Bureaucracy: A Paranoid Fantasy

A funny thing happened to me on the way to the printer with this month's issue—I got stuck in the toughest adventure from Infocom since *Spellbreaker*. I'm not saying it's *that* hard, but it is definitely tougher than *Moonmist*, *Hinjinx* and *Leather Goddesses* combined.

The opening "scene" of Douglas Adams' second adventure is decidedly odd: The program informs you that you are not authorized to use it, so you have to fill out an onscreen License Application Form before proceeding. Instead of just working your name into the game, the program also incorporates other information from the form into the game in a number of new ways. (And goofs on you as you fill in the form: When I typed in the name of my present girlfriend, it said: "What a dog!")

The street name and number entered on the form became the name of the first location, a new apartment I had just moved into, and the rest of the locations outside had the same street name. I was soon roaming up and down Elgin Court searching for my mail, which had been forwarded to the wrong address. Collecting mail from each house on the street is the goal of the opening game, in which I had just been hired by Happitech, Inc. A letter included with the packaging said Happitech was sending me to an employee training course in Paris. Obtaining the ticket from the local travel agency was a snap, but I soon realized I needed money for a cab to the airport, and the only way to get that was to find the $75 that Happitech sent—in the mail.

First stop was a stamp collector, who proved easy enough to lure away from his home so I could grab a valuable piece of his mail: a copy of *Popular Paranoia* magazine. The useful part of it was one of those little yellow Postal Service stickers, this one bearing the letter "C." Similar stickers on mail from other houses hold the key to solving a puzzle later on.

Rambo Meets Woody

But Elgin Court, I learned, is inhabited by some of the most paranoid people on the planet, who made the task extremely frustrating. Especially the heavily-armed weirdo who looks like a combination of Woody Allen and Rambo. And the one living in the fortified house, where a voice from the intercom kept repeating: "A radio is connected to my brain."

Next door to that is a llama farm, which I had never noticed on Elgin Court before. You can go to the bank and try to get the situation straightened out. Try, I say, because signs in half the windows say "Next Window Please," and when I found one devoted to change-of-address forms, the teller said I had already filled one out—so they wouldn't let me fill out another one. I tried calling the bank from home, and the only "person" I got to talk to was Bongo, the bank dog!

Bureaucracy is so frustrating, Adams included a "score" that represents your frustration level. Each time you do

Realms of Darkness

by Charles Don Hall

In this singular blend of text adventure and fantasy role-playing you control a party of eight adventurers who must complete five quests of progressively increasing difficulty. Amazingly enough, none of the quests involves defeating an evil wizard. They range all the way from delivering a letter to defeating a wizard who is *not* evil. The manual is especially well-written. One very useful feature is the "tutorial" section, which takes you keystroke-by-keystroke through the first ten minutes or so of the game. (You're on your own for the next several thousand minutes.)

There are eight character classes: Fighters, Wizards, Clerics, Thieves, Champions (Fighter-Wizards), Knights (Fighter-Clerics), Friars (like Monks or Ninjas) and Barbarians. Barbarians are essentially Fighter-Thieves who can go into a "Berserker Fury" and do double damage for any one encounter during a dungeon expedition.

In the usual fantasy role-playing tradition, the disk comes with a pre-rolled party of eight characters with stupid names (such as "Swat", who I think was also in the pre-rolled *Phantasie* party). Expert gamers will of course delete these characters without looking at them. Less-experienced players may consider renaming and using them.

A Magician's Delight

I found the magic system nothing short of a joy to use. There are seven levels of spells in two classes (Clerical and Wizardly). When you cast a spell the program shows you two windows. The first contains the number of spells of each level that you are able to cast. You use the arrow keys to move a pointer up and down in this window. In the second window, you can read the names of all known spells of the level that you're pointing at. Simply hit carriage return to
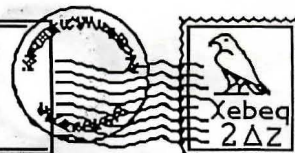
New Games

Phantasie III caught us by surprise when it showed up last week (Apple now, C 64 by June). Lots of changes in the game design, but we still found as many mispelled words as we did monsters. (Will somebody please send Winston Douglas Wood a spelling checker?) *Accolade's Interactive Comics*, a three-disk package, is on the shelves. But *Shadowgate* (Mindscape) and *Alternate Reality, the Dungeon*, are still unavailable. *Guild of Thieves* may be out by now. *Sign of the Wolf*, an illustrated berserker story by Fred Saberhagen, is not a game but may be of interest to berserker fans.

Hello? Floyd?

The long-awaited *Planetfall* sequel, *Stationfall*, is set for a May or June release. So is Infocom's first "fright night" adventure, *Lurking Horror* by Dave Lebling. Future InvisiClues will contain hints for two game each ($9.95). The first one will have *Bureaucracy* and *Hijinx*. (Speaking of *Hijinx*, don't forget to show "A Corpse Line" in the screening room.) Zorkmaster Marc Blank is now in California putting together CDI software for the Record Group (funded by Polygram).

Conversions

SSI is working up Amiga versions of *Phantasie* and *Roadwar* as well as ST versions of *Wizard's Crown* and *Rings of Zilfin*. Plans for the Macintosh *Roadwar* and *Phantasie* have been cancelled. SSI is now publishing a quarterly newsletter, *Inside SSI*, with tips and interviews of authors. *Might and Magic* is being converted for the IBM as well as the C 64 (both by the fall). A clue book with maps is also in the works. And the sequel may be ready by early next year. All of Sierra's *King's Quest* games, plus *Space Quest* and *Winnie the Pooh*, are out for the Amiga.

The new version of *Ring Quest* was totally revamped by Richard Garriott and author Dallas Snell. Graphics were changed so you are always facing north, which makes mapping easier, and the arcade sequence was rewritten from scratch. There are 20% more text responses, the vocabulary is 10% bigger, and it now supports two drives. (Plus it was redesigned to minimize swaps on a one-drive system.) A C 64 version is coming. (And the Apple only costs $19.95.)

On-line Orc-slaying

Doug Rogers' AdventureLand is an excellent BBS devoted to the genre, offering plenty of hint files, messages and over 100 user-written games (80+ are for IBM) to download. It's in Lexington, KY: 606-271-0558, 300/1200, 24 hours. In Pennsylvania you can check out The Dungeon, 717-235-1747, which is run by QB subscriber Norm Marks. 1200 baud, 6 PM-3AM. If you know of an adventure-oriented BBS let us hear about it so we can publish an up-to-date list.

New Guild Members

This month's new members are Harold Bohn and Christan, for a *Breakers* walkthru, and Allen Reinwasser for *Space Quest*. They also get the game of their choice. To apply for membership in the QuestBusters Guild, send in a walkthru for a recent adventure (write first to make sure we haven't already got one for the game). If it checks out, you'll also get the game of your choice.

We will soon publish these solutions, as well as *Hijinx*, *Bureaucracy*, *High Stakes*, *Might & Magic* and *Destiny Knight*. (The *Phantasie I* walkthru scheduled for this issue was postponed.) Let us know which games you want to see covered in future walkthrus, since we have a backlog of them right now.

ACS Club Update

Ken St. André says ACS games may not make it onto QLink due to idiosyncracies in the way the files are saved. The ACS Archives now has 55 C 64, 30 Apple and 10 Amiga games. For info send SASE to Ken at 3421 E. Yale, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

Winners

Daryl DuBose won the *Ultima III/Zork I* Contest and a Commodore version of *The Pawn*. (Correct answer was bell, book and candle, as hundreds of people told us. The next special contest will be a *little* more difficult.) Robert Carpana is getting *Realms of Darkness* for winning the Keys contest last month, and this month's winner is Paul Shulz, whose prize will be announced in the next issue. Next month we'll give also away a game in the random drawing.

Dear QuestBusters

The new code for clues is very difficult for someone with bad vision. Even with my glasses on I spend half my time switching my eyes back and forth...could this be a "c" or is it a "k"...is this one an "f" or maybe it's an "a"...let's see, maybe it's an "e". The codes in the text seem clear, but the code bar below is just too small and smudged. I hope you can make it at least as big as the coded letters in the text in the next issue.

Sheila Hazelwood

We set out to make the codes a little harder for people to "accidentally" read too much, but we did not intend to make it that hard—or to drive our readers blind, which would not produce very many renewals this year! The previous system resulted in lots of typos because the clues had to be decoded to be proofread, then recoded, which resulted in a serious drinking problem for the proofreader. The new system lets us write and proof the coded clues in a plain font, then switch them to the graphic font.

But several other people complained of the same problems you describe. Most of them also blamed the small text in the code bar, which was printed extra small to get it to fit into two columns. This time we have printed the code bar in a larger type size that should make it easier to decode. You may find it even easier if you make a high-quality photocopy of the code so you can place it on the page near the coded clues. Please let us know if you still have problems reading this month's clues.

QuestBusters ™

Indiana Jones in Revenge of the Ancients

by William E. Carte

Isn't it amazing how easily Indiana Jones escapes death and avoids dangerous traps in the movies? If you've ever wondered how it would feel to be in his shoes, you now have the opportunity to experience the same kind of dangers in this all-text adventure from Mindscape. In *Revenge of the Ancients*, you *are* that famous archaeologist and explorer.

Your quest is to find the ancient Mazatec Power Key, which can be used to control the world. Unfortunately, the Nazi army is also searching for the Key, and their vicious leader, Plebinheim, will stop at nothing, especially your death, to get his hands on it. Armed with your trusty bullwhip and wearing that well-known hat, you plunge into the steamy Mexican jungle to find the Key.

The story opens with the Nazis chasing you. As bullets fly past your head, you leap down into a centuries-old Mazatec pyramid. Immediately a stone slab slides over the opening and seals you inside. Is there a way out? Quick, what would Harrison Ford do? One step in the wrong direction and you're dead. Better find an exit from this maze quickly, or that poisonous slime dripping down the walls will also do you in.

If you are lucky enough to escape the Central Chamber you'll soon battle a swarm of killer bats. You have only a few seconds to deal with them, or again you will be wiped out. Unexpected and seemingly unavoidable death is the theme of this game. That should be no surprise—after all, this is Indiana Jones. [And a Mindscape game, all of which have been noted for their deadliness.] The surprise is that sidestepping the traps and surviving the dangers is not nearly as easy as it looks in the movies.

After taking care of the bats, you have to map the maze of tunnels. Success leads to the discovery of the Power Key, but of course the game isn't over yet. Taking it triggers another deadly trap, and without quick action you're dead again. No matter what you do at this stage, Plebinheim winds up with the Key, and the rest of the game is devoted to tracking him down and sabotaging his plan to use it in an attack on America.

Along the way you will grapple with various creatures, people and threats to your life. There is the strange Snake-Man, Don Pedro. You must say the right thing to him in order to finish the game. You must also leap from a bridge into a plane flown by an old friend, Marion Ravenswood. Without perfect timing, you will leap to your death. You'll also meet a gang of banditos led by a greedy little man named Benito. One wrong move here and—you guessed it—you're dead. There's a crocodile-infested pool you may want to cross, and a marching Nazi platoon that appears randomly and must be avoided at all costs. Once they catch up with you, there is no escape.

Eventually you will come face-to-face with Plebinheim himself. Unfortunately, he always wins the first confrontation. Survive these traps and a raft of others, solve the right puzzles, and you will finally meet him again in an ancient temple inside a vast pyramid. Only with quick action and shrewd thinking will you be able to rescue Marion from being sacrificed, obtain the key, save America and destroy Plebinheim.

Mechanical Breakdown

The story line and prose are excellent, but my praise ends there. When I play a text adventure, what I call the "mechanics" are as important to me as the story itself. And the mechanics of this program are the poorest I have ever seen. First of all there is a lengthy booting process that is followed by a long list of opening credits. This would be acceptable if you didn't have to sit through the same sequence every time you restore a saved game. Another drawback related to restoring saved games—which you will be doing frequently in this adventure—is that it supports only one disk drive. This is 1987, and the standard for an Apple or IBM game should definitely be two drives.

And it is slow...painfully slow! Every time you type in a command you must wait and wait and wait for the cursor to reappear. Every time you get killed or make a mistake (quite often in this game) it takes approximately 90 seconds to restore a saved position and start playing again. Compare that with less than five seconds for an Infocom game. (It is faster on the new Apple IIGS and IBM, but still slow compared with other adventures.)

The parser is the worst I have ever used. Simple two-word commands are often not understood. Whenever you type in a command that the program can't understand, it won't identify the unrecognized word or point out that you need to rephrase the command. In every such case it replies with a vague comment like "Don't lose your nerve, Indy." I got this answer to commands like "climb rock" and "cut vine with rock." Another confusing fact is that you are not allowed to hurt anyone with the knife throughout the entire game—but have to do so in the final scene.

Documentation is almost non-existent. One of my initial disappointments came when I opened the beautiful book and found no story background whatsoever. All you get is a single paragraph on the back cover of the book, which was designed to sell the product. The only acceptable part of the documentation is the special command section, which offers a thorough list of verbs. You also get a separate reference card listing special verbs used in the game.

As for the puzzles, most of them require serious thought. Some, however, are almost impossible. In one location you find an animal skin on the wall and have to take the eye, which is a jewel, from it. But the program never tells you the jewel is there. I tried to examine the skin, search the skin, and look at the skin. Nada.

And with Benito, besides making one obvious trade, you have to ask him for something the program never tells you he possesses. Another design deficiency makes it is impossible to complete the final scenario unless you said the proper phrase to Don Pedro. Again, there is no clue as to what you should say, and nothing in the end game that hints that you should have done so earlier.

Because of puzzles like these, I have to rate this one as an expert level adventure. Combined with the poor mechanics, this makes *Indiana Jones* an unusually frustrating adventure. It took me three months to solve it, though I admit that the disk would often lie untouched for a week at a time. The only thing that kept me from trashing it was the thought of the hard-earned $35 I had paid for it. It got to the point where I felt driven to

Mercenary: The Second City

by Tim Snider

You've finally found the Intergalactic ship in one of the underground hangars and escaped the surface of Targ. It took you five months to complete *Mercenary*, and now you're looking for a *real* challenge. Well, *Mercenary, The Second City*, fills the bill.

The sequel to the popular *Escape from Targ* (see review in November, 1986, issue) plays exactly like the original, but it is much harder. It employs the same interface and animated graphics for the flight simulator, and the same limited commands for the adventure (mainly "take" and "drop"). It is not really the long-awaited *Mercenary II*, but a supplement to the original program, which is required in order to play it. (This one will not use saved games from *Escape from Targ*, but *Mercenary II* will use saves from either game.) It's best-suited for anyone who thinks the original was too easy. (Anyone who thinks that must have an i.q. of well over 400.)

The Second City referred to in the title is a metropolis located in Targ's southern hemisphere. After booting the *Mercenary* program, you load this game as you would a save disk. The game begins as you crash in downtown Second City, just the way the original one kicked off with a crash-landing in Central City. The Palyars and Mechanoids are still battling for control of the planet, but the Mechanoids are beginning to gain a firm grip. Their ships litter the landscape outside of town, and they've built a few structures inside the city as well. There are even *two* Colony Crafts orbiting the planet now…if you can reach them.

For those who thought Central City was large, just wait till you see Second City. This place is more than three times bigger, with numerous buildings to visit—or blow up with your ship's laser. The underground complex is also huge. And to make things interesting, the designers have incorporated invisible doors and walls, rooms that change and random teleporters.

Remember the maps that were provided with the first game? Remember the hints section you referred to in the manual? Well, enjoy those fond memories, because you don't get any such help here: All the records of Second City have been destroyed, and the location of *everything* in town is unknown. I felt the designers

were close to unfair with this move. I did not need a map for Central City in the first game, but would have traded my disk drive for a map of this burg. Exploration and mapping, obviously, play a more important role in this game.

Conclusions: *The Second City* is not for the faint-hearted. If you thought *Escape from Targ* was difficult, this one will drive (or fly) you to an early grave. It's the same story and game system, only much harder. But those who thought the original was a snap will love this one. (And if that's the case, could you do my income tax, too?)

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System: C-64/128, AT 8-bit & ST
Skill Level: Expert
Price: $14.95, C & AT; $19.95, ST
Company: Intellicreations

Bureaucracy

something that doesn't work, your blood pressure goes up one point. (This is yet another example of Infocom's penchant for self-satire.) After a few successful actions, your blood pressure returns to normal. The game is not overly deadly, but you can get killed when you least expect it—like when you try to stiff the cabbie at the airport, which is an inventive enough death that everyone should experience it at least once.

While struggling to retrieve the mail from a politically-obsessed macaw, an elephant gun-toting matron, and other local wackos, you can take a break and relax at the keyboard of your Boysenberry computer. Pop in the adventure game cartridge called *Dork I* before you trade it for another program in the nearby software shop. You also get an eclipse predictor cartridge that may be handy when (if) you ever reach the exotic land of Zalagasa, site of the next such astronomical event. Then again, it could be yet another of Infocom's infamous red herrings.

Every time you step outside your door you will be accosted by a whining computer nerd who wants to sell you the latest peripheral, software or other piece of computer paraphernalia. The nerd turns up again later, when you get a chance to do some serious hacking yourself. If you've ever wanted to tamper

with the innards of an online data base, this game offers a far more satisfying outlet than *Hacker*.

While most of the puzzles are object-oriented, some require a series of actions that don't involve object manipulation in the usual sense. (For an example, see William Carte's clues in Keys.) Top score is 21 points. Did I say 21? Yes, this is the lowest top score seen in an Infocom game since *Zork III*, whose seven measly points proved nearly unattainable to This Adventurer. Ratings are granted as you progress. When you type in score, the result is something like: "Your blood pressure is 124/82 in 220 moves. Your status is stable. Your score is 5 out of a possible 21, making you a victim."

Flight 42, Where Are You?

Much of the humor emerges from Douglas Adams' warped view of what is often referred to as reality. He describes a travel agent, for instance, as someone who waits "for customers to explain where they want to go and how they want to get there so she can get a large commission for misunderstanding everything and sending them to Djarkarta." (Be sure to kick the travel agent.) The airport and airplane scenes are genuinely hilarious, not just just funny, and the only thing I missed was being harassed by Moonies and Larouche-oids. Many situations in the game reminded me of the film *Brazil*, which took place in a future where nothing could be accomplished without filling out the proper form in triplicate and having it stamped by the correct agency.

Adams' twisted humor infiltrates the scene whenever you type an unacceptable command. Instead of reading that "you don't need the word 'mango' to complete this story," I was told that "you need special permission to use the word 'mango' in this story." Breaking the door, I learned, "is not permitted without permission in triplicate from Infocom, Inc." And I was threatened with a visit from a legion of attorneys bent on suing me for destruction of Infocom property when, admittedly desperate, I attempted to "cut bird with hacksaw." Kicking the door, it turns out, is a "violation of the Cambridge Convention, which prohibits it in humorous games" (What? Infocom actually called one of their programs a game instead of a story?).

Walkthrus: Neverending Story & Breakers

by Brian Smith

Clearing
NE. East. SW. [Well-trodden Track] Get stone. S. W. N. [Western Edge] Get branch. S. East. NE. N. East. East. East. SW.

Atreyu's Hut
Get leather. NE. W (four times). SW. [Clearing] ●✱✱✱▼ ○□◆■✱❖. NE. East (six times).

Foothills of Silver Mountain
●✱✱✱▼ ○◆▲✱✱▲. Look. D. [Center of Morla's Cave] ▲○❖✱ ○□❙. ✱□□□ ▲▼□■✱. Get ✱□▲▼❖●. Get ✱□❖✱○✱■▼. U. W (five times).

Base of Tower
Get ❖◆□■❙. S. SW. [Clearing] Get ✱□□❙. ●❖□❩ ✱□□❙. Drop ✱□□❙. Get ✱❖●✱□□. W. SE.

End of Great Forest
✱●❙ ▲□◆▼✱. E. S. E. [Back of House] ✱□□□ ✱□▲▼❖●. S. S.

Entrance to Oracle
❩○✱▼ (◆■▼✱● ▲□✱✱■❙ ○●✱■✱▲). S.

Part Two
Deep in Forest
E. N. [Main Gate] Drop fragment. Drop leather. E.

Eastern End
Get ✱●□❩✱●□○✱. W. W. N. [Sparsely Wooded Area] Get □□□✱. NE.

Remains of Small Building
□✱○□✱✱ □○●❙✱▲. E. E. (✱❖●● ✱□❩❙ into ✱□❖✱✱) W. NW. W. W. S. [Kitchen] Get ✱■✱✱✱. E.

Pantry
Get ▼✱❙. W. N. W. [Well Room] ▼✱✱ □□□✱. E. E. E.

Narrow Stone Corridor
Open ▼✱❙. Drop ▼✱❙. N. [Box-shaped Room] Get ✱□□❙ ✱✱❙. S. SE. SW. D.

Bottom Dungeon Stairs
✱◆▼ ❩✱○. Drop ✱■✱✱✱. W.

SW. [Dungeon Guard Area] ◆■□○✱✱ ✱✱●●. Drop ✱✱❙. E.

Cell
Get □□◆✱❖. Get ✱□✱❙. Drop □□◆✱❖. W. W. [Torture Chamber] Drop ✱□✱❙. W.

Treasure Room
Get ✱□●✱ ✱✱❙. E. E. E. D. U. E. NW. U. S. S.

Main Gate
Get leather. Get fragment. Drop glowglobe. S. E.

Top of Hill
Get ❖◆□❙❙. Get ✱●●✱□□.

Part Three

Asteroid Floating in Space
E. N. [Outside Ivory Tower] ◆■□✱✱ ✱□□❙. E. E. U. NW.

Maze Wood Stairs Up
●□□✱ ❖▼ ✱□❖○✱■▼. U. E. SE. U. E. E. E. U.

Ornate Door
▲❖❙ □●❖❖▲✱. E. E. (✱○□□✱▲▲ ▼❖✱✱▲ ❖◆□❙❙.)

Breakers

by Harold Bohn and Christan

Level Three

Supply Room
Open trap door. D. ■□□▼✱. U. Open hatch. U. S.

Bar
SW. Sit. Bobo "Help. Bobo "✱❖❖ ○✱ ▼✱✱ ❖○❙. Bobo "❙✱▲. Out. E. Betty "✱ ■✱✱✱ ▲□○✱ ✱❖▲✱. Betty "give me a ●●❖❖. Betty "▼✱○■✱▲. Betty "how do i ✱✱▼ ▼□ ○□□✱? Betty "where is ✱□■✱▲? Betty, I don't ✱❖●✱ ✱❖▲✱. N. N. (The answers to Beek's two riddles are "▼✱○✱" and "○●□□✱.")

Utility Corridor
Using the ❖○❙ to detect Gaks, go: N. NE. NE. SE. To avoid Gaks, wait in the corridor where the coffee cup is found.)

Maintenance Bay
Worker "❙✱▲. Worker "▲□□❙. Worker "❙□◆□▲. Open locker. Take ✱✱▼ and ▲◆✱▼. ❩✱❖□ ▲◆✱▼. U. Open hatch. U. □◆●● □○❖■▼▲. D. D. NW (twice). (If you run into a Gak, say: Gak "●■❩✱□✱. Gak "▲✱❙ ○✱. Gak "❖✱∞○○❖∞. After that the other Gaks in this corridor will leave you alone.) SW. SW. NW. NW. SW.

Old Maintenance Bay
✱✱❖✱ ✱❖□□□▼ to ✱□○○❙. Take □□□✱. NE. SE. SE. N. N.

Gak Station
Get in ✱❖✱○□○✱●✱. Take ✱❙●✱■✱●□. □◆▲✱ ❖✱✱✱●✱□❖▼□□. □◆▲✱ ○□❖✱. Out. N. W. Push button 1. E. E. E.

Level Two

Grey's Office
Grey "✱✱■✱. Grey "□✱❖❙. Grey "□✱❖❙. Grey "■□. Grey "❙✱▲. W. Push button 2. E.

Admod Pod Bay
Enter pod. Push button B and C (until caught by Gaks).

Security Cell (Level One)
Wait (until Gak brings ○□✱❙). Out. Take ✱❖□✱ (from ▲✱✱□▼ □✱ ✱✱❖✱ ○□✱❙). Wait (until Gak brings ✱□✱✱✱❙). Out. Open ✱□✱✱✱■. Take ○□✱❙. Put ○□✱❙ in □✱✱ ●✱✱. ✱□◆✱□ ○□✱❙ with □✱✱ ○●●■✱✱▼. Get ✱■ ✱□✱✱✱■. ✱●□▲✱ ✱□✱✱✱■. Wait (until ✱□✱✱✱■ is ✱□□□✱✱ *and* ✱❖✱▲ ●✱❖✱✱).

Morgue, D Module
□□✱■ ✱□✱✱✱■. Out. N. ▼◆□■ ✱❖■✱●✱. Open east door. E. U. U. E. (The Gaks capture you.)

Cell
▼✱□□ ▲◆✱▼ ❖▼ ●✱✱✱□. Wait (until Gak is asleep. He always ▲■❖□●▲ just before he wakes up, which gives you time to get out. E. Open drawer. Take all from drawer. N. E. U. (four times). E. E.

Hallway in front of D10
Take □✳■. W. Put ✶✿□✳ in slot. N.

Rigg's Apartment
E. □□✳■ ✶□◐✶□. ▼✿✶ ✶□✳■✿. ✶✶✶✶. Put ✶■▲✶✶■✿ in ▼□✿✶○□✶. Druella "✶✿●●□. Druella "□✶✿✶ ○✶▲▲✿✶▲. (You may repeat this to hear them all, but it's not necessary.) Druella "□□✶■ ▼✶✶ □✿■✿. W. S. E. N.

Apartment D10
W. ▼✶✶ □□□✶ ▼□ □✿✶✶. ✶✿✶○○ ✶□■ □□□✶.

Secret Room
○□✶✶ ✶□▼. (□□✶■✶✶ the ✶✶✿● in the ✶✶✶▲▼ three times will yield vital information used later in the game.) E. S. S. S.

Well Bottom
▲□□✿I ○□✿▼)✶▼✶ ✶✿■. □□✶■ ✶✶▼. ▼✿□■ ○□✿▼)✶▼✶)□✶■✶✶. S. E. N.

Break Hole
Jones "○□□✶. Jones, (▲✿I ✿■I▼✶✶■✶). Give ✶□✶■▲ to Jones. Jones, (▲✿I ✿■I▼✶✶■✶). Jones "■□. Jones "■□. Jones "I✶▲. Get in box.

Shuttle
✶◆▼ ○□I with ○✶✶✿●●✶□■. Put ○✶✶✿●●✶□■ in ▼□✿I. □◆▲✶ ✶■ ✿✶▼▼□■. □◆▲✶ ○✿✶ ✿◆▼▼□■. (Don't worry about retrieving the ○✶✶✿●●✶□■, since you cannot prevent it from being found later.) Wait (or look out porthole until shuttle lands).

Borg

Edge of Chasm
D. D. D. W. NE. N. NE. NE. E.

Jungle
□◆✿● □□✿✿▼. SW.

Beast Lair
▼✶□□) ▼◆✿✶□ ✿▼ ○◆✶✶✶□. S. □□✶■ ✶□✶□■. Step up. D. D. Take ▲▼○□■✶. D. W. SW. SW. NW. N. (Gaks capture you; you may have to move NW once for this to occur.)

Headquarters
Wait (for Mulcahy). Mulcahy "■□. Mulcahy "■□. Mulcahy "from ✶□■ (or ✶□■✶▲). Wait.

Storeroom
○□✶✶ ✶✶✶ ✶✿▼. E. ○□✶✶ ✶✶✶ ✶□■. D. ○□✶✶ ✶✶✶ ■□□▼✶. N. ▲▼✿■✶ □■ ✶✶✶. U. (Don't waste time or the keg will explode.) E. N. Get ✶■ □✶✶▼.

On Raft in Violet Sea
Wait (until you "□✶✿●✶I✶ ●✶✶✶✿▼✶□I is ▲◆□✶✿✶✶■✶"). ▲□◆✶✶I✶ ✶✶✿□▲▼○□■✶. Wait. Out.

Rocky Spit
E. D. N. Take ▲▼○□■✶. S. U. W. W. W. W.

Flaming Pit
Take ▲▼○□■✶. ▲□◆✶✶I✶ ✶▼. W. W. W.

Branch
▲□◆✶✶I✶)✿▼✶□▲▼○□■✶. E.

Rocky Place
□✶✿✶✶ ✶■ ✶□✿■■. ▲□◆✶✶I✶)✿▼✶□▲▼○□■✶. W.

Gold Cave
▲□◆✶✶I✶ ✶✶□✶▲▼○□■✶. Wait (three to four times, not actually necessary). Leader "○◆✶✶I ▲✿I▲ ✶✶. Leader "I✶▲. Leader "✶✶●□. ✶□□●●□ ✶□○○✶✶▲.

Chasm Bottom
Take ○✶�●▼.)✶✶□ it. ✶●✶□ ▲□✶▼✶✶. ▲□◆✶✶I✶ ✶✶□✶▲▼○□■✶. D. D.

Junction near Compound
S. W. Take key. E. N. ◆■□□✶✶ ✶✿▼✶ with ✶✶I. NW. Take ▲▼○□■✶. SE. S. SE. E. E. N.

Stone Amphitheater
Say "✶✿□○□. Wait. ✶✿□○□ "I✶▲. ▲□◆✶✶I✶)✿▼✶□▲▼○□■✶. W.

Chamber
Lau "I✶▲. ▼✶□□))✿▼✶□▲▼○□■✶ ■□□▼✶✶✿▲▼. ▼✶□□)

✶✶□✶▲▼○□■✶ ■□□▼✶)✶✿▼. ▼✶□□) ○✿□✶✿▼○□■✶ ■□□▼✶.

Indiana Jones

finish it. I would be playing it, muttering, "I can't stand this game, I can't stand this game," and my wife would laugh and ask why didn't I just quit. The truth was I couldn't quit. Despite the poor mechanics, I simply had to prevail over this poor excuse for a computer game.

Conclusions: This game is certainly not for everyone. The question is, is it for anyone? Those who don't mind the poor mechanics of the Angelsoft products (which are only distributed by Mindscape) may also enjoy it.

But I expect the average adventurer will detest it. Mindscape and Angelsoft should wake up and realize this is 1987, not 1982. Their standards may have been acceptable five years ago, but not now. The tragedy is that such a good story line was wasted.

System: Apple, IBM, Macintosh
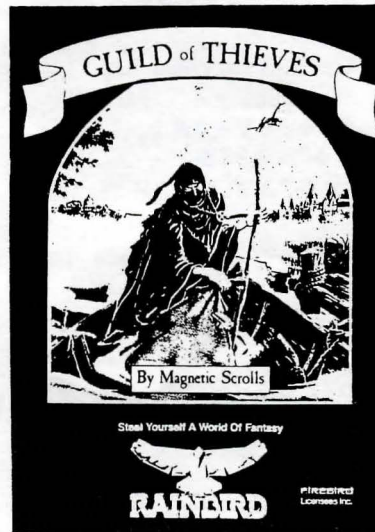**Skill Level:** Expert
Price: $34.95
Company: Mindscape

The QuestBusters Code

✿ = A	◉ = B	✶ = C	✶ = D
✶ = E	✶ = F	✶ = G	✶ = H
✶ = I	✶ = J	✶ = K	● = L
○ = M	■ = N	□ = O	□ = P
□ = Q	□ = R	▲ = S	▼ = T
◆ = U	✶ = V	) = W	I = X
I = Y	▮ = Z	∽ = 1	➡ = 2
✓ = 3	✔ = 4	✗ = 5	✖ = 6
✗ = 7	✗ = 8	✚ = 9	✐ = 0

Mapping Made Easy!

If you're tired of drawing—and redrawing, and redrawing—all those funny little boxes, you need the QuestBusters Cartography Kit. Kit A contains 50 sheets of mapping paper designed especially for text/graphic adventures, plus ten record sheets for keeping track of objects and other discoveries. Kit B has 50 mapping sheets that are much more convenient than graph paper, plus 10 character record sheets. With either kit you get the manual "Adventures in Mapping," which details the mapping system. Either kit is $5 ($9 for both) plus $1 postage & handling.

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy was written by Douglas Adams, who was inspired (though he would probably choose a different word) by a real-life incident, and the staff of Infocom. Infocom says that, "it's not clear who helped the most. Some say it was Marc Blank; others blame Brian Moriarty. Chris Reeve and Tim Anderson did SOMETHING, while Jeff O'Neill, Jerry Wolper and Paul DiLascia played more nebulous roles." The manual names only "Original Implementer Fred Morgan" as co-author, but this turns out to be an inside joke: Fred Morgan is a nickname for the DEC 20 mainframe on which Infocom's programs are developed.

Conclusions: I get the feeling Douglas Adams spends a fair amount of time online these days, for a number of puzzles revolve around that activity. He also takes plenty of shots at computers, nerds, software salespeople, software and computing in general. Though the setting and story line are a far cry and hundreds of light years from *Hitchhiker's Guide*, *Bureaucracy* displays the same warped sense of humor. If you enjoy humor with a point of view (paranoid as it may be) and puzzles whose solutions don't leap out at you the first time you face them (or the second, or third...), you will certainly have fun tracking down your mail, feeding llamas and hacking your way through a Zalagasan jungle.

System: C-128, Amiga, ST, IBM, Apple, Mac (128K except Mac—512K)
Skill Level: Expert
Price: $34.95, C-128; $39.95, others
Company: Infocom

Realms of Darkness

select a level, and the pointer moves to the second window, where you can select the actual spell.

The program is pretty intelligent about figuring out spell targets, too. If your cleric casts "Cure Blindness" and only one character has been blinded, the program is smart enough to know which one to cure. If no characters are blinded, then the program tells you there's no need to cast the spell. If several are blinded, then the program lists them all and asks you to select one.

The Lay of the Land

You start the game in a town composed of fifteen locations that resemble scenes from a hi-res graphics adventure. There are no puzzles to solve or monsters to kill, but you'll find a few people to talk to and several stores to shop in. Outside the town is a small wilderness area (25 locations) done in the same style. It features lots of monsters, an uncrossable river, a temple where you can buy healing, and two mysterious ladders leading down.

Beneath these ladders are multi-level *Wizardry*-style dungeons packed wall-to-wall with monsters and puzzles. It is here and in several similar dungeons that you'll spend most of your time. Somewhere in the first dungeon is the lost sword of Zabin. Recover it and the Captain of the Guard will help you get started on your second quest. As you solve more quests you'll gain access to lands across the river, many more dungeons and eventually a second town.

To help you get started, the package comes with several maps: all of the first town, about half of the first area of wilderness and a small section of the first level of the first dungeon. The package also contains a sealed "map pouch." When you find this item in the dungeons, you are allowed to open the physical pouch and use the maps inside. (Don't get too excited; it only holds two maps).

Adventure Mode

In addition to the usual mapping "puzzles" and monsters to kill, the dungeons have logical-style puzzles that are among the most complicated I've seen in a role-playing game. Hitting the carriage return will put you in "Adventure Mode," which lets you type commands telling individual party members to manipulate objects, say magic words and talk to people. The desired commands range from the obvious, such as "talk" and "push button," to commands like "insert card in slot," which are obvious when you have the right objects, to a few puzzles that are downright *hard*.

The parser takes some getting used to. It has a large but very specific vocabulary. If you have the right idea for solving a puzzle you'll find the program is very good at recognizing synonyms, and the first thing you type in will probably work. If you're barking up the wrong tree, however, the program will almost certainly give you nothing better than an "I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT!" The parser also changes from dungeon to dungeon, so a verb that doesn't work in one dungeon may be crucial in the next one.

Another thing you can do is break the party up into two or more groups that can simultaneously explore different areas of the dungeon. Needless to say, this can get confusing fast. You would never want to do it, except that the authors have thoughtfully put in a few puzzles that can't be solved any other way. The first one involves a bridge with a sign warning of a four-character weight limit; you have to figure out how to get everyone across without falling into a pit. Later puzzles are somewhat harder.

Monsters and Mazes

Meanwhile, you're also fighting monsters and gaining experience points. It takes a while to acclimatize yourself to the graphics. When you encounter a group of monsters, the program doesn't show you anything immediately. Instead, the disk drive starts grinding and then stops. For the first few days I thought it was reading a new section of the dungeon, because the disk had stopped spinning and nothing obvious had happened. Nothing would continue to happen for another second or so, and then the program would suddenly fill the screen with a brightly-colored picture of a scary monster and I'd fall off my chair. Giant spiders are especially unnerving. [Editor: The graphics, however, are not as detailed as those seen in the *Bard's Tale* series and employ no spot animation.]

The mazes the monsters live in are pretty tough. They are made (I think) out of 17 x 17 areas. It's hard to tell, though. Sometimes a level will have an unusual shape, such as a long, thin rectangle or even a triangle. Apparently, teleporters are set up to create the illusion that the levels have these shapes. And sometimes two or more levels will be built out of one of these 17-by-17 areas, or one level will be built out of two of them.

With all this going on, there is of course no spell to tell you where you are in relation to the stairs going up. This makes it very easy to get lost, especially with the multitudes of one-way doors, one-way walls and teleporters. Not only that, but it takes two sheets of graph paper to do each level. No matter where you put the stairs, you can bet your life

KEYS TO THE KINGDOMS

Might and Magic

To get lots of experience points quickly, got to map ⊙✓, |∞✓, |•◇. To reach it, go to |∞✐, |•◇ and have sorcerer teleport 4 east. Blow ruby whistle twice and go to second floor, |✓, |✓, where the ❋□❋ gives each character 10,000 points. Do not search now. Instead, have cleric cast spell to return to surface, then repeat above until you have all the points you want. Search the last time, then return to the surface and teleport to a town. If you don't have the teleport spell, go w,w,s,w to exit woods without a confrontation.

William Carte

To get through a locked door use a key made of the ▲❂○❋ ▲◆❂▲▼❂■❋❋, except for the ❂□■❋ door, which requires the ▲❋●◇❋□ key. To enter castles, find the wizard □❂■◇❂○□◆, then search the abandoned wagons in ❋∞ until you find a merchant's pass. To get clues from the taverns, alternate buying drinks with tipping the bartender until you have them all.

Charles Don Hall

A leprechaun at x11, y3 in Sorigal will teleport you to any city for 1 gem. The Pit of Peril in Blackridge South dumps you to the fourth level of ❋□❂❋❂❋◆■❋. The thundarium permanently increases might; use it, then rest. But might rating recycles from 250 to 0, so watch it.

Paul Shulz

Bureaucracy

To get mail from the macaw, □❋■❋ ○❂❂▲❋□■ ❋□□□❂❋●●. Go to porch and into trophy room, get □❂❋■▼❋■❋ and ▲❋□◗ to ❂❋□❋. To enter the fort at south end of street, listen to intercom. Go into llama farm and leave. ▼❋●● ▼❋❋ ◗❋❋□❋□ what the ❋■▼❋□❋□○ ▲❂❋❋ and ❋□□◗ what ❋❋ ▲❂◗▲. Then ▲❂◗ ▼❋❂t to the ❋■▼❋□❋□○. To use the unlabelled cartridge, put it in computer and type "□□❋■▼❋", or whichever ▲▼❋❋❋❋□ you found first. Type in other ▲▼❋❋❋❋□▲ in the order you found them.

William Carte

Hollywood Hijinx

To get down the broken stairs, ◗❋❂□ ▲❋❋▲. The □❋❂■□ prevents you from taking pillar in crawl space, so move it all the way ■□□▼❋, then take pillar and □◆▲❋ □❋❂■□ to ▲□◆▼❋ ◗❂❂. The combination to the safe in the bomb shelter is linked to the ■❂○❋▲: ❋❋□▲▼ ●❋▼▼❋□▲ and ■◆○○❋□ of ●❋▼▼❋□▲. And don't watch the reel of film! (Unless you save the game first.)

Samantha Kunz

Mercenary

To escape Targ you can buy a ship for a millin credits. Load up on items and sell them to the Mechanoids. When they won't buy any more, take the Mechanoid leader and all the items you can grab and take them to the Palyar Colony Craft. Keep taking things there until you have a million credits. Return to the ground and find the ❂■▼❋■■❂. Take it to communications room and you will get a message from Hertz Rent-a-Rocket.

Bob Brickeen

To decode clues, see page 7. If you've got clues to recent adventures, send them in & qualify for next month's contest.

Waiting for Duffy

Duffy's busy decoding his zip code, so if you need help, send in a brief ad.

Ring Quest: Need help! Ted Aicher, 2819 Gilham St., Philadelphia, PA 19149.

Ultima 2: How do I kill Minax? Have the ring, but when I try to kill her she has gone to another corner. Can help with all Zorks, King's Quest 1 & 2, Wizardry 1 & 2, Ultima 3 and Phantasie 2. Mike Bertrand, 5213 Windsor, Ave. S, Edina, MN 55436.

Dragonworld: need help. Can help with King's Quest 1 & 2, both Bard's Tales, Phantasie 1 & 2, Ultima 1, 2, 3, and Dragonworld. Brad Kinman, 510 Laurel Rd., Easley, SC 29640.

Death in Caribbean: After getting bottle from river, how do you recross ravine without getting killed? Tony Fournier, RD #3, Box 112, Bainbridge, NY 13733.

Can help with Destiny Knight, Bard's Tale, any Ultima, Moebius and most Infocom. Robert Carpana, 2838 Roebling Ave., Bronx, NY 10461.

Need help in Dragonworld, Fantastic Four, Bard's Tale. Send SASE for help with Tass Times, Tracer Sanction, Borrowed Time, Mindshadow. Chris Jacobs, 12 Spring Ave., Wakefield, MA 01880.

Destiny Knight: In Snare #3, Dargoth's Tower, what is my Battlecry? Kathy Taylor, 4133 Caldwell, The Colony, TX 75056.

Need help? Have solutions to King's Quest I & II, Phantasie I & II, Ultima III, Bard' Tale I and Dragonworld. Brad Kinman, 510 Laurel

Rd., Easley, SC 29640. Rendezvous with Rama: Need help. Chris Allen, RFD 2, Box 5460, Jay, ME 04239.

Ring Quest: How do I get past Ogress to enter boat? How do I cross river, get past wolf? Can help with Hitchhiker, Planetfall, Ultima 1, 2, 4, and Bard 1. Christopher Smith, POB 478, Hamshire, TX 77622.

Need help in Robots of Dawn. Mrs. R.E. Whitley, 1644 Pine Colony, TX 77511.

Starflight: Have 23 Arth days before Arth sun explodes. Have used black egg on planet at 55,32. Now what? Why can't I orbit planet at 192,152? Can help with Ultima 3. Michael Albert, POB 50, Plaisted, ME 04767.

Bard's Tale: need 18th-level or higher characters. Have hints, solutions to 50+ games. Send SASE to Armen Kassabian, 6230 Amigo Ave., Reseda, CA 91335.

Sekaa of Assial: Need walkthru for second part, where I am stuck in many areas. Linda Perry, HCR Box 71, Cold Brook, NY 13324.

Trinity: How do you get across lawn to Long Water? Sword of Kadash: How do you get into the dragon's lair? Tass Times: Where is the Tower? Can help with Sorcerer, Alternate Reality—the City (complete map with all guilds, secret doors, etc.) Samantha Kunz, 651 W. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, IL 60613.

New at adventures, need help with Transylvania. Doug Douglas, 112 Danube Dr., Apt. D, Fairfield, OH 45014.

King's Quest I: How do I get out of the well? Faith Hersey, Rd. 5, Clark Ave., St. Clairsville, OH 43950.

Realms of Darkness

Continued from page nine

that one wall of the dungeon or another is going to go off the edge of the page, and you'll have to copy the whole thing to a fresh sheet, with the stairs in a more appropriate location.

At least there aren't any anti-light/spell areas. Secret doors are also mercifully rare, and it's usually obvious when one of them is probably in the area. You don't want to get lost when you're low on hit points, because finding the monsters is a lot easier than finding the exit. And getting killed in this game presents some unique problems.

How to Die

Now, I hate to admit it, but the second thing I do when I start playing an FRP game is to find out what to do when characters get killed. (The *first* thing I do is delete the pre-rolled characters with the stupid names.) In most games, you can automatically restore a previous save by rebooting. In others, such as *Wizardry*, you have to go through more complicated contortions. In this game, though, when you die, you have *died*.

The instant a killing blow is struck, the program saves all your characters to disk.

Only after the victim is in the grave does the program tell you what's happened. You can make character backups, but that isn't much help. If you've picked up a one-of-a-kind object (such as a key) since the last backup, then you'll find that the restored characters don't have the key, and the key isn't in the dungeon anymore—so you're in a no-win situation. The program comes with a built-in utility to reset all the dungeons, but remember, the five quests can only be solved in order, so you've got some backtracking to do. No fun. Use this utility only in case of a dire emergency.

It didn't take me very long to come up with a solution. Just make a backup of the dungeon disk every time you back up the characters. It also didn't take me very long to find out that this doesn't work, because the dungeon disk is copy-protected. (This also means that there can be only one ongoing game, unlike games whose dungeon disks can be copied.)

In fact, if one of those giant spiders slices you open you just have to lie there and accept the fact of your death like a man (or woman). There is one glimmer of hope: Resurrection is very cheap; it

only costs 20 silver pieces per level of the character. If hard-pressed for cash, you can earn about 350 silver pieces by rolling up seven new characters and transferring their money to a party member. If the whole party gets wiped out, the monsters will neatly wrap them up and mail them back to town, where you can roll up some new characters to drag them to the temple for resurrection. This has only happened to me twice.

Conclusions: As you've probably guessed by now, this isn't the easiest game in the world. According to the documentation, it will take a normal person 150+ hours to finish it (it took me about 75-100 hours). And if you stop concentrating on what you're doing, you can quickly get half your party killed. This game is most definitely not for novices. However, if you've got two or three other FRP games under your belt and you're looking for a real challenge, then this is well worth looking into.
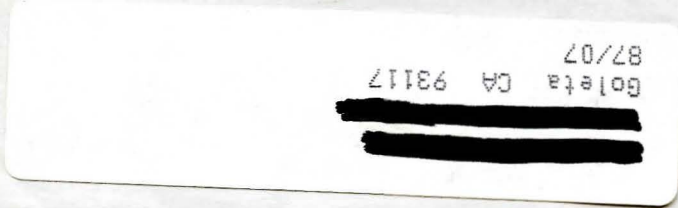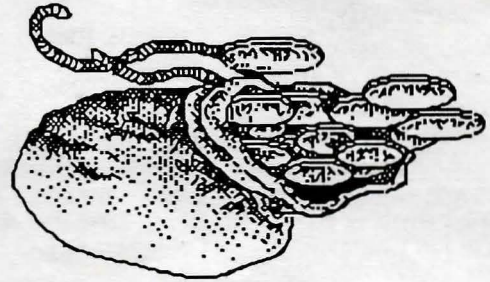

System: Apple II family
Conversions: Commodore 64/128 (May)
Skill Level: Intermediate to Advanced
Price: $34.95
Company: SSI

SWAP SHOP

Continued from page 11
Roadwar & Ultima 1. Michael Esposito, 57-68 246 Crescent, Douglaston, NY 11362.

$20 each: Trinity, Moonmist, Wishbringer, Labyrinth. $10 each: Zork 1, Deadline, Oo-topos. Write first. Craig Konecnik, 873 Yorkshire Lane, Crystal Lake, IL 60014.

$25 each: Dragonworld, Essex, Ultima 4, AutoDuel & more. Will trade for Roadwar or Fairlight. Janice Bumgardner, Rte 1 Box 136, Fillmore, IN 46128.

IBM & Quest-alikes

Trade/sell: Black Cauldron, Oo-topos, Ballyhoo, King's Quest, Crimson Crown, Hitchhiker, Holy Grail, Inca, Farenheit 451. Want Tass times, Below Root, Leather Goddesses, Earthly Delight. Have PCjr. Ricky Jackson, 6766 Winifred Dr., Ft. Worth, TX 76133.

Ultima 3, $25. Write first. Jason Overgard, 375 Nash Rd., Crystal Lake, IL 60014.

Want to buy King's Quest 3, Space Quest, Ultima 2. Will sell/trade Ultima 3, Apshai Trilogy ($20 @). M. Albert, Plaisted, ME 04767.

Trade/sell: King's Quest 1 & 2, Black Cauldron, The Quest, Oo-topos, Infidel. Marc Manderino, 104 Lagoon Rd. SE, Winter Haven, FL 33880.

Want to buy Wishbringer, with docs and box. Jennifer Shulman, 12 Ardmore Rd., Scarsdale, NY 10583.

ATARI

Tons of 800 games. Write for lists. Jim Hollingsworth, POB 27, Kelso, WA 98626.

ST games to trade/sell: Rogue, Sundog, $20 @. King's Quest 3 & hint book, $25. Want Dungeonmaster, King's Quest 2 & Time Bandit. Dale Angelotti, 600 Primrose St., Haverhill, MA 01830.

Sell/trade: all SSI games & more. Ed Park, 1115 Meadow Lane, Streamwood, IL 60103.

For sale, $15: Realm of Impossibility. $20 each, Zork 2 & 3, entire Enchanter series, Hitchhiker, 7 Cities of Gold, Cutthroats, Ultima 1. $22: Zork 1 with map & hint book. $35: Ultima 3. All with docs, boxes. J. Weigley, 327 S. Smedley St., Philadelphia, PA 19103.

Passport to Adventure

For a 10%-20% discount on NEW games, order from QB—and get 3 extra issues of the newsletter for each game.

Bureaucracy..C128, $30. ST, Mac, Amiga, IBM, $35.
Might & Magic:.............$45
Realms of Darkness........$30
Destiny Knight:............$35
Earthly Delights:.....AP, PC,
Mac............................$25
Oo-topos:...AP, C, PC....$18
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