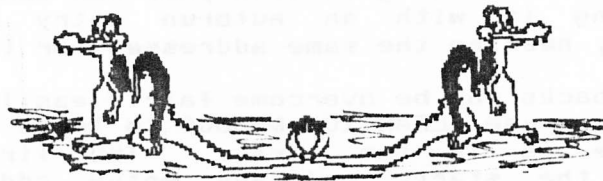


The Newsletter of the National Dragon Users Group

DRAGON



UPDATE

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The Gaffer's Bit

Oh well, at least it looks as though we're back to using English again this month, which will no doubt be a great relief to all our French and Belgian members!. Other than that there isn't really a lot of news, mainly due to the efforts of the Post Office who haven't yet managed to deliver anything posted between the August Bank Holiday and 19th. September, although they've done a grand job of delivering all the junk mail and bills posted SINCE then. All of which means that Issue 50 isn't going to be quite up to standard. As to Stephen's suggestion (the printable one!) that this Issue should be printed on gold paper, I'm afraid our paper supplier was unable to help as he claims that someone called Lawson had confiscated his entire stock, and gone away muttering about "balance of payments" or something like that. The Weston Show looks like being the main event of the Dragon year, so make a point of being there if you possibly can, not only to make Andrew Hill happy, but to convince the few remaining firms that it's still worth producing things for the Dragon, and more to the point convince ME that it is worth risking Group money (YOUR money!) setting up a London & South East Show next year!. One the subject of the show, Andrew Hill has offered me a couple of free tickets to use as prizes, but I can't think of a competition!. I was going to try "Complete the following ... I think Paul Grade is a ...", but then I realised I'd never be able to print the winning answers without getting nicked, so I think I'll try something safer. To keep it simple the first two people to answer the following question correctly get a ticket:- Who was the first General Editor of Dragon User Magazine, and what was the date of the first issue?. (Sorry Helen, you're disqualified from this one!). You can't all win, but it's worth a try, isn't it?, so send me your answer, and if it wins I'll send you your ticket, and unless the post improves you should get it in good time for the 1996 Dragon Show!.

Paul G

The Editor's Bit . . .

Well, here we are with issue 50, and as a special surprise I've got a whole page all to myself later on because NO ONE HAS BOTHERED TO WRITE ANY ARTICLES!!! I won't harp on about it too much here as I shall do that later. What I will say though is that you'd better get those fingers to the keyboard pretty damn soon or there WILL be no newsletter in the near future. For those of you out there thinking that I am sitting on a stack of articles, then think again. I do have several that will be used later on, but which I could not use this month, basically because I don't want 10 pages of Dragon versus ST arguments, or 10 pages of software reviews! UPDATE is supposed to cover as wide a range of subjects as possible. I'm not complaining that I have several similar articles (at least I HAVE them!), but a whole newsletter on the same subject would be very boring. You don't have to be a great expert on computers, but there must be something which you can write about! ANYTHING! I always look at all articles which come in, so don't think I will just throw it away if it is rubbish. You must realise however that Update runs on what YOU put into it. I'm not going to sit around each month writing a whole page just because there are a thousand of you out there who can't be bothered to put anything into the group - I edit the newsletter, I DON'T write it (not that I ever have anything to edit though!).

Got the message? ARTICLES, and NOW - or would you prefer reading blank pages? You have been warned...Stephen.

Post Early for NEXT Christmas!!!

Making The Most Of Sprite Magic2..RAD

Sprite Magic is undoubtedly one of the cleverest and most interesting routines ever made for the Dragon, but also one of the most under-used. This is possibly because of the copyright restrictions placed upon it in the first place, and the difficulty in using it with your own SBASIC program to load and run easily, or using it with an autorun entry sequence. Also, it is incompatible with DOS, needing the same addresses for the machine code hooks.

Some of the drawbacks can be overcome fairly easily, in your own programs. Firstly, you must always use CLEAR 200,&H6000 to leave it room to operate. The Sprite Magic routine is in two parts. The first of these resides at 28464,32767,28464... the start, end and entry addresses. This part has a routine which loads the second part, then puts up the copyright screen and waits for you to CLOAD your SBASIC and run it. The second part resides at 298,418,35725. Unfortunately, DOS uses some of these locations too. However, you can load the first part from tape, using the above-mentioned CLEAR, and without the EXEC normally required, and then you can re-save the code to tape. You can then load the second part from your tape and re-save it to tape.

To overcome the routine in the first part that loads the second part and gives what appears to be a cold start, you can amend the first few bytes of the first part so that it will CLOADM to a warm start. All you have to do, having loaded in the first part, is to enter a direct command:-

```
FOR I = 28464 TO 28549: POKE I,0:NEXT
```

If you have a monitor, you should now see that location &H6F86 (28550) contains &H39 (57). You can CSAVEM this revised version for your own use at the addresses given above, followed by Part 2 unaltered. You can use an SBASIC program to CLOADM (for the first part), CLOADM (for the second part), and continue with your SBASIC. The tape would have SBASIC,PART1,PART2. It is also possible to use the autorun sequence with this system, in which case your tape would have AUTORUN,(with loading screen),SBASIC,PART 1,PART 2. The Part 1 would overwrite the autorun as the former is CLOADM'd, but by that time your SBASIC is running. Any problems would probably be insufficient use of CLEAR. I have used it successfully myself. It is excellent for the adventure type of program.

I haven't attempted it myself, but it might be possible, with some effort, to use it from disc. You would have to re-save Part 2 with an offset, to place it initially for storage somewhere in RAM, perhaps a high resolution screen address which could be PCLEAR'd for its reception. SAVE Part 1 to disc, SAVE Part 2 to disc. SAVE a DISCOFF or DISKILL routine, all to the same disc. Make up your SMAGIC BASIC routine so that it would:-

```
CLEAR as described above.
```

```
LOAD Part 1 and the re-located Part 2
```

```
RUN DISKILL or DISCOFF
```

```
COPY the data from the re-located Part 2 to the addresses which it needs, as above-mentioned.
```

```
EXEC Part 1 and carry on with the SBASIC routine
```

This SBASIC can then be CSAVE'd to tape, trying it out without disc and with REM to avoid the DISKILL temporarily. You can then re-load it from tape, remove the REM, and save it to the disc which has the SMAGIC code and DISKILL. These latter need only be on the disc once for several SBASIC routines, of course, just the same as RAINBOW WRITER routines. On the other hand, you may have found some better way. If so, please let us all know!

Do YOU have a program that you think is badly under-rated by most other users?. Why not write us an article about it?, some of our readers may not even know that it exists unless YOU tell them.

The Dragon Vs. ST (part 1, 625).

Yes, we have all read about the death of the Dragon and the popularity of the ST. Yes, we all know how many ST owners are "idiots with more credit cards than sense", and how the world out there is full of "hostile ST owners". Are these statements true?

It is important to have first hand knowledge of what one writes about, so a little about myself. I am a dedicated fan of the Dragon AND the ST. I make money out of writing for ST publications and I work as the marketing manager for a specialist hardware supplier for the ST range of systems.

When the Dragon was first marketed, whether we like it or not, the general public was being overloaded with hype about a whole range of new home computers. To many, the Dragon was just another machine. The fact that it was well designed and constructed, endowed with a powerful array of interfaces and expansion facilities, impressed few "punters". It had fewer colours and poorer graphics than some of its rivals, and it was expensive too! What did it matter that the Dragon boasted a 6809 processor with wonderful OS-9 just around the corner? Very little. At the end of the day the Dragon did not sell in enough numbers and neither did it make enough money.

The Atari ST was marketed in a far less hostile environment, and before a far more informed potential user base. In the early days, there was nothing to rival the ST in price or performance. As more people bought the machine, production costs fell and so did the end user price. Even now it still offers excellent value for money. Like the Dragon, the ST has a powerful array of interfaces and expansion facilities. Significantly, the 68000 processor used in the ST is the descendent of the 6809, also manufactured by Motorola. The ST can run OS-9 just as the Dragon does, although a later version. I guess many of you have heard of OS-9. Do you realise that it has been adopted as one of the new standards for educational computer systems in Europe?

So what about credit cards and sense? We live in a decade of rapidly developing computer technology. If the user can taste some of these exciting developments at an affordable price, what is wrong with that? The entry level ST system, in real terms, is less expensive today than the Dragon was at its launch!

If some ST owners are hostile towards Dragon users then that is their loss. What is to be gained by holding rigid and narrow minded views and opinions, blindly defending ones own computer model and deriding those owned by others? No specific computer model stands in isolation from others. The ST is not the best computer or the most powerful, but whether we like it or not it is cheap and it is popular. The Dragon is not the worst or least versatile computer, but it is losing in the popularity stakes. There is a slowly contracting user base, and those Dragon owners buying STs do not help the situation.

Few users can financially support two different computer systems, that is, actively invest in both systems. What one can do is to retain an interest in your "first love", in this case the Dragon. Why write off a considerable investment by "selling up" for a paltry sum? Weather the initial storm and keep tight hold of your Dragon hardware and software. You will, perhaps, be surprised to learn that text only adventures are popular on the ST. For example, Colossal Cave is just as much a challenge when run on a mainframe, an ST or a Dragon! Similarly, why use a sledgehammer to crack a nut? There are some truly amazing desktop publishing packages available on the ST, but believe me, how I often yearn for TeleWriter! There must be many other examples that ex-Dragon owners can think of.

Don't make the mistake I made (and have to buy back into the Dragon market)... if you want to upgrade, don't downgrade your Dragon. Keep tight hold of it!... Martin Walsh.

<<...Personally, I think that anyone who rushes out to spend money they haven't got on a machine they've no use for, especially when they never even learned to use the one they had, DESERVES the title "idiot", and should listen carefully to the words of the old Kinks' record - "Dedicated Follower Of Fashion"!!!!...Paul.>>

Sorry, I KNOW you all have a lot to say on the subject of which computer washes whiter and who has the biggest RAM, etc, but it isn't really one of the most useful topics, so I'm afraid that as of now this subject is closed, at least so far as Update is concerned.

Logo-The BASIC Alternative? Mike Ganley

Hands up all those people reading this article who have heard of BASIC? Probably most of you, because BASIC is the most commonly supplied language with today's home micros. Countless thousands of programs, games and applications have probably started out as BASIC. But in spite of its popularity it is a fussy language. I wonder how many of you have shared my experience of typing in your first BASIC program, running it, only to be greeted by the helpful message 'SYNTAX ERROR', with, if you're lucky, a clue to which line the problem is in.

Transfer this into the classroom situation. Imagine how upset a child would be to have all their hard work and sore fingers rewarded with an unintelligible error message. BASIC falls down seriously as a teaching language for infant children because it makes many assumptions about their abilities, effectively excluding children from programming until they achieve a high level of literacy. Its major failing is that the child must be able to read the screen, whereas most can only look at them.

The language LOGO on the otherhand makes no such assumptions. At its entry level, only simple words like left, right, or up and down are used - words that most children will already be familiar with. Instant and rewarding results are thus obtained immediately from very simple commands. So what lies behind LOGO? If it has a key concept, then quite simply it is this: that the child should be able to program the computer, as oppose to the more normal (BASIC) approach that the computer programs the child. Many programs written in BASIC are of the drill and practise approach, with the computer very much in control.

LOGO's inventor, Seymour Papert, had this concept very much in mind when he set out in 1967 to develop the new language. Original versions of LOGO were derived from another high level language called LISP, a programming system that allows programmers to write lists of symbolic instructions in a logical order. The early versions of LOGO opened this concept up to children.

LOGO eventually surfaced as a useable language early in 1968. Initially it was used on mainframe computers and mini systems, and results were encouraging, particularly with children who had been experiencing difficulty with Maths. But in this original form the language was still too abstract for very young children to grasp, being still text based. Papert and his development team needed a radicle re-think of the LOGO front end. This they achieved by giving LOGO perhaps its most well known feature - the Turtle. These came in basically two forms, little blobs or blocks that moved around the computer screen, or more exciting (to your average seven year old at least) little robots that scuttle around the floor drawing lines behind them. With either type of turtle children got instant feedback of their programming efforts.

The initial concept of LOGO was that it would replace the conventional teaching methods of mathematics. But this revolution proved a little too hard to swallow for most teachers. In the U.K., a LOGO research group based at the University of Edinburgh produced its own version of the language, originally for the RM 380Z, at the time the most popular computer in use in schools. They found that a less radicle approach with LOGO also worked, by integrating it into the maths curriculum. Their work and eventual development of a LOGO dialect for the BBC Micro has lead to its wide use in school maths departments.

So how does LOGO work? Its key is in the Turtle Graphics. Power up a typical LOGO package and you will get a screen with the turtle sitting in the centre. Type a command like 'FORWARD 50' or even just 'FD 50' and the little creature will move forward 50 steps drawing a line behind it. A floor turtle will behave in a similar manner, and today these little robots are remotely controlled and have no trailing wires. To draw simple geometric shapes commands like LEFT and RIGHT can be used, together with angles of turn. This way a child soon learns that a square has four equal sides, and four ninety degree corners. More complex shapes can be built up by writing simple procedures and repeating them. This approach encourages the child to write out the program on paper before entering it into the computer, a good programming habit we could all do with learning.

A good version of LOGO was available for the Dragon from Salamander Software under the title of 'Turtle Graphics' and it is often seen for sale in the small ads of 'Update'. If you are interested in more information on LOGO, Ray Hammond's book "Forward 100", (published by Penguin) can be recommended. If you have a child or a whole classroom of them who find computers a little daunting, then LOGO could be the answer. It has been shown to be effective with ages from three upwards. In fact, anyone who has problems with mathematical concepts can be helped by the LOGO approach.

While I've nothing at all against Logo, I wouldn't have thought that writing BASIC required a "high standard of literacy", even for a seven year old, and I certainly wouldn't agree that a language usable by children unable to "read the screen" was a good thing ... they could be better employed learning to read than playing with computers!. Any teachers care to comment one way or t'other?.

Paul

HenceForth (13) ... Bob Smith

If you've typed in all 15 screens from the last issue then you are ready to load these screens, but first load in the RAM disk routines by typing '13 LOAD'. You'll need these to save you data on disk. Choose a suitable blank screen (e.g. 378) for this purpose and note the number. Now type '470 LOAD' to compile all the screens. Rectify any mistakes in this way: FORGET HI-ADDR, edit the offending screen(s), and LOAD again. When error-free, the drawing data can be input. You need sets of X,Y,Z coordinates, and the pairs of set numbers which are to be joined with a line. If you haven't your own drawing, the following data will draw a simple house:-

- 1) 70,20,96
- 2) 180,20,96
- 3) 50,50,171
- 4) 200,50,171
- 5) 200,150,171
- 6) 60,150,171
- 7) 50,50,21
- 8) 200,50,21
- 9) 200,150,21
- 10) 50,150,21

1-2 1-3 1-7 2-4 2-8 3-4 3-6 3-7 4-5 4-8 5-6 5-9 6-10 7-8 7-10 8-9 9-10

To input the data type DATIN. On "HOW MANY POINTS?" answer with 10. On "SET 1 X?" answer 70, ... Y? 20, ... Z? 96 and so on until all the coordinates are read in. On "LINE: FROM?" answer 1, TO? 2 and so on until the last pair of line numbers has been input. Answer twice more with zero. You should now get the OK prompt. You must now be very careful not to get an error message. If you do, you must start again with DATIN. Write 378 378 RAMTODSK where 378 represents your blank screen. You have now saved the data on disk. Write HI-ADDR @. and note this number (e.g. 3204) for future reference. The instructions that follow are those necessary for this and all future runs on this data. (13 LOAD and 470 LOAD will be required after each new FORTH start):-

```
SP! 3204 HI-ADDR ! 378 378 DSKTORAM
CADUT
```

then these can be followed by CADP that draws in perspective and CADI that draws isometrically.

Well that's it for now. More about CAD next time.

Toolkit For DragonDOS-Extra! ... D.J.Gray.

The following program is a combination of listings 1 and 3 which you may find easier to use. It will turn on all 64K, put ROM and DOS into RAM and then LOAD and RUN the previously stored and modified TOOLKIT.UTY.

```
_10 REM *****
20 REM *** LOADER TO PUT RAM AND DOS INTO ***
30 REM ***      RAM OF A DRAGON 64      ***
35 REM *** AND PATCH TO AUTO RUN TOOLKIT ***
40 REM *****
50 FOR I=&H4E20 TO &H4E71
60 READ A$
70 POKE I,VAL("&H"+A$)
80 NEXT I
90 EXEC &H4E20
100 DATA 8E,80,00,1A,50,B7,FF,DE,A6,84
110 DATA B7,FF,DF,A7,80,8C,DF,FF,25,F1
120 DATA 30,8C,26
130 DATA 10,8E,03,EB,A6,80,A7,A0
140 DATA 10,8C,03,FC,25,F6,10,8E,03,EB
150 DATA 10,9F,72,86,21,B7,BE,C5,1C,AF
160 DATA 86,22,30,8C,0C,9F,A6,7E,01,94
170 DATA 12,B7,FF,DF,7E,C7,06
180 DATA 22,54,4F,4F,4C,4B,49,54,2E,55,54,59,22,00
```

Pascal For Beginners (13) ... Part 2.

Continuing last month's program:-

```

BEGIN
  sum:=0;mean:=0;
  write('Enter month number in range 1 .. 12 : ');
  readln(input_month); (* readln cannot be used with user defined types *)
  month:=jan;
  IF input_month > 1 THEN
    FOR count := 2 TO input_month DO
      month:= succ(month);
    FOR row:= start_year TO end_year DO
      sum:=sum + annual_rainfall[row,month];
  (* ... you can do this bit .... !!*)
END;
PROCEDURE display_data; (* displays the matrix of rainfall statistics *)
BEGIN
  (* .....and this bit .....*)
END;
PROCEDURE select_from_menu;
VAR
  ch : Char;
BEGIN
  writeln(' Annual rainfall statistics '); skip(5);
  writeln('1 ... Average rainfall for selected year '); skip(2);
  writeln('2 ... Average rainfall for selected month '); skip(2);
  writeln('3 ... Display data '); skip(2);
  writeln('4 ... Quit '); skip(3);
  write(' Enter Choice : ');
  REPEAT
    read (ch);
    IF (ch < '1') OR (ch > '4') THEN
      writeln('Invalid input');
    UNTIL (ch = '1') AND (ch <= '4');
  CASE ch OF
    '1' : year_average;
    '2' : month_average;
    '3' : display_data;
    '4' : finished := true;
  END; (* of CASE *)
END; (* of select from menu *)
PROCEDURE terminate; (*rewrites the matrix back on disc file, overwriting
original *)
VAR
  row : years;
  col : months;
BEGIN
  rewrite(rainfall,'rainfall.dat');
  FOR row := start_year TO end_year DO
    BEGIN
      FOR col := jan TO dec DO
        write(rainfall,annual_rainfall[row,col]);
        writeln(rainfall); (* force new line on output file *)
      END;
    CLOSE(rainfall);

    writeln;
  END; (* of terminate *)
BEGIN (* start of main program - at last! *)
  finished := false;
  fill_array;
  REPEAT
    select_from_menu
  UNTIL finished;
  terminate;
END.
  Finally, your task is to insert code to carry out the requirements of
  procedures 'skip', 'display_data' and 'month_average'. Good Luck.

```

Dragonart Library.

Ray Smith tells me that while quite a few of you are ordering graphics screens from the library, there is a TOTAL lack of new material being sent IN. This just isn't good enough!. If you have any ORIGINAL graphics of ANY kind, please send them in to add to the Library stock ... you only get as good as you give!. Paul.

Slightly Untidy House(3)...Keith Bean.

I said that I would describe the funny things that happen when you use PC-CONVERT. Unfortunately, since I wrote the last piece, I have not had the chance to try it again, so I'm not yet sure exactly what does happen. The idea was great, and it probably will work when I get it straight; a recent DU contained a program to read IBM PC formatted discs! After my usual problems, (well, wasn't my fault they printed the correction in the next issue after I had 'kludged' my way around it!), I got it to work, and it was really fascinating reading character representations of object code. After a while that began to pall but I felt that there was something interesting there. The way I do word processing on the Dragon is with a BASIC shell around ALLDREAM. ALLDREAM gives me the text manipulation and the shell program handles file loading and saving and print formatting. I'm really quite proud of it even if it isn't the fastest system in the world. Being home-brew I can play around with it and so I decided that I could add a new routine to output the text file to disc in a simple ASCII format so that I could use PC-CONVERT to read the file at work. No more lugging kit around to do some work at home. It DOES work, BUT the file which PC-CONVERT creates is not quite suitable for WORDSTAR - it will read and display it okay, but when I try to edit the text it grinds to a halt. It's all to do with line feeds and carriage returns and I'm sure that I will be able to fix it at the Dragon end when I get time.

One other aspect of my word processor is the option to output the formatted text to the screen for a preview. That's a bit limiting with a standard screen but with BASIC 42 it's a bit more worthwhile and it works! Then I thought Rainbow Writer? That works as well. Remember this is a 64 and Rainbow Writer tucks itself out of the way above the disc controller addresses, and at its highest density it does 64 characters per line, very similar to a normal printed page. I don't know which to choose. BASIC 42 is a lot more stable and friendly but those extra 22 characters!

Considering that the Dragon is supposed to be unsupported, it's amazing what choices we have, even without OS9 or Flex. I had just got used to the idea that BASIC 42 was the development tool for me and along comes D.J.Gray giving me the Delta Toolkit back again. If you don't know about it you should. It gives a lot of power for the creation of BASIC programs. The opportunity to convert cartridge software to disc is interesting. Does anyone know how to do it for LOGO? I have copied it using the method published in Update some time ago but it just resets to the controller when EXEC'd.

I finally decided to join PRESTEL, not Micronet, yet the 'phone bill is too high anyway. It is interesting and growing as I watch. It may even be useful, but my wife takes a lot of convincing. If anyone wants to leave a message the number is 107752359.

I was interested to see Paul's tirade about equipment and operating systems in the June issue. I understand what he means but most people do want computers to help them do a job, not as a form of mental masochism. I was very annoyed when the IBM PC first turned up, it was nothing like as good as the kit which was then available from other sources, but over the years it has provided some major advances in software. Some of it does work and some of it is not. This is not the place to go into detail but the latest databases spreadsheets are very much better than they were, and some things such as project management with graphics are far better than was possible on mainframes years ago. Anybody else care to comment?

Descriptions and things.

If you think the Dragon world will go on for ever, I think I ought to say that both NDUK membership and Dragon User subscribers are sinking steadily now, and unless YOU do something to recruit some more subscribers in the VERY near future it isn't going to be viable for Group or D.User to keep going. There's no risk of either suddenly disappearing but if you want us to still be around in a couple of years time you do something about it!.

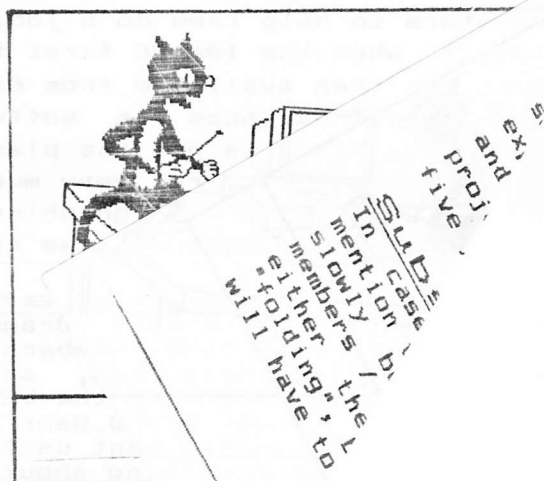
48, Gladstone Street,
and enclose an S.A.E for

```

10 REM 64K SWITCH BY CHRIS ROUSE
20 FOR F=&H7500 TO &H751D
30 READ P$
40 POKE F,VAL("&H"+P$)
50 NEXT F
60 EXEC &H7500
70 CLS:PRINT"NOW IN 64K MODE"
80 DATA 1A,50,8E,80,00,7F,FF,DE,A6,84,7F,FF,DF
90 DATA A7,80,8C,E0,00,25,F1,8E,A1,A5,86,12,A7
100 DATA 84,1A,00,39

```

As the cartoon was designed and drawn by Tony Davis I'll be asking him to judge the entries, so send yours in to me as soon as possible. Paul.





The Editor's PAGE!!!!

If you have bothered to read page 1 you will see that I have had to write almost a whole page this month due to lack of submissions. I haven't complained about articles for a while, and maybe this is the problem. No one has mentioned it so you obviously think it isn't a problem anymore. WRONG! I'm sure you would much rather read something else as opposed to me droning on for a whole page, but TOUGH. If you want something else to read, you will have to write it. If that means reading your own article, then so be it. There's no harm in a little modesty now and then, and it may even inspire you to write some more (some hope!). I fail to see why you lazy ones out there should rely on a handful of people to give you a newsletter each month. I'm sure Bob Smith, Gary Coxhead, Keith Bean and the rest would love to have a break, but they are good enough to supply articles to keep the newsletter going. You will all be complaining when Update doesn't appear, or has 10 blank pages, but you have been asked time and time again to write an article, even if it is only once a year!, so you cannot complain when the people who write over 10 articles a year suddenly stop doing so. They need a rest too, but the difference is that they DESERVE one, because they have actually WRITTEN SOMETHING!!!

The 1988 PC Show, Earls Court.

You are probably wondering why I have chosen to write about a show which has virtually nothing to do with the Dragon. Well, frankly so am I, but I needed something to fill the space!

The 1988 PC Show had all the hype which you would expect of the UK's biggest annual computer show. The Ocean and US Gold stands glittering with chronic game-of-the-film licenses eg Rambo 3, the Atari, Amstrad and Commodore stands desperately trying to convince you that you needed a new computer, and all the business stands showing off their great new 'DTPs' or 'CADs' or whatever. If you owned any one of the 5 major home computers then you were laughing. All the software you could ever want at guaranteed high prices. But for those of us who own a Dragon (at least YOU if you're reading this), then the show had little to offer. Or did it?

Frankly, YES, it did have very little to offer. There were, however, a few surprises in store. Firstly, I was shocked to see our good friends R & AJ PRESTON hiding away in a smallish stand. They do, I believe, support other machines, but they had a strong catalogue of Dragon software on display, and even some 32s going for the very reasonable price of 45 quid. Amidst the comments like "A DRAGON 32? What's that?" and "They're a load of rubbish", I had half a mind to turn round and tell everyone all about the Dragon. Swamped by a crowd of ST owners, though, I changed my mind. I tried to grab a word or two with Bob, but he was actually doing quite a trade and did not see me.

Second on the list of surprises was probably our best known "ex-friend", the huge form of John Symes and Microdeal. Desperately trying to flog some new music program to a poor customer, I was tempted to ask him (the customer) why he couldn't manage with Composer and Composer Companion, or with Music Maker. OK, so the little graphics DID look impressive. But so did the lights and arcade games and carrier bags and bars and leaflets and in fact the whole atmosphere of the show. From the point of view of trying to sell all your latest products to the public, it was a great show, with the sort of activity which was present at the first and second 6809 shows. However, from the Dragon's point of view, it wasn't worth a lot. Which made me question myself for going. It was heartening to see the Prestons there, though. At least we still have SOME support. Don't give up yet - there's still hope!...Stephen.

Ad. complaint reply.

We have now heard from Simon Jones re the complaint from R.A.Davis published in last month's Update. Simon wishes to apologise for any offence he may have given, but asks us to mention that he genuinely thought that his use of the quote referred to was in order, although he had not actually requested permission to use it in his advertisement.

I think we can accept that this was a genuine error, and I hope that both parties will now consider the matter closed.

New D.T.P program release by NDUG.

After a lot of panic and bad language when things didn't go quite according to plan, we are now ready (or will be by the time you read this) to offer our own D.T.P program.

It is based on a Tandy program owned by Falsoft (U.S.A), and we have a licence agreement with them to produce and market our Dragon modified and much improved and enlarged version, paying them \$1.00 per copy sold.

I haven't seen McGowan's DTP offering yet, so I can't say how they compare, but from the prices I would expect the McGowan one to be much more elaborate.

Ours is a simple to operate, menu driven program which allows you to call in and use graphics from disc, plus a selection of small graphics suitable for logos, decoration, etc, and of course a variety of different type faces, all of which can be used in three different sizes. The sizes, typefaces, and graphics can be mixed in any way you wish, and the program includes an Epson type screen dump which gives you a choice of two dump sizes (three if you have a 132 column printer!), and which allows you to set the left margin of the dump to any point on the paper!.

Currently it is available only on Dragon DOS disc, although there is no reason why a tape version shouldn't be made available in the near future if sales are reasonable, and the price is 8.50 to Group members or 10.00 to non-members.

An additional collection of graphics and typefaces will be made available on disc shortly, and at these prices how can you go wrong?!

The program is available via Ray Smith, so please send all orders to him at 5, Glen Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset. (Cheques made payable to the Group).

For those of you who do NOT use an Epson type printer, provision has been made for you to substitute your own screen dump. This is merely an "advance notice", and we hope to be able to publish a full review in the next issue of Update.

DOSPLUS 4 reply from Philip Scott.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to Lee Cooke's review of DOSplus 4. I would like to make the following observations:-

BOOTstrap loaders - unmodified DragonDOS 1.0 versions of OS9, Flex, Telewriter (version 4) and NDUG Forth V2.0 all BOOT and run with DOSplus 4. Any bootstrap or program that works with V1.0, V4.1 and Superdos E6 should also work with DOSplus 4 unless "self modifying code" is used. (I trust no-one approves of such code, McGowan excepted).

Patches - The Telewriter patch deletes an unnecessary directory backup, but is not essential. The Electronic Author patches are to overcome incorrect operation and make it DOS independent at the same time - it will work with DOSplus 4 as reliably as with V1.0 without modification (except directory output, as with E6). The Flex patches should be overprinted "only required with double sided discs" and are being revised. Perhaps here "an error in the bootstrap routine" (it is only said of the Flex bootstrap) should be "the use of unofficial DOS calls".

DragonDOS compatibility - Only programs which are DOS specific through calling routines directly instead of using the "official" entries cause problems. These require different versions for every DOS. On the basis that compatibility means that DOS routines should be at the same addresses, DOSplus 4 (with 5) is more compatible than Superdos E6 (with 4). I exclude DragonDOS routines which do not work as their addresses are irrelevant.

IV ERROR - The recovery technique described does not work if the disc housekeeping errors in DragonDOS 1.0 are corrected, as the backup directory is usually corrupted before action can be taken, hence the "on demand" backup in DOSplus 4. The built in backup and recovery of DOSplus does not allow copying to/from track 16 if it is not a directory track.

MAGIC GOLD - I think "experimental" says it all. I suspect it performs a directory backup similar to the Telewriter bootstrap (which also fails "WP" if write protected and not modified) to overcome the V1.0 housekeeping errors. Try it without protecting the disc before claiming discs will be corrupted.

Kill - Surely valuable programs are protected?. If not and you press keys without reading the screen - well!. Anyway, in the unlikely event that this happens DOSplus will leave the backup directory unchanged.

Crossword NO.36 Answers.

ACROSS: 1A) Triangle. 11) Omens. 2A) Acid. 3B) Hour. 4C) Dimple. 5B) Pleasant. 6B) Mains. 6G) Cutlass. 7A) Rubidium. 8A) Index. 8F) Plum. 9B) Koala. 10J) Ahem. 11A) Cerebrum. 12A) Cravat. 12G) Adobe. 13A) Armada. 13I) Noun.
DOWN: A1) Tambourine. B2) Chipmunk. C10) Tram. E1) Norman. F1) Gasps. F9) Aorta. G2) Lilac. G7) Ulna. H2) Die. I2) Omit. I8) Maroon. J1) Modem. J9) Rambo. K5) Cabin. L1) NALGO. L7) Aileron. M1) Status Quo.

First prize as usual is donated by Dragonfire Services from their current list, and this month it goes to F.J.Fisher. Second prize (a tape from our own collection) goes to Richard Nash.

Peeking the Dragon (7). Mike Stott

Yet another month has passed since my last article and not much software has arrived due to the postal strike, so let's get down to some reviews.

HOLE - DRAGONFIRE SERVICES.

This is a text adventure set on a space ship, and your task is to return to Earth. The tape takes a long time to load but once loaded you are faced with problems, which although fairly logical will take you many sessions to find the answers. There are other locations to visit and you must visit these in the right order and complete the tasks in order to finish the game. Quite often at first you will lose your life and have to restart so I would advise frequent saving. At 3.00 this is good value, being fairly well written, accepting "TAKE ALL", "N" (go North), and also the first three letters of words, though how does it distinguish between CRYstal and CRYosuit?. Not a classic but worth buying.

MANDRAGORE - KOUGA SOFTWARE

Arcade game with sideways scrolling screen worth buying for the graphics alone although the colour choice of black and green is not one I like. In fact I prefer it on a B&W tele. The first part is fairly easy avoiding nasties and shooting them if possible. Then you have to fight a duel with something like a painting on the wall which is difficult to master at first. You then descend to a lower level and move in the opposite direction to the upper floor and there is a lot more to avoid and shoot. Movement is slightly jerky but I must repeat that the graphics are something else. Good value at 4.00.

NORTH SEA ACTION - ORANGE SOFTWARE

The screen shows two tankers lying off an oil rig and below them is a series of passageways through which you have to steer a pipeline and collect oil spots and barrels, avoiding the monsters which move around. Unlike other games you cannot just avoid the monsters as you will lose a life if they touch any part of the line which stretches back up to the rig. Pressing the fire button retracts the line quicker than you have moved it down. At first it is very hard to control the line but practise makes perfect and this is one of those games where you want to play it once more to beat your high-score or to try and finish another level.

Very difficult at first, not very good graphics, but very playable especially at 2.99 on tape or disc.

BURST-OUT - DRAGONFIRE & BALLDOZER - KOUGA

Two more Brickout games, I thought when I received them, but they will each appeal to different people and if you like this type of game you might even want both of them as they are completely different. Bust-Out is for one or two players simultaneously, has 6 brick sizes, 9 bat sizes, and 9 speeds so a game can be played between two people of different skills by altering the options. Music plays at certain points but this option can be turned off. The wall in this game is the standard wall on each screen.

Balldozer is a one player game, keyboard only, which has balloons dropping from the wall which give you additional help like kasers and power if you can catch them. Each screen is designed differently and needs a different approach. This is more of a tactical game and requires more thought than just placing your bat in the way.

Bust-Out at 3.00 is good value and especially good played as a two player game. It is hoped to have a disc version ready soon. Balldozer, slightly dearer at 4.00 is an outstanding game despite a slight contact detect problem at times between bat and ball. This can be obtained from Orange Software.

Please remember that most companies charge postage and this has to be added to the above prices.

Next month I hope to include a review of Curse of Comarc, a vberly good text adventure from Orange, and also something about the new WIMP program from Dragonfire as Andrew Hill assures me there is a copy in the post. Also I hope to receive a copy of Impossiball from Pulser if that has been completed.

Remember, keep supporting your software companies and they will keep on supporting you!!.

The Late, Late Bit - - - - -

Fifty issues of Update!. I must have been out of my tiny mind to even THINK of starting this lot, to say nothing of continuing it all this time!. I should have become a "Computer Expert" instead, with nothing to do but learn the magic phrases (you know, ones like "in the current climate of information technology and the ongoing situation datawise ..."), and drift vaguely about filling in the gaps between "business breakfast" and "executive lunch" by taking the XR3i down to the Pheasant Plucker's Arms for a few "meaningful discussions" over the odd jar or two. It all goes to show that even the world's most modest genius can make horrible mistakes, doesn't it?

Well, I know what I'VE been doing for the past fifty months ... getting eye-strain, a concussed typing finger, developing a filthy temper, and keeping the paper industry, Smirnoff, and the manufacturer of Shinwa ribbons in business all on my own, answering several reams of letters, enough phone calls to ensure that Telecom share-holders get a bonus, and typing up several miles of garbage like this, to say nothing of wearing out photo-copiers and little things like that.

What have YOU been doing?. Writing nice, error-free articles on interesting subjects for us to print?, starting local Dragon groups?, offering to help out with the group workload?. Some of you have, I know, and it is much appreciated, but what about the all too silent majority?. It can't be just my paranoid imagination that makes me think that 95% of the Group are contributing precisely nothing towards keeping things going, because everyone who takes on the Editor's job gets the same idea after the first couple of weeks.

OK, it's your choice, you don't have to write anything for publication unless you want to, but please don't complain to ME that "there's nothing interesting in the newsletter", or when there's no newsletter at all. You want like the answer!!.

Yes, I KNOW you "don't have time" and that you "don't know enough about computers", but the answer is simple, do the same as I had to, MAKE time, and LEARN. Instead of taking the budgie for a walk or bathing the goldfish, try making yourself useful to other Dragon users for a change, instead of expecting them to do everything for you. There's always someone who knows less than you do, so why not let them have the benefit of what you know?. So alright, you're thick!, that's no excuse at all I was going to get a job as village idiot but I couldn't pass the exam, so I settled for running a User Group instead. Whatever the excuse, if you want the Group to keep going you have no choice but to do something to help, because the few who DO contribute are getting more than somewhat tired of carrying passangers.

OK, that's the situation, what you do about it is up to you. Anyway, let's get on to other matters. I had intended printing a review of the Siegfries Group's "Tastat-Uhr" kit a real time clock (with NiCad backup) and extention Commodore 128 type keyboard, but owing to a combination of factors like postal strikes, more work than usual, and the discovery of a couple of minor changes needed in the driver software, it will have to wait until next issue. I CAN tell you now that it is a very nicely produced unit, that it works well, and at the price they are asking is good value for money, especially for OS9 users, so if any of you are thinking of getting one, go ahead and order it now. The only real problem could be that wiring the unit into the Dragon isn't a job for anyone who doesn't know which end of a soldering iron gets hot twenty rather awkward connections could well be rather risky unless you are used to that kind of work.

The other bit of news is our new DTP program mentioned earlier. Now personally I don't like calling it a DTP, because I don't think anything less than a full professional package, the sort you could produce the Sunday Times on, deserves the name, but it seems I'm a minority of one on this point, and our program is at least as good as a lot I've seen for other machines, and even if it won't help you to put the Thompson group out of business it is well worth the price, quite useful, and a program you could have a lot of fun using even if you don't intend changing your name to Murdoch. Ray Smith and Ken Grade have done most of the work involved in getting the program ready, and they've done a good job, so why not buy yourself a copy?.

While I've got a bit of space to spare I would like to thank all of you who have been adding a bit to your cheque when ordering things or renewing subscriptions. It has helped to keep the copier in spares, and even if it hasn't added up to the price of a replacement machine yet, it all helps, and without your contributions to the "Copier Fund" Update would have gone under a long time ago!.

The Group is still solvent, if you're interested the currnet account balance is approx. 2,350.00, which means that even if no-one else joined, and no-one renewed, we could keep going for twelve months before finally pulling the plug. Membership renewals are falling off now as more people desert to newer and more fashionable machines, and although we are still getting new members every week the total number is falling slowly. Well, we've been "flogging a dead computer" for years, and sooner or later the decline had to set in. It could still be reversed, but that's something for YOU to bring about ... I'm doing all I can, as is Helen Armstrong, but YOU'RE the ones who will kill the Dragon or keep it going. It's entirely up to you.

Paul G.

CLASSIFIED ADS PAGE...

Dragon DOS cartridge. Perfect working order 50.00.
Chris Jobson, 23, Walsingham, Biddick Village, Washington, Tyne & Wear.

WANTED! Dragon PSU, plus TV, printer & tape leads & manual. Can pay up to 24.00 for the lot.
J. Rogers. F31, Sunnyside Court, 4, Trebovir Road, Earls Court, London SW5-9LU.

Dragon DOS or Cumana DOS cartridge for sale. Either one 50.00 for quick sale.
Phone Andrew on 0495-292088.

NEW PROLOG COMPILER!! An all new OS9 Prolog Compiler which converts Prolog 2 to 6809 Assembler. Full implementation with runtime module and documentation on disc. Requires OS9 Assembler (NOT supplied). SPECIAL PRICE ONLY 12.50.
METASOFT. 4, Pinehurst Walk, Orpington, Kent.

Dragon games, all originals (some latest) on tape and disc. Prices from 1.00 each. Send s.a.e. for list.
Steve Knight. 76, Etwell Road, Hall Green, Birmingham. B28-0LE.

CGP115 four colour printer / plotter, plus lead, 4 spare rolls of paper and 2 spare sets of pens. All original and good working order. Open to sensible offers. Would prefer buyer to collect.
R.A. Davis, 39, Boxley Drive, West Bridgford, Notts. NG2-7GQ.

WANTED! Anyone in the Bisley area interested in forming a local Dragon User Group.
P. Marsh. 37, Corbetts Walk, Bisley, Surrey. GU24-9DU.

Wanted! D64 PSU and main boards (keyboard not necessary) must be in good working order. May be able to collect. Up to 60.00 offered.
Phone H. Grey on 01-601-3694 (Days) or 0277-62555 after 7pm.

WANTED! Delta DOS cartridge and manual, complete with cable, for desperate Dragon owner! Good price paid.
Phone Keith on 021-525-6018.

Dragon 32 and 64 repairs undertaken at good rates by experienced engineer. Contact Lee Cooke (see PD Library ad for address).
Phone 0903-41633 Monday evenings only.

WANTED. Addbus expansion system, UV EPROM eraser. Please phone with details and price.
Chris Jobson. 091-4165415.

DRAGON LOGIC. Issue 3 of this new up and coming amateur Dragon magazine is now available. Priced 1.00 it is full of interesting and thought provoking articles. Suitable for both Tandy and Dragon users. (Available in UK only). Send cheque or PO for 1.00.
Donald Morrison. 72, Biriebuigh Road, Inverness IV2-3QT. Scotland.

Dragon 32 with Delta DOS and 40 track SS drive, with PSU. All complete & ready to run, complete with software. 120.00. EPROM programmer, kit built, works well. 40.00 p.n.o.
Phone Stuart on LEEDS 645519.

2 Dragon 32's, both with manuals. 35.00 each. Tandy Multipak converted for Dragon 20.00. Dragon 64, perfect but no manual 50.00. All in g.w.o.
J.E. Glade. Phone 0843-47340.

Full set of Dragon User magazines, Datapen, pair of Dragon Data joysticks, Peaksoft Dragon Power supply. All in very good condition. Offers wanted for all or for individual items. @ Ian Smith, Phone 0236-34305.

DOS EPROMS. Your DragonDOS or SuperDOS rebloated to V1.7 (as per D.U. patch with additional corrections). 3.00, or rebloated to DOSPLUS for 9.00. DOSPLUS EPROM 11.00. (Please state whether Dragon Data, DD or DD DELTA). DELTADOS copied onto a 27128 with DOSPLUS added 11.00 (requires mod to cartridge). For mod service add 1.00 and send cartridge. 60 page DOSPLUS manual 2.50 or 2.00 with DOSPLUS.
P.G. Scott, 4, Badgerwood Drive, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey. GU16-5UF.

NEW FOR THE COCO!. Own a CoCo and want to run Dragon DOS discs on it? Our new program, written by Chris Rouse, will let you do just that! Converts DragonDOS discs to CoCo DOS format and retokenises Basic programs at the same time. Versions available for CoCo DOS V1.0 and V1.1. Price just 5.00 inclusive.
Cheques and orders to the Group, please, at 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex.

DOS EPROMS blown to V1.0. Patched V1.0, Eurohard V1.0 and V4.1, or translated and debugged V4.1. EPROMS up to 27128 copied to order. Send a clean EPROM (2764 for DOS) and 3.00.
Paul Grade, 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex.

40 track full height drive, cased but no PSU. 30.00 plus postage.
2 DS 40/80 Canon drives plus two non-runners for spares. Cased and with PSU's. 140.00 the lot or 70.00 each.
18A quad density 1.2 Meg 5.25" drive, NOT suitable for Dragon. 75.00.
Reasonable offers considered on all items.
Phone Alan Butler on 0371-4234. evenings only.

NDUG FORTH OPERATING SYSTEM: Written by John Payne and available ONLY through the Group. New version for DragonDOS V1.0 and SuperDOS includes an assembler as well as the original Turtle Graphics facility, 80 col. w.p., etc.
New version on V1.0 / E5 & E6 disc ONLY. New low price 10.00 inclusive. Original version (no assembler) for SD or DD Delta as well, now 7.50 inclusive.
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CIRCUIT DIAGRAMS: Available for D64, D32, Dragon DOS controller, Cumana DOS, and now CoCo DOS. All the same price 1.00 each.
Cheques and orders to the Group at 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex.

DRAGON 32 UPGRADE MANUALS: The cheapest and easiest way to upgrade your D32 to 64K RAM. Easy to follow instructions covering all variants of 32, 2.00 inclusive.
Cheques and orders to the Group at 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex.

DRAWZEE: One of the best graphics utilities available. Written by R.A. Davis, simple to use, outstanding results. Available on cassette for only 2.50 inclusive.
Cheques and orders to the Group at 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex.

NEWCOPY: Machine code tape utility for the production of backup copies of any m/c programs. Allows loading and resaving of both headed and headerless programs, plus many other facilities. Written by Stuart Mills. 2.50 inclusive.
Cheques and orders to the Group at 6, Navarino Road, Worthing, Sussex.

DRAGONART LIBRARY: The Group Graphics library has a vast range of screens available at a nominal cost, so why not take advantage of them? It also wants YOUR graphics screens. Also available is 'TX', a 1p-Res editor and screen manipulator price 2.75 inc. @ Details from the Librarian, Dragonart Library, 5, Glen Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset.

P.D. UTILITY LIBRARY: A good range of original programs and routines available and wanted! For details contact:-
Lee Cooke on Worthing 41633 (evenings) or send sae to 117, Limbrick Lane, Goring, Worthing, Sussex

THE OS9 BOOK!: "Everything you wanted to know about OS9 but didn't know who to ask". 150 pages of hints, tips, and articles for the Level 1 OS9 CoCo and Dragon user. Includes a disc of source files. 18.95.

CON09: Easy to use, full feature OS9 comms program, together with source, Xmodem (CRC & SUM), function keys, disc monitor. Send messages direct from disc! Suitable for ANY OS9 system. 5.00.

PD-PAR: Selection of useful PD OS9 utilities on one disc. Includes DDCOPY.
Cheques and orders to Jason Shouler, 70, Victoria Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset. BH12-3AE.

OS9 MODEM PROGRAM: Up and downloading of files, any Baud rate from 50/50 to 9600/9600 (NOT split rate). Up & download buffer from 4 to 32K or program will adapt to largest capacity available. All 6551 options supported. 8.00.
Phone Barry Knapp on 0932-242800 (evenings only).

BRING OUT YOUR DEAD!!!!: Scrap dead and/or dying Dragons and CoCo's wanted for spares to help keep the price of members repair jobs down to absolute minimum. All varieties of dead and dying printers also required for the same purpose.
Computer details to Alan Butler on 0371-4234 (evenings only please), and printer details to Paul Grade on 0903-207585.

BACK ISSUE UPDATES: Back issues of Update reprinted to order from original master copies. Now only 75 pence per copy!! Price includes postage etc.
Orders to E. Hall, 32, Thackeray Hall, Fareham, Hants. PO16-0PG. Cheques made payable to BACK ISSUES DEPT. (NDUG).

DELTA DOS UTILITY: m/c utility to copy ALL Basic and m/c files from disc to tape in one operation. Basic listing of loader and Hex dump 1.00 or on cassette for 2.50.
J.C. Bushell, 33, Tennyson Avenue, Clevedon, Avon. BS21-7UJ.

Not many ads this month - blame
the Post Office!
Paul

Crossword 37.

Or at least, it should have been, but owing to the diabolical state of the mail it hasn't arrived yet, and there's no way I can hold this page any longer and still hope to get this issue out somewhere near on time!.

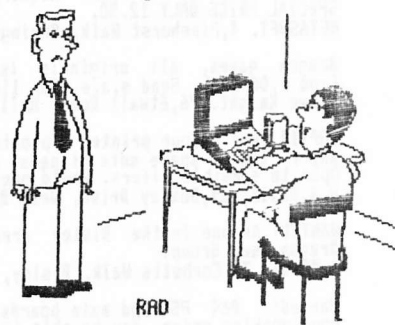
Still, you've got a couple of competitions to be going along with, the freebie tickets one and the cartoon caption one, so try those instead this month and hopefully things may be back to normal by Issue 51.

The Even Later Late Bit!

Well, that's it for this month. This **SHOULD** have been a good issue, but thanks to the moronic peasants at the Post Office who insist on industrial inaction because they are too damned stupid and greedy to do the work themselves and too selfish to allow others to do it, you'll have to put up with this ... it's the best we can do under the circumstances. It's a good job everyone outside the unions doesn't take the same attitude as union members when it comes to strikes, or they'd find themselves very broke and very hungry! Worry about the workers?!, that HAS to be a joke!, they don't give a damn about the rest of us who have to rely on the post in order to make a living!.

Anyway, sorry this is such a rough Update, but with most of the material "missing" and not a lot of "stock" articles to work with, I think Stephen hasn't made a bad job of things, so don't shoot the Editor, that's MY privilege!. Paul.

Shall we crash the stock market again or have a N.A.T.O Nuclear alert today?



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