on, read on ....

So why, oh non-Liberal readers amongst you, does a Liberal go to a Soviet propaganda event? One of the key elements of my Liberal view of foreign matters is that both super-powers, the USA and the USSR are much of a greyness. Neither is worse than the other. They both behave like the powerful states they are, poking their noses in other peoples affairs and generally wrecking things, just like any other state. I believe the key divide for mankind is the North South one, not the East West. I would be just as willing to go to a major political event in the USA, if they were willing to subsidise me as well, although I may insist that I will only attend in a town in which MacDonalds has been banned! (no wonder the Scots hate the English; Edinburgh has banned MacDonalds by capitalist methods; the population won't buy the product).

In this diary, I write the events on a day to day basis. Thus the political analysts amongst you are going to be severely dissappointed at the utter lack of structure, but since thats true of the rest of HT as well, they're fools to read this crap in the first place.

In Moscow, at the festival, we stayed in the huge Hotel Cosmos, which has 22 floors of 84 double rooms. Each delegation also shared a 'club', which was a building of some kind requestioned for the festival, to use as a base and for holding social events. The British club was shared with the Irish, Canadians, Aussies and New Zealanders. It was a newly built "Young Pioneers Centre", inconveniently located in a Moscow suburb.

So on with the story ....

### Day one

I arrived on the dot at ten thirty, like a good little boy. I should have got rather suspicious over the fact that the organiser, the bloke with the visas, didn't arrive until an hour later, an eleven thirty, so we were all hanging around Gatwick departure lounge looking bored and furtive.

We left a few minutes late. I suppose my choice of an Aeroflot TU-134 for my first flight was apt. Not many airliners seem to be converted bombers, waiting to be converted back again. This one still had its navigators bomb aiming glass nose! The pressurising didn't work too well, so on take off and landing my ears popped more than travelling through tunnels on the Kings Cross line. The food was to British Rail standard as well.

The flight took  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Getting from Moscow airport to the Hotel took 5 hours. The Soviet customs are paranoid! Everyone got searched. Dave Senior, a YL Gay activist, got mega-searched. He had his photo-copies of the Liberator songbook confiscated (although he got them back a few days later). It probably had something to do with the song "Oh My Stalin", which I'll have to print one day. Nothing of mine was nicked, although they seemed quite fascinated by my railway rivals maps, which I bought along just in case of boredom.

### Day two

I got up at nine o'clock in the morning for a mega-verbose delegation meeting, having been woken up at about 3am by a telephone call begging someone to go to some organising committee. I should have slept. Most of the



meeting seemed to be about the joys one or two individuals feel for the sounds of their own voices. And the Russians carved us out, with great skill, of that meeting my room-mate went to.

Instead of lunch, we were supposed to go on this march to the stadium. Now normally, I don't like organised marches unless its a method of expressing at opinion not usually appreciated by the establishment, and the establishment in Russia certainly appreciated the festival! I decided to go along anyway (I needed the exercise). Good thing I did, too. It was magnificent.

The Soviets had organised the local population to line the route of the march and cheer. No matter how aware of the organisation I was, the very fact that I was on a march who's message was peace and the local population was cheering as we went past was fantastic. How could you not react? The route was also sporadically lined with folk groups, organised dances and music on the theme of the festival (which was 'For anti-imperialist solidarity, peace and friendship'). Half way through the march we had managed to wreck the neat organisation insisted on by the Soviets by stopping and dancing with the musicians. The East Germans, behind us, had about 500 delegates and were spread out over perhaps 100 yards. We had 160 delegates and were thinned out over  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile! And there wasn't any drink about.

The opening ceremony was very impressive. I normally find large quantities of people marching in formation excruciatingly boring, but I have clearly judged them from either being forced to take part (at school), or a quick five seconds on TV before I could turn over. That, or the Red Army are very very good at anti-militaristic displays! Afterwards, President Gorbachov spoke, live, to the people in the stadium. Not many English can truthfully claim to have heard a speech by one of the two most powerful men in the world. Mind you, he spoke in Russian and I've no idea what he said - it could have been anything .... (I picked up a copy of the speech later, and it was actually the usual politicians platitudes).

I must have had a late night, because ...

### Day three

I spent the morning in bed, recovering from the flight and so on. In the afternoon, three of us decided to go to Red Square and see the sights. After seeing the queue at the metro, we went by taxi. He got us there without any problems, but the condition of the roads ... plus the taxi was a little old, tho' spick and span. We only got twenty yards into Red Square before we were mobbed by Moscovites after ... our signitures. We signed hundreds of the things ... it was incredible. Soviets must collect signitures the way students collect overdrafts. Many of them spoke some words of English, and I ended up chatting for an hour and a half with a first year English student so she could practise her English. Do you realise that joining the CP in the USSR is a reward for working hard at school and college, and its simply a social club with some method of selecting the politically interested for promotion. It sounds remarkably like the Young Conservatives, famous for being a marriage beareau.

One remark which was fairly common from the Soviets in Red Square was that they were very happy to have visitors who weren't anti-Soviet. It appears they also suffer from American Tourists, who seem to wander around Red Square muttering about seeing the place before it gets nuked.

If you ever go to the USSR, takes tons of badges. Everything got swapped. Martin Tod's "Come to Sunny Worthing". Dave Senior's "How Dare you presume I'm heterosexual". Soviet badges are almost always the high quality metal caste affairs, often of home towns or factories.

Apparently, some of the Norwegian delegation went around with teashirts saying "Soviets out of Afganistan" in Russian, and the Soviets complained to the Norwegian government! Those in question were ... Norwegian YLs!

#### Day four

I must have been somewhat depressed because, following a trip to the English club in the morning, I decided that there didn't seem to be much point in taking part in the political activity. I think the depression was caused by a rather good exhibition in the centre, entitled "The Nuclear Family", which consisted of a post holocaust washing line, where daily dress had been frozen in melted form and strained of colour, effectively illustrating the horrifying consequences of Thatcher's dream. It was by Roxanne ... um ... why I am so useless at names ... balls, see it if you can find out who I mean! The root of the mood was the fact that the Soviets had blatantly carved most Western delegations out of the Centre's Presidium (Steering Committees). I feel some competent organisation and inspired hacking would have got round the problem.

In the afternoon, I discovered that the Soviets had left every delegate a present. It consisted of a carry all with three full colour maps, a teshirt (which I gave away later), an extremely gross American style basketball hat, a small rubber doll symbolizing the theme of the festival, writing paper and pens, a first day issue of stamps, and a lookalike swiss army penknife. Some blasted Scot borrowed my knife without returning it.

Impressions of Moscow: no rubbish on the streets, although its a bit dusty. Lots of greenery. No graffiti or anything like that in the subways or the beautiful metro. The shops are discreetly set back, waiting to be used as opposed to attacking passers-by with consumerism. Instead of advertising slogans trying to persuade us to worship the latest video recorder, there are lots of political slogans on the theme of peace (I know which I prefer).

The Irish held a Cealah in the evening at the club, but the s/\$££/ds drunk the Guinness before it started. I ended up sharing Vodka with a republican, who ended up assuring me that I was decent for a Brit. I also discovered, which I hadn't known before, that the Worker's Party holds the view that the IRA are fascists.

#### Day five

The metro is magnificent!! It was originally built as a showpiece by Stalin in the 1930s, and has been continually extended since then. I know the more extensive London underground well, and noted the following differences:

- no adverts, graffiti, or other insults to the eye;
- mega-fast escalators;
- a train every two minutes throughout the day;
- all the stations are of high standards, not just the occasional busy one;
- every station has a unique décor;
- the Russians are just as nasty as Londoners when it comes to getting on trains at rush hour, if not nastier;
- the escalator for the hotel is longer than that at Leicester Square.

Despite my misgivings yesterday, I made it to a political centre, despite difficulties finding it. Nothing special, nothing bad. I think wandering around the park in the morning looking for it was, to be honest, more rewarding.

The park in question is opposite the hotel, and is full of magnificent buildings housing museums. Too many paths and not enough flower beds. I got some good photos out of it though. When I feel like celebrating something, I'll print some of them.

Virtually all Moscovites seem to live in flats. Each flat is large by London council standards, but apart from that the resemblance is considerable. The buildings themselves are often fairly neat tenement blocks. Its certainly a sufficient way to live, but things must get difficult if you want to grow your own food or flowers. I didn't see one allotment. (I later discovered that allotments can be found on the city's borders, and furthermore Russians are positively encouraged to have holiday homes provided they grow food there, partially because of the Soviet's food supply problems).

The afternoon rounded off with a visit to the UK embassy, which flies the only foreign flag visible from the Kremlin, much to the annoyance of the supreme Soviet! We went to get hold of some decent cheap booze, following an inspired move by the Australians, but the blasted Brits insisted on keeping to the rules. I think they must have been a little annoyed that we were at the festival. Still, we had an interesting bugged conversation.

The evening was taken up by a party/gig in the club. Misty & Roots played & played & played & ... In fact, they played so much that they stopped everyone else on the programme playing (we had to be out by lam). Fortunately, I had remembered my political roots, and ensured that I was stocked up with Stella (despite the embassy), although I didn't get to drink all the cans because I took pity on some of those lesser mortals whose list of major priorities don't include social lubrication.

#### Day six

I attempted to catch up on my sleep, but unfortunately Martin, still my room-mate, remembered that he came from Cambridge and spent the entire time trying to keep me awake.

Later on, I started thinking about the differences in the ways of life of the Soviets and the Brits. The similarities are interesting:

- both got tons of silly traditions, whose meaning has become irrelevant & in many cases, have been completely forgotten, which are still preserved;
- both drink far too much;
- and I'm sure there is some other things as well ...

The key difference is, of course, economic. Britain has an advanced capitalist economy, in which the purpose of an economic unit is to provide a service of some kind to those with the power to utilise it. The USSR, with its socialist based economy, is a system where the purpose of an economic unit is to provide employment. Unemployment in the USSR would be a sign of the collapse of the state's principles, whereas in Britain it simply means that the economy's going through a bad patch. On the other hand, goods in the UK should be of a higher quality than those of the USSR, since Soviet goods need only be built to function, whereas British goods need to sell as well. I get the impression that Soviet goods are finished to a high amateur standard compared to what you find in Britain.

One of the key differences this creates is motivation. A significant factor in work quality has to be the average Brit's fear of losing a job. Traditionally, a socialist worker's motivation should be positive, a love of her/his work. The problem is that positive motivation is personal. It is easy for a state to provide negative motivation on its population (if you don't do this, you'll be out of a job), but it is rather difficult for a state to force a worker to love her/his job. You cannot order someone to love their work! Of course, the Soviet state tries to get round this, by using the old standby of the external threat. Russia needs America, for exactly the same reason that America needs Russia,

As it happens, I believe in a third approach to the whole question of an economic system. I believe a society should be based on the principle of

providing its members with maximum opportunities for self-fulfillment. Both capitalism and socialism concentrate on different elements necessary in such a society (provision of the necessary resources and opportunity to utilise those resources) but the emphasis is in the wrong place, on one particular factor in the overall picture. I intend to discuss this sooner rather than later in HT.

Ok, a subject change. I was warned by some Brits before I went that Russian coffee is 'orrible. Ok, on Aeroflot, it is. However, in Moscow, its average to good. They use reasonable coffee in Espresso lookalike machines. I suppose if you are culturally ignorant, and you don't like Espresso, you'll dislike their coffee, but if your taste buds have the remotest sense of humanity, you will at least find what they drink palatable.

The evening of this day served as an introduction to what was to come. IFLRY (the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth) held a disco. During the first half I generally did some bopping and helped in the consumption of some (safe) Austrian wine, donated by the Austrian embassy. But later on...

I'm only going to tell you about this conversation because the Russian with whom I was talking translated everything for her avidly interested friend. I don't know what caused it - probably drunkenness - but we created romantic images for each other. I haven't been able to preserve the feeling of that evening, so its difficult to describe, but basically we started describing pictures in our minds whose theme was purely and simply romance. She complimented me a great deal by accusing me of being a poet, and seemed genuinely surprised when I admitted I was merely a technocrat. After an ego boost like that, I went overboard and invented an image which I still remember, am somewhat proud of, and have no intention of telling anyone else (you won't understand why if you're not a romantic at heart).

#### Day seven

I went to Lenin's Tomb this morning. It is a simple, austere building, which seems to clash with the more complex Kremlin wall behind it, yet in fact doesn't. It seemed to be to be the architectural equivalent of modern classical music. Inside, the moving line of people went down into the blackened tomb where Lenin's body was displayed peacefully in a glass case.

The atmosphere of the thing is that of an unending funeral. Lenin's body seems destined to be mourned by the Soviet nation so long as that nation exists. He has become, unfortunately for them, their messiah, in many ways.

The evening was taken up by a visit to the Bolshoi Ballet, to see a production of Romeo and Juliet. It was excellent. In the past, I did a tour of the London classical music circuit, and this has provoked me to rejoin it. Ballet is popularly regarded as being effete in Britain, something which this performance proved false.

The building is a fairly tatty greek lookalike from outside, in the style preferred by mega-rich Americans for their country houses. The theatre area itself is huge, with five storeys of boxes rising above the stalls. Each box is surrounded by red velvet inlaid with golden Soviet patterns. They were full of the only neatly dressed Russians I saw in Moscow, obviously dressed for a special evening out.

The stage was austere, with the minimum scenery blending in with a background of crimson curtains. The rare prop was the minimum necessary to aid the story, such as a cross for the engagement scene.

I never knew that dance could be so expressive. I used to the move your hips, wave your arms and become a windmill approach to discos, so seeing the real thing was quite a shock. I saw how Juliet ran away from Romeo, wanting

to be caught. I saw how she ran away from her parent's choice of suitor, wanted to escape. I saw the joy of their love, and the grief of their deaths. I must go to more Ballet.

#### Day Eight

What you've read for the last few days was written today! I went to the club to meet some cosmonauts, who didn't turn up. However, I did have a chat with a translator from the local radio station, who told me how the Soviet election system works. Everyone in the workplace gathers together in a mass meeting, and sorts out their nomination for an election. The mass meeting then chooses their candidate, who is then subjected to a vote via the ballot box, with the voters saying yea or nay. The effect is that the actual election takes place at the equivalent of our nomination stage, and that the ballot box acts as a vote of confidence in the candidate. Candidates must continually consult their electorate, and must be seen to pursue their interests and desires. The electorate may at any time recall and replace their candidate.

Obviously, like any electoral system, this one has its weaknesses and strengths. It seems to me to be far more orientated towards hacking than ours, since the implication was that the electoral bases were smaller (factories, etc.), where candidates could wander round being nice to people and generally having a good old hack session. Imagine: Mr. Gorbachov has hacked his way right to the top! It is like internal party politics in the UK. Mind you, this gives me a good idea how things could go wrong!

In the evening the management of the club went out of their way to be nice to us by organising a Soviet folk concert, with music from all over the USSR. Unfortunately, it didn't really work, despite excessive quantities of food. However, I met a Russian who shares my interest in the impact of computers on society, and also realises that you ain't seen nothing yet.

#### Day nine

I finally made it to the Economic Centre - but they'd moved it!! All that effort to get up early wasted. However, I did get some good photos of the backstreets of old Moscow. I didn't bother, out of a body blow to my enthusiasm, to go to the Young Worker's Centre.

Today, being the last day of the Festival, was finished by a closing ceremony. The event itself was ok - especially the scrobats from the circus - but hours of incomprehensible speeches in French and Russian resulted in a great deal of boredom. However, half was through the Victoria Station standard tannoyed words, a number of British, Irish, Canadian, and others, suddenly became aware of the importance of research into the aerodynamic properties of paper, and turned the many page, Russian only, closing ceremony programme into millions of paper darts. The idea rapidly spread to the rest of the stadium; by the time the speeches ended, fully half the place was throwing the things. Leaving at 5.30pm and getting back at lam for a 2½ hour ceremony was a bit over the top.

Afterwards, in the club's closing session, I had another chat with the Soviets I met last night. We were all too tired for intellectual games, so we compared council flats!

The structure of the Soviet state, limited by the constitution, and its effect on the people is interesting. The state cannot preach war - indeed, standing up in a street and saying "We should attack ..." is an arrestable offence. However, all states need "a threat" to keep control of the people. Thus, what the Soviet state does is preach peace, and emphasize the "Western Threat" (with more than a little help from the Rastafarian anti-Christ, Ronald Reagan). So, despite the fact that the USSR behaves like any other powerful state in protecting its interests, as Hungary, Czechoslovakia & Afganistan have shown, the people genuinely believe in peace and dialogue to solve problems. They're also somewhat



paranoid, because any potential Soviet action needs to be justified in terms of an external threat on the USSR, so the Red Army has an excuse to march.

It is remarkably interesting to note how informed the average Soviet citizen is about the UK. The average Brit knows little about the USSR, but Fredski Bloggski in Red Square is quite capable of holding a discussion about, for example, proportional Representation (which appears to be the line for the UK electoral system!).

#### Day nine

We got back at 3.30am last night, so perhaps it's not surprising that I woke up at 11.30am. Martin is still asleep, but I've managed to resist temptation to get revenge for Thursday (was it Thursday?). I feel too kind hearted to disturb the sweet little Cambridge boy's sleep, especially in his second home. I've had a lot of fun teasing him about Cambridge and Moscow, and he gets more irritated every time I do it!

The day followed with quantities of boredom. First of all, there was a trip around the Kremlin. Now, it must be said that lots of the buildings were pretty from the outside, but my feet were aching and we had been promised views of the interiors, where there might have been some seats. I was even too tired to try and get some decent photos.

Last night, the Scots were leaving, so most of us became pissed. I got as pissed as I have ever been. I must have consumed most of a  $\frac{1}{2}$  litre bottle of Vodka. I missed the finale, when some Cypriot tankies ('tankie' is a term to describe those who believe the USSR is perfect) came down in a blazing temper about some t-shirts which were meant to be insulting to our hosts, worn by the Young Communists. One person, not a Cypriot, ended up hitting the widow of a man killed by plastic bullets in Ireland last year, which has resulted in Sinn Féin being very annoyed and threatening vendettas.

I haven't mentioned the hotel food. It has been excellent, given it is mass catering. The Soviets are evidently unfamiliar with vegetarianism, and so had difficulty at first sussing what to give us (about 40 are veggies). However, rather than surrendering to the boring temptation of producing an infinite number of cheese salads and omelettes, the chef experimented and came up with some wonderful ideas. As always with experimentation, not everything worked, but we were all grateful for her/his efforts.

#### Day ten

Things have started to dive downhill. We left for Kalinin today, after an exhausting week in Moscow, on a package tour to Leningrad. Originally, we were promised five days in Leningrad, and I was looking forward to the rest, but the Soviets couldn't satisfy the tour company's commitment. Intsetad, we got this.

I don't like package tours at the best of times. I am not the type to be organised into hordes of rush visits of the most touristy locations. I much prefer to find and explore things in my own time.

Furthermore, the hotel at Kalinin doesn't understand that meals consisting of eggs, eggs, and more eggs doesn't half bugger up the digestive system. I bet we veggies had more animal fat than the carnivores - they got veg with their meat; we had pure bloody omelette.

#### Day eleven

Had a hangover and went of a riverboat to look at the tractor factories on the banks of the Volga.

#### Day twelve

We got up at 6am for a six hour coach trip to Novgorad. I was so tired that I missed the trip to the city itself, which is a pity because its meant to be quite pretty. After another not quite so boring egg based dinner, we went on another boat trip, through some attractive countryside, and met some of the local Komsomol people (Soviet Young Communists).

#### Day thirteen

This time, we got up at 5am for the train journey to Leningrad. The first couple of hours consisted of going very slowly along an old branch line (Novgorad is a terminus since the nazis wrecked the old river bridge). The trouble is that Russian branch lines are so long that, although the track was just as knackered as, say, the BR Blackpool branch, the slow journey was much longer and so lasted much longer. Once we got on the main line things were a little better. Guess who missed the visit to the city. I must go back one day.

#### Day fourteen

Flew home. The aircraft was more modern, and wasn't a converted bomber!

#### Afterthoughts

I definitely want to visit the USSR again, just as I must visit France again. Its a beautiful, untamed country (between Moscow and Leningrad, the most populated part, 60% is forest, 20% is swamp, and 20% is agriculture).

It was interesting to see how the Soviets live. They are a very friendly people the only ones who caused us any trouble were black marketeers. It was also interesting to see the Soviet system from inside, and to confirm that, basically, both the East and West have problems of a different nature, but most of the propaganda directed in one block against the other is a load of statist crap.

It is true that Soviets punish political dissenters, but it would be very hypocritical for a Briton to criticise the USSR for doing so without criticising the British government for doing precisely the same thing. For example, in the UK, a woman was jailed for a year for peacefully campaigning for peace. Indeed, in both countries, there are many, regular violations of human rights. In direct comparison, I think the USSR is slightly worse, mainly because they dish out heavier punishments.

The one thing that really impressed me about the USSR is that things are built to function, not sell. It might be useful if the Soviets applied a little art to their functional objects, to make everyday life seem a little more interesting. The division between art for the special things, and pure, boring functionality for the rest was stark. The freedom from consumerism was very refreshing.

The Soviet people care about and are proud of their achievements, though they are very willing to admit that improvements can be made (and it was difficult to get them to say what improvements). The USSR is a very tidy, clean and, interestingly, unpolluted country. Moscovites are very proud that their city is the least polluted capital in the world.

Overall, a very interesting visit and I would like to see more.



Points of compasses

— I have received from Dave Phillips of Middleton on the Manchester part of the map the rules for a game called majority, where eight players control eight parties in the representative democracy of CONFUSIA. Each player represents a party which controls a national paper, has particular policies to promote, enemies to defeat, elections to win, and governments to run, often in alliance. The game is currently being playtested in Match Abandoned. If anyone is interested, I'm sure that HT could run a game. One warning; the Liberals in Confusia are the nasty mainland European type, or so Dave claims.

— I must write my article on bean shoots called a question of work, especially following the contacts I made in the USSR. Can someone remind me before the next edition is due to be published?

— Despite my earlier promises, here is an index:

Pages 1 to 12: An ADVERT for New South Wales, or so Rupert Murdoch told me when he bought the space.

Page 13: The front cover?

Page 14: Editorials and letters and deadlines

Page 15: The latest HT election; which article should be written?

Page 16: Games: one to five.

Page 17: Maps for games one and five.

Page 18: Games eight and nine.

Page 19: Games eleven and twelve.

Page 20: Maps for games eight and eleven

Page 21: Games 13 to 16, including a Scrabble gamestart.

Page 22: SHITEWRITE III

Page 23: Wainging lists, spelling lessons, nuclear variant banks and a blancmange.

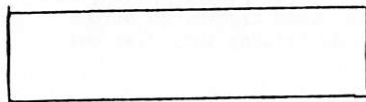
Page 24: Dr. Death writes ...

Pages 25 to 27: The Frong wanders over some paper

Pages 28 to 35: The boring bit about my visit to Russia

PAGE 36: the bit that should have been written with some Tpix and a Dictionary.

— The usual crap about the contents of the box below:



IF THIS BOX CONTAINS A SMALL FIGURE THEN  
YOU HAVE THE GOOD FORTUNE TO NEVER RECEIVE  
THE HACKS GAZETTE AGAIN, UNLESS YOU ARE  
FOOLISH ENOUGH TO SEND ME (DYLAN HARRIS)  
A QUANTITY OF MONEY. STILL, YOU SHOULDN'T  
HAVE PAID IN THE FIRST PLACE, SUCKER.

— Hacking Times was brought to you by Dylan Harris on behalf of Greenwich Young Liberals, who are due to receive a cheque if I could find the address of their treasurer.

— Well, I'm going to bed soon, which means that I've got nothing to type below except to give you a hint of what I might put in the next HT:

- 1) A number of plugs for all the zines I receive, especially the new ones.
- 2) A review of the mega-intellectual books I've been listening to.
- 3) A review of the mega-intellectual music I've been reading.
- 4) A review of the mega-intellectual ego I've recently acquired.
- 5) A reveiea, or even review, of something else as well.

Oh, fill this space with something yourself.