## Notes on the back story of this letter:

This 8-page letter is one of the very last letters I sent to Richard Nelson before I went abroad to fulfill my military obligations, and when I eventually came back many months later I was all too busy with real-life issues to dedicate any more time to calculators and related matters. By then I had already sold my HP-41C (for the last time) and even my beloved SHARP PC-1211 (which I later regretted, again, and this time I didn't even need the money ! ...) and so the HP-11C (presented to me, not bought by me) was the one and only calc I kept (it still is with me, as new !), which was more than enough. Thus, my then-strong calc hobby went into hibernation for many years, which was for the best as things PPC would get utterly sour and nasty soon after, and thankfully I was spared it all.

As this present letter was essentially the last one where I would "talk" to Mr. Nelson (one-way communication, as always) I threw "political correction" aside and went into mild "rant mode", giving him a piece of my mind for the last time, in particular asking (among other things) for the criteria used to select which materials would be published and which wouldn't ever make it. I also asked about the blatant bias on publishing time and again the umpteen ever-so-slightly-improved version of this or that tool in detriment of publishing real applications created (or not) using said tools. Anyway, I didn't care for or expect an answer (there was none, of course) as I was going to leave it all behind immediately.

Just for the sake of it, I also included one last contribution for its possible publication in Mr. Nelson's PPC CJ, namely my "Chess 5x5" program for the HP-41C. Actually, I didn't care in the least whether it would be eventually published there or not, as PPC CJ was the last place I submitted it to: I had already submitted it to Melbourne Chapter's Technical Notes and both the US and Europe HP Users' Libraries for good, and all of them featured it (and also included it in the "HEWLETT-PACKARD HP-41 USERS' LIBRARY SOLUTIONS" Games II book !!), so even if Mr. Nelson decided not to publish it in PPC CJ I wouldn't mind at all, my last barbed remark notwithstanding.

End of an age for me.

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SPAIN

June 13, 1981

Dear Richard:
I could ask the standard "how are you?", but I guess that now that the ROM is finished, the word best describing your condition should be "relaxed", or the like.

Do you remember me ? It must be diffi cult to remember particular members amons some 7000 numbers, but I ve made some contributions in the past to the PPC Calculator Journal, though just a few of them received the high honor of being published there. For unknown reasons, some of the best never appeared; the most relevant example probably being the program "Othello", submitted for its publication nearly a year ago, and never published. The programwas, fortunately, publishod by the Melbourne Chapter PPC TN, and it generated a big deal of interest, even some members created bar code for it. I recently received a letter from Corvallis (see attached photocopy), asking for permission to include the program in the Amrican Users'Library. As it seems, someone in Melbourne took the care of sending the program to them and, as they say in the letter, it ge nerated a lot of interst.

Now, I use to always say what I think, re gardless of it being adequate to standard social behaviour or not, $=$ and the question is (crudely exposed): if Corvallis is interested., why you aren't ? Don't you think the membership will enjoy the program ? Why don't you write an article in a future PPC telling the membership the criteria used in editor's censorship ? Is a normal ("normal" means non-synthetic) program preferred to a synthetic one ?. Is an article on the last stupidity on synthetios preferred to a pro gram ? Are we ("we" means most PPC members) creating programs that ser ve to create anothor programs in a never-ending loop? I am pointing now at those Key Assignments, Byte Loaders, etc, that are very use ful as tools to do something whith them, and the question is: why don't stop perfecting, improving, revising to a limit the tools, and begin to do something with them?

Here included is some contribution. It is:
CHESS 5x5 : This program allows the user to play a game of chess against the 41c. Actual chess is played using actual. rules, as all standard rules are implemented, including pawn promotion. The board is $5 \times 5$ instead of $8 \times 8$, due to memory and speed limitations, but this hardly matters, as both players have all pieces of standard chess, with the same powers and limitations, arranged in the same order: that's a king, queen, bishop, knight, rook, and a row of pawns. The program makes extensive use of the graphic capabilities of the printer, and printa the board using visually beautiful BLDSPEC characters. If a printer is not present, it runs the same, however. The level of play is surprisingly good for such a tiny program ( 921 bytes), and the average time for a machine move is some 5 minutes. Additionally, a synthetic routine can be added that speeds the execution if printer present. The machine easily checkmates you if you don't play fine enough. Magnetic cards included ( 9 tracks+1 track+1 data card: MCHESS and P are indopondent, separate prograns. SIZE EXACTLY TO 097).

That's all. I think this is the 1st and possibly the last chess prograin written for the 410 , and will surely interest to the membership. Let's hope it does not follow the same destiny as poor "Othollo".

Yours sincerely:

This prorran alows the user to play ohens against the flo．Tho gam is ployed in a 5 ，womed ingteal of the stanard $8 \times 8$（see raasons below）but this hardly matters，as all standard rules for chess are implenontod，in－ clucing paw promotion．The progran is absolu－ 1 HOE toly printer－compatible，but if a printar is－－ FROM © TO 4，Dllok presant，it will print the board．Is a pinter

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Fon？ is used，you may have tho boand printod efter evory move，or only after IP＇s moves，to savo－ papor．

I originally wrote an $8 \times 8$ crama，buts
－an $8 x 8$ boerd cannot be pxinted using BLDSFEC characters because of printer bufier limitam tions．A board could bo printed using numboss to identify each pisce，or charactors，but－ oven the best attempt was much worse and un－ recognizeble than the present version．
－ $8 \times 8$ game took tho full memory of a $41 c$ with 4 singlo density RAMs，so that，unless you have a quad RAM or a－ 410 V ，neithor the printar nor the card reader could be plugged， piting very difeicult to load and sun the program．
$-3 \times 8$ game，using the same playing lo－
gic as this $5 \times 5$ version，took several hours For eech move，playing very weak，and thus－ making the gans uninteresting．

On the other hand this $5 \times 5$ version－
provides the following advantagos：
－the $5 x 5$ boerd is printed using BLDSPRCs，so You can clearly see the position．
－Whough the board is $5 \times 5$ ，you still hove all pieces of conventional chess，arranged in－ the same order：king，queeng biscop，lenight，－ rook，and a row of pawns，all vith tho same ponems and restrictions of stendard game．

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－thia 505 vexsion fits in 3 sdranis，and ta ．． kes just 5 minutes（averege）per move．$A l_{\text {so }}$

1 MOUE
FROH 22 T0 33 cue to the recuced siso，a typical game－ takos an average of 20 moves（ 8,8 games tam ke some 40 moves），making the gane＂faster＂ and more ootivo．The armies get into battlo very soon．And also， as the muber of positions and moves is less than in $8 \times 3$ ，the lis yel of play is much better，so thet the 410 plays

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 a woak，but nonorrivial gane．It can eyen cheokmow to you if you con＇t play fine enough 11
－All standard chess mules are inplemerited， with the following exceptions：
a）as the king is alreacy in a comer（soe stan－ dard initiel position above），no castling is ．． nocessary：it is protected by the queen
b）as there is only one empty row between the parns ，a pawn may advance just one position on itis－ Iints move（not 1 or 2 as in standard $8 \times 8$ ）
c）no capture＂en passent＂is allowed
All other miles are tho sames parn promotion is alloweds if a parn reaches the opposite side，it becomes any desined pisce（except king on pawn，of course），as in standara chess．Such on oxamplo is－ given in the illustration at the leit：If moves－ tho pam in 42 （standard matrix row／colum notatín Fpon？ on）to 53，thus taking the whita bishop at 53 y bocomes a queon－o （soe illustration）and givea check（not indicaterd）．In case of－ parn promotion，HP will always select a quaen，but you may chose any desired plect．

This progran, callod meHESS, is composed of 3 serarate filles: luHESS, $P$, and 5 . The main filo, weHESS, is indopendent of the others, and $4 f$ you do not intend to use a prin tor, just load RCHESS ( 921 bytes, 9 tracks). Howevor, it you have a printer and want printing of the bused, load the $P$ (print board) routine, too. Noither muss nor P -


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 5—M\% From? use synthotics at all. But you may have noticed that pluging in the printer slows dom the execution speed by somo $35 \%$. So, you may want to also load the routine called 5: this is a synthetic routing that togeles flas 55 on and off. It is called at proper times from the main file (if printer), so disabling the printer when not necessary. The operation of 5 is tranaparent to the user: the program runs the same with or without it, but it muns appreciably faster if 5 is used. In fact, it runs alroost as .. fast as if no printer is pluzged in. Both routines, $P$ and 5, fit together in exactly 112 bytes, and can be stored on the foth track, so the whole program takes 5 cards.

In addition, a separate -data card is used, that contains all, BIDSPEC characters used by the prin ter, as well as other useful constants. You should prepare this data card previousily to ruming the program. The card is used at the beginning of each game. It contains numeric constants in R 18 thru R36 and BLDSPEC alpha consta nts in R37 thru R49. That's 32 registers in all, $\bar{a}$ whole card. If you do not have a printer, store an alpha A in liou of the BLDSPEC characters.

The program needs SIKE 097 to run. VeFy important: tha STZE must be exactly 097. If it is stialler or larger, it won't work. It has to be no other than 097.
REMARKS: -you can select wether the board is prin-

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|  | ted after every move (SF OO) or just af. ter HP moves ( CF CO ) at any time during the game. -If a printer is present, the $P$ routine should be present, too. The 5 routine is recomended, then, to speed program execution. But if you do not want synthetics, just load the alternate IBL "5", END, which will do nothing, and no changes to the main fille will be needed.

- If some HP move results in a check being given to your king, the machine places the word CHECK after its move. There are 2 oxcoptions to this rule: (see illustrations above)
a) if a pam promoted to a queen by HP results in a chock, this is not indicated (right illust.)
b) if HP moves a piece that, while not giving check by itself, leaves your king under attack from some other HP piece, the check isn't indicated, too. (left illust.)
-ffP will never make illegal moves, but your moves are not tested fow legality (you are assumed to play honestly). If your king is under check, and you forget the fact, and move some other thing, HP will actually take your king on its move.
"fip's average "thinking" time is 5 minutes per move. This is the average for a non-printer game. But actual tines vary very much with the specific position. The time increases quadratically with the number of possible moves for HP and linearly with the number of your responses. Minimun times are 15 seconds, typical are 3 or 4 minutes, average is 5 minutes, and maximun some 15 minutes. A little pationce is needed ! Hovever, a whole game should last no more than $1 \frac{1}{2}$ hours or so.
- io not mako any changes to the program,or it may not work. Spow cially do not insert subroutines, all 6 levels are used up
－SIZE 097 （exactly ！！！）
－If you want to print the board，load the $P$ and 5 routines and Gro．
－load the HCHESS main file（do not press GRO．if your program is comptled，to avoid new recompilation and delays when searching for labols）
－XEQ＂NCHESS＂$\rightarrow$ CARD
－Ioad the data card（2 sides）；the machine turns itsolf off，to allow you unplug the card reador and plug the printer instead． （if you do not have printer，or have a quad you can delete the OFF instruction）
Hi
RUS
－once the printer is plussed in and ON（and set to NORM position）turn on the 41c．The program starts inmediately．If printer， the board is printed now reflecting the initial position（see illust．at left）：
the pieces are arranged as followss
black（HP）：king，queen，bishop，knight，rook pawn，pawn，pawn ，pawn ，pown white（you）：pawn，pawn，pawn，pawn，pawn king，queen，bishop，knight，rook
you always play white，and HP plays black， but you can select who moves first：
HP 1ST？，if you want HP to make the first move，simply press $\mathrm{R} / \mathrm{S}$ ．If you want to make the first move，press $N, R / S$
a）HP moves：it will display I IHOVE ，and scroll the message to the right while it thinks its move．Then finally，if a printer is present，it prints
FROM xx TO yy ，where xx is the row／column position of the piece it mo－ ves，and yy is the loca－ tion where it moves to．
If the piece gives check，FROM XX TO Yy，CHECK is displayed（see REMAILS for exceptions）．Then the board is printed．（if you have no printer，the execution stops to allow you to see and perform the move on the board．If you fail to see the whole messase，tum to AJPHA to see it again．Press $\mathrm{R} / \mathrm{S}$ to continue）．Then，you are prompted for your move with：

FROM？，onter the xx coordinates of the location where your piece stands，then $R / S$

TO？，enter the coordinates of the
location where it moves to．The mavhine，once ycu press $\mathrm{R} / \mathrm{s}$ ，pro ceeds to compute its own move．Howevex，if you just promoted your pam，after the TO you will be prorapted for the piece you want－ the pawn to become：PIECE？，enter the code for the selected piece：
the codes are；
quaen： 5.09 ，bishops 4.03 ，knights 3.03
rook 32.05
whenevar you are prompted by PIECE？enter the code for the desirod piece（most likoly a queen，5．09）． If the machine promotes one of its pawns，it will elways solact a queen．If you aro playing without a printer，romember this fact and piace a black－ quoon where the promoted bJack pawn stands．Of－ course，you may promote any number of your pawns， and choose any destrod piece，so you can have 3－ knights if you want to．

1 hove
FOH 12 T0 52，CHECK

-always reminer to properly actualize the board after $H P$ moves if no mintan is boing used.
b) your moves : juet enswor the From, TO?, (PIECE?) prompta with the respoctive coordinates, as stated previously, but you nust romombers
-your moves are not testod to be legal. So, please, play carofully and do not make any illeggal move, which would spoil the gone. Remomber that, though HP announees most ohecks given to your king, there are two oxceptions, and if you fail to notico the check and let your king under attack, HP will take your king on its next move
-the machine recognizes the situation when you give checkmate, and displays the propar message CHECKMATE, YOU WCN on its move. But see c) end of a game, below.
The game continues, alternating moves between you and $\mathbb{F P}$.
c) end of a gamo
a) if you give checkmata : the machino recognizes the fact, -

## I MOVE $\rightarrow$ CHECKMATE $\rightarrow$ YOU WON

b) stalamated position: a stalemated position is a position in which either you or IIP cannot make any lagal move on their respective turn. HP recognizes tho stalemate by it self if, and only if it has no possible move at all (legal or not). In this case, it displays:

STALEMATE, the game is a tie
howevar, if $H P$ cannot make any legal move (and its king is not under check), but has "illegal moves" (such as moving the king to a position under attack from your pieces) it displays the CHECKMATE $\rightarrow$ YOU WON message. This is not so, because HP's king is not under attack, so the position is a stalemated one, and the game is a tie, too
If you cannot make any legal move, but your king is not under check given by HP, the position is a stalemate, too. Just answer the FRon? prompt with $\varnothing$, then $\mathrm{R} / \mathrm{s}$ :

$$
\text { FROM? , } \emptyset \mathrm{R} / \mathrm{S} \rightarrow \text { STALEMATE appoars. A tio. }
$$

c) if HP chockmates you : should HP happen to checkmate you, it does not recognize the situation by itself. Just answer the From? prompt requesting your move with a ninus ones

$$
\text { FROM? , }-1 \mathrm{R} / \mathrm{S} \rightarrow \text { CHECKMATE } \rightarrow I \text { WONS , HP won }
$$

DATA CARD a you should propare a data card with the following contents:

| $=1, \mathrm{R} 26=-7$ |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\mathrm{R} 27=-11$ | 23 | , R43 = dot. square |
| $20=-10, \mathrm{R} 28=19$ | $6=16.023$ |  |
| $21=-8$, R29 $=17$ | R37 = black king |  |
| $22=10, \mathrm{R} 30$ | , R38 = black queen | - |
| 23 $=8, \mathrm{R} 31=11$ | R39 = black bishop | , R470w.bishop |
| $24=-19, \mathrm{R} 32=16.019$ | R40 = black knight | , $148=w$ queen |
| 2 $=-17, \mathrm{R} 33=24.031$ | R41 = black rock | - 249 w |
| that's 32 ( 1 card) registers in all. Registera 37 thru 49 con - |  |  |
| tain the BLDSPRC characters usod to generate the boaid. If you |  |  |
| do not have a printer, store an alpha A into R37 thru R49. Tf - |  |  |
| you have a printer, you can construct your own BLDSPEC characm |  |  |
| toxs and store them in the registexs ass shown abova (the chaxac |  |  |
| tar for tho black king in R37, oto). If you want your board to |  |  |
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R37 $=$ black king $\quad=0 \quad 96$

| － | 0 | 95 | 114 | 127 | 114 | 96 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $\sqrt{139}$＝black bishop | $=0$ | 100 | 110 | 123 | 110 | 100 | $\bigcirc$ |
| R40＝black knight | $=0$ | 108 | 102 | 119 | 125 | 108 | 0 |
| R4i＝black rook | $=0$ | 102 | 124 | 126 | 124 | 102 |  |
| $\mathrm{P42}=$ black pawn | $=0$ | 96 | 102 | 126 | 102 | 96 |  |
| R43 $=$ dotted squar |  | 0 | 65 | 0 | 65 | 0 | 35 |
| R44 ${ }^{\text {a }}$＝white pam | $=96$ | 95 | 89 | 65 | 89 | 95 | 56 |
| R45 $=$ white roak | $=103$ | 89 | 67 | 65 | 67 | 89 | 103 |
| R46＝white knight | $=110$ | 83 | 89 | 72 | 65 | 83 | 126 |
| R47 $=$ white bishop | $=110$ | 91 | 81 | 68 | 81 | 91 | 10 |
| R48 $=$ Whito quean | $=112$ | 95 | 77 | 64 | 77 | 95 | 112 |
| B49＝white king | 112 | 95 | 69 | 64 |  |  |  |

SAMPIS GANE \＆RUNTING TIMES
If desired，test that your program is correctly recorded by executing this sample gans．Check is indicated－ with a + sign，and numbers in brackets represent the code of preces obtained by pawn promotion（answora to PIECE？prompts）

Sample game，you first（ tines $=T$ ）

| YOU | HP | no printar | printer（85） | printer |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 44 －34 | 25－34 | 3.08 | 3．26 | 4.45 |
| $43-34$ | 23－34 | 3.08 | 3 －26 | 4－45 |
| 53 m 44 | 34－45 | $2 \cdot 16$ | $2 \cdot 28$ | 3＇26 |
| 54－33 | 24－33 | 3.25 | 3．44 | 5＊11 |
| 42－33 | 2．2－32 | $4 \bigcirc 04$ | 450 | $6 \% 11$ |
| 33－23 | 12－22 | $7{ }^{\circ} 18$ | $8 \cdot 02$ | $11^{\circ} 05$ |
| 23－14（3．03） | 22－44 | 6.25 | 7.04 | 9.45 |
| 55－53 | 45－55（queen） | $6 \cdot 38$ | $7 \cdot 17$ | 10.05 |
| 53－55 | 15－14 | 14.40 | $16^{\circ} 07$ | $22^{\prime} 17$ |
| 41－31 | 13－31 | 10－48 | $11^{\circ} 39$ | 16．25 |
| $52 \cdot 54$ | 44－54＋ | $4^{\circ} 20$ | $4{ }^{\circ} 47$ | 6.35 |
| $55-54$ | 14－54＋ | $4 * 51$ | 5－23 | 7－22 |
| －1 CHEC | Mate－I WCM |  |  |  |
| total tines |  |  | $78 \cdot 13$ 6.31 | $\begin{array}{r} 107^{\circ} 52 \\ 8.59 \end{array}$ |

ronarks：－as you can see，the combination printex＋routine 5 slows down the program by a factor of 1．1，while using the printer without 5 slows it dow by a factor of 1.52 ．
－this is not a standard average sample gamsa most－ games are faster than this one．For instance，the move 15－14 which takes $14^{\circ} 40^{\circ}$ to be found is a maximum．The 410 had to ex plore nearly 1000 ajternatives（i．es moves）to find it，so－ the time had to be large．In that position，HP had 26 possible options，aach option having at least 19 responses from you，etc．

## mxamples

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FROM 2： 7031


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hp 1st？ yes
HP moves さts pam from 21 to 31
now position
your movs？ setting rilag
43 Rel OO causes tho board to ber
37 ful printod move
the new posi－ tion is prin－ ted now reflec ting your mo－ ve， and HP compur tes its move now，giving oheck with 3ts pawn，when taking ths white one at loontion 42

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FROM？


That will be all for now. Excuse the quite
long documentation, but the complexity of the program mado it unavoidablee As always, I hope you will like it.


