

APPENDIX I

THE COMMANDS AND THEIR MEANINGS

The Commands used in all three of the adventures in this book are listed below in alphabetical order. The letters in brackets after each command correspond to the adventure, or adventures, that the command comes from: “C” stands for the model adventure, “Captive”; “D” stands for “Dracula’s castle”; and “J” stands for “Journey to freedom”. After this, the meaning of each command is given.

1) *BLAST* (D) — This command is used with connotations of obliteration, with a more destructive force of wiping out than with shooting. Obviously an object must be carried which the player can blast with, and in the context of the adventure the passageway is cleared of obstacles which are in the adventurer’s way.

2) *CHOP* (D) — This may have a similar useage as such commands as “KILL” and “SHOOT”, and various others since it allows the player to take away the life — if a “VAMPIRE” may be said to be alive in the first place — of a character opposing him or her. Again, the adventurer will require a suile implement to carry out the command successfully. you could also use this command to chop such things as wood, for example.

3) *CLIMB* (DJ) — In many cases a “ROPE” or similar object may be required, but in other cases it may not. If a “ROPE” is required then it should be tied or in some way attached to something before it may be climbed. Depending on the context, the player could either climb up or down it. In the cases where a “ROPE” is not required, the player may be in the positoin to climb something like a tree, and in such cases there are usually hints that the tree may be climbed. For example, the computer may print out that a low branch is within easy reach, or on examination of the tree by the adventurer, the machine could print out that it is climbable.

4) *CUT* (CDJ) — In my adventures I have not used this command with any association of death, but instead for various uses. In one instance it is used to form something new out of something existing; another time it allows an object to be freed from whatever it is attached to and thus enable it to be picked up; in the other situation it removes trees from an area, revealing a certain object — that is, it removes something from the surface and renders visible an object which could not previously be seen.

5) *DIG* (J) — This has a use in “Journey to freedom” which is similar to the second use of “CUT”; if a “POST” is dug out of the ground then it

can be picked up and carried. Another possible use of the command could be to reveal something to the adventurer — for example, if ‘DIG GROUND’ is typed in, assuming that ‘GROUND’ is listed under ‘Objects’, then the computer could print ‘Some treasure has appeared’. The word ‘TREASURE’ would then appear under the list of objects in the room. Note, however, that this can only take place on the provision that six objects are not already in the room, since there cannot be seven in a room (the seventh would be the ‘TREASURE’ if there were already six objects). You should also remember than an object like a ‘SPADE’ must be carried before the player can ‘DIG’.

6) *DROP* (CDJ) — This is one of the essential commands in any adventure, since without it and ‘GET’ the player would not be able to transfer objects freely from one room to another. There are not a great deal of conditions surrounding this command apart from that the object must be in the adventurer’s possession to begin with, before it can be dropped. Since the only objects that may be picked up are moveable objects there need not be any conditions about them being dropped, for only such objects are carried.

7) *DUST* (J) — In ‘Journey to freedom’ this has one function which is implemented in two different ways. In one case, with the help of a ‘DUSTER’, some rust may be dusted off a key to make it fit a lock, and in the other case a ‘DIAMOND’, when dusted, becomes a ‘lethal weapon’. The object acted upon changes to the benefit of the player.

8) *EAST* (CDJ) — This is a command of movement and may be used by just typing the first letter, ‘E’, into the computer and not the first three letters as in commands which do not concern movement. The purpose of this command is to move the player to a location, or room, ‘EAST’ by one room square, of the room presently occupied provided that there is an exit to the east. Remember that directions do not require an object.

9) *EAT* (J) — This command, when used, is not often to the player’s benefit — the object, more often than not of food, which the player is allowed to eat, will be required for another part of the adventure. For example, the ‘FOOD’ which may be eaten in the adventure is for feeding a ‘LION’ with. An example of eating being beneficial is where a ‘SCORPION’ is eaten in the same adventure — the creature would otherwise kill the adventurer.

10) *EMPTY* (D) — This is used for some sort of container which has some fluid inside it which is usually water. In ‘Dracula’s castle’ the container is a ‘BUCKET’, the fluid is some water, and the result of emptying this container is to extinguish a fire sufficiently so that it may be passed. A possible alternative to ‘EMPTY BUCKET’ could be ‘POUR

WATER”, but “WATER” is not included in the object list, since examination of the “BUCKET” reveals that there is water in the “BUCKET”. “POUR” is similar to “EMPTY”, but differs in that it refers to the fluid in the container directly and not to the container itself.

11) *EXAMINE* (CDJ) — A great deal of use is made of this command in adventures; although it is not one of the six essential commands, it is resident in most adventure vocabularies. Examining objects can reveal attributes about them which the adventurer may take advantage of. For example, by examining a “DESK”, the machine could say that a “PISTOL” and a “LETTER-OPENER” are in the “DESK”, and then print these two objects under the heading “Objects” in the display format.

12) *FEED* (J) — When an adventurer meets some sort of creature which refuses to move out of the way and sounds rather hungry, by feeding it some food, it could be persuaded to move away and so let the adventurer Ijrass. By doing this, the food will be used up as the programmer Intended, instead of as a meal to a player who types in “EAT FOOD”. After being fed, the creature is usually removed from the game — a useful point to note when programming this type of thing, is that when the creature is in the room, an exit will be barred from the adventurer, and when it has been removed, the player will be allowed freedom of movement (when “E” of the object name equals “A” and the input for movements is in the direction of the barred exit, then the computer prints c.mt that the creature will not move out of the way and jump for the next Input).

13) *FILL* (J) — If an adventurer has some sort of container and a particular type of fluid is available for the taking, but requires something to carry it in, then the command to use is “FILL”. The fluid may then be carried about in the container. In “Journey to Freedom” the fluid is “OIL” and the containers in which it may be carried are some “CANS”. However, when the container is dropped, the fluid must be dropped as well, so there has to be provision for this. In the above mentioned adventure, the “OIL” is transferred into your possession by simply picking it up while carrying the “CANS”. The actual command “FILL” is used to transfer the “OIL” into a “CHAIN- SAW”; the opposite of this command is the command “EMPTY”.

14) *GET* (CDJ) — This is the second of the two essential commands which require objects, the other four being directions which do not take an object. The purpose of this command is to enable the adventurer to pick objects up on the condition that the programmer has decided that the chosen objects are moveable by the player.

15) *HAMMER* (D) — In the context of my adventures this command is used to drive a “STAKE” into “DRACULA” and his “VAMPIRE” colleague, provided that a “MALLET” is in the possession of the

adventurer. A possible usage which I have not yet seen in an adventure could be to put a "POST" or something similar into the ground so that there would be something to attach a "ROPE" to for climbing.

16) *HIT* (J) — A player often has to use force on creatures that are in the way, and "HIT" is a command which allows the player to use violence on such creatures. In most cases a certain implement may be required to do the hitting. In the third adventure, a "POST" must be used against a reluctant "BEAR" before it will move. It is then removed from the adventure by letting "E" of the object number equal fifty, which is one more than the number of rooms.

17) *KICK* (CD) — Like the previous command, this is a command of violence against various unhelpful objects. However it is different in the respect that no objects need be carried since the implement that does the kicking is the player's foot. The common purpose of such commands are either to preserve the life of the adventurer, because it is said that attack is the best form of defense, or to clear the passage so that the player can move past.

18) *KILL* (CDJ) — This is the third of three similar commands. The way in which this one differs from the other two is in that the recipient of the blows suffers more harm to a fatal extent. Some sort of weapon is usually needed, but in the incidence in the second adventure, the player's bare hands are sufficient to the deed.

19) *LIFT* (D) — There is a greater force behind this command than "GET", which does not imply much exertion. In "Dracula's castle", a "COFFIN" may be lifted, and the effect of doing so moves it enough to reveal a "VAMPIRE". The command is associated with the movement of an object which is too heavy to be carried.

20) *LIGHT* (CJ) — This is a popular command, since a great many adventures have torches or some other light-emitting devices which must be lit to show the way in a darkened section of the adventure layout — failure to light the device can result in death. Quite often, only a torch is required, but in several cases batteries may be needed before it may be lit. To light the "TAPER" in "Journey to freedom", the player must be carrying the "MATCHES" as well as the "TAPER".

21) *LOWER* (D) — Often, the adventurer will be required to "LOWER" a "ROPE" before it is possible to "CLIMB" down it — if one starts to climb down a "ROPE" which is still where one started to climb from, then it is more than likely that one will fall. There are other possibilities for this command: for example, in a situation, one may wish to cross a drawbridge, there could be a necessity to lower it first of all, so therefore the command

and object typed in first of all would be ‘LOWER DRAWBRIDGE’, which would be followed by ‘CROSS DRAWBRIDGE’.

23) *MELT* (J) — As it may seem, this command is used for objects to be melted, as long as there is, of course, something to melt them in. In ‘Journey to freedom’, the objects are melted in a ‘CRUCIBLE’ — the first object to be melted must be some ‘SNOW’ to wash the ‘CRUCIBLE’ out and then a ‘CROSS’ may be melted down. Once this has been done, by some sort of miracle a ‘FLICK-KNIFE’ is formed. If an object like the ‘CROSS’ is examined then the computer could print out: ‘This looks as if it can be melted’. The player’s reaction on finding the ‘CRUCIBLE’ would then be one of having found something to melt the cross in. If the computer has more memory then helpful hints like this can be given to aid the adventurer in such situations, since I admit that the solution is not too obvious, but that is how it is with adventures — some problems that you set are more logical than others which may suffer from ideas that are a bit too far fetched. However, if your adventure is completely logical, then it may be too easy for the player and it would not be much of a challenge, so the programmer should always strive for a balance point between credibility and problems to which there are no obvious solutions. When one does meet a problem which is not obvious at first sight then the solution is generally found by trial and error — if, on completing this problem, the solution then appears perfectly logical, then one would curse oneself for not having thought of it sooner, but, on the other hand, if the solution is arrived at by pure chance, and the problem seems completely stupid, then the programmer would be thought of as some idiot who specialises in daft ideas (many people who write adventures fall into this category at some stage or other). Remember that what may seem logical to the programmer could appear illogical to the player.

24) *MIX* (D) — This command, like many others of those under analysis in this section of the book, are specific to just one incidence in one adventure. It may have other applications which could arise under various situations, but the use that I have made of it in ‘Dracula’s castle’ is for mixing some chemicals together along with a made up formula, with the result of forming a glue, which can only be dropped in the one room. I am more pleased with the routine for ‘MIX’ than with the routine for ‘MELT’, since, with the former, the prompt of ‘With what formula?’ comes up, and there is only one given formula in the adventure — the presence of formula points towards the chemicals being mixed under specific conditions.

25) *NORTH* (CDJ) — The purpose of this command of movement, where only the first letter ‘N’ need be typed in, is to move the player to the location immediately north of that room presently occupied, provided that there is an exit in that particular direction from the room that the player is in.

26) *OPEN* (CDJ) — This normally refers to some form of door, but can be used for any object which may have the status of being either open or closed. A key may often be required to open the door, which usually stays open, although it sometimes closes behind the adventurer. A door acts as a barrier and can be counted as an obstacle which has to be cleared out of the way before the adventurer can proceed. The converse of this command, ‘CLOSE’, is not very often used.

27) *PAT* (J) — In the third adventure there is a situation where a dog is in the way of a player, and since a dog is ‘man’s best friend’, it might be more beneficial to be kind to the dog, rather than attack it; so one of the actions that one might do in kindness towards the dog is ‘PAT’ it. I cannot foresee much greater useage than this for such a command in an adventure.

28) *PLAY* (D) — This command is used twice in ‘Dracula’s castle’, in one instance to ‘PLAY MUSIC’, and in the other to ‘PLAY’ a ‘RECORDER’, the latter being used more frequently in adventures. The first use transports the adventurer, by some form of magic, into a concealed passageway, and the second use is to give the player some extra information which would be on the cassette in the ‘RECORDER’. Sometimes it is necessary to find the cassette and insert it before the machine can be played.

29) *PRESS* (D) — When there are any types of switches or buttons lying around, then an attempt should be made to ‘PRESS’ them, since they could disclose a secret. However, they may be equally dangerous, because - the wrong button from a row of several buttons, or buttons pressed in the wrong order, can lead to the death of the player. There are many possibilities for the things that may happen from the pressing of buttons.

30) *PULL* (J) — This is similar to the previous command, but different in - that a greater exertion is required and that the object, often a lever-type object, is pulled, rather than pushed, ‘PUSH’ being a possible alternative for ‘PRESS’. ‘PULL’ may be used for buttons as well, to confuse players who would be expecting ‘PUSH’ or ‘PRESS’.

31) *PUNCH* (J) — Another variation of violence against annoying creatures is contained in the command ‘PUNCH’, in ‘Journey to freedom’. I have made it necessary for a ‘BOXING-GLOVE’ to be worn before the desired effect of being thrown into the next room is obtained — without wearing it, adventurers would meet their deaths. Such necessities before particular actions are carried out add more interest to the game.

32) *QUIT* (CDJ) — Although this is not essential, it is a standard for the adventure game, and only needs one program line to install it. Its purpose is to allow a player to start the game again from the beginning, if a mistake

has been made that cannot be corrected, for example, or if time is running too short and the position is hopeless. No object is required of this command.

33) *READ* (CDJ) — This is another popular command which, like ‘PLAY’ gives some extra information to the player, and it can also produce some ‘magic’ effects if a spell is ‘READ’ from such things as scrolls. You may, however, be given details about spoken words which can affect the adventurer’s position — most of the time the spells in adventures tend to move the player around the network of rooms. Warnings may also be given through the reading of material.

34) *RING* (C) — One should be always careful of the command ‘RING’, although it can be beneficial, for one of the most tempting things to do when one comes across a bell, is to ‘RING’ it — this may produce some sort of catastrophe which kills the adventurer; it may do nothing; or it may be useful. The choice is at the discretion of the programmer.

35) *SAY* (C) — When a magic word has been revealed to the player, then the usual way to use it, is to ‘SAY’ it, but the problem is in working out where it can be said, and having something happen as a consequence, because most of the time such a word is said the computer prints out the words ‘Nothing happens’, so allowance for this must be made by the programmer.

36) *SHOOT* (J) — This is yet another word of violence, and you may be pleased to know that there are only another two such words of direct violence left to deal with, but it is best to have a reasonable vocabulary of these words in an adventure. This command needs the player to have some sort of trigger-fired weapon (it could be a gun or a crossbow, for example) which would have a clean impact without the devastating force of ‘BLAST’. The object being shot at is not always killed, and occasionally stunned — it very often happens that it is removed from the game, and seldom revives.

37) *SOUTH* (CDJ) — The third command, alphabetically, of direction is ‘SOUTH’ and as in all such commands, the first letter only need be typed in, and no object is taken. The purpose is for the player to move one position south provided that an exit lies in that direction.

38) *SPEAR* (J) — The object that the player must carry when using this command is obviously a spear, and the object that is to be printed after the command is the creature that the spear is to be thrown at. The command is fairly self-evident in purpose, and need not kill. It may often injure, but if it is thrown at the wrong beast the programmer could decide to either make it miss, or else let the creature turn on the player. Programmers usually prefer

to use the latter possibility.

39) *STAB* (J) — Like the previous command, this is used in the art of killing, or causing injury to monsters. It gives a clean blow to the creature provided that some form of knife is carried. The use of commands like this and “*SPEAR*” (“*KNIFE*” could be an alternative for “*S*”) which are specific to their purpose help to build up the vocabulary. A command like “*THROW*” can replace the more specific commands if there is a shortage of memory.

40) *TAKE* (C) — This command is an alternative for the command “*GET*” which some people may prefer. I, myself, prefer using “*GET*”, and have included this alternative as an example of how easy it is to add extra commands which have exactly the same purpose as others — in my earlier adventures I did not develop this feature.

41) *THROW* (CJ) — A variety of uses can be made of “*THROW*”, since a good many of the moveable objects are able to be thrown. To climb over an obstacle like a “*WALL*”, a “*ROPE*” can be thrown and it may catch securely enough for the player to climb. Weapons can be thrown, as well as various other objects, to pave the adventurer’s way — for example, a “*GRENADE*” can be thrown to remove some boulders, and a “*CHEST*” may be thrown to form a platform across a river.

42) *TIE* (D) — The main use for this command is to “*TIE*” a “*ROPE*” so that one may climb down without falling. The converse, “*UNTIE*”, could be used to “*UNTIE*” a “*ROPE*” that one has just climbed up, if there is the possibility of requiring it a second time.

43) *TRANSMIT* (C) — This is a command that does not require an object, and it is used to “*TRANSMIT*” a signal from a “*TRANSMITTER*”. In “*Captive*”, the conditions required to make this work are cooling it down and giving it an “*AERIAL*”. The command “*TRANSMIT*” can then be used, and the result could be from a variety of things that the programmer would choose from — in this case it reveals an exit from a room which was not there previously. It is a very specific command.

44) *TURN* (J) — In “*Journey to freedom*”, this command refers to a “*CUBE*” (one of those that aggravates people), and the result of making this action is totally irrelevant to the adventure, as it says who the copyright of the program belongs to. It is good practice in adventures to contain red herrings to aggravate the player into trying to complete the adventure with more determination; however, you should not overdo it too much, for this could make the player question whether anything is relevant. A possibly better use of this command could be in a situation where the player finds an abandoned car, enters it, inserts a key into the ignition, and then turns the

key — the car could then be used to travel across a section over which the player is unable to survive, because of the large distance, if he or she travels by foot.

45) *UNLOCK* (C) — This is an alternative for the command “OPEN”, but it may have a separate function, because a “DOOR” may have to be unlocked before it may be opened. Where there is no sign that the door is locked, then just “OPEN” should be used, and where the unlocking of the door is combined with the opening of it, then “UNLOCK” may be used as well.

46) *WEAR* (CDJ) — This is a popular command as can be seen by the fact that it is used in all three of the adventures of this book. A lot of players can be caught out through the necessity to “WEAR” an object like a “BOXING-GLOVE”, or some “BOOTS”. It is used with any object that can be thought of, as being something that can be worn.

47) *WEST* (CDJ) — This is the fourth and last command of movement, and is typed in, in the same way as the other three. The purpose is to move the adventurer one location west of that location presently occupied, provided that there is an exit in that direction. The present location then becomes that location west of the original one.

The purpose of this section of the book is to detail the purpose of each of the commands used in the three adventures, and to suggest possible alternative usages of these commands. As can be seen, different commands are thought up to suit the situations in each adventure, but also several commands appear time and time again, and the relative popularity of usage of each command can be seen by looking at the number of letters, out of ‘C’, ‘D’, and ‘J’, which are in brackets after it. Obviously, many more commands can be thought of, but that is up to you to think of in your own adventures — the combined number of commands out of the three adventures is sufficient to show a general pattern in the various types of command.