

Diplomacy World



#126 - Summer 2014

www.diplomacyworld.net

Notes from the Editor

Welcome to the latest issue of **Diplomacy World**, the 126th one of these to be produced. Some issues are filled with a lot of sarcastic humor or lighthearted banter. Sadly, this isn't one of those. I don't mean to suggest that this issue is one you should skip reading. On the contrary, this is the kind of issue that should help show you why a DEEPER involvement in this hobby can be quite rewarding.

Don Williams passed away since Diplomacy World #125 was released. Many of you will have heard his name, and some of you will have had the good fortune to interact with him. He has been a fixture in the Diplomacy hobby – to varying degrees – for 40 years or more. And while nobody gets along with everybody, Don was a very beloved figure, and built some incredibly strong and long-lasting friendships.

Whether you knew Don or not, I urge you to read over the articles which talk about him, and what he meant not just to the Diplomacy hobby but to those who came into contact with him over the years. You owe it to yourself to see how much you can gain by trying to build friendships with people you meet across the board from you. Limiting your Diplomacy experience to fast-paced on-line gaming with little or no negotiation (and what negotiation there is devoid of personality and real life) deprives you of so much potential enjoyment. So keep that in mind as you read the articles on Don.

Of course, this issue isn't just filled with tributes to Don Williams. There is plenty of less serious reading material. It doesn't matter what your preference is; there's something for you. The first two years of the new Youngstown IV Variant Demo Game are included, along with the usual commentary from our experts. The combination of the type of variant this is, and the players involved, has also led to the inclusion of a good deal of old-style press. Perhaps this will inspire you to attempt such material in some of the games YOU play in.

Larry Peery continues his series on building the hobby, and also announces his plans for PeeriCon 2014, which takes place in just a few weeks. Leave it to Larry to work under pressure. Check out his article to see if you're available to participate!

There are also some entertaining Con reports, specifically from World DipCon in Chapel Hill at DixieCon, and Yorkshire DipCon which seems to have been a rousing success as well. It's always good to hear about all the hard work people put into an event paying off.

If variants are of interest, make sure you check out Part 2 in the series on the new variant College of Cardinals. It has been a few issues since Part 1 appeared, but it was well worth the wait. Understanding the process of designing and revising a new variant is quite interesting, and invaluable if you ever want to create one yourself. I'm still hoping – someday – to design variants on fictional topics like The Prisoner, Robert Adams' "Horseclans" series, and even a battle between the characters in Winnie the Pooh. Okay, I admit my ideas are a bit unorthodox, but maybe you've got better ones?

And, as usual, I have only scratched the surface of what you can find here.



So read through the entire issue. Remember, Diplomacy World is meant to be enjoyed. Flip through it, read the articles that grab you first, then go back and give the ones you skipped over some attention. You never know what article will spark some ideas of your own...and next issue YOUR name may be under an article title!

I'll close by reminding you the next deadline for Diplomacy World submissions is October 1st, 2014. Remember, besides articles (which are always prized and appreciated), we LOVE to get letters, feedback, input, ideas, and suggestions too. So email me at diplomacyworld@yahoo.com! See you in the fall, and happy stabbing!

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Contributions are welcomed and will earn you accolades and infinite thanks. Persons interested in the vacant staff positions may contact the managing editor for details or to submit their candidacy or both. The same goes for anyone interested in becoming a columnist or senior writer. Diplomacy is a game invented by Allan Calhamer. It is currently manufactured by Hasbro and the name is their trademark with all rights reserved.

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Knives and Daggers - The Diplomacy World Letter Column

Dr. Walter Buchanan - Hard to believe that DW #1 came out exactly 40 years ago and that in another 40 when I will be 112 you will be up to DW #285, Doug!

[[I wonder what the Vegas line is on that?]]

Conrad Woodring - Quick question; who does your art? I have noticed there is a lot of it and it has a consistent style. I like it. I think many readers would be keen to get a blurb about the art of Diplomacy World and where it comes from.

[[The original artwork, including the cover, comes from the talented Nemanja Simic, the Art Director for Diplomacy World. If I remember correctly, he was reading Diplomacy World and asked if we needed artwork, and I named my first child after him in return. He is quite talented, isn't he?]]

Mark Nelson - I was interested in Jack McHugh's article "My Top Five WorldWide Diplomacy Variants". I'd only heard of two of these (the classics Youngstown IV and Colonia), perhaps indicating how much dip variants have changed in the last twenty years!

Firstly, I always liked the look of Fred C. Davis' Small World IIR, but never got a chance to play it.

Secondly, although Youngstown was popular in the UK in the early 1970s it declined in popularity in the late 1970s as it was replaced by Mercator. Mercator had a series of rules which act to eliminate stalemate lines (which plague many of the Youngstown variants). Unfortunately (I think) Mercator was never popularised in the USA where Youngstown and then Colonia were popular.

So, I think a very useful article would be to have someone write a review of the basic ideas in Mercator and then to explain all the differences between the different versions. (I'm not sure if a person with the required knowledge still exists!). Steve Jones would be the ideal candidate if he's still around.

Perhaps I'll email you again in twenty or so years!

PS Don't usually look at DW these days, but I wanted to read Jim's article on Jerry Jones.

[[You don't have to make an excuse; nobody likes to admit reading Jack McHugh's articles, even though everybody does.]]

Selected Upcoming Conventions

Find Conventions All Over the World at <http://diplom.org/Face/cons/index.php>

Philadelphia Massacre – Friday July 4th – Sunday July 6th – Philadelphia, PA - <http://philadelphiamassacre.com/>

2014 PEERICON/SAN DIEGO DIPLOMACY PLAYERS/BASTILLE DAY - Saturday, 12 July - Monday, 14 July - Oceanside, CA, USA - Contact: Larry Peery (peery@ix.netcom.com) - Website: <http://www.meetup.com/San-Diego-Diplomacy-Players/>

ManorCon – Friday July 18th – Monday July 21st – Leicester, UK - <http://www.manorcon.org.uk/>

Weasel Moot VIII - Saturday July 26th - Sunday July 27th - Chicago, United States - Contact: Jim O'Kelley ([jimthegrey1013 "of" yahoo.com](mailto:jimthegrey1013@of.yahoo.com)) - Website: <http://windycityweasels.org/wm8>

VI Legatio in Urbe, EDC 2014, 3rd CISD step - Friday September 5th - Sunday September 7th - Rome, Italy - Website: <http://forum.webdiplomacy.it/viewtopic.php?f=67&t=569&sid=351f4e833246d64>

VIII Milano Dip Con - Saturday October 18th - Sunday October 19th - Milan, Italy - Website: http://www.signoridigioco.it/index.php?option=com_seminar&Itemid=53

MidCon XXXV - Friday November 7th - Sunday November 9th - Hallmark Hotel, Derby, UK - <http://www.fbgames.co.uk/Midcon/>

Carnage - Friday November 7th - Sunday November 9th - Killington Grand Hotel, Killington Vt., United States - Contact: Robert Rousse - Website: <http://www.carnagecon.com>

I Wasn't Exactly Chopped Liver

By Steve Cooley

I had a terrific time in Chapel Hill! Did I win? Well, no, but then again, I'm consistent. I've never won at DipCon or WDC.

Here's the thing: I played against some of the very best players in the world and, other than an abysmal showing in round 1, I think I more than held my own.

The one problem at a massive event like the World DipCon is that you rarely get the kind of social interaction away from the game board that you'd like, although we did have a big lunch Sunday with about 10-12 of us. I spoke with both Freeman Butland and Tom Reinecker (two PBEM friends from Redscape.com) a couple of times, but we didn't really get to spend that much time together. It's a shame we didn't wind up in a game together. That would have been fun. It was Tommy's first face-to-face experience! Talk about the lion's den!

Round One: The TD (David Hood) asked me ahead of time if I would mind being part of a special game--some kind of NPR thing. I (stupidly) said I would do it. So, the assignments come. I'm France (great!), but England is Andy Bartalone and Italy is Chris Martin. The last time the three of us were anywhere near each other, the game was a fiasco. So was this one. Toby Harris (UK) was Germany. Now, I'll just say those three guys are all as good or better than I am. The NPR guy was Turkey. The other two players were players with less experience (and, dare I say, stature).

The cool thing was that Ambassador Dennis Ross (this guy http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_Ross) was observing the negotiations of the NPR reporter/player and offering his insights. He had never played the game before, but clearly knows something of DIPLOMACY in the real world. I'd seen him on TV many times. It was worth the thrashing I was about to take to have the opportunity to meet him.

The game was slowed greatly as we were being recorded, etc. We opened (Andy Bartalone as England, Toby Harris as Germany, and me as France) with a Triple that really wasn't a Triple. I went after Chris Martin (Italy), building two fleets and moving to Wes in Fall 1901 at England's suggestion. The problem was that it seemed a rather unlikely Triple. So, I changed direction in 1902 (at Italy's urging) for a zero-dot stab. This was easily my worst game of the weekend. I was eliminated as EG hung together and Italy was getting pummeled. Eventually, the game ended in a 6-way draw. I half-jokingly said they just wanted to eliminate me so they could call a draw.

Before he left, Amb. Ross said something to the effect that what the government has to train ambassadors and consulate personnel to do (interpersonal communications, identifying mutually beneficial strategies, etc.) we (players) do instinctively. He said the game would be an excellent tool to help them train. He seemed genuinely intrigued by what he saw. Nevertheless, I was disheartened by my performance.

Round Two: I drew Italy. I opened against Austria (to Tyl, then to Vie), but he made a few good moves and it turned into a slog. Eventually, I wore him down, but Turkey and France were moving my way. France (an old hand getting back into the hobby, Jim Yerkey) had sent a fleet to help me fend off Turkey and that worked, but France also was getting huge (although not at my expense). In the end, I saw "we" (the East, as I switched sides to prevent the solo) could nab Munich. That ended it. The tournament system was draw-based so I made sure to be included in the 3-way draw even though I only had 6 centers. How did I do that? Because there was no way Turkey could stab me and not hand the game to France, so I played that to the hilt, vetoing a 2-way draw. Overall, I was happy with my diplomatic play, even if my tactics were not as crisp as I would like them to have been. Yerkey tried several times to get me to throw in the towel—he desperately wanted the win or the two-way.

Round Three: This board featured the eventual tournament winner (Thomas Haver) as Italy. I was Turkey. I thought this would be good for me. Tom led the tournament and "everyone" was out to stop him. Perfect!

Um, no. Russia (Brian Ecton) said he was going to Bla. So, I agreed to bounce. He went to Rum instead. I thought that odd, but he said he changed his mind last-minute. Okay, these things happen, right?

Italy had opened to Tri and there was no bounce in Gal. It seemed pretty standard--until the fall. Italy moved Ion-Aeg, so clearly I was facing an AIR. In fact, Austria (Aash Anand) had given me a bit of a tip just before the deadline, so I tried a convoy from Con-Sev. During the adjudication, Russia admitted he had changed from Sev-Arm to Sev S Rum just before the deadline. That convoy could have changed the game.

Skipping over the gory details, let's just go to Fall 1903. At this point, EF have been pounding Germany, but he's still at 4 sc's and EF have been pretty ineffectual. In fact, England lost Nwy to Russia and didn't bat an eye. France would have F Spa (sc) and F Bre H for most of the game. I tried everything--getting them to form a

Triple, begging France to send Spa into the Med, asking England to go north. They were indifferent.

So, Fall '03: I have F Bla, A Arm and A Con. They have a unit in Smy and a Fleet in Aeg. They want Russia to use F Rum to cut Bla so that Bul-Con is guaranteed. Italy is talking to Russia at the board with me sitting there (no fear). Russia says, "I can't do that. He'll take F Bla and push it into Sev with Arm support. I said, "I've already written. I did not do that." Ecton says, "Okay," and writes Rum-Bla. Well, I told the truth: I didn't write that. I wrote F Bla C A Con-Sev with Arm supporting. So, I got Sev.

Oh, but it gets better. In Spring 1904, I order Sev-Rum with Bla supporting (I still owned Sev and Ank). I not only take Rum, but I annihilate the Russian fleet. In the fall, I keep them out of Sev, but Russia dislodges me from Rum. However, Austria was scattered and I had my choice of retreating to Bud or Ser. Budapest here I come!

So, I lasted five years, playing against an AIR that had NO Western opposition at all. Yet, somehow I didn't get a death with dignity award? (as if I'd know what to do with it)

At one point, the player of England (Siobhan Nolen) saw me smirk (I think it was around 1904 after the convoy). She said, "It's not my fault," referring to the way I was being eliminated and the lack of progress EF were making. I said, "All I know is: it's not my fault." I was playing my butt off tactically. I have no idea how EF had such a rough time given that Germany built 2 armies in 1901--so he could not cover Hel, etc.

Did I get eliminated? Yes, but try taking on an AIR that won't genuinely negotiate while EF are fighting G and won't lift a finger to take pressure off of you.

Round Four: Here everything came together, but I had a really tough draw. First of all, Russia is not my favorite country to play. Second, England was Dan Lester, who is not only a brilliant player, but also was in a position to win the tournament if he could get a solo. Germany was Doc Binder, a World champion (Lester, while British, has won our DipCon—and, I'm sure, many other tournaments). Turkey was David Norman, another Brit, who, while quite clever, can also be a handful to ally with because he is so clever. Austria was Adam Silverman, a pretty fair player. Italy was Nate Cockerill, another Dipcon champion. So, this board was loaded. A player I'd not met before, Eric Grinnell, was France.

Right off the bat, Norman comes to me and suggests he'll give me Bla IF I agree to convoy him into Rum in the fall. I readily agree as it gives me all the room I need tactically to move an army north. Normally, I don't prefer that as Russia, but Lester is truly great and I know I'm

going to have to keep him from getting huge. So, I talk to Italy (Cockerill). He wants to go to Pie. I tell him we have to get rid of Turkey. He learns EG don't want to go after France, so he agrees to join in. Austria (Silverman) was not eager to leave Tri and Gal with no coverage until I told him I was going north and Italy was fully on board.



Lester (E) was less than happy with my move north, but in his typical style he asked with a smile, "Steve, you're not really going to bounce me in Nwy, are you?" I said he could certainly force his way in. He replied he was taking Bel. True enough. England took Belgium and I bounced him out of Nwy. Grinnell had opened with the "dreaded" double-bounce in Bur, so he had no say in who took Belgium. Le sigh.

Germany (Binder) assured me I was going to get Swe (he lied!). In fact, Doc was nice during the whole game, but didn't get around to telling the truth until he was on the ropes.

In the south, Turkey had A Ank, F Con, A Bul. Now, I was supposed to convoy him into Rum and he would support it from Bul. This meant, of course, that Austria could waltz into Gre. It also meant that A Bud was free to support my A Ukr-Rum. So, I had 2 builds as locked down as I could get them (I thought—not being aware of the Evil Doc Binder's Master Plan). Could I get three? I was convinced Norman would convoy to Rum. So, all I had to do was discern whether or not he would go "all in" with Con-Aeg. I concluded he would and ordered F Bla-Con.

That worked and I made, I think, my only mistake of the game. I built A Mos and F Sev. I did not believe Germany would come after me. After all, they had to deal with France—and England had landed in Bel. If I would have built A War and A Mos (Stp still had an army in it), the coming EG attack would have been relatively easy to parry. However, Turkey would have been difficult to take out.



EG launched their assault and I would lose Stp in 1903. I managed to keep the fleet alive, which would be key. I played a “scorched earth” defense that would have made Zhukov proud. I think I guessed their moves every step of the way, using whatever I could to slow them down. One move I could not stop an attack on Lvn, but I could bounce Ber-Pru if I was willing to risk Warsaw. Instead, I supported an attack into Warsaw and used it to bounce Pru. Every tempo was crucial.

In the south, we kept moving forward, eliminating Norman at the end of 1903. France (Grinnell) sent fleets into the Med, eventually taking Tunis. He also permitted Lester to put a fleet in MAO. I was really worried that we would not hold off the Triple. Grinnell did something that

ultimately undid the alliance. He moved into Munich on a spring move. I wanted him to stay there and tried to make it happen tactically. Happily, France obliged on his own and supported Pie-Tyl instead of using Pie to support Mun-Tyl. This did not sit well with France, but it was not enough to break the alliance. I was surprised, but Doc continued his full-on support of Lester in the campaign of Northern Aggression.

Then, it happened. Grinnell shouted about something. He said he was suffering from low blood-sugar and asked for a break. We took one, but I think some damage was done. Austria supported France into Kie.

I believe the turn before, maybe Spring 1904 (I know it was a spring move because that gave it some of its drama), something more important happened. I had already fended off attacks and maneuvers in/around Warsaw. But now Germany had A Lvn and A Pru. He had fleets in Swe and somewhere else in the Bal region (but not Bot, that’s where my fleet was). Austria was in Sil. I was in War, Mos, and Ukr. England had armies in Nwy and Stp, I think. Pru went to War with support from Lvn. Stp was supported in place. I used Ukraine to support Warsaw, risking Moscow. Warsaw supported Sil-Pru and Moscow supported Bot-Lvn. The result? Both German armies were destroyed.

I don’t know if Dan was tired physically or tired mentally (Eric really had been a handful) or just very disappointed, but his face told the tale: this game was over. He was not going to win Dipcon. I was very satisfied. No, I don’t hate Dan Lester. I had just played some excellent players who had some advantages and I had come out ahead. That was sweet.

I would say my play was good throughout—except that first game. I have no excuse. I just had no focus, no one to ally with and did not sort out a course of action. In retrospect, I should have pitched some kind of funky IF to Martin. I think it would have been viable. And, it’s not like Martin finished well (well, he finished better than me, but one center? That’s not what he “normally” does).

As for the event, I met some of the folks there, enjoyed the timeliness of the events. David ran a very tight tournament. The facilities, while not flashy, are certainly functional. There were plenty of restaurants within walking distance, even for old guys. If you’ve not been to a DixieCon, I don’t know if you actually play the game. I’m dubious.

Steve Cooley is a long-time Diplomacy player and a good guy. If you play a game with him, give him Belgium. Or at least promise it to him.

Club and Tournament Roundup

By Will J. Abbott

Do you have word on Diplomacy in your area that you want the whole hobby to know about? Let me know and I'll include it in my next column.

I've heard of another player here in the Tampa area, which makes three that I know about. After my wedding (July 26th, come Hell or high water) I will look to be more active in starting a local hobby in this neck of the woods. If you live in or near Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, or Sarasota, I'd love to hear from you. I'd also love to hear from you if you're in the Orlando area; the trip along I-4 is not that hard. I would like to get enough for a house game or two in the next few months, and eventually, in the next couple years, get a tournament going down here. Contact me at wabbott9 of gmail dot com.



I've heard that ARMADA is starting up again in the Denver area. I don't have any contact info in that part of the US, so if you're part of them, let me know. If you're interested in Diplomacy in or near Denver, let me know, too, and I'll see about connecting you.

The hobby in Australia and New Zealand seems to be moribund. If this isn't true, let me know what is happening down there!

Let me know about any tournaments or local clubs you want to promote. Promotion in *Diplomacy World* is free and reaches players around the world! And, as always, we would love your articles on any aspect of Diplomacy,

especially local hobbies, house games, tournaments, and related topics!

At any rate, now on to news.

WDC 2014 was held recently in Chapel Hill, NC, at DixieCon. Every report I have seen says it was a success. Congratulations to Thomas Haver for winning WDC 2014!

Yorkshire DipCon was also completed. Congratulations to David Wigglesworth for his victory!

The tournament scene in the United States seems to be picking up. Christian Pedone is hosting the Philadelphia Massacre on July 4-6. For details see <http://www.philadelphiamassacre.com>.

Larry Peery is hosting Peerycon July 12-14 in Oceanside, CA. For more details see his article in this issue or <http://www.meetup.com/San-Diego=Diplomacy-Players>.

Weasel Moot this year is July 26-27 in Chicago, IL. Information can be found at <http://windycityweasels.org/wm8>.

Gencon will be happening August 14-17 in Indianapolis, IN. For information about the general convention you can see <http://www.gencon.com>. The Diplomacy tournament, only a small part of this huge gaming convention, has been run by Rogue Judges for several years now. Info on them is at <http://www.roguejudges.org/events/gencon>.

The Potomac Tea and Knife Society will be holding Tempest in a Teapot again on October 10-12. This year it will be in Rosslyn, VA. More info available at <http://ptks.org>.

The United Kingdom hobby will not be idle after Yorkshire DipCon. ManorCon XXXII (yes, that's 32!) will be July 18-20 at the University of Leicester. The tournament has info posted at <http://www.manorcon.org.uk>.

Across the Channel, the European hobby will be holding EuroDipCon 2014 in Rome September 5-7. More details are available at <http://edcroma2014.wordpress.com>.

Will is the Diplomacy World Club & Tournament Editor.

Call Me, Maybe or It's all Don's fault

By Jim O'Kelley

It's all Don's fault.

All the things that bug my wife of three years. The fact that I can't watch our shows on Monday until I've published The Weekly Weasel e-newsletter. The hours I spend emailing people to coax them into filling boards or attending one of our two tournaments.

Those two weekends, when I'm a ghost. And the tournaments I travel to, not as frequent now that we have a toddler at home and another on the way, but time away from home nonetheless.

The Saturdays I give up to play Diplomacy here in Chicago. The times when I'm home but really not because I'm writing game reports for our website or logging games in our database.

And the weeknights when I roll home after 2 a.m., reeking of a bar game. Curiously, the 11 p.m. end time never seems to get me home by 11:30.

I can't count the number of times Meghan has said that she comes second to Diplomacy. That's not true, but this hobby does consume me.

And for that, I blame Don Williams.

Don and I first met in postal game 1997AC, a game called No Shirt in Andy Lischett's venerable *Cheesecake*. (Standing alone, as it does now, No Shirt sounds like a stupid name for a game. But it was meant to stand with two other games that opened in *Cheesecake* then: No Shoes and No Service.)

I joined the postal hobby in June 1992, a few years after the hobby's second Golden Age. The postal hobby was already in decline then, and perhaps for that reason, I played more than five years before running into a player who could keep pace with my correspondence.

Writing more than the other players worked. Anne Marie, my wife at the time, took ballet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so on those nights, I'd write all the other players. My job wasn't very demanding back then, so I also found time to write some letters at work.

As with the email hobby, writing early and often worked wonders in postal Diplomacy. Perhaps because they weren't getting much from the other players or maybe because they couldn't believe that a player would invest so much time in an alliance that wasn't real, players tended to do what I suggested. Whatever the reason, I

took the postal hobby—what was left of it, anyway—by storm, soloing in five of my first 10 games and drawing in the others.

And then I ran into Don Williams in October 1997. That guy could write.

He told me a story once of his first postal game. Playing England, he fired off a letter to Russia—Russia!—that was 20 pages long. (I never wrote more than three pages.) The Russian was a grizzled vet named Woody Arnawoodian. Within a year, Don would introduce me to him, but at this point, he was just a character in one of Don's lengthy messages. Woody responded with a brief missive, the gist of which was, "Don't ever do that again."

To ensure Don got the point, Woody and pal Kathy Caruso (then Kathy Byrne) followed up with a taunting phone call.

"Kathy wasn't even in our game," Don explained, "but she just couldn't believe that anyone would be stupid enough to write such a thing."

Don learned his lesson. "Haven't written a 20-page Dip letter in 15 years," he told me.

(As I flip through old game files to research this article, it strikes me that Don simply traded length for frequency.)

My first letter from him was actually an email, and it wasn't quite that long, just eight paragraphs, but it was fun to read. Don could write. But within a few days, I received a proper letter from him, and it was two typed pages. In it, Don told me all about himself, which was something I also liked to do in my letters.

He was on his second marriage and had "depending on how you count them," one to five kids. Valerie was his only biological child, but he had stepchildren from both marriages, and he helped raise his first wife's two kids. He was still close to both.

He described his family dynamic as typically Californian.

In his second long letter to me, Don gave me the rundown on his five kids. One was a boy named Scott, his only biological child from his first marriage. Scott died of SIDS at 10 days. "He'd have been 18 this year," Don wrote.

Back then, Don and I both subscribed to the notion that the game never ends. But I think that meant different things to us. For me it meant that I was trying to develop a relationship outside the game to give me an advantage within it. I figured it would be easier to believe and harder to stab a player you felt like you knew. For Don, I think it was different. He met so many people through the game, and the relationships he forged didn't end when the game did. For Don, they were all real. It took me a long time to get there, but I did.

So, Don could write. And he could also talk. It wasn't long before we began conducting our negotiations over the phone, which was Don's preferred method of diploming.

By 1997, most postal players were diploming by email, which made it easier and faster to communicate, but Don still preferred the phone. He played Austria to my Italy, so we had a lot of game stuff to talk about, but we talked about lots besides Diplomacy, too.

Almost from the start, it bothered me that I knew Don's name but couldn't figure out how. He mentioned that he had published *Fiat Bellum*, but I never played there. I think it folded before I entered the hobby, so that wasn't it. And I knew we had never played together prior to No Shirt. I used to maintain an Access database with all my Diplomacy game starts. When the game started, which zine it was in, the Boardman number, which country I played, who the other players were, how the game ended, my center count and result, and some notes about the game. That helped me keep everything straight, and it's also why I'm certain that we hadn't met in another game. (I actually maintained that Dip database until September 2011, when I spilled a glass of water on my laptop and fried it.)

I was sure I knew his name, but it was a mystery as to how. Then one day I pulled out an old copy of *The General* magazine to reread the first part of an article called Leviathan about the press in a high-profile postal game. Don wasn't a player in that game—I had read the article enough times to know all seven by heart—and he wasn't the GM, either. That was Gary Behnen. But it turns out that game had been played in Don's *Fiat Bellum*. When I saw that, I fired off an email to let Don know that I had solved the mystery of his familiar name.

That prompted a phone call and a long discussion about the glory days of the postal hobby. After we hung up, Don must have continued thinking about the old days, because he set out to lure some of the Leviathan vets out of retirement to play in an invitational game called Arsenic and Old Farts.

He managed to get Caruso to play. It turned out to be her last game. Her Austria was eliminated early, and she died before the game ended or shortly thereafter. He

also got Mark "Faz" Fassio from Leviathan to play, along with himself, Jim Burgess and Bob Slossar. (With Woody Arnawoodian's help, Slossar had soloed as Italy in Don's first postal game, that one where he made the mistake of writing a 20-page letter.) The final seats went to two relative newcomers to the postal hobby: Steve Emmert and me.

Arsenic and Old Farts started in January 1998 with the coveted Boardman number of 1998A. Don was really proud that his game was the first one started that year. Terry Tallman, another old-timer, came out of retirement to run it in a flier he called North Sealth, West George. I still have no idea what that means.

A couple months earlier, I was surprised that Don could match my output. This game blew me away and probably more closely resembled the postal hobby's heyday than any of the games I had played. Everyone communicated.

I used to play in three to five postal games at a time. For each game, I kept a file for the game results and one for each of the other players. That helped me keep the games straight. Even when we started moving to email, I'd print every message and put them in the appropriate file. Within a couple of months, the files I had for Faz and Emmert were thicker than the complete sets of files for many of my finished games. And if there had been a way to print out Don's phone calls, that file would have been even thicker.

In mid-February 1998, business took me to San Diego for a brief board meeting. (I was now two jobs removed from the one at which I actually had time to write the occasional Diplomacy letter.) Afterward, I rented a car and drove up to Los Angeles to visit my sister Tricia. She had moved there a year earlier to pursue a career in television.

I also arranged to meet Don, who lived in Saugus and was a city planner for Santa Clarita. I felt like I knew him already because of all the time we had spent on the phone, and I wanted to meet him in person and thank him for inviting me to play in Arsenic.

Don met me at Tricia's apartment in West Hollywood. She was out for the day. Back then, she was still waiting tables while awaiting her big break. (During the visit, Tricia took me to Red Rock, a pub on Sunset where she worked. We had a beer, and she introduced me to Joe E. Tata, the guy who played Nat on Beverly Hills 90201.)

Anyway, when I answered Tricia's door and found this big guy standing there, I was overcome with doubt. I mean, yah, we had talked on the phone of bunch times, but how well did I really know him?

For context, let me explain that Tricia and I were born in Massachusetts 11 ½ months apart. When we lived there, my parents belonged to the Salem Country Club. We spent a lot of time there in the summers, and my mom made us both wear life jackets the entire time, even when we were in the playground. She didn't want us leaving the sandbox, wandering over to the pool, falling in and drowning.

The fact that I'm overly cautious is my mom's fault, not Don's.

So I invited Don in but kept my back to a wall for the few minutes that we were in the apartment. If he was going to jump me, he'd have to do it head on.

Fortunately he didn't try to jump me. Instead, he took me to Santa Monica. We walked around the Promenade and down the Pier, and talked a lot about the hobby and our two games. It was a nice visit and the beginning of a long off-the-board friendship.

I can't remember whose idea it was, but within a couple of weeks, the Arsenic crowd began talking about meeting up at DixieCon in Chapel Hill, which would be hosting the World Diplomacy Championship. Don, Faz, Emmert and I committed.

Don, Faz and I even planned to play together in the team round. I offered to have t-shirts made. I got us grey baseball jerseys with buttons down the front. Our team name was on the left side: Arsenic and Old Friends. On the back was one of those men you see on street signs, only there was a knife in his back. Red circle around him with a slash through it. No backstabbing. Along the top of the circle were the words "Trust me, I'm a Dip player." Great shirt.

We had a great time at the 1998 World Dip Con, my first Diplomacy tournament, our disappointing finish in the team tournament notwithstanding. Actually Don and Faz played pretty well, but I contributed a goose egg.

The four of us skipped the Saturday night round and instead went out to dinner. Emmert selected a fancy restaurant for the occasion and picked up the tab, as I recall. Of the four of us, he was by far the most refined.

There was nothing refined about our table conversation. We drank a lot and laughed even more. At one point, Don laughed so hard that stuff came out his nose. Emmert would later write that "Don Williams laughing uncontrollably is a dangerous animal."

I started talking about my terrible game that morning and resolved to do whatever it takes to secure an ally. "Where can I find some kneepads?" I asked.

So Don started calling me Pads, which was better than his first nickname for me. Shark Chum.

I wasn't familiar with the term, so when I was telling my buddy Paul about the Arsenic game and mentioned that the players all called me Chum, he asked why.

"It's short for Shark Chum," I explained. "They're sharks, I'm not, so they all want to be friends with me so they can get me to do what they want."

"No," Paul said. "Chum is the chopped up fish that they use as bait for sharks. They think you're a chump."

Eventually we made our way back to the dorm and checked on the boards. Then I taught them Settlers, and we laughed some more. At life. At our game. At David Hood and his brothers re-creating some battle of the French Revolution with miniatures. Everything was funny that night.

It would be five more years before I'd attend another tournament. But I wouldn't have to wait quite so long to see them again.

In September of that year, I was the keynote speaker at a convention in Virginia Beach, which is where Emmert lived. When my work was done, Steve picked up me and Anne Marie and brought us to breakfast and then showed us his town.

At one point, he mentioned that he and Faz were planning to tour Gettysburg in November. "You should go," he said.

I looked at Anne Marie. "If you want to go, go," she said.

I called Don when we got home. Two months later, the four of us were in Gettysburg. Faz picked the restaurant our first night, and he went with a Perkins.

I don't remember why, but at some point during that meal, we started giving ourselves Indian names with the word Weasel in it. Faz, the most cunning diplomat among us, was Scheming Weasel. Emmert was Legal Weasel. I can't for the life of me remember Don's name or mine, but borrowing from Tolkien, I dubbed the weekend a Weasel Moot.

After dinner, we actually played a couple of games of the old Avalon Hill Gettysburg game and then called it a night. Nerds will be nerds.

I roomed with Don on that trip, and when he went to the bathroom to get ready for bed, I pulled out the knee pads I had purchased just for that moment and put them on. Don came out, saw the pads, and doubled over.

The next day, Woody Arnawoodian and his dog Pompei joined us, and we toured the battlefield. We walked up and down Little Round Top, then drove over to Seminary Ridge and walked the open field to Cemetery Ridge.

As we walked, I lit a cigar, took a pull, and soaked it all in. We were walking in the footsteps of history. Don was on my left; Faz and Emmert on my right. At that moment, there was no one I would have rather been marching with. Cemetery Ridge was the highwater mark of the Confederacy. It was also the highwater mark of my friendship with Don, Faz and Emmert.

After Gettysburg as our two games heated up, Don called even more frequently.

In a recent episode of DiplomacyCast, guest Christian Pedone ticked off several player archetypes that he hated to see on his boards. One of them was the Clam, the player who never divulges anything during negotiations. I don't consider myself to be a Clam, but when Don got on a roll, he could turn anyone into one. It was difficult to get a word in.

I quickly learned that if I let him go, he'd say too much.

Don called me in August, shortly after the Fall 1902 deadline in our No Shirt game. That was a critical turn for us, as we were both taking a leap of faith against Turkey. We hadn't seen the results yet and I was curious whether Don had held up his end as I had. But Don wanted to talk about everything but the game. We probably talked for 45 minutes or so. That was pretty typical for us. And if Anne Marie answered the phone, he'd hit her up for 15 minutes, too.

Don started to hang up, and I said, "Wait. Did you attack Turkey?"

He paused. "We'll talk when the moves come out."

Cheesecake arrived a couple of days later, and as fate would have it, someone had requested a separation of seasons.

In the postal hobby, to save time, when there are adjustments or retreats, you can submit conditional orders. GM Andy's house rules permitted a single player to request a season separation so he could see a retreat or build before writing his orders.

It was only the fourth turn of the game, so the board situation couldn't have been that tricky. Nevertheless, someone requested a separation and I caught a break. I changed my orders and stole Greece from Don.

Our relations on and off the board soured a bit after that, but as Don would prove time and again, he wasn't really

capable of holding a grudge. At least not over a board game or a nasty email from a friend with a hot temper.

The year 2000 was a big one for the four Weasels.

In April, Arsenic ended. That game was a bust for my Turkey. I never got much going and managed to unite Don in Italy and Slossar in Russia against me. I fought a hard-nosed tactical game, though, and when Faz in England stabbed Emmert's Germany to go for the win, I was the one who stepped forward to organize the resistance.

In Spring 1908, I persuaded Slossar to let Emmert's last unit in St. Pete walk into Moscow because we needed that army to stop Faz at 17. That sealed the board, so when I opened the Fall 1908 results, I fully expected to see that the draw had passed. Instead, I learned that Faz had captured Warsaw for his 18th dot.

Had there been a flaw in my line? I read my moves, then looked at the map. I read Slossar's moves, then looked at the map. And then I read Emmert's moves. Instead of holding in Moscow, he had moved to Ukraine, cutting a Russian support and allowing England to take Warsaw.

"Mark deserved to win," Emmert explained in the postgame chatter.

Don nicknamed him Judas after that, which is much worse than Chum or Pads.

Don called another Weasel Moot for August. The World Championship was in Baltimore, and he wanted all of us to attend. I couldn't go though.

Back in 1988, I had started an annual event with my group of oldest friends called Badminton Tourney. We were celebrating our 10th Badminton Tourney that same weekend, and as the founder, organizer, and most beloved former champion in Tourney history, I couldn't possibly skip it. Jim Burgess took my spot in the foursome, and they had a great time without me.

Badminton Tourney X, meanwhile, turned out to be the final installment of that event. Pity. But at least I'll go down as the only player ever to post back-to-back championships (1995 and 1996).

No Shirt ended on October 18 in an Italian solo, my first with the green pieces. I had stabbed Don a few turns earlier for one dot and position. He was horribly out of position and I quickly gobbled up most of Austria and the Balkans. By the end of the game, Don was so frustrated with the lack of communication from the other players that he was actively aiding my solo bid. I finished with 20 centers.

But the biggest thing to happen in 2000 was the birth of my son. Kevin arrived on October 17, the day before I received the news of my win in No Shirt.

Don pulled me into two other games that sort of tried to re-create Arsenic's magic. One was a short-lived effort called Goofy Golf in Scott Morris' old zine The Flat Earth Society. It started a couple of weeks before No Shirt ended, and every player but one had some connection to Don: His brother; a co-worker; his step-daughter's boyfriend; Slossar, the Arsenic vet who soloed in Don's very first postal game; me.

I can't recall the point of this particular Don Williams production, probably because it didn't last very long. The game never finished.

When the millennium turned, Don grabbed the Boardman number 2001A for a game he called 2001: A Gaming Odyssey. Don ran the game in a zine he called *Deny Everything*. He tapped Faz, Burgess and me from Arsenic and rounded out the board with the crustiest old farts he could find: Andy Lischett, Mike Mazzer (one of the players from Leviathan), Woody Arnawoodian, Gary Coughlan and Bob Olsen.

The highlight of that game was a fake issue of *Deny Everything* produced by Coughlan. Apparently that sort of thing used to happen all the time in the postal hobby's glory days. I got eliminated pretty early. The game eventually went on hold. I'm not sure Don ever finished it. He could be like that. Something would catch his attention and he'd be all about it until something else came along. Sometimes it was an idea like 2001 that would get him excited; sometimes it was something he was doing professionally, like a 360 degree survey. Whatever it was, he was always passionate about it.

Once Goofy Golf faltered, we weren't playing together anywhere. We continued to talk, though not as frequently. Still, it got to the point where when the phone rang at 8:30 p.m. on a weeknight, Anne Marie refused to answer it.

"It might be Don," she'd say.

She liked Don. She's a big talker, too, so they got on well. But she was working from home now a couple of days a week, and that meant she was squeezing in assignments around Kevin's sleep schedule. She just couldn't spare 15 minutes to catch up with Don at 8:30 p.m. on a work night. Anyway, the point is that although Don and I weren't playing in a game, we were still talking often enough that my wife knew when not to answer the phone.

Meanwhile, Tricia caught what looked to be her first big break in 2002. She landed a small role in the cast of a pretty good time travel show on ABC called *That Was*

Then. In 2000, she had been on the cast of the short-lived *Emeril* on, I think, NBC, but that show sucked. *That Was Then* was actually good, so my entire family decided to go out to L.A. for Thanksgiving to celebrate with her.

Unfortunately, by the time we got there, *That Was Then* was history. No one watched, and the network pulled the plug after two weeks. Tricia was rooming with Kiele Sanchez back then, one of the stars of the show who went on to have a pretty good career. We spent the Friday after Thanksgiving at their apartment with brooding members of the cast, including Tyler Labine, who also went on to bigger things.

The highlight of that night, though, was a visit by Shaun Cassidy, Tricia's neighbor. He brought a bottle of Dom and was really nice guy, especially when juxtaposed with all the disgruntled *That Was Then* cast members who only wanted to talk about their bad luck. (Tricia gets a pass. The rest of them were bores.)

That trip wasn't all about hobnobbing with the greats and almost greats of television, however. Anne Marie and I also made plans to see Don. He picked us up at our hotel and took us to the P.F. Chang's on La Cienega. P.F. Chang's was a favorite of his.

Our family returned to L.A. the next couple of years, and we hooked up with Don each time. He joined my family on Venice Beach for dinner one year. Another time, he brought his wife Stephanie along but confided to me that they were on the outs.

I love my family, but seeing Don was always a welcome break from them. Since Tricia moved, my mom gets all worked up whenever she's around. Sometimes it can seem like my older sister, Meg, and I aren't even in the room. For that reason, we refer to visits with Tricia as Triciapalooza. So it was nice to check out of the festival for a while with Don.

The Weasels Mooted again in 2003 for the DipCon at Tempest in a Teapot in D.C. All four of the originals made it. Emmert even talked tournament director Andy Marshall into putting us on the same board, Game 1A. Edi Birsan, Buz Eddy and Jeff Dwornicki drew the short straws and played with us.

That tournament used a draw-based scoring system with a 29-center rule. A coalition of 29 centers could force a draw. Games were worth 150 points, and parties to the draw split the points equally, less a point for each center outside the coalition. To maximize your score, you needed to clean up the board, but we had mint juleps to drink and cards to play, so we killed off Faz, Edi and Dwornicki, then ground Buz down to five centers and passed the draw. I felt pretty good about my Italian three-way.

Afterward, Edi remarked that it had been a fun game but he regretted that there hadn't been anyone on the board that he could mentor. "That's what I enjoy most," he said.

In the team round the next morning, Faz organized a team called Edi's Mentors.

I posted another three-way in the team round and figured I was having a pretty good tournament. That night, Emmert was going to drive us to an Italian restaurant in Baltimore. I thought about skipping the dinner and playing the third round, but I was there to be with my friends, not just play Diplomacy. I went to dinner.

On Sunday, I stunk it up. My England finished with two centers. The game ended in an F/G/I that split 146 points. I lost Best Italy by a third of a point and finished 14th in the tournament.

A couple of weeks before DipCon, Don and I drew another game start in *Cheesecake*. This time he was France to my Germany. And the fact that I was playing Germany was a source of friction between us.

We had talked many times before about completing the rainbow. I first read about the notion in an article by Brian Cannon in, I think, *Diplomacy World*. A rainbow was a solo as each country, and it was something I wanted to achieve. I used to tell Anne Marie that I'd quit the postal hobby when I completed my rainbow.

"Then hurry up and complete it," she'd say.

I was pretty useless when I was caught up in a Diplomacy game. Kevin was in his crib one night on ballet night, and I was writing Diplomacy letters. He starts yelling from his room. "Dada, I have poopies!"

"I'll be there a minute," I yelled back. He keeps yelling, but the email won't wait. I had a letter in my head and I needed to get it out.

Finally, I go into Kevin's room and flip on the light. Kevin is standing in his crib. His diaper is off, and he has smeared shit all over the wall.

I was furious. I cleaned him. Changed his diaper. Then I started cleaning the wall. Kevin knew I was pissed, and no joke, he starts singing, "Can You Feel the Love Tonight."

I wanted to shake him.

Anyway, one more solo and I'd be a better husband and father. At least that's what I promised Anne Marie. I had six of the seven colors. All I was missing was black. And Don knew that.

He kept telling me I was going to stab. He expected me to stab. But when I did, he was still ticked. We fought for a couple of turns, but circumstances changed and we reformed our alliance. He swung his fleets into the Mediterranean, and I pushed my armies down. The Italian resistance was staunch, and it appeared to me that he had the units to stop us cold.

When Don called to discuss our moves, I said, "Italy has us stopped. We need to figure something out."

"No, this will be easy," he said. "Italy is like a puzzle. You take one space, and that unlocks another."

"But it's easy to hold from the east, and he has the units to do it," I said.

"I've seen this so many times before," he continued, bulling past me. "It's easy to take out Italy."

Don was wrong, but he wouldn't listen to me, so I clammed up. When we hung up, I grabbed my map and looked at the board. I was going to stab him, and this time, it would be decisive.

News of my solo arrived on October 2, 2006, slightly more than three years after the game start. Two days later, I got an email from Don.

"You got your Rainbow," he wrote, "but it cost you a friend. I hope it was worth it."

It was, but only because, as I noted above, Don was completely incapable of holding a grudge. Six months later, he was calling me frequently to discuss his plans for attending Chicago's first Weasel Moot Diplomacy tournament.

I liked the taste of tournament Diplomacy that I had gotten in D.C. three years earlier. Don did too. He attended the 2004 DipCon in Portland, but I had to skip that one due to a work conflict. The next year, Tempest hosted Worlds in July. This time Don had the conflict, so I went alone.

The 2005 WDC was a five-round slog. I played every round, and I loved it. I went home completely jazzed about face-to-face Diplomacy and determined to build a club capable of supporting a tournament like Tempest.

On September 10, I hosted the Windy City Weasels' first game. I chose that name for the club because a) I wanted to honor Don, Faz and Emmert, and b) I really wanted to call our tournament Weasel Moot.

By 2007, the Weasels were ready. We scheduled Moot for June, and Don was one of the first players to commit.

He wanted to come in a day early so we could hang out before we both got swept up in the tournament. He wanted to keep his cost down, though, and was hoping to stay with me. My problem was I didn't have a place of my own.

My marriage had failed the previous year. Anne Marie and I separated in August 2006 and were on our way to a divorce. But even when she was declining to answer calls that might have been him, she always liked Don, so I asked her if Don, Edi Birsan, and I could stay at the house for the tournament. Because it was Don, she agreed.



Clockwise from back left) Steve Emmert, Don Williams, Mark Fassio and me at WDC in 1998

He came in on Thursday, and I took him to one of my two go-to Chicago restaurants, Chicago Pizza and Oven Grinder. The next morning, I picked up Edi at O'Hare and arranged for the two of them to take the architectural river tour. Don was a city planner, and Chicago was the birthplace of urban planning. He had a great time downtown.

That night, we added Dave Maletsky to the mix, and the four of us took in a Sox game in my seats behind the bullpen in leftfield. And the next day, Weasel Moot I opened.

Don represented the original Weasels well, although he left a solo on the board in Round 1. Tactics weren't Don's strong suit. He was a great communicator, a good strategist, but a terrible tactician. In that first-round game, he was so busy talking about what needed to be done that he didn't stop to look at what needed to be done.

Don finished fourth in the tournament and took home the Best Austria and Best Russia awards.

I saw him again at WDC in Vancouver later that summer. He, Rick Desper and I played together in the team round on Sox Fans for World Peace. They were red, I was

white. Frankly, I wasn't wild about playing on Don's team. Teammates can't play on the same board, and I had soloed on Don twice. But Vancouver was a six-round tournament. There would be other chances to play with Don, so I joined his team. And I didn't get a chance to play with Don.

The next year or two were pretty good ones for me and Don. I was going through a rough patch, living like a vagabond, mostly out in the western suburbs, but on the bright side, my morning commute lined up nicely with Don's.

We talked frequently in those days, not just about Dip but all sorts of stuff. Prior to the divorce, for example, he felt I could benefit from reading *Men Are from Mars*.

"It might help you figure things out," he'd say.

Back then he was doing a lot of counseling for battered women, and sometimes he'd call me to vent. He wouldn't share specific stories or anything like that, just the frustration of knowing you're giving someone good advice that they won't follow. I probably fell into that category for him, too.

Don returned to Weasel Moot in 2009, and this time he recruited three members of the Old Guard to join him: Melinda Holley, Vince Lutterbie and Gary Behnen.

For this trip, he stayed on an extra day. After all the travelers had left, Don and I drove out to my parents' place in Oak Brook and stayed there for the night. I still didn't have a place of my own. We found a P.F. Chang's and ate there, and then watched *Inglourious Basterds*, which we both loved.

I gave him my parents' room and took for myself the room I shared with Kevin when I stayed there. The next morning, I drove him to the airport.

We didn't talk as much after that. I moved into the city, and my commute got much shorter. Plus I wasn't playing much postal Diplomacy, so we didn't have the games that for so long had bound our friendship.

In 2011, within a month of each other, we both remarried. He to Stacey, me to Meghan. He came to Moot that year and again for Worlds in 2012.

We exchanged emails and the occasional phone call, but we were a far cry from that November afternoon in 1998 on the field in Gettysburg.

But Don has one last production in him. One of the things we had always talked about doing together was playing a game in *Graustark*, John Boardman's zine that had given birth to the postal hobby. When Allan Calhamer died in February of last year, Don got an idea

to pull together a memorial game. I was one of the last to sign on.

The game was slow to get going. Don drew Austria to my England. We got the Spring 1901 results in July. Then the Fall 1901 results arrived on August 6 along with a brief message from Boardman: "Don Williams has had to resign for personal reasons."

I wondered what that was all about and made a mental note to call Don.

In October, I saw Melinda Holley at the Tempest DipCon. She was also playing in the Calhamer Memorial Game and also was close with Don.

"Is Don all right?" I asked her.

"You haven't talked to him?" she asked.

"No, not yet," I said.

"Just call him," she said.

In February, Jim Burgess came to town on business. Also playing in the Calhamer game. Also a friend of Don's. I met him for dinner.

"What's going on with Don," I asked. "Is he sick?"

"Yah," Jim said. "He's got cancer. He's in really good spirits, but you should call him."

"I will," I said.

I sleep with my iPhone on the nightstand next to my bed. When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is check my email. On May 15, one from Stacey Williams was waiting for me.



"I'm so sorry to be emailing you this news," it started. "Don's oncologist told us in mid-April that treatment had

failed, and that no treatment options remained. He's been slowly calling his friends to break the news, and intended to call you this week. Unfortunately, his health took a steep decline two days ago, and he only has brief periods of mental clarity and consciousness now.

"He has always considered you one of his closest friends in the hobby. I'm so sorry life dealt us this cruel hand before he was able to tell you this himself."

Don died the next day. I never said goodbye.

Years ago, I remember my buddy Frank (the only other two-time Badminton Tourney champion) lamenting all the reasons why he couldn't join me and our friend Mike (one-half of the legendary Team Sasquatch that won in 1994) on a bender.

Mike waited patiently for Frank to finish and then said, "Frank, it's called life."

Don't let it get in the way is what he meant. But it does get in the way.

We have a toddler at home, and we both work. At night, Meghan hogs Patrick. My time with him is in the morning, when she's getting ready. We snuggle in bed and watch *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood*.

That usually means a late start to my morning, so I get to work late. That means I have to stay late. I get home in time for dinner, and then Meghan gives Patrick a bath and gets him ready for bed while I clear the table and wash the dishes.

Then I have Weasels stuff to do. The club doesn't run itself. And we have shows to watch, and there's just no time. No time for a 45-minute phone call. That's what I tell myself, anyway.

A week after I got that email from Stacey, I found myself packing for the trip to WDC in Chapel Hill, the very event and place where Don and I had forged our friendship 16 years ago. Maybe that's what Don meant when he said the game never ends. We do, but it doesn't. Even without its creator, the game goes on.

I walked over to my closet and dug through a stack of old t-shirts. Near the bottom, I found the Arsenic and Old Friends shirt.

I broke it out for the team round on Saturday. A couple of people asked about it.

"I'm wearing it for a friend who can't be here," I told them.

The shirt didn't bring me any luck—I disappointed Patience is a Virtue, Bitches, just as I had Arsenic and Old Friends back in '98—but it felt good to wear it again.

The game may never end, but friendships take more work. People drift apart. Even people who care about each other. Sometimes it's a call you make that brings you back together. And sometimes, it's a call you don't make.

One day you'll hear that I'm sick. Call me, maybe.

I'm going to try really, really hard to do the same for you.

Jim is a Windy City Weasel, a good guy, and a great friend.

Southeast Asian Diplomacy – Variant Capsule Review

By Jack McHugh

South East Asian is Dip variant which centers on its title area with Australia, the Philippines, and Indonesia included with the South East Asian powers of Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and China. The game has nice mix of powers and has 34 centers just like regular Diplomacy. The game has more claustrophobic feel to it as there are fewer provinces although there are the same number of units.

Generally speaking the Chinese and Australia are the wicked witches of the board with China/Vietnam and Laos being the land powers to sea powers of the

Australia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. I like the way there are so few free neutral centers, they are almost all contested so you're all thrown into serious negotiations right from the start. No fooling around in this game—you have to negotiate early and often.

So far I've played it once as China---unfortunately I was wiped out just two game years into the game but I still like the variant and will definitely try it again.

Jack McHugh is the Diplomacy World Variant Editor. Encourage him! He likes sarcasm.

If You Play Face-to-Face, I WANT to Hear From You!

By Jason Mastbaum

Think about what the most common Diplomacy-specific topics of conversation were the last time you went to a tournament. You most likely heard at least one conversation about what to do with Belgium in 1901. Maybe someone was interested in the pros and cons of bouncing Russia out of Sweden as Germany, or how to balance various alliances beyond the first few turns. But you also very likely heard people talking about how to grow the face-to-face (FtF) part of the hobby, or in more pessimistic contexts, how to keep it from shrinking. Well, I recently noticed something important about our prospects for growing the hobby which I don't think has been getting enough attention: to the extent that such information is even out there, the information available online about the FtF part of the hobby is presently a minefield of dead links, inactive meetup.com groups, and outdated hobby and tournaments lists.

Doing some Googling, you can find active local hobby groups, and you can find information about upcoming tournaments, but the links are scattered all over the place to the extent that your search is going to be a total crapshoot if you don't already know what you're looking for. For some groups, such as a group in Texas that organizes over Facebook, I simply could not come up with a set of search terms that would get their Facebook

group to show up. And to top it all off, the poor quality of the Diplomacy-related search results is further exacerbated by the fact we're competing with search results where "diplomacy" means the State Department and not a board game. How can we retain new players if new players don't even know how to find us in the first place?

So I'm looking to compile up-to-date information on local FtF groups and tournaments, and then to keep this information up to date going forward. I'm looking for information from North America, Europe, Australia, and wherever else people reading this are from. As to why I'm looking global with this, speaking from my perspective as a North American, I know we'll show up on other continents to play in tournaments, and at the point that I'm collecting global information on tournaments, I may as well say that I'm looking for everything—besides, I'm not looking to take any pride of ownership over this information and will happily pass it along to someone looking to do a version of this in their country or on their continent so that they don't have to start from scratch.

I'm also looking for input from anyone who's involved in or knows about fledgling hobby groups or tournaments;

I'd like to include a section of contact information for people who are trying to develop a critical mass of known Diplomacy players in their area, as well as resources on starting a hobby for people who find the list of local hobbies and discover that there's no hobby near them, nor one even under development.



While I'm here, I wanted to talk a bit about what led me to even have the opportunity to really come to appreciate the extent of this problem. As I imagine is the case for many of the people reading this, I'm already active in my local hobby, so why would I be searching for this information? It started while I was looking at the Diplomacy subreddit recently—it hit me that the discussion was pretty severely dominated by people talking about games on playdiplomacy.com. If you were looking at the list of discussions as a newcomer to the game, you quite plausibly would not have even realized that people play Diplomacy anywhere other than online. This seemed like a pretty wasted opportunity—the subreddit isn't super active, but it does seem to generate at least weekly activity, and you'd assume that it would be at least marginally easier to convert an online player into a FtF player than it would be to convince a random person to play Diplomacy.

So, I decided to do a first cut at compiling some information on FtF groups and tournaments to get some exposure for FtF on the subreddit, figuring that it shouldn't be that difficult to do for someone like myself who's now in my second year of traveling to multiple tournaments a year. As I discussed earlier, I was pretty wrong this one. Even worse, I wouldn't say that I'm as plugged into the hobby as well as some people I know—

in large part because I've only really been active for a couple of years now—but that's actually kind of the point here. If I couldn't easily find this information, then what chance does a total newcomer have? How many potential players have we lost due to these would-be players doing a search for people near them to play a FtF game with—say, after reading a certain article on grantland.com about WDC 2014—only to come up empty-handed?

This convinced me that our single biggest problem right now is very likely to be the state of the information available online. I'm certainly not going to make any deluded promises like “the moment this information gets published, tournament attendance will double overnight!” But if we want people to show up to our house games and our tournaments, they need to be able to find us without already knowing a Diplomacy player. I also suspect that what we will get for free out of this effort is an easier time retaining new players. One would expect that the more vibrant your local Diplomacy hobby in terms of things like the frequency of house games and how geographically spread around those games are—for instance, I know that here in DC, it can be hard to get people in Maryland to go to games in Virginia and vice-versa as the travel times can be non-trivial—the less work you'll have to put into actively convincing people to keep coming back. Furthermore the frequency and geographic spread of your games is more likely to take care of itself the more people are able to get involved in your hobby. Again, I'm not going to blow smoke up your ass and tell you that this will fix everything, but clearly it's going to be easier to get people to stay if it's easier to get a game going.

Now here's the rub: if our single biggest problem is the extent to which the information available online about local hobbies has decayed, I think it's also the single easiest problem for us to fix. This issue almost completely stays away from some of the trickier problems with local recruitment, such as “where should we be looking to recruit new people who might enjoy Diplomacy?” or “are people not coming back because of something we did that put them off, or is it just the game itself that put them off and it would have put them off no matter whom they were playing with?” To me, this is far simpler than that. All we need to do is make it so that people who are already sitting down at their computers to find information about other people to play Diplomacy with—essentially, people who have already recruited themselves!—are actually able to find the information they're looking for without having to already know someone who plays Diplomacy.

This is a great project and I hope you can all give Jason a few minutes of your time to assist him! You can find him at jason.mastbaum@gmail.com “of” gmail.com

DON “DUCK” WILLIAMS: HE WAS AMONG THE BEST OF MEN AND HE BROUGHT OUT THE BEST IN OTHER MEN. AND HE WASN’T A BAD DIPPER EITHER. WHAT MORE NEEDS BE SAID?

By Larry Peery



It's gotten to the point where I hate to run into Edi Birsan at a DipCon or see his name on an incoming email because I know it's going to be bad news --- usually about another hobby member who has passed on. I guess at my age I have to expect that, but it still hurts to hear of another of our family leaving us. I was just getting over the shock I felt from listening to Edi in Paris as he rattled off the names of hobbyists we've both known for years, in some cases nearly fifty years. But when I read his message and a similar one from Jim Burgess about Don Williams passing I was not only saddened I was shocked. You see, I belong to the old school of Diplomacy and we were taught that the good Dippers never die young, they go on and on collecting dots as they go, but this time I felt robbed by whatever had taken Don from us while he was, at least in my mind, barely in his prime.

I met Don, for me and all who knew him well aka “The Duck,” so long ago I don't even remember when or where I met him. Looking back it just seems that he was always there, a positive presence as he was a positive force in the hobby, I'm sure the first time I met him was at a Diplomacy event, but I don't remember which one. It was probably at one or another of the early and frequent FTF house games held in San Diego and Los Angeles during the first Golden Age of Diplomacy. I know he played in some of the early PBM Dip games I ran in XENOGOGIC and the first real impression he made on me was through his handwriting. Even now, all these years later I can still visualize his penmanship It was simple and manly, and perfectly easy to read – totally

unlike what you see from most Dippers today. He had ties and links across the hobby and whenever there was a project that needed a volunteer, or a game that needed a player or an event looking for a participant he'd be there. His enthusiasm for the game and the hobby was contagious, as was his respect for fellow Dippers; and that was entirely mutual. In all honesty I cannot think of ever hearing anyone say anything bad about him. Everyone liked him. He was that kind of man.

But to me he was more than that; he was also something of a hero although he didn't particularly look like one. As I vaguely remember in his younger days he had reddish hair, green eyes and an impish look in his eyes --- all of which made him irresistible during across the board negotiations. I do remember asking him in all seriousness if he was Irish and if perhaps there wasn't a bit of leprechaun in his blood. He laughed, as he was prone to do when given the least excuse. Edi confirmed that Don was, in fact, part Italian (Must have been far northern Italian!) and part English. Thinking back I can recall how he and Mike Maston used to banter with each other in Italian, so I guess Edi was right. But from these simple and casual beginning contacts a warm camaraderie and friendship grew over the years.

I'm not going to write about Don's skills as a Dipper. I'm sure others can do that. But I do know they were good, marginally close to greatness, but he lacked the taste for the jugular that distinguishes the truly great Dippers. He was just too nice a guy, usually, to play mean and dirty Dip. Still, it isn't as a player of Diplomacy I want to remember him because there was another game that he truly excelled at. Don was a master of manipulating the civil service systems. I remember one time I had asked him what kind of work he did and after he explained it I was convinced that what he was really doing was making a career out of making a career by moving from job to job in city to city, but constantly moving up the civil service pecking order and finding cities with better and better pension and retirement systems. His goal was to climb as fast as he could, get as big a retirement as he could, and then get out and enjoy life. The tragedy, of course, is that he never got to enjoy the benefits of all his efforts.

I called him a hero, which will come as a surprise to some, but to me it makes perfect sense, and perhaps it will to you when you read this story about him and our

relationship that goes back some thirty-five years. Those of you who go back to the early years of the hobby may recall a bit of the story, but for the younger generations let me take you back to a very different world when Diplomacy was just entering its first Golden Age.

Don's sense of inclusiveness was far greater than his world of Diplomacy and that gave him the strength to survive and to thrive in what could be a very exclusive and cruel world. The world, the United States, California and especially Southern California was a very different place in 1978, at least for me and those like me. Two events happened in late 1978 and early 1979 and although at first there was no obvious connection between them, in time the two changed our society profoundly.

The first event was The Briggs Initiative or California Proposition 6 as it was technically known that appeared on the California State ballot on November 7, 1978. Sponsored by John Briggs, a conservative legislator from Orange County, the failed initiative would have banned gays and lesbians, and possibly anyone who supported gay rights, from working in California's public schools. The Briggs Initiative was the first failure in a movement that started with the successful campaign headed by singer Anita Bryant and her organization Save Our Children in Dade County, Florida, to repeal a local gay rights initiative.

Openly gay San Francisco politician Harvey Milk was instrumental in fighting the measure, and opposition from a variety of public figures from California Governor Ronald Reagan to President Jimmy Carter helped to defeat it. Public opinion swung fairly quickly from general support of Proposition 6 to what became overwhelming opposition. A Wikipedia search has more information on this, but I want to tell you how this involved Don and me.

As the campaign in support of Proposition 6 got underway I got more and more agitated. By then I had accepted the fact that I was homosexual ("Gay" was not the term de jour for being "queer" at that time.), I was in a committed relationship with another man (Long before that was an accepted thing.), and most of my friends seemed totally unaware of either, particularly in the Diplomacy hobby where I was still in my first active period as a publisher, editor, writer, player, etc. etc. I remember reading an editorial in the local newspaper claiming that the reason support for Proposition 6 was so high was because 85% of the people asked in California claimed that they didn't know anyone who was gay, but they still had a bad opinion about gays. I thought long and hard about that and thinking back over the events that led to the Kennedy Brothers and Martin Luther King's assassination and what was going on in the struggle between Mexican farm workers and Californian farmers, I decided I had to do something. The question

was what? Riots, demonstrations, picketing, boycotts, etc. just didn't seem my style, but there had to be something I could do. Finally I decided to, as we commonly said then, "come out of the closet" and do it in such a way that it couldn't be ignored. So I sat down and typed up my own "gay manifesto." About the only thing I recall, besides expressing my total opposition to Proposition 6 was my last line which went something like, "Eighty-five percent of California's population say they don't know anyone who is gay, etc. etc. etc." I ended with this line, "You no longer have that excuse because you know me." To make sure recipients got the point I printed up a 100 copies of my letter on pink paper, sealed it with a gold seal, and mailed them to a hundred of my nearest and dearest friends, as well as anybody else I knew.

Then I waited to see what kind of reaction I would get. Surprisingly, the strongest criticism of what I did came from other gays I knew, including various members of the Diplomacy hobby, who all said I should have kept quiet and it was "too dangerous" to come out of the closet. Bullshit, I thought. My stepfather called me and objected to the mailing, not because of what it said, but because I had done it that way instead of telling my mother personally. I heard nothing from my natural father, which was no surprise since I hadn't heard from him since I was five. Interestingly, my aunt told me that I had a gay uncle although he had never told me so, and eventually he made himself known when he showed up with his boyfriend at our "gay wedding." (Again, long before that was an accepted act or term. In those days it was called a "holy union.") The biggest percent of responders simply yawned and said, "So what's the big deal. We knew that all along."

But there were other responses from some of my Diplomacy friends that did surprise me. Months later I got an airmail from Papua New Guinea from the Rev. Brian Bailey, my oldest and best Diplomacy friend, expressing his support and offering Mike and I his blessing, and said his aborigine parishioners were praying for us. Jim Findley, one of the local Dippers and a Marine, showed up on my front doorstep with three of his beefy Marine buddies and wanted to know if we needed any "security" in the aftermath of the mailing. I thanked them but said I wasn't having any problems at all.

A few days later I got a call from another of my old college friends, Bill McLinn, who was then working in the White House's East Wing where his office was down the hall from Rosalynn Carter's. In fact, Bill shared his office with one of Mrs. Carter's secretaries. Bill didn't tell me much since he was on his way to a meeting, but he said that President and Mrs. Carter were at that moment flying to Sacramento, California and planned to speak to the press when the plane landed. He told me to be sure to watch what they said and then hung up. I figured it

was just another campaign trail press show and I almost missed it, but I turned on the news at dinnertime and the first story was a short clip of the Carters standing on the tarmac in front of Air Force One facing a bank of microphones and a gaggle of reporters. Carter looked very serious as he told the reporters that while presidents didn't usually comment on local or state election issues the two of them felt obligated to speak out in opposition to Proposition 6 and were doing so because of the importance of the issue. I was stunned that any president, but especially a conservative Southern Baptist like Carter, would take such a position. The TV news commentators were also stunned and said that Carter's comments as President, would have a major impact on the election. A couple of hours later Bill called again and asked if I had seen the president's remarks. I said, "Yes," and waited. He told me that what had happened was that there had been a lot of discussion among the gay staff members (Apparently the East Wing offices were filled with them.) about Proposition 6 but nobody had had the courage to bring up the issue to the Carters, just assuming that they supported it. Bill had gotten my manifesto and left it on his desk in plain sight. Mrs. Carter's secretary saw it, thought it was a party invitation or something, picked it up, read it and then carried it into Mrs. Carter's office and suggested she read it. Mrs. Carter did and asked where it had come from. Her secretary explained it had been received by one of her staff members from California, and Mrs. Carter responded with, "Bill?" She asked if she could keep the letter for a day and then went back to work. The secretary later told Bill that she had showed it to Jimmy that evening and the two had discussed it, the whole question of gay civil rights, and what they should do, if anything. And the rest, as they say, is history.

I told this story because the background it offers puts what comes next into some kind of context. I got a call from Don that was very low key and he asked what kind of response I had gotten to my mailing. I told him that it had been overwhelmingly positive except for a few gay Dippers who thought I should have kept quiet. He proceeded to rattle off a half-dozen names without a pause, and I just responded with "Bingo," and we both laughed. What happened in the following years was as significant as it was uneventful. Whenever Don and I wrote, or talked on the phone, or met at the occasional FTF Dip event, he always asked about Mike and how things were going with us. Once in a while he'd surprise me with an off the wall question that told me he'd been following the growing and worsening horror story of AIDS and HIV (The second event in 1979 that I referred to above was the discovery of the first known AIDS case

born in the United States) sweeping the gay community and the country. He never pried, but he left me know of his concern for our health and wellbeing. I reassured him that there was no cause for alarm. In time I noticed his questions began to take a different tack and I sensed there was another reason behind them. Another time I shared with him the results of a meeting I had attended conducted by Professor Dr. Simon LeVay. He didn't even let me get started and butted in with, "Yeah, the Gay Gene Guy." Then, at one or another of the DipCon events we were both at we had a chance for a one on one chat. After the usual routine questions he came out and told me that he appreciated that Mike and I had been so candid and truthful in answering his questions over the years (I didn't even know he was asking Mike questions!) and that since we were the first gays he'd gotten to know personally we'd helped get him over the hump of dealing with the coming out of a gay relative. I remember the time he told me he had gotten involved in PFLAG and I responded with, "What's that?" He looked shocked as he explained it to me, but I could sense he had finally come to accept what was. Instead of trying to change the world to fit his notion of what it should be, he had accepted it and expanded his boundaries of inclusiveness to make the world a bigger and better place. It was the same technique he had used in Diplomacy and it's the reason he will be so missed and was and is a hero of mine.



I realize this isn't your normal obituary but Don wasn't exactly a normal guy either; and I hope what I've shared with you will give us a sense of closure to our grief at having lost a truly good man, husband, father and fellow Dipper.

Don will be greatly missed by multiple generations of people, both within and outside of the hobby.

Aquatic Shenanigans

By Joshua Danker-Dake

In Spring 1901, the English Channel and the Black Sea are two of the most hotly contested territories on the board. And in that turn, at least, they have a great deal in common—these, along with Galicia and the Italian–Austrian border, have the potential to be “Hey, you better not go there”/“Oh my God, he’s totally going to go there” panic spaces (and I would speculate that by and large, the Channel and the Black Sea are the subjects of the hottest discussions on the first turn).

These two sea spaces have something else in common for me in Spring 1901: If I think I can take them, I absolutely will, with little regard to what’s been discussed or agreed upon. But any fool can do that—the trick is to pull it off while keeping things friendly.

In brief, Russia and Turkey negotiate over the Black Sea, which touches five supply centers—three of them are home centers. Fleets in the Black Sea can be tough to dislodge, especially for Russia. But while Turkey in the Black Sea is bad for Russia, Russia in the Black Sea can be disastrous for Turkey (I am on record as saying that Turkey should *always* open to the Black Sea—it’s his front yard, after all). Bouncing in Spring 1901—whether intentionally or not—is common here.

England and France discuss the English Channel, the loss of which isn’t necessarily as critical as that of the Black Sea in Spring 1901. Fall 1901 attacks from the Channel by either party tend to be geared toward Belgium, and moves against London or Brest tend to be of the sneaky (and sometimes short-sighted) sort (although France naturally worries about an English move to the Mid-Atlantic, while England experiences the same emotions about the possibility of France going to the Irish Sea). Spring bounces here (as Sharp writes) tend to be of no long-term benefit to anyone but Germany.

It is not my intention to discuss in detail the pros and cons of opening to these spaces. Readers interested in the strategies and tactics underlying the various openings of England, France, Russia, and Turkey are referred to Sharp and to the many excellent articles that have been written on the subject.

Going forward, we’ll assume that you’ve already made the decision to go for the Channel or the Black Sea. The question, then, is how to get away with it. In the following, I’ll talk about my favorite way to play it. (For the record, we’re talking about opening to these spaces without any other obvious hostility; if you’re Turkey, for example, best of luck playing off the move to the Black Sea combined with a move to Armenia.)

Whether I initially intend to go for one of these spaces or not, I will agree to a DMZ almost without fail. Agreeing to a DMZ and then promptly violating it is hardly a new idea, but the key is how you handle it. Here, true success means obtaining a strategic advantage without burning your bridge with the power you’ve just crossed.

I prefer to wait for the other player to propose the DMZ—to let him begin to commit first. Aggressively campaigning for a DMZ and then breaking it immediately is a tough sell—it makes you look shady. See if the other guy’ll be the pushy one.

Let’s consider the possible outcomes of breaking your DMZ in Spring 1901.

1. You get in. The goal of breaking a DMZ isn’t always to attack. Sometimes, it’s to thwart an enemy offensive, to establish a better strategic position, or to keep your neighbor from doing the same (feel free to remind your neighbor of this if he gets too worked up).

If I break the DMZ and get in, after I’m done patting myself on the back, I like to say, “Well...here I am in [The Black Sea/The Channel/Galicia] looking like a jackass. Sorry about that; I’m paranoid. I thought for sure you were going to go there. I hope my non-aggression in Fall 1901 shows you that I’m sincere and that we can still work together.”

If you want to attack your neighbor after that, great, go for it. If not, non-aggression in Fall 1901 may indeed make your neighbor relax a bit, whether you vacate that space *or not*. Your neighbor may not be happy about your effrontery, but if you keep your liberty-taking to a tolerable level and you’re nice about it, you improve the odds that he won’t decide it’s worth starting something over.

Never be afraid to play the “paranoid” card. This is Diplomacy—who’s going to disbelieve it? Anybody who isn’t paranoid hasn’t been playing long enough.

2. You bounce. While less desirable than Option 1, this one tends to be a bit easier to play diplomatically. You simply say, “Aha! I knew you couldn’t be trusted!” Your opponent may try to flip this around on you—don’t you let him. Be the good guy. If you lay the groundwork in the discussion phase by letting him be the one to push for commitments and if you’re assertive enough with your *Aha!*, you might succeed in making him feel like he’s the one who did something sneaky. He may still attack you, of course, but at least you’ll have the moral high ground going for you, which is always nice.

Whether you pull off your excuse or not, it isn't necessarily a bridge-burner. Be the one to step up first and say, "All right, we bounced. Where do we go from here?" If somebody's got it in for you, they've got it in for you, and there's nothing to be done about that. But if your neighbor is an open-minded player, being gracious and invested enough in his concerns to move forward (whatever that means specifically in your game) can go a long way for you.

That's it; those are all the outcomes. There's no **3. They get in**—that's half the point. Here's the other half: I've never had cause to regret this aggressive/apologetic approach (which isn't quite the same as saying I've never regretted opening to the Channel or to the Black Sea, but suffice it to say that I've regretted *not* opening that way a lot more often).

Obviously, none of what I've written above is magic words, and your mileage may vary according to your opponent. The takeaway is this: if you can be friendly and conversational, if you can take the blame on yourself, if you can maintain your self-control—that is, minimize the hostility and aggression you express (whether you mean it or not)—then you are exhibiting qualities that make you the sort of player that other people want to work with.

In 1901, most of us are just looking to live and get a build or two—finding a friend/ally is icing on the cake at that stage. Be the kind of player who's attractive in this regard to your neighbors—whether you're planning on attacking them in the near future or not—and see what it does for your long-term prospects.

Joshua is the Diplomacy World Strategy and Tactics Editor.

Yorkshire DipCon – Making it Happen

By Graeme N Murphy

In issue 124 of Diplomacy World I spoke about some of the trials and tribulations of organising my first Diplomacy tournament.

Readers of that article, and its pre-cursor in issue 122, will remember that the main driver for Yorkshire DipCon (YDC from now on) was falling attendances at UK based events that had resulted in the loss of the final days play at Manorcon 2013 because we could not get the seven players required to fill a single board. A meeting of some of the senior faces in UK face to Face Diplomacy had resulted in a degree of soul searching and some thoughts on why people weren't playing at UK events anymore and this resulted in a number of potential actions that the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Group might take to halt this worrying trend.

One of these actions was to create a Diplomacy only event that would focus on the Dip and relegate the other games and activities to the diplomatic downtime that comes in between and after games of Dip. Regular readers will recall that I had tested the waters of interest at Midcon in Derby in November and, by Christmas Eve 2013, had booked a venue and accommodation at the University of Hull and had opened the website for bookings. Issue 124 discussed my digital trials and tribulations and left the situation in March with bookings coming in and around 10-12 weeks left before the event was to take place.

This article will describe the work that went into those last 12 weeks and provide a report on the event itself. I'd love to say that everything went to plan but, as you will see, those 12 weeks threw in numerous challenges which made life interesting.

So, it's March 2014. My article is in 'Diplomacy World' and I have several sign ups already. Things are looking good.

The website seems to be attracting interest and we (Dave Simpson and I) are getting enquiries from across the country. These enquiries seem to surround the availability of the accommodation, the level of skill required to play in a 'tournament' and the atmosphere in which the games are played. Our responses at this time are that we have the whole Hall available as accommodation, that we will have a mix of regular players and people who have played just two or three games face to face and that traditionally the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Group are promoting games that are played in the best possible atmosphere and one where every effort is taken to integrate and help new players without compromising the competitive side of the game. (The publication of David Hill's article <http://grantland.com/features/diplomacy-the-board-game-of-the-alpha-nerds/> which described his, not altogether pleasant, experiences at the recent World Championships at Chapel Hill could not have come at a worse time and I worried if that might have a negative effect on attendance, especially as it was re-posted onto the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Facebook pages by one of the members)

Whilst responding to these emails coming from visitors to the website I was also posting on the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Group's Yahoo Group and their Facebook page and the Dip2000 PBEM site. Dip2000 kindly provide us with free web hosting for our site and have supported the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Groups

work unselfishly for some years now which is really appreciated. They have also supplied a rich source of players (myself included) for face to face events in the UK in the past and YDC was to be no exception with all of the top 4 in the event being Dip2000 or ex-Dip2000 players. Email and Face to Face Diplomacy might well be different games but it obviously does not mean that that playing one style precludes success in the other.

Articles were put into the UK Boardgames Zine 'The Queens Lane Advertiser' and, by the end of April I have had more signups from the website via PayPal and have a number of local players who have indicated that they will come along to play but who do not formally sign up via the website as they don't need the accommodation. I am getting hopeful of two boards and, in an effort to entice more sign-ups, I make an offer that once we get sign-up number 14, I will hold a raffle with the two lucky winners receiving a free breakfast each day.



The presentation boards and trophies. The big shield is the Tour of Britain trophy.

As May arrives I order the trophies and get the Tour of Britain shield engraved with the name of last year's winner, which just happens to be me, and this sees a repeat of a conversation about Diplomacy that I had with the same proprietor of the trophy shop two years ago. I am assured that all the trophies will be ready to collect by the 16th of June and move on to my next tasks which is to prepare a tournament presentation board which will hold information that the players will need during the event and give them somewhere to sign up for the individual rounds.

This work takes some time but is reasonably straight forward. I end up with some sign-up sheets, areas where the results of each board will be displayed, areas where players can see the current state of the tournament, details of when each round will start and information on the C-Diplo and Tour of Britain scoring systems. I am happy with the results and it's another thing ticked off the 'To Do' list.

By now it is mid to late May and the sign-ups are drying up. We still haven't reached two boards and I start to ramp up the emails and Facebook activity as well as providing more information on the website.

On Facebook I start an occasional series of posts on 'How to speak 'ull', this is drawn from the website <http://www.greengates.karoo.net/hull/speak.html> which is a light hearted look at the Hull accent and how distinctive it is from the rest of the planets idea of English. I start to update the website every day or so and we are getting enquiries from players in Ulster and Finchley which I am hopeful will turn into bookings. At the same time I chase some other acquaintances that I know played Diplomacy in their past but who perhaps haven't done so for some years. One is my shift leader from 34 years ago with whom I shared a 17-17 draw on night shift and the other is Simon Stansfield, Stanny, The Yellow Peril from school, The Turk !

I find Stanny via the Friends Re-United website. This was a UK website that brought old schoolmates together around 10-12 years ago. It was bought for a pretty penny by a television company just as Facebook hit the interweb and sort of disappeared from use for most people, much to the distress of the television company's executives. I remembered seeing Stanny's name on the site and on the off-chance sent him a message through it. I got a reply next day and got a sign up. Stanny was keen to play and started actively posting on our Facebook site so I had a positive vibe that he would turn up.

My ex-shift leader also replied swiftly and also showed interest although the fact that he spend several weeks of the year now sailing the seven seas meant that he wasn't 100% able to commit at this stage. Still it sounded promising and I now had 17 names.

Alas, as the event neared and I started to try to firm up commitments the numbers started to drop. First was a player who had shown interest in coming up to Yorkshire with his wife and playing some did whilst his partner explored the region. There had been a change in plans and a restructuring of holidays and commitments. He wouldn't be coming but wished me well.

Next was some of the locals: A player at my wargames club who was also an ex-schoolmate of mine and Stanny's suddenly stopped attending the club and didn't respond to emails; A colleague at work who had played some online Dip and attended some of the Face to Face sessions at a local training company some years past similarly went missing and stopped answering emails; A player from my darts team, who also wargames and had only expressed an interest in the event a couple of weeks previously suddenly announced that he was driving his mother to her 'Race for Life' weekend. Finally, my ex-shift leader confirmed that, due to caring

responsibilities elsewhere and an imminent voyage on the briny, he would now be unable to attend and thus, within just a few days, YDC had dropped from the heady height of 17 possibles to 11 likelies. There was a little over a week to go!

The final run in to the event started badly. I met with the Top Honcho in Residence and Catering at the University to discuss the practical arrangements for the event. As I walked through the door and saw his face I knew there were problems. It transpired that the building contractors were still on site at the Lawns Centre and we would not be able to access the rooms for the Diplomacy games as they were not yet finished. Not only that but, with contractors on site the bar and refectory areas would also be unavailable. I looked out of his windows and thought the worst but Head Honcho's don't get to be Head Honcho's without having a trick up their sleeves and on this occasion he rose to the challenge.

There were rooms available in the accommodation blocks that should be able to take the games; The University would provide a free hot meal on the Friday night and buffet lunches on the Saturday and Sunday. These would be for all attendees and not just for those staying in the accommodation. The University also agreed to send over a chef and an assistant to cook our breakfasts within the accommodation blocks now that we had lost the use of the refectory. The previously agreed arrangement where we could bring our own food and drink on site took care of the bar issue.

I arranged to meet someone up at the Lawns to look at the rooms proposed and, after this visit, decided that with the numbers due to attend these rooms would be fine and that the University's offer more than made up for the loss of the facilities in the Lawns Centre.

I reviewed my to-do list. Still there was the design and production of the certificates and making the posters and signage that would direct people from the car parks to the accommodation and the new room that I would use to register people and doll out room keys. I also needed to review the structure of the event in the light of expected numbers and decided to add an extra round on the Saturday so that we could guarantee everyone at least three games.

I also drew up a list of items I needed to take with me: Pens, Drawing Pins, Blu Tack, Scissors, Extension Leads, 2 x Laptops, 2 x TFT Screens, 2 x Speakers (We had lost the meeting rooms and their built in projectors. If we had turn ups on the day that meant we would get two boards I could use two separate rooms for the games with separate Dip Timers running), Cottingham Take Away Menu's, Laminator, Laminator Pouches, Velcro Hooks, Diplomacy Sets, Other Board Games, Beer, Pepsi, Lemonade, Orange cordial, Black Bin Bags, Crisps, Nuts, Chocolates, Dip rules, Blank certificates,

Printer, Trophies, Presentation board, Signs, Suitcase, Felt tip pen, Price list (I was selling the above food and drink at cost using an honesty box due to the loss of the bar facilities), Money tin, Feedback forms, YDC2015 & Manorcon Flyers, phone charger, Wi-Fi connection instructions, Camera, Batteries.

Pretty much the only thing I forgot was a bottle opener for the selection of Real Ales that I took but the Lawns Centre staff helped out with that and also provided a selection of glasses and free tea and coffee throughout the event.

Friday the 20th Dawned. I took my two Labradoodles out for a last run from me for the next three days and loaded the car to the gunnels. 30 minutes later I was at the Lawns, in possession of the keys to the whole block and welcoming my first guest.

By 18:30 everyone had arrived. I asked everyone as they arrived to indicate their preferences for which rounds they wanted to play and which they didn't mind skipping if required. By 18:45 I had the information entered into the Dip Tour software and conducted the draw. By 19:00 we were off and YDC 2014 was underway.

Round one saw David Wigglesworth's experience prove too much for the rest of the board as he charmed his way to an imposing 12 centre win with Austria. Poor Simon Stansfield, with my plaudits about him being the feared Turk still ringing in everyone's ears, drew the yellow pieces and was immediately pounced on by all his neighbours and the Italian. Stanny survived under extreme pressure until 1906, winning the Geoffrey Boycott Award for a Most Stubborn Defence in the process.

The results of round one were:

| Country | Player | Centres | Score |
|---------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| Austria | David Wigglesworth | 12 | 51.00 |
| England | Owen Richards | 9 | 24.00 |
| France | Simon Chandler | 6 | 14.00 |
| Germany | Keith Smith | 2 | 3.00 |
| Italy | Joe Loveland | 1906 | 1.00 |
| Russia | Andrew Jones | 5 | 6.00 |
| Turkey | Simon Stansfield | 1906 | 1.00 |

Whilst round one was underway experienced players Graeme Murphy, Dave Simpson, Jeremy Tullett and Brian O'Farrell sat out, playing a game of '1775 – Rebellion'. A game eventually won by the Continental Army and the Patriots after an inconvenient peace treaty brought hostilities to a premature close.

The post-Diplomacy activities involved the drinking of copious amounts of beer and two simultaneous games of Spartacus. Needless to say a great time was had by

all although how the Batiatus family managed to win so easily on our board I'll never know.

The Diplomacy had gone well and the players new to the UK Face to Face Diplomacy scene had enjoyed every minute of it. So far so good.



General view of the gaming room. L-R Front Brian O'Farrell, Owen Richards, Joe Loveland. L-R Rear Keith Smith (seated), Simon Chandler, Andrew Jones, Dave Simpson, Jeremy Tullett.

Saturday, just like Friday, dawned clear and hot with a bright blue sky over East Yorkshire and a host of hungry Diplomacy players gathering for breakfast. Full English and continental varieties were available with even the option of having both for those with a special sort of appetite. The food was prepared fresh in the room and was well appreciated by the ravenous hordes.

10am saw the start of round two and this saw the participation of some of the more experienced Dipsters who had sat out last night's round. 1901 saw an unusual opening with Austrian armies in Bohemia and Russians in Silesia. I suspected I had been done up like a kipper and the Autumn Diplomacy required an extra special effort to prevent an early German exit. By working with England however I managed to recover and eventually got to 7 centres, pretty much at Russia's expense, but an ill-considered build of a fleet in Kiel sent alarm bells ringing in Whitehall and saw a stab by the English at the same time that the other wolves gathered to feast. With some ill-considered moves and circled by enemies I went from my heady 7 centres down to 2 centres to qualify for the Yorkshire Pudding award. This was for the player who received the severest battering in a turn. I exited in 1907 and was pretty bruised. The game was won again by David Wigglesworth who had done well out of my demise whilst Jeremy Tullett's Russia recovered from 1 centre back to 9 in display that would put a phoenix to shame.

The full board results were:

| Country | Player | Centres | Score |
|---------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| France | David Wigglesworth | 10 | 49.00 |
| Russia | Jeremy Tullett | 9 | 24.00 |
| England | Keith Smith | 8 | 16.00 |
| Italy | Simon Chandler | 5 | 6.00 |
| Austria | Dave Simpson | 2 | 3.00 |
| Germany | Graeme Murphy | 1907 | 1.00 |
| Turkey | Andrew Jones | 1904 | 1.00 |

With a short break for lunch, once again provided free by the University, it was time for round 3 and with two eliminations behind her it was time for Turkey to shine, Jeremy Tullett taking advantage of a disjointed opposition to finish just ahead of Brian O'Farrell's 10 centre France. Owen Richards took the Mid-Summer Madness award in this game for what I believed was his decision to scupper a three way draw on 10 centres, giving the high scoring win to Jeremy instead. It has to be said that this was explained to me well into the early hours of Sunday morning whilst sat outside over a beer and I may have missed some of the nuances of Owen's position at this time as he was clearly not a part of that draw and no one thought to offer him a reason to hold the line against Jeremy to force the three-way. Owen is however hanging on to his certificate and, in my mind, anyone who keeps centres out of the hands of Dave Simpson, deserves an award of some kind.

The results of round three were:

| Country | Player | Centres | Score |
|---------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| Turkey | Jeremy Tullett | 11 | 50.00 |
| France | Brian O'Farrell | 10 | 24.00 |
| England | Dave Simpson | 9 | 14.00 |
| Germany | Owen Richards | 3 | 3.00 |
| Russia | David Wigglesworth | 1 | 2.00 |
| Italy | Andrew Jones | 1907 | 1.00 |
| Austria | Simon Chandler | 1907 | 1.00 |

Round four was delayed to allow me to go out and pick up another 40 bottles of real ale and a huge Indian meal for all the players. We eventually started at 21:00 with completion expected around 1am. This was a game that saw myself as England hold sway over insubstantial alliances with France and Germany. One in which I balanced the alternate demands of each to throw myself in on the side of one against the other. This balancing act saw me use German help to take over Scandinavia and Northern Russia whilst keeping France small. None of my immediate neighbours ever built a second fleet which helped me no end and, when the knife slid into Germany it was only at a point where I already had it poised to point it at France's back. I finished the game on 11 centres and had only one army on the board at the end. My final turn stab of France saw me take Brest and Holland whilst my lack of armies made it easy for me to persuade Germany to take up exile in Moscow and Warsaw rather than try to recover any of the Fatherland. Elsewhere on the board Turkey had seen off Brian

O'Farrell's Austria and done enough damage to Italy to secure second place. The full results were:

| Country | Player | Centres | Score |
|---------|-----------------|---------|-------|
| England | Graeme Murphy | 11 | 50.00 |
| Turkey | Simon Chandler | 9 | 24.00 |
| France | Joe Loveland | 7 | 15.00 |
| Italy | Owen Richards | 4 | 5.00 |
| Germany | Andrew Jones | 2 | 3.00 |
| Russia | Dave Simpson | 1 | 2.00 |
| Austria | Brian O'Farrell | 1904 | 1.00 |

The late finish to the game, gone 1am, saw several players retire to bed, some disappear to play other games and four or five others raiding the fridge and moving outside to enjoy a warm mid-summers eve with a beer and a host of tales of how the day would have gone so much better if only...



Graeme Murphy (L) presents the winners trophy to David Wigglesworth (R)

Sunday morning continued the pattern of the weekend with clear skies and a lovely warm day. Shame the Dipsters were going to spend most of it inside playing boardgames.

Round five saw David Wigglesworth leading, Jeremy Tullett in second, Graeme Murphy in third and Brian O'Farrell in fourth. There were more players wanting to play the Sunday session than places so, as TD, I stepped aside to play my new solo game 'Codeword Cromwell' whilst Andrew Jones and Simon Chandler, having also played all 4 games so far, were to spend the day thoroughly engrossed with games of '1812: The Invasion of Canada'. This was the sister game of '1775: Rebellion' and the lads from Warwick Uni finished several games whilst an exercise in meta-gaming took place on the Dip board with David Wigglesworth only countenancing a person winning the board if they would not threaten his position current tournament leader. This seemed to impact Jeremy Tullett who, if it looked like he would pass 'The Wiggler' found that David would look to take centres off him. Barring an outright solo win, no-one

else was in a position to win the tourney. This then had the knock on effect that, out of gratitude for Jeremy's support earlier in the weekend, David was very happy for Jeremy to take second place in the tournament, which required Mr Tullett to take second place in the game. (Are you following this ?) With this in mind he made it clear to Russia that he would attack Russia, if Russia attacked England.



Meta gaming is the major difference with tournament play over a house game and I am pleased that some of the newer players (Andrew and Simon for instance) didn't have their gaming experience affected by this, which, whilst I understand, I personally dislike, much preferring to play each game as a separate game without bringing in external factors such as tournament position. (I know, I live in La-La land and this is always going to happen but this doesn't mean I have to like it!)

So, board 5 finished thus:

| Country | Player | Centres | Score |
|---------|--------------------|---------|-------|
| Russia | Brian O'Farrell | 11 | 50.00 |
| England | Jeremy Tullett | 7 | 22.00 |
| Germany | David Wigglesworth | 6 | 14.00 |
| Italy | Dave Simpson | 5 | 6.00 |
| Turkey | Joe Loveland | 3 | 4.00 |
| France | Owen Richards | 2 | 3.00 |
| Austria | Keith Smith | 1903 | 1.00 |

This meant that the final standings in the tournament were:

| Position | Player | Games Played | Score | Other Awards |
|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------|---|
| 1 | David Wigglesworth | 4 | 107 | Best Austria, Best France, Best Germany |
| 2 | Jeremy Tullett | 3 | 85 | Best Turkey |
| 3 | Brian O'Farrell | 3 | 75 ½ | Best Russia |
| 4 | Graeme Murphy | 2 | 51 | Best England, Yorkshire Pudding Award |
| 5 | Simon Chandler | 4 | 41 | (Joint) Best Italy |
| 6 | Owen Richards | 4 | 31 | Mid-summer Madness Award |
| 7 | Dave Simpson | 4 | 24 ½ | (Joint) Best Italy |
| 8= | Keith Smith | 3 | 19 ½ | |
| 8= | Joe Loveland | 3 | 19 ½ | |
| 10 | Andrew Jones | 4 | 9 ½ | |
| 11 | Simon Stansfield | 1 | 1 | Geoffrey Boycott Award |

The presentations were made soon after the tournament closed with 8 of the 11 participants having picked up one or more awards. It interesting also to see that a different country had topped the board in each round with only Italy and Germany missing out on a top spot.



The top three. Jeremy Tullett (L), David Wigglesworth (C), Brian O'Farrell (R)

With the Diplomacy done Jeremy disappeared off to the railway station whilst the rest of the players showered and changed for a trip to the Fair Maid public house 5 minutes walk away where they enjoyed several beers and an excellent meal, arriving back at the Lawns for more late night gaming that included Firefly and D-Day Dice. The sun was coming up when the games of Firefly finished so it was perhaps unsurprising that attendance at breakfast on the Monday morning was less than expected which resulted in more eggs and bacon for the D-Day dice players.

As part of the tournament wrap up I issued each player with a feedback form. This was the first time I had organised an event such as this and I was keen to hear

what their thoughts were, what they think went well and what not so well. I have yet to analyse the returns properly but the headlines were that the majority thought the venue and value for money of the event was good as was the accommodation itself. Players recognised that the change of venue for the games had caused difficulties and that these manifested themselves in the distance between the games rooms and the toilets and the size of the games rooms themselves. These are easily correctable next year.

All the participants said they would recommend YDC to their friends which was very encouraging and almost everyone quoted the friendly and relaxed atmosphere that the games were played in as one of the three things that they liked best about the event.

Planning is already in place for Yorkshire DipCon 2015 with the Lawns Centre and Ferens Hall already booked between the 19th and 22nd of June 2015.

The UK Face to Face Diplomacy Groups website (www.ukf2fdip.org) contains the full results from the weekend, pictures from the event and information on YDC 2015 as well as more details of future Tour of Britain events (Manorcon in July and Midcon in November) and current Tour of Britain placing's. Pay the site a visit and perhaps come and join the UK Face to Face Diplomacy Group on Facebook!

All in all I think YDC was a great success. True, we could have done with a few more players but we did attract more than the numbers who turned up for Manorcon a year before and the feedback from players was so positive that it bodes well for the event next year when I look forward to welcoming you all to a bigger and better Yorkshire DipCon at the Lawns Centre, Cottingham, between the 19th and 22nd of June 2015.

Don Williams – 1957-2014 – The Man and the Diplomat, A Diplomacy Player’s Diplomacy Player

By Jim Burgess

I really hate cancer and I really hate having to write these articles about the loss of another one of the Diplomacy Hobby’s great individuals and personalities. Don was precisely one month older than me, born August 29th, 1957 and passed away May 16th, 2014. Like all such passings, it was way too soon. I come here today to record some of the history of the man and the Diplomacy player. Might any of you do half as much for the Hobby and its culture and climate. Don also probably was my best friend of all of you, and I count many, many of you among my closest friends. This really hurts to write about this, but I really want to put down on paper and record in *Diplomacy World* his story from my perspective. If any of you want to send statements that his wife, Stacey Williams, will be distributing with Don’s ashes please write them on eco-friendly dissolving paper using water soluble ink pens, send them to Stacey at 27505 Artine Drive, Santa Clarita, CA 91350-2193 by the end of July. My wife Charlotte and I will be doing this. Then they will be scattering Don’s ashes off the coast of Moonstone Beach in Cambria, CA. We also sent a donation in his name to (Unitarian Universalists of Santa Clarita Valley Literacy Project, Post Office Box 800028, Santa Clarita, CA 91355 with checks to UU of SCV and “Don Williams-Literacy” in the memo line), which you are welcome to consider as well. I am going to tell this story a bit more personally than you see in most *Diplomacy World* articles. I also wrote about Don in the most recent issue of my *Abyssinian Prince* (I will be complementary, not repetitive with that, so you might want to read both – see link at the end). But I do this in hopes of continuing to help to build the deep relationships that this Hobby has built for me over the years. May each of you have as good friends I have made in the Hobby. I hope those of you who knew Don, and didn’t really know Don, will use this as an impetus to look back into the Hobby’s history and learn more about it. This article easily could have been ten times as long.

Don and I both started playing Diplomacy in our very early teens, around 1970, but it took about ten years for both of us separately (growing up on opposite coasts) to join the wider (at that time) postal Diplomacy Hobby. I started up a bit earlier than Don with each of these, starting to play the game and joining the wider Hobby, but by about 1982, which was a watershed year in the postal Diplomacy Hobby, we both were REALLY, REALLY fully engaged. Don was publishing two szines/subszines by the end of 1982, *Flick of the Wrist* (moved around a bit and I think started in *Europa Express*) and *Fiat Bellum* (which started in Steve Langley’s *Magus*, and later went solo). Don was the one

of the centerpieces of the heavily press-driven Silver Age of the postal Diplomacy hobby leading into the Great Feud. Although I wrote press for EVERYONE, I always loved writing press for Don best. We would go back and forth and back and forth in all sorts of “infield banter”. Of this period, very little is on the web. Doug Kent’s archive (<http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/index.HTM>) has three issues of *Magus*, #58-60 that you can look up to read more detail. Issue 58 has some of Don’s humor at its best as he tried to diffuse the seriousness of the Hobby Great Feud that was going on and worrying so many of us who just wanted to have fun with the Hobby we loved. Don brought the issue to THE TOADY’S COURT of Daf Langley (GMS), Pete Gaughan (PRESS JUDGE) and Bob Olsen (BOB’S OMBUDSMAN SERVICE). It also featured lots of “Flat Evil” in the eleventh part of “Fifty Ways to Leave your Captor”. Flat Evil was one of the great characters of the press wars of that period. In what this felt like for me.... (Steve Langley congratulated Charlotte and me on our marriage in the first page of this *Magus*), Don said, “It was kind of fun to remember what was going on in my life, and in the hobby, since 1982. Not that long ago, really, but I’d never thought of a Dipzine as a sort of miniature time capsule before. If you’re a pubber, or even a subber, I urge you to take an hour or two some time and go back through the pages of your zine, or a favored zine. It may or may not help you remember a few things you’ve forgotten.” For me DEFINITELY it was that it helped me remember a WHOLE bunch of things I had forgotten. This issue also started Don’s call for “DEAR AUNT DIPPY” that finally started in *Magus* #60. Aunt Dippy begins her advice with the classic: “Wake up and smell the coffee, honey. Your lover is not an average man, he’s a Diplomacy player. As such, he is immune to the standard sexual attractors and devices. You must think like a Dipper, too, if you ever hope to get the attention you desperately want. (Your desperation is obvious—only a desperate woman would have anything to do with a Dipper in the first place.)”

Steve Langley in *Magus* also was running a Bourse that was a vehicle for an incredible amount of this infield banter we all engaged in. Let me give you a flavor of it from *Magus* #60. Steve regularly had to cut it since we wrote pages and pages and pages of it. You might note how Doug Kent is running a Bourse in *Eternal Sunshine*, but part of what has Doug in a funk is we “all suck” since we don’t write press like this anymore, anywhere in the Hobby.... I’ll do a bit of translating in ((...)) I am the Boob of course. This is some press from “Old Fiends” and the “Old Fiends Bourse”, Don, of course, was playing our

favorite country, Italy. You can look at more of it, this is a tiny, tiny sample from a tiny sample of szines. Plus we GMs would get all this press handwritten and have to type it all in. Today, I don't think I can even imagine how many hours I spent scrawling and typing all this press, and Don, and Steve Langley, and all the rest of us. You cannot conceive of it unless you were there, I don't think....

BOOB to GMS (*Daf Langley*): When they passed out the sense, what happened to my share? What do you think my chances are?

SOCRATES ((Don's cat-like alter-ego)) to BOURSE: Hey, pals, for those of you buying Italian War Bonds – yeah, it makes me wanna choke too – rest assured that I won't allow Williams to screw up what I've done for him so far.

GM (*Steve Langley*) to SOC: What have you done for him so far? It isn't as though he were in contention for second place or anything.

OLSEN (*Bob Olsen, he have the PudgeCons in Wichita, Kansas*) to WILLIAMS: Just when you thought it was safe to enter the Hobby again... dum-dum-dum-dum, dum-dum-dum-dum, The Return of the Toadi!

ROME to JOY DIFFUSION (*Don is Italy of course, Bob Olsen was Joy Diffusion or JD in the Bourse, Bob Olsen and I loved Joy Division!*): Better late than never. (And another thing, you didn't get burned putting money on me in Le Ronde, did you? History isn't the only thing that repeats itself...)

GM to ROME: How true... there is always the press.

QUEEN OF PRUSSIA (*Linda Courtemanche, also known as Lucky Lindy*) to WICHITA: Don't listen to Redlands (*where Don was living*), I like you just the way you are! You're not a burnout... you're more of a joke-shop birthday candle.

DON JOHNSON WILLIAMS, REDLANDS VICE to LINDY: Chill out. That's not stubble, that's sex appeal. Want a Pepsi?

REDLANDS to GM: Impressed?

GM to REDLANDS: Well, at least you've stopped trying to pass it off as a beard. Now what's this about a burn-out? (*Us GM's always had to mix this up and write links to other press, I don't recall who Kentucky Fried or KF was?*)

KF to REDLANDS: He's not burning out because you don't light up his life.

JD to ITALY: If the joke was aimless and not very funny, not only would the Boob like it, but he'd probably publish it. (Bash, bash)

KF to BOOB: No!

SOCRATES: Blow it out yer ear, pal!

KF to TT: Pass the pasta.

LINDY to GMS: Get well soon! No one can keep these macho males in their place like you can.

SOCRATES to CRUSADER BABBIT: Why don't you go find a holy war? In hoc signo vinces, pal. (*Don loved playing Italy, and going to Italy, and thinking about Italy... and spoke a bit of Latin, or whatever that was....*)

ROME to BOURSE: If you're wondering why I keep butting in over here, it's because your press section is more fun than ours (Also I can call Keeney a wienie here because he doesn't read the Bourse press, right Steve?)

GM to ROME: You mean **JIM KEENEY**? (*Trying to get Jim's attention.... Jim was playing Russia and was leading the game. Bob Slossar was France, John Crow was England, Steve Arnawoodian was Turkey, Marshal Linder was Austria, and Michael Pustilnik was Germany.... The press was better in the Bourse here...*)

I hope this gives you a flavor of the fun that was to be had in all of Don's Dippy publications and his participation in so many others. As I said, I could easily have made this ten times as long. Around this time, or a little earlier, I visited Don in California for the first time, while he was married to his first wife Venessa. As noted, Charlotte and I got married in here, and fairly soon Charlotte and Don started.... Well whatever it was they had together. Don and Charlotte bonded instantly as Don tended to do with all the Dippy wives. But I could tell that Venessa wasn't Don's life partner.

Skipping to the early 1990's after ten years of marriage and two years of being Boardman Number Custodian and *Everything* editor Don pulled away from the Hobby a bit. Again, I'll quote from his own words, this time from *Everything*.

"Through my many years in the Hobby, I have generally tended to keep my personal life out of the pages of the various zines in which I participate. (I haven't always been successful in that respect, but I have tried.) Frankly DIPLOMACY is a part of my life, but my life isn't necessarily a part of DIPLOMACY. In January of this year (*1990*), my wife and I more or less agreed to end a chronically unhappy marriage of ten years. (This is, believe me, a very sanitized version of something which was done with a lot of anguish, pain and emotional turmoil... nor is this to say that all of it is yet over.)

There are many regrets on both sides, and enough guilt to go around. I have told some of you this already in personal and other correspondence. ((As you have guessed, these discussions (as I had met Venessa, and my wife Charlotte had been divorced from her first husband before meeting me) involved me over some many years leading up to this and cemented our deep friendship.)) I'm telling the rest of you now because it has affected how I discharge the publication duties of the BNC. (The game numbers have been going out fairly regularly, though I'm backlogged about three weeks right now.) Most people who have gone through a divorce will tell you that it is extremely traumatic and I'd have to agree. Until recently, my ability to focus long enough to get this done was practically nil. Ditto with my desire to do it. The fact that I'm doing—finally—is a sign of recovery." Don had a second marriage as well, but it was his third marriage, to Stacey Williams, that was the joy of his life. I cannot tell you the joy I felt as Don's two and half decades of difficult relationships blossomed into meeting Stacey. Don always got along best with all the women in the hobby (like Kathy Byrne Caruso, Daf Langley, Linda Courtemanche and others; as well as with Charlotte, I never got why it took him so long to find Stacey). It was the cruel shame that he and Stacey had so few years together. But Don, even through this difficult time, did far more with organizing the BNC records and computerizing some of them, than he is generally ever given credit for.



Don was the 17th Boardman Number Custodian (BNC), officially in the office from 6/89 to 3/91, publishing two issues of *Everything* (also in Doug's szine archive) #81 and #82 and was the second BNC in a row to get divorced during his tenure (after Steve Heinowski). This always has been a bit of an occupational hazard of some of us Dippy Hobbyists. The BNC is the person who assigns Boardman Numbers (often giving blocks to overseas associates to assign), publishes game reports in *Everything*, publishes the list of game starts, labels irregular and local games as such, and appoints his successor. This office fell into disuse soon after Don's

tenure with the growth of the Internet and the explosion of games. 1989 had 134 game starts, about 25% of them being the first of the E-Mail games, run through Eric Klien's *Electronic Protocol*.

Although Don played some E-Mail/electronic games in the succeeding two decades, what he really did most in these last twenty years was become the Diplomacy Player's Diplomacy Player of the FTF hobby of this article's title. According to the World Diplomacy Database (http://www.world-diplomacy-database.com/php/results/player_fiche.php?id_player=3668) Don was in 22 tournaments between PeeriCon in 1986 (which he writes about in the issues of *Magus* noted above) and the NADF Masters tournament run by Chris Martin every other year in January of 2013. He attended five World DipCons, including the one in Canada in 2007 for his only foreign tournament. And he WON BADAss Whipping in 2007 for his only tournament victory. In 2003 in Denver, my team Thirty Pieces of Silver team (with Steve "Judas" Emmert) beat out his Evil Cool Ducks team with Edi Birsan and Steve Cooley (one of my VERY few successes in a Diplomacy Tournament). Though Don played a really mean poker game at that World DipCon, as I recall, that was pretty much the ONLY tournament of the 22 where he finished in the bottom half of the field. Don was a much better Diplomacy player than he gave himself (or we sometimes gave him) credit for. He was smooth and knew when to shut up (I wish I would learn that!!!). In the 2007 BADAss Whipping he came from behind after being smoked by the estimable Adam Sigal in game one, topped his Round Two game by one center over the even MORE estimable Edi Birsan, and then routed his Round Three opponents, including the very good Chris Brand to win the tournament. I played with Don postally and by E-Mail more times than I could count, and was happy to share a number of tournaments with him, including the Chicago World DipCon of 2012 where he finished 19th. In 2009 he came all the way out to Providence for TempleCon, where we had a great time. And then we were at whatever that Fiasco in Maine was in the Summer of 2008.

I hope you had the honor of sharing a Diplomacy board with Don the Duck Dippymaster. I'm sure you had fun and shared some laughs and some intense diploming. I hope you had the opportunity (maybe now looking back) to read some of Don's writings. Also, you can go check out my even more personal take on Don's passing in *The Abyssinian Prince* (<http://devel.diplom.org/DipPouch/Postal/Zines/TAP/TAP348.pdf>).

Let me end with Don's favorite tagline (completely original to him as verified by Google): Wishing you all Semper the Best!

Short-term Diplomacy

By Lewis Pulsipher

There are three parts to a well-played game of Diplomacy, negotiation, grand strategy, and tactics. Strategy is something that functions over a full game, but that means 6 to 10 hours. Tactics is the most short-term of the three parts, with negotiation in between the other two.

But most people don't have the time to play a full game of Diplomacy, even at the sacrifice of grand strategy. What can you do to play a shorter game?

One obvious way is to reduce the victory criterion to much less than 18 supply centers, for example nine or 10 (there are 34 altogether). But this still leaves a great deal of room for how long the game is going to take, and in some cases no one may ever reach nine or 10 as the game ends in a draw. If you only have a specific amount of time available this is unsatisfactory.

Another way to make the game shorter that also turns it into a very different game is to eliminate secret negotiation. All negotiation takes place over the board where anyone can hear it. But the very essence of Diplomacy is secret negotiation, so (at least in my view) you're no longer playing Diplomacy. The extremist version of this, known as "Gunboat Diplomacy," is to have no official negotiation at all. This is really hard to do

in a face-to-face game because any comment that a player makes can be construed as negotiation, even if he or she is just "talking to no one". I've heard of people putting tape over their mouths while they're playing gunboat, but even then you can still gesture vigorously to try to make a point (or a deal). Gunboat removes negotiation from the game and minimizes strategy leaving only tactics, and even then you can't arrange tactical cooperation with other players. So while it's a popular way to play Diplomacy you're not even close to playing real Diplomacy.

Another method is to play to the end of a previously specified game year. That works okay but can still vary a lot depending on how fast the game is played, which depends quite a bit on the players. It gives everyone a definite target year for their "big stab," perhaps allowing for more planning than my method below, but you could easily find the game taking a lot more (or less) time than you expected.

So my method for a short game is to establish a more or less fixed by-the-clock time limit for ending the game while allowing the secret negotiation and cooperation that characterize the game. (This is hardly anything of great originality; points for centers is a common way to score short Diplomacy games.)

Rules for Lew's Short-Term Diplomacy

1. Set a time limit. For a club meeting the time limit would be the ending time for the meeting. Half an hour before that time limit expires, whatever game-year is being played at that time becomes the last game-year of the game. That game-year is played out in full. If players are slow then the game may still go beyond the actual time limit, or it may end somewhat before. For example, if the time limit selected is 10 PM then the game could end as soon as 9:31 PM if you're just about to complete a game-year, but it could also end later than 10 PM if you're just starting a game-year (the last game-year will take longer, most likely, because everyone will want to talk privately with every other player).

2. The player with the most points at the end of the game wins. Each player gets one point per supply center owned at the end of each game year, with centers counting double at the end of the last year. So if a player has five centers at the end of a game-year he or she scores five points. The score is doubled in the last game

year for two reasons. First, it rewards players who have more centers, the idea being that those who are doing well would continue to do well if the game lasted longer. Second, it encourages more fluidity toward the end of the game in a grab for those extra points.

3. There could still be a draw, though it's much less likely than in a full game of Diplomacy.

This is likely to be a niggling and nibbling game as everyone maneuvers to be slightly ahead (or slightly behind) going into the last year. If the game goes from 1900 to 1905, five normal scorings plus a double scoring for 1905, then on average a player's going to have about 34 points. My guess is that 50 points will often be a win.

There are a variety of sometimes-complex ways to play Diplomacy with less than seven players, which could be combined with this Short-Term method.

Growing the Hobby: Part III – Publish or Peerish, The Secret to Fame if not Fortune

By Larry Peery

In this series of articles I've been looking at various ways to "grow the hobby" in an effort to both increase the number of players of Diplomacy and to strengthen the hobby's institutions. In the first part I wrote about the potential for bringing new, younger people into the hobby. In the second part I wrote about the possibilities for bringing back former players and recruiting new blood from the Geritol set.

While I've been thinking and writing about these things; another San Diegan Diplomacy player, Adam Silverman, has been doing them with some very impressive results. Adam set up a web site on meetup.com for San Diego Diplomacy Players in late March and we've already had two, two board events and attracted 35 members. A similar group exists for the PTKSERs in the DC/MD area. Five of the members of the San Diego group banded together and produced a report on our first event in April that you can read in THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH's current issue; and Adam has written up a report on the second meet in June that should be in this issue of DIPLOMACY WORLD. So, Adam has showed with his hard work that it is possible to create a new FTF, local Diplomacy group and, with the help of the internet and sites like meetup.com it can be a lot quicker and easier than it was two generations ago.

But what about the publications that the hobby relies on? At first glance it would appear that the current state of the hobby's publishing compares poorly with the hobby's first Golden Age of the 1960s, and in some ways that is true. Certainly there are far fewer publications today carrying far fewer games and with far less extraneous material, but in some ways things have gotten better. Although fewer in number the quality of our publications (almost entirely online now as "print" publications have gone the way of the dinosaurs). The quality of the publications is also far better than it used to be thanks to the new software available for editing and publishing. And perhaps most importantly the distribution of the end product has increased circulations by a factor of hundreds and done it in a much more timely manner. In the old days deadlines were anywhere from two weeks to a month apart and publications that appeared on a regular schedule were few and far between. Finally, something we seem to take for granted today --- all of this is basically free. In the old days publishing a magazine was a certain way to lose money for a publisher and game and sub fees never covered costs. I know that during my time as publisher of DIPLOMACY WORLD I put in over \$4 thousand into the magazine, or around \$8 thousand in today's dollars. Today the biggest

cost for any publisher or editor is in the demands it makes on his time and even that isn't nearly as bad as it used to be. So, in this nearly perfect world you may be wondering, "What's the problem?" "The problem," as any publisher and editor will tell you, "is getting material to publish and feedback from the readers." Doug Kent has successfully perfected a combination of "stick and whining" to generate material. Chris Babcock uses a more polite "please and thank you" approach. Still for both of them, and others as well I'm sure, it is nerve-racking not knowing until the day of the deadline whether you'll have enough material to put together a publication that will bring 'em back for more --the highest goal of any publisher or editor.

If you're one of the relatively few frequent or at least regular contributors to any of the hobby online publications I'm sure their publishers and editors thank you, as do I. And since you've already perfected your own method of creating and distributing your thoughts you're dismissed. No need for you to keep reading unless you're just curious about , well, Peeriblah ♪ If you're one of the many more people who have never contributed something, anything of a literary nature to a Diplomacy publication all I have to say is shame on you! But you too are dismissed since I know there is nothing I can write that will change your slothful ways! However, for those procrastinators among you who have told yourself at least once that you really ought to write something for DIPLOMACY WORLD, THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH, etc. etc. this is for you, so keep on reading.

Here I am offering some guidelines for writing for the hobby press. Please note that these are "Do what I say, not what I do" suggestions because if you do what I do you'll be writing nothing more than Peeriblah, and God knows (and so do Doug and Chris) that the hobby doesn't need more Peeriblah. No, find your own way of thinking, of speaking and of writing --and go for it! However, I will give you some guidelines and suggestions that are based on my fifty-plus years of experience as a writer. I've tried to keep them at least somewhat relevant to Diplomacy related writing, but as my "dip&Dip" approach shows; Diplomacy has mastered the art of crossover as well as the art of double-crossing.

So, let's begin at the beginning, shall we?

TITLE: The title is the most important part of your piece. I always give an idea a working title until I'm nearly done with it. By then, with any luck, a really good title will have suggested itself; failing that your editor or publisher

might be able to come up with one. Titles should be fairly simple and indicate what the subject of the article is. Wit is good. Humor is better. On the other hand, sometimes a long, complicated title, especially if it is filled with esoteric foreign language phrases, puns, mysterious literary or historical allusions will give your reader the impression (usually mistaken, but worth a try) that they really are reading something of literary merit. But keep in mind; if you were the next Tom Clancy or Dan Brown you wouldn't be writing for a Diplomacy publication anyway.

INTRODUCTION: The Introduction is the second most important part of your piece. Again, it clearly states what the subject of the piece is. Remember, you're not writing a mystery novel like Umberto Eco (And has anybody noticed how much he looks like Edi Birsan?). If you have a thesis state it here, otherwise tell your reader what you're writing about, why and why they should be reading what you've written.

DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION: If you're writing Diplomacy game report, or a WDC or DipCon report, or an obit about a hobby member who recently (or perhaps not so recently) passed away the association or connection between the subject and Diplomacy should be obvious. However, sometimes that connection is not immediately apparent. For instance, elsewhere in this issue you'll see an article I wrote (I hope) on Halford Mackinder. Now, if you're one of the 336 people in the United States who know who he was you'll know what the Diplomacy connection is right away. Well, maybe not, but at least you'll have an idea. However, my Introduction and the Diplomacy Association will, hopefully, draw you into this story about a man who had a huge influence on Allan B. Calhamer and the creation of Diplomacy.

"d"IPLOMACY ASSOCIATION: If you're writing a story about something related to diplomacy (e.g. in the Henry Kissinger style) that at first has no obvious connection to Diplomacy then you need to explain the link. For instance, some time ago I wrote a review of the opening of the new Peninsula Hotel in Paris. What, you might wonder, does that have to Diplomacy? Well, at first read nothing, but if you read the article you'll learn something about the history of the building on the Avenue Kleber that now houses the Peninsula Hotel but which was originally built as a palace for the Queen of Spain and later became the Hotel Majestic (of murder mystery fame), the headquarters for the Gestapo during WWII, then the headquarters for Gen. Eisenhower when he was in Paris, then the conference Center of the French Foreign Ministry (during which time it hosted such diverse groups as the negotiations that ended the Vietnam War, the meeting that ended the Cold War in Europe, and the first meeting of the European Diplomacy Association)! Voila, we have our connection!!

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE: One milestone in this year of historical milestones is the obvious one, 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of WWI. Every Dipper knows that, I think, but how many realize that 2014 also marks the 50th anniversary of the first postal Diplomacy game; and that is the milestone from which we can now officially measure the beginning of the history of the hobby! Anniversaries are important, as any husband who has ever forgotten his, will tell you. Decades, quarter-centuries, half-centuries, and centuries are all milestones and in writing about Diplomacy and diplomacy it is important that we keep these dates and their relationships in mind when writing about hobby events. For instance, had not MANORCON been on a roll in the mid-1980s there would have been no WORLD DIPCON (I) in 1988 but only six years later at WORLD DIPCON IV in 1994 the English hobby was in decline and the French hobby on the rise.

CURRENT RELEVANCE: One of the amazing things about the game Diplomacy to me is its constancy. It really hasn't changed much in the last fifty years. However, the hobby has changed constantly and today it continues to do so. At last year's DipCon in Silver Spring I had never heard of meetup.com. Now I've seen what it can do in promoting the hobby as it did in Silver Spring, Seattle and even in Podunk Sandy Ego. Someone asked me why I haven't written much in the last six months or so about events in the Near and Middle East. I have a simple answer. Things there are changing so fast that little I, or anyone else writes, today will be relevant tomorrow. Few of us know much about the history of this area or how that influences what's going on now and without that knowledge how can we possibly hope to predict or anticipate what will or might happen tomorrow. If you asked the average American today what is the difference between Catholics and Protestants most people would have at least some idea of what that difference is, but if you asked the average American (except maybe in Cleveland, OH) what the difference is between a Sunni and a Shiite Muslim is I wonder what percentage of them could give you a simple explanation? Two percent, three percent? Not more I suspect. And yet with the way things are going in the Near and Middle East that difference may kill more people than all the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants. Time will tell. So, when you're writing make sure it has some current relevance. History is interesting, even Diplomacy history, but it becomes fascinating when we can link it to our own lives and times.

FUTURE IMPEERITANCE: (BLUSH)

SUMMARY: The Summary is the fourth most important part of your piece. In one well written (I hope) paragraph you attempt to repeat (This is the third of the litany parts: 1) Tell them what you're going to tell them, 2) Tell them, 3) Tell them what you told them.) your key points in

memorable or, even better, quotable, form. For instance, all I have to do is write, "Ask not..." and your brain automatically finishes the thought. If not, you're brain dead and you need to find a different hobby.

CONCLUSION: The Conclusion is the third most important part of your piece. This is where you take what you've summarized and make it directly and personally relevant to the reader. Which of these three are you more likely to remember: 1) Twelve pages of whining by Steve Cooley on why he didn't win at WDC this year? 2) Twelve minutes of whining by Edi Birsan on why he didn't win at DipCon last year? 3) or three words, "I screwed up," by Larry Peery on why he didn't win in Silver Spring, Paris, or Seattle?

THE NITTY GRITTY: I'm a big believer in readings and references, even if it's just a list of Google results and a Wikipedia.com report. Think of your piece as a structure with key points, points, counterpoints, and trivia & what ifs. On this structure you will embellish your work with examples drawn from the literature, anecdotes and personal examples. Remember, reading the greatest S&T article ever written will not teach you as much about Diplomacy as sitting down and playing your first game.

ON LENGTHS AND ATTENTION SPANS: Readers, even Diplomacy players or perhaps especially Diplomacy players, like to keep it short except when they don't. Have you ever noticed in FTF play that there are two and only two kinds of Dippers: the ones who barely talk to you and the ones who won't shut up and let you get a word in edge wise? Which one do you prefer as an ally? Exactly. Neither, right? In writing for the Diplomacy reader, keep in mind that different levels of players have different tolerance levels for the amount of information they can process. When I was a journalism student back in the 1960s I was taught that 600 words was the minimum for a short story, 1,200 for a news story, 1,800 for a feature story, and 6,000 for a novelette. Just a few days ago I read that the new AP (Associated Press) guide for journalists said that 600 words was the max for a news story, 1,200 words for a major story, and 1,800 words for a major feature story. And of course now we have the Twitter generation that wants it all in 140 keystrokes or characters. As a writer I have found over the years that my speed in my output has remained consistently the same no matter whether I was using a manual typewriter, an electric typewriter, an electronic typewriter, a simple word processor or a computer keyboard with lots of bells and whistles. Day in and day out the entire process from idea conception to printed or emailed finished product takes about 1 hour per printed page and a printed page holds about 600 words. This article, for instance began with a one page brief outline put together after about an hour of thought. Three hours later I am at four pages and 2,400 words. In other words, right on schedule. (NB: I'm now at 6 pages and 3,600 words two hours later.) That's interesting because I

actually type over 60 wpm, so it should take about 10 minutes to type one page or 40 minutes for four pages instead of the three hours. However, if you cut out the wasted time I spend checking emails, the news, refilling my drink, etc. etc. Well, you get the idea. I mention all this so you can, as a new writer, better guesstimate how long it will take you to write a story. Editors and publishers tend to think in word counts and page counts, but writers tend to think in terms of hours. There's a difference.

WHAT TO WRITE ABOUT? I offer two suggestions: 1) Write what you already know something about, the more the better. Although it sounds bizarre I also suggest that once in a while you write something about something you know very little or nothing about. When you do the first, you are sharing your knowledge with your reader. When you do the second, you're sharing your learning experience as you explore the subject with them; and make sure you do just that as you write your piece. When you have a "flashing light bulb" moment as you write, make sure your reader realizes it. 2) Write about something you feel passionate about, even if your passion is the horrors of boredom. Depth of feelings can hide a multitude of bad writing mistakes and readers will sympathize or at least empathize with you. The best way to figure out what a Diplomacy publication is looking for is to look at back issues (3-5 should be enough) and also look at the table of contents of each issue to see what kinds of stories it has published recently. Certain topics are almost seasonal (e.g. con reports). Others are timely (e.g. an obit). And some (e.g. S&T stuff) are timeless and always in demand. For instance, to take DIPLOMACY WORLD #125 as an example, it contained:

Editorial: Notes from the Editor by Douglas Kent (pg. 2).
Feature: 5: Growing the Hobby: Part II – Catch 'em While Their Golden Oldies by Larry Peery (pg. 4); After Action Reports as Metacognition by Scott Allen (pg. 10); Ask the GM by The GM (pg. 23); Jerry H. Jones – A Retrospective of a Former DW Editor by Jim Burgess (pg. 24); The Balkans in My Life by Larry Peery (pg. 28).
Face to Face: 2: Thoughts on Organizing a Diplomacy Tournament by Graeme Murphy (pg. 6); Clubs and Tournament Roundup by Will J. Abbott (pg. 11).
Ads: (see Convention News).
Feedback: Knives and Daggers – The Diplomacy World Letter Column (pg. 9).
Convention News: 2: Selected Upcoming Conventions (pg. 9), World Dipcon Heads to North Carolina (Again), by David Hood (pg. 77).
Convention Report: A Diplomacy Trifecta by Larry Peery (pg. 12).
Conventions: 8 Reasons Why You Need to Attend Philadelphia Massacre in 2014 by Christian Pedone (pg. 33).
Variants: 2: 1905: Europe by George Oldenburg (pg. 15), My Top Five Worldwide Diplomacy Variants by Jack McHugh (pg. 27).

Strategy and Tactics: Three Ways Diplomacy Has Enriched My Life by Joshua Danker-Dake (pg. 22).
Classic DW (reprint): R2001: A Diplomatic Odyssey by Jerry H. Jones (from Diplomacy World #27) (pg. 25).
Demo Game: Thanks for the Roses – Diplomacy World Demo Game – 1909 through End Game Results (pg. 35).

It's also a good idea to take a look at the staff roster and see who is responsible for what. Note if there are any vacancies on the staff and if it's an area you're interested in you might consider volunteering for the position. If you're a known writer in the hobby don't worry, you'll be welcomed with open arms. If you're a newbie it might be a good idea to submit a couple of samples of your writing, including your first piece on the subject matter. If you see a filled position on the staff roster but it doesn't seem to have any items in the last few issues, you might send a gentle query to the publisher and editor and let him know of your interest in that area and your availability. Don't volunteer to take the job unless he asks. One thing I've learned is that whether you're writing for a big publication or a small one all publishers and editors are looking for the same thing: a good story, well told, that arrives in a timely fashion and doesn't require too much editing. If you can produce that consistently you'll be able to write what you want and get it published. I actually do write on subjects other than Dip&dip, although it may seem that I wouldn't have the time. Several years ago a friend of mine did some serious searching online and came up with a list of over 500 comments, letters to the editor, etc. that I had

posted online. What amazed him was the variety of subjects I covered and the variety of publications I had written them for. Back in the good old days when Hong Kong was still British, I wrote a brief letter to the editor of a Chinese magazine called Health. I knew nothing about it but I was responding to what I'd read online. I got a nice email from one of their editors and that led to an exchange of emails. I mentioned I lived a few miles from the original The Golden Door beauty spa and had known the owner/founder for years (which was true). That led to a request for a feature story from the magazine. I wrote it. They liked it. They published it. And a couple of months later I got two calls: 1) From Shanghai asking me to join their group going to visit The Golden Door, and 2) From The Golden Door wanting to know why they'd gotten a dozen calls from women in China asking for me??? Only then did I learn that Heath magazine had a circulation of 1.6 million and the nice check they'd sent me wasn't likely to bounce. Strange things happen when you become a writer. Finally, as a writer I urge you to be versatile in all these areas. A publisher and editor love different kinds of stories of different lengths on different subjects. Try to avoid becoming too predictable if you can. We all eventually develop our own style, but try to reinvent yourself ever so often just to keep your readers on their toes. Finally, as a reader and writer to be take a few minutes to send an email to the author and publisher of any story that you've read that you like. Both will appreciate it. And, if you read a story you don't like (especially an S&T or Con Report) feel free to take issue with it online. A little controversy is good for the publication, the writer, and you.

On Systèmes de Scorage

By Peter McNamara

The genesis of this article was with the 2012 WDC in Chicago. So allow me to begin by discussing the way that this tournament was structured. There were four qualifying rounds after which the top 7 players fought it out for the title on the top board during the fifth round. The scoring system used was sum of squares and each player's best three out of four games counted for qualification. I ignore the silliness that was a separate system to determine the DipCon title.

There were five solos in the qualifying rounds and each soloist managed to collect enough points from their other games to make the top board. The major victim of the three out of four rule was Doug Moore, who had four consistently good results in the qualifying round and would have overtaken soloist Peter Lokken for a place on the top board had the lowest score not been dropped.

The context of this article is that of a large or largeish tournament, especially those with a major title (eg, WDC, EDC, DipCon) attached. So there will be some number of qualifying rounds before a final round with a top

board. Despite the concept being around for a long time, there are segments of the community who do not understand the need for a top board so let me briefly recap the arguments here, even though it is not the main point of the article. To the players finishing 2nd, 3rd, 4th, you owe it to them the chance to pit their wares in play against the winner. And to the winner, you owe it to them that they can feel they deserved the title by besting the rest of the field, as opposed to being the beneficiary of a favourable draw.

One issue that needs to be discussed is the relative value of a solo compared to various combinations of non-solo results. There are a couple of schools of thought that get bandied about on this. One is that the aim of the game is to solo, and to solo only and so any combination of results including a solo beats any other combination. The other line of thinking is that a tournament is a series of games, and that in order to do well, one should be performing to a high quality across multiple games, not being carried by a single good result.

What we should do is examine the situation in which solos are frequently achieved. On any given board, the player who gets the best score tends to be the one who plays the best game. But the size of this score, and in particular whether it is a solo or not, is more commonly a function of the abilities of the other six players on the board, rather than the winner's individual performance.



This shows that the idea that a single solo result beating a combination of nonsense. As really I think it should be, since a tournament result should be about how well you play diplomacy, which means having to deal with playing different powers on the board, not just relying on drawing country A which you happen to be particularly strong at.

So we should make sure not to weight solo results too heavily.

At one point, the question of tie-breakers should come up. The best tie-breaker rule I have ever seen is that the relative ranking of players tied on points is determined by the quality of the opposition they faced. And how do you determine quality of opposition? Well simply by looking at how well the opposition faced performed on their other boards in the same tournament.

Although it is arguably better to try to arrange the scoring system to minimise the possibility of ties. This would seem to eliminate systems like Cricket, though it is possible to modify Cricket in a very minor manner to bring it into the realm of a tie-avoiding system.

The standard way to minimise the likelihood of ties,

which is a good one, is the following type of scoring system: Pick a nonlinear function f . A player's raw score is f applied to the number of supply centres achieved. The raw scores are then normalised so that every game produces the same number of points. Examples of functions used in practice are $f(x)=x^2$ (squares), $f(x)=x^2+4x+16$ (ManorCon, for draw participants only) and $f(x)=2^{(x/4)}-1$ (WDC 2007). Everyone seems to choose a convex function.

Of course Win beats Draw beats Elimination/Loss. We've mentioned something about the difference between a solo and a draw. Now I want to say something about the difference between a draw and an elimination or loss. One aspect of two of the systems mentioned above (squares and WDC 2007) is that in practice they give essentially the same score to a 1SC power as they do to someone who is eliminated or loses to a solo. Since achieving a place in a draw is unambiguously better than failing to do so, this must be rewarded in the scoring system for the scoring system to be a just one. Doing so also gives people an incentive from the tournament point of view to fight out poor positions. Of course the only honourable thing to do is to fight out all positions with 100% effort but unfortunately in practice this does not happen and needs some extra motivation.

So amongst the scoring systems mentioned, it looks like the ManorCon one is the best. Since the ManorCon system traditionally gives out fewer points to the soloist than to an entire board which ends up in a draw, this is another positive point in favour of said system. So if you're running an event and just want to pick a scoring system off the shelf, I'd recommend this one. If you know what you're doing, I expect it to be improvable.

And we will finally get back to that issue of drop rounds. There is a refrain, oft repeated, that not counting all rounds for score allows the player who can not or does not want to play all rounds a better chance to do well. Technically true, yet not relevant in practice. And for the player who wants to maximise his or her score, the dominant strategy is still to play all rounds. The major effect of not taking the sum of all scores in all rounds is to penalise the consistently good player. This seems to go against the whole idea of having a tournament, where you play a bunch of games and whoever is able to consistently perform well gets on the top board.

So please, all rounds count, make sure there is a top board and use a sensible scoring system like ManorCon.

PS: Detailed descriptions of scoring systems mentioned in this article are at <http://www.world-diplomacy-database.com/php/scoring/scoring.php> (amidst many shockers).

Suspense & Decision

from
PlayByMail.Net



**A
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magazine
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21st
Century!**

College of Cardinals: The Evolution of a Variant

Part 2: Transformation

by Timothy Hayward (timothy.d.hayward@gmail.com)

and Baron Powell (VonPowell@aol.com)



of clever, but somewhat jumbled ideas, became the rules we used during the first playtest.

The process started in earnest in August 2010 when Tim sent a copy of his map and rules to Baron. What ensued was an eighteen-month dialog that delved into all aspects of the variant, often in excruciating detail. As an example, one particular exchange that took place over twenty-nine days and that helped us flesh out the crusading rules ended up being twenty-one pages of single spaced type! The intent throughout this entire exercise was to create a special variant that:

- successfully captured those aspects of this time period that made it so remarkable without straying too far from the basic tenets of classic **Diplomacy**, namely simplicity, balance (i.e., each played position has a reasonable to succeed), and the a complete lack of random events outside of those the players themselves bring to the game (i.e., no dice or cards);
- gave players a feel, if only abstractly, of the tension that existed between Islamic, Orthodox, and Catholic realms; and within Catholic Europe itself, particularly between the Papacy and the ruling Catholic Monarchs; and
- had rules that worked (i.e., no contradictions or loopholes), were unambiguous, and as concise as possible.

Early on in our work, we decided to jettison several of the more daring concepts Tim had included in his initial draft rules and that we mentioned in the first article. These concepts included the “darkened map” that the GM would have to produce each turn for each player so that each player could only see his immediate neighbors; limiting a particular player’s correspondence to only those neighbors the player could see or to the Pope, who would serve as a middle man; spies; and anything having to do with currency, in particular the currency-based victory conditions. Though each of these concepts had potential, they also had shortcomings. We felt the darkened map required far too much effort on the part of the GM; the neighbor-to-neighbor correspondence was too constraining, as well as unenforceable; and both the spies and currency rules were so alien to **Classic’s** familiar rules that we were concerned that they might turn off more potential players than they attracted. We also set aside Tim’s original crusading mechanism because it was primarily currency-based and because we felt it had too many “mechanical” issues. Unlike the other concepts, however, the notion

This article is the second in a series of articles we are writing provide readers with an overview of how **College of Cardinals** evolved from a vague idea to a playable variant. The first article, Genesis, discussed how Tim came up with the variant concept and drafted an initial rule set. This article will examine how we transformed the concept and draft rules into working rules. It will also mention some of the difficulties we encountered trying to make specific rules work like we wanted them to. Future articles will focus on:

- how our efforts to refine the map impacted on the parameters of the variant, and
- the changes to both the map and the rules that came about because of lessons we learned during our first playtest and the feedback we received from the players during and after the playtest.

As the name of this particular article suggests, we will now look at how Tim’s initial draft rules, an assemblage

of crusading was one we never gave up on. It would prove to be our greatest challenge.

After all this trimming, what we were left with was basically a standard map variant that had special rules for electing a Pope. Our intent with these rules was to replicate the issues that were the heart of the Investiture Controversy. To summarize these Papal election rules:

- Every player in charge of a Catholic realm represents both the Monarch who rules that realm and a Cardinal from that realm who is a member of the College of Cardinals, the body responsible for electing a new Pope.

- Each player, in his role as that realm's Cardinal, campaigns to become Pope during every "winter" turn. [While **Classic** has Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter turns; **College of Cardinals** has Early Decade, Mid-Decade, Late Decade, and End Decade turns.]

- A player can vote for his own Cardinal (i.e., himself), for another player's Cardinal, or for a neutral Italian Cardinal. The GM treats an abstention or a "bogus" vote (e.g., for Mickey Mouse) as a vote for the Italian Cardinal. Worth noting is the fact that the GM only publishes the results of the voting. The GM does not publish how each Cardinal voted.

- The Cardinal with the most votes becomes the Pope for the next "game year." In the case of a tie, we initially had the Papacy going to the Cardinal from the realm that controlled the most Catholic SCs. We changed this so that the Catholic Monarchs openly vote for the Pope during each Early Decade and, if necessary, Mid-Decade turn. This puts each voting Monarch in a risky situation, as a Monarch faces excommunication if he backs the wrong candidate (more on excommunication later). Rather than place himself in a vulnerable position, a Monarch can abstain from getting involved in Papal politics.

One of the first things we did in an attempt to replicate the historical reality of the period and increase the need for across-the-board negotiations between players was borrow three rules that Baron and Jeff Kase introduced in their **Ambition & Empire** variant.

- **Armed minors.** Instead of being vacant like they are in **Classic**, each minor realm has a unit. In most cases these units are armies, but a few minors (e.g., Venice) have fleets. The minor realm units force the Major Realms to attack the minors with support if they hope to take control of the minor realm SC. If a Major Realm attack dislodges a minor realm's unit, the GM immediately disbands that unit.

- **Diplomacy Points (DPs).** Each Major Realm gets one DP at the start of each Early Decade and Late Decade turn for each Supply Center (SC) it controls up to a maximum of three DPs. Players use their DPs to try to influence what minor realm units will do, hold or support, by bidding on that minor realm. For each DP a

Major Realm bids, the player submits an order for that minor realm unit. The GM publishes the order with the most DP backing, even if that order is invalid. If two or more orders for a particular minor realm's unit have equal DP support, that unit holds. Worth noting is that the GM does not publish bids. Instead, he only publishes the results of the bidding. Needless to say, this mechanism creates all sorts of opportunities for duplicity and mischief.

- **The Religious Rule.** This rule recreates some of the issues that Major and minor realms with different religious beliefs had when attempting to cooperate with each other. In a nutshell, a minor realm of one religion cannot support an attack by a Major Realm with a different religion into a space occupied at the start of a turn by a unit with the same religion as the minor realm. Though this restriction actually allows considerable flexibility (e.g., a Catholic minor supporting an Islamic minor against an attack by an Orthodox Major), there will be times when the religious affiliation of a minor realm proves highly frustrating to a Major Realm trying to manipulate it. Though a few fans of **Ambition & Empire** have argued that the Religious Rule is out of place in that variant because religion was not a paramount consideration for military cooperation in 1763, no one can deny that religious affiliation was a huge factor in the time period **College of Cardinals** covers.

Baron and Jeff installed armed minors and DPs in **Ambition & Empire** primarily for play balance purposes. The **Ambition & Empire** map provides some Major Powers with excellent access to minors while denying that access to other Major Powers. Baron's and Jeff's belief that armed minors and DPs would help level the playing proved accurate. An added benefit of armed minors and DPs was that they reflected reality far better than **Classic**'s empty minor power SCs do. The simple fact is that regardless of the time period a variant covers, the minor powers of the day had their own agendas. Often these agendas were quite at odds with their more powerful neighbors. This was certainly true in the 12th century. Given that Tim's original **College of Cardinals** map had eighteen minor realms (two Islamic, four Orthodox, one pagan, and eleven Catholic) and that this number would swell to twenty-four minors by the time we finalized the map (four Islamic, six Orthodox, and fourteen Catholic), it becomes obvious how important control of minor realms, both physically and diplomatically, is. The alliance or coalition that best uses its DPs to get the minor realms to help its cause while thwarting the plans of rivals goes a long way towards winning the game.

Earlier we mentioned that all Major Realms get DPs at the start of every Early Decade and Late Decade turn. The Pope also wields diplomatic clout in the form of DPs. The Papacy begins the game with three DPs (its maximum number). The number of DPs available to the Pope each turn depends on events that occur during the

game such as the loss of *Outremer*, a successful *Reconquista*, or the loss of an Italian SC to a non-Catholic Major. If one of the Catholic Cardinals becomes Pope, that player gets to use the Papal DPs in addition to the DPs he receives as Monarch of his realm. If the Pope is neutral (i.e., the Italian Pope) or if there are rival Popes, the Papal DPs are forfeit.

Another rule that we quickly agreed to was Chaos Builds. For those unfamiliar with this rule, Chaos Builds allow a player to build in any SC he controls, not just in "home" SCs. Though a GM often uses Chaos Builds to simply spice up a game of **Classic**, they actually enhance **College of Cardinal's** historical accuracy. In the twelfth century, the ruling elite of a particular realm would grant land to lesser lords who proved themselves to be loyal subordinates. In return for the privileges they received, these lesser lords would swear fealty to their Overlord and provide military service. When a high ranking lord conquered new territory, the local lords had to choose between pledging their loyalty to the new lord or having him confiscate their lands (occasionally after he executed them). One need only examine the Norman conquest of Anglo-Saxon England to see this process at work. Given this dynamic, it is entirely plausible that an area a Roman Catholic lord once ruled could produce Saracen units within a cycle encompassing two decades and vice versa.

We were able to work out all the above rules with comparatively little discussion. Some other topics went through several iterations before we came to agreement.

The Papal States. The special status of the Papal States and its lone SC, Rome, evolved over an extended time period. In Tim's initial draft rules, the Papal States was similar to the other played positions with the exception that the player responsible for the Papal States was subject to changing at the end of each decade. The Papal army, like any other Major Realm's army, could move, participate in attacks (even against other Catholic realms), and conquer SCs. The player in charge of the Papal States could build units in Rome. In addition, Rome enjoyed defensive advantages that other SCs did not have. Tim gave Rome a permanent defensive bonus of +1. This meant a Papal army in Rome was worth two units for defensive purposes. Perhaps more significant, attacking Rome or supporting an attack on Rome resulted in the excommunication of any Catholic Monarch involved in the attack.

The notion of the Papacy as an agent of conquest seemed inappropriate, however. Though the Papacy was not bashful about proclaiming lands as ecclesiastical property when the opportunity arose and it fiercely resisted Monarchical attempts to usurp Church lands for themselves (e.g., the Aragonese Crusade of 1284-1285), the Papacy's primary goal was not the establishment of a great empire. For this reason we

came to the conclusion that treating it like a Major Realm with a rotating "player-in-charge" was the wrong approach. Instead we attempted to create a rule set that reinforced those political objectives that would become the cornerstones of Papal policies, namely to maintain Papal independence and freedom of movement, and to maintain or enhance Papal influence within Catholic Europe.

Over time the Papal States went from being a pseudo Catholic Major with special rules to being a Catholic minor with special rules. In their final form, these special rules included the following:

- Any Catholic Monarch that attacks Rome or supports an attack on Rome, except to liberate it, faces automatic excommunication.
- If the Pope comes from a Catholic Major, that player controls the Papal army. If the Pope is neutral or there are rival Popes, players bid for control of the Papal army like they bid for control of a minor realm unit.
 - Regardless of who controls the Papal army, it can only hold in place or support a Catholic unit.
 - If a Catholic Monarch controls Rome, the Pope excommunicates him. That Monarch must also keep a unit in Rome at the end of each Late Decade turn or the Papal States automatically reasserts its independence. If this happens, the Catholic Monarch loses control of Rome and the GM rebuilds the Papal army during the End Decade turn.
 - If a non-Catholic Major controls Rome, the Pope flees to a new location and the Papacy loses one DP. If a Catholic Monarch liberates Rome, the Pope returns to his home in the Vatican and regains his lost DP.

The Holy Roman Empire. The Investiture Controversy was a political conflict between Pope Gregory VII and the King of the Germans, Henry IV, over who had the authority to appoint (or invest) people into positions of responsibility in the Catholic Church. The Pope prevailed and Henry was only able to maintain his position by completely humbling himself in the Pope's presence. To quote a Wikipedia article [Retrieved June 28, 2014 from Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Roman_Empire], "the political power of the Empire was maintained, but the conflict had demonstrated the limits of any ruler's power, especially in regard to the Church...Both the Pope and the German princes had surfaced as major players in the political system of the Empire."

At the time period **College of Cardinals** was to start, the Holy Roman Empire was a huge entity that technically controlled all of Germany, Bohemia, northern Italy, Corsica, and Sardinia. The variant map was still under development, but we anticipated that Holy Roman Empire territory would include anywhere between six to eight SCs. Given this, our challenge was to adequately portray the Empire's potential power without making it

such a colossus that it would dominate play. Our solution involved a two-pronged approach. One prong focused on how the variant map would reflect the Empire's possessions in northern Italy. We will discuss this dynamic further in our next article. The other prong focused on the Holy Roman Emperor's ability to control his units.

Our first idea was to allow the Holy Roman Emperor to order only half of his units (rounded up). Unless he told them, the other players would not know which units the Emperor would order and which would simply hold in place. The other players could bid on the Holy Roman Empire's units as though they were minor realm units. If they bid on a unit the Emperor ordered, the DPs invested in that unit would be lost. If they bid on a unit the Emperor did not order, they could get that unit to support another unit even if that support worked to the Empire's detriment. We figured this mechanism would reflect the political independence of the German princes, who often acted in their own interests instead of those of the Emperor. It would also make up for the fact that the Holy Roman Empire would probably start the game with twice as many SCs and units as any other Major Realm.

We were quite pleased with ourselves until someone Baron worked with (and who was not a **Diplomacy** player) pointed out an obvious flaw. Though our idea might work well at the beginning of the game when the Holy Roman Empire was double the size of any other Major Realm, it would increasingly work to the Holy Roman Empire's disadvantage as other Major Realms grew larger. If, for example, both the Kingdom of France and the Holy Roman Empire had ten SCs and ten units, the Frankish King would be able to synchronize all ten of his units while the Holy Roman Emperor could only count on five of his units. Worse, the five units he did not order might actively hinder the Holy Roman Emperor's efforts. After this reality sunk in, we went back to the drawing board.

Fortunately, a solution was readily available. By this time in the variant's development, we had decided the game would start with the Early 1170s turn. This time period coincided with a potentially dangerous situation that the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I, had to overcome. Frederick's cousin, Henry the Lion ruled several large and powerful realms within the Empire, to include Bavaria and Saxony. Initially supportive of Frederick's campaigns, Henry refused Frederick's 1174 call for assistance in Lombardy because Henry had his own ambitions to pursue in the east. This incident served to highlight the fact that Germany's high ranking nobility frequently went their own way instead of supporting the wishes of the Emperor.

We recreated this dynamic and used it to eliminate the Holy Roman Empire's early size advantage at game start (fives SCs/armies versus three or two SC/armies

for the Empire's competitors). The resulting rule, the Henry the Lion Rule, worked as follows:

- During the Early 1170s turn, the Holy Roman Emperor provides the GM with orders for only three of the five Holy Roman Empire armies. When the GM adjudicates the Early Decade 1170s results, he treats the three ordered Holy Roman Empire armies normally. The GM also announces that the unordered Holy Roman Empire armies have rebelled.
- The Holy Roman Empire no longer controls these two armies or the SCs they occupy. Instead, they become Catholic minors and all rules that apply to minor realms apply to them.
- The rule prohibiting self-dislodgement prevents the Holy Roman Empire from attacking either of the two unordered units during the Early 1170s turn.
- For victory purposes, the Holy Roman Empire controls only three SCs at game-start, not five.

Excommunication. Excommunication represented the most powerful weapon the Catholic Church had in its arsenal against those who opposed its policies. Though the Church's official position is that excommunication is not a punishment as much as it is a corrective action intended to bring the excommunicated person back to a path of righteousness [Boudinhon, A. (1909), *Excommunication*. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved June 28, 2014 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05678a.htm>], in the day and age **College of Cardinals** covers, excommunication was a fearsome penalty indeed. It meant that mankind, the Catholic Church, and God all shunned the disgraced person. The excommunicated individual lost any rights and privileges he might have enjoyed as a member in good standing within the Catholic community. In most measureable ways, excommunication was tantamount to an eternal death sentence.

We have already mentioned that a Catholic Monarch who openly supported the losing Papal candidate during Monarchical voting faced automatic excommunication. We also discussed how participating in an attack on Rome or gaining control of the Holy City served as grounds for excommunication. To this list of crimes, we added one other: the Pope would excommunicate a Catholic Monarch who failed to support a crusade by contributing at least one DP towards raising a crusader army.

When we first started tinkering with our excommunication rules, our plan was to give this power to the Pope. Doing so would create a situation we did not care for, however. It seemed to us that all Popes would condemn the types of crimes we were considering as being worthy of excommunication. Given this, it made no sense to us that having a neutral Italian Pope

in office would be the equivalent of Catholic Monarchs getting a free pass to commit crimes or that a player-controlled Papacy would be willing to overlook an egregious act against the Church regardless of who committed it.

We decided that the solution was to make the imposition of excommunication non-discretionary. Some research provided justification for this course of action. The Catholic Church did not limit the power to excommunicate to only the Pope. To quote [The Catholic Encyclopedia](#) once more, "Excommunication is an act of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the rules of which it follows. Hence the general principle: whoever has jurisdiction in the *forum externum*, properly so called, can excommunicate, but only his own subjects" [Retrieved June 29, 2014 from New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05678a.htm>]. In games terms this meant that players should presume that any Church official with jurisdiction over an offending Monarch would excommunicate that Monarch.

We wanted the prospect of excommunication to be something Catholic Monarchs thought long and hard about before they did something the Church considered a crime. Towards this end, we imposed the following penalties:

- An excommunicated Monarch may not allocate DPs to a Catholic minor or a Crusader army.
- An excommunicated Monarch loses all influence over the Cardinal from his realm. If a Monarch is already excommunicated at the start of an End Decade turn, the Cardinal from that Catholic Major automatically votes for the neutral Italian Pope.
- The Pope may declare a crusade against the excommunicated Monarch.

Crusades. No other aspect of the variant came close to challenging us as much as creating a viable crusading mechanism did. At one point we despaired of coming up with something workable. We nearly went forward without crusades being a part of the game, but in the end we decided such a shortcoming was completely unpalatable. The crusades are arguably the most memorable series of events that took place during the time period our variant covered. We simply **HAD TO** figure out a way to replicate them.

We wanted our crusading rules to be:

- Innovative. We were breaking new ground. We needed to think out of the box to come up with a crusading mechanism that accomplished what we wanted without the result seeming out of place or at odds with basic **Diplomacy** concepts.
- Elegant in their design. **Diplomacy** is a simple game. We needed rules that players could grasp quickly

and GMs could implement easily. As much as possible, we needed to avoid complexity.

- Faithful in their intent. Crusading was often counter-productive to the interests of the crusaders. We needed to provide players with subtle incentives that would induce (or compel) them to crusade even as they attempted to pursue their goals of winning the game.
- Evenhanded in their application. If attacking crusaders execute their campaign brilliantly against a poorly organized defense, we felt they should be able to entertain reasonable expectations of positive results. Likewise, we believed a stout defense taking on an ill-conceived crusade should have reasonable expectations of limiting or even preventing damage. Going a step further, we understood that a "successful" crusade should not have results that are completely inconsequential (i.e., the "why bother" scenario) or that absolutely annihilate the defenders (i.e., the "nuclear bomb" scenario).

Piece of cake!

As we analyzed the historic crusades, we were able to identify some commonalities:

- We could measure the time between the occurrence of a "trigger" event and the Catholic response in years. Our decision to go with turns that covered multiple years worked in our favor in this regard.
- Whether traveling by land or by sea, the crusaders were able to move virtually unimpeded to their designated area of operation. This historical precedent would enable us to be creative when attempting to replicate crusader movement.
- The crusaders rarely achieved unity of command or unity of effort. We thought we could easily replicate the squabbling, intrigues, and double dealings that were prevalent in all the crusades using the rule set we already had in place.
- Crusades were expensive, often ruinously so. We felt it reasonable that Catholic Monarchs would have to make a sacrifice of some sort to participate in a crusade.

As we mentioned earlier, we exchanged voluminous correspondence over a period of months to finally arrive at a rule set that we agreed would (mostly) accomplish our four objectives. We say "mostly" because one of our objectives, maintaining an elegant simplicity, definitely took a hit.

So what did the final crusading rule set look like?

To begin with, we divided each crusade into phases as follows:

- The Declaration Phase during which the Pope declares a crusade.
- The Recruitment Phase during which the Pope and Catholic Monarchs raise Crusader armies.

- The Deployment Phase during which the Crusader armies deploy to the objective.
 - The Movement/Attack Phase during which the Pope and Catholic Monarchs determine what the Crusader armies will do.
 - The Conclusion Phase during which newly conquered SCs becomes Catholic minors.
- A thumbnail sketch of each phase follows.

The Declaration Phase occurs during the Mid-Decade or End Decade turn immediately after a trigger event takes place in the previous Early Decade or Late Decade turn. Trigger events included a unit belonging to a non-Catholic Realm moving into a Catholic-controlled SC or a Catholic Monarch being excommunicated when an Early Decade or Late Decade turn ends. Only a Pope from a played Catholic Realm can declare a crusade. A neutral Pope or rival Popes cannot declare a crusade. The Pope must specify the SC that is the crusade's objective. That SC must belong to the offending non-Catholic Realm or the excommunicated Monarch. Note that only one crusade may be on-going at any particular time.

The Recruitment Phase occurs during the subsequent Early Decade or Late Decade turn after the Pope declared a crusade. Each played Catholic Realm needs to contribute at least one DP to the crusade or face excommunication. The Pope must also contribute at least one DP to the crusade. For each full increment of 5 DPs, the GM builds one Crusader army in Rome during the ensuing Mid-Decade or End-Decade turn. Note that Rome can accommodate all newly built Crusader armies and the Papal army for that one game-turn. If the Recruitment Phase ends without Catholic Europe raising at least one Crusader army, the crusade concludes.

The Deployment Phase occurs during the next Early Decade or Late Decade turn. If one of the players is the Pope, that player writes the deployment order for each Crusader army. If the Pope is neutral or there are rival Popes, the Catholic Monarchs who contributed DPs to the crusade during the Recruitment Phase may bid on the Crusader armies to gain control of their deployment. A crusader deployment order resembles a convoy order in that the Pope or Catholic Monarch lists the starting space, each space along the deployment route (called the Line of Supply), and the destination space. The following provisions apply.

- The destination space must be the objective SC space or an adjacent land space.
- If more than one Crusader army is involved, they must each deploy to different destination spaces. In addition, each Crusader army must use a different Line of Supply. There can be no overlapping spaces in the respective Lines of Supply.

- Fleets are not necessary for a Crusader army to deploy through sea spaces.
- A Crusader army can pass through friendly spaces and friendly units along the Line of Supply. If the target of the crusade is an Islamic Realm, all Christian spaces and units are friendly. If the target of the crusade is an Orthodox Realm, all Catholic spaces and units are friendly. If the target of a crusade is an excommunicated Catholic Monarch, all Catholic spaces and units are friendly except those belonging to the excommunicated Catholic Monarch.

- If a space along the Line of Supply is vacant at the start of the deployment turn and a unit, friendly or hostile, moves to that space during the deployment turn, no conflict occurs. Both the Crusader army and the other unit move normally.

- If a Crusader army's destination space is vacant at the start of the deployment turn and a unit, friendly or hostile, moves to the destination space, a conflict occurs. The better supported unit moves successfully and the other unit fails to move. Similarly, if a unit, friendly or hostile, occupies the destination space the Crusader army is deploying to, the deployment fails if the unit does not vacate the destination space or if the Crusader army does not receive sufficient support from adjacent units to force the unit from the destination space.

- If no Crusader army successfully deploys or a Crusader army successfully deploys to the objective SC, the crusade concludes.



The Movement/Attack Phase occurs during the next Early Decade or Late Decade turn after the turn in which the Deployment Phase took place. Catholic Monarchs who contributed to the crusade and the Pope bid for control of each Crusader army like they would a minor realm unit. The difference is that a Crusader army can move in addition to holding or supporting. In effect, a Crusader army can do anything a Major Realm army can do except support units that are hostile. There is no requirement for a Crusader army to attempt to capture the objective SC the Pope originally targeted. If a Major Realm attack dislodges a Crusader army, the GM immediately disbands that Crusader army. If a Crusader army fails to end the Movement/Attack Phase on a SC, the GM disbands the Crusader army during the subsequent Mid-Decade or End Decade turn. If no Crusader armies remain in play after the Mid-Decade or End Decade turn, the crusade concludes.

The Conclusion Phase occurs during the subsequent Mid-Decade or End Decade turn after a Crusader army ends the Deployment Phase in the objective SC or after a Crusader army ends the Movement/Attack Phase in any SC. The GM replaces the Crusader army with a minor realm army. The resulting Crusader state is a

Catholic minor. The Pope and Monarchs may influence what that minor realm's army does by using DPs. For as long as the new Catholic minor remains independent, the Catholic Monarchs who contributed DPs to raise the Crusader army may consider the Catholic minor as "controlled" for victory purposes only.

We felt the above rules reflected the historical realities of crusading reasonably well. They demonstrated that conducting a crusade took years from its inception to its conclusion. The Catholic Realms had to sacrifice to participate, but they had incentives for doing so, both positive and punitive. The Crusader army deployment and movement rules allowed for flexibility and unpredictable results, but by no means did they guarantee success. Indeed the target of a crusade had plenty of time to prepare for the coming onslaught. The one thing the crusade rules were not, though, was simple. We heard about this at length during the first playtest. That, however, is the subject of a future article.

In Part 3 of this series of articles on the evolution of **College of Cardinals**, we will discuss the development of the map and how our efforts to refine the map impacted on the variant itself.

Ask the GM

By The GM

Dear GM,

I was playing face to face back in 1996. I found myself in the unhappy position of trying to maintain my F Portugal against an attack from the Mid Atlantic and Spain. Luckily I had a fleet in the **North Atlantic**.

I had a hunch that my attacker would anticipate me trying to cut support, and thus order Spain supports MAO to Portugal. So I handily ordered **NAO** support Portugal to MAO. When the orders were read out, I was pleased to find out that I had guessed right, and that my attacker did indeed order MAO to Portugal with one support. Neither of our supports were cut.

No one was particularly familiar with the rules. It turned out that I was the only one at the table who felt that both MAO to Portugal and Portugal to MAO should bounce, each with one support. The ultimate judgment was that MAO to Portugal succeeded, my fleet being dislodged and disbanded. The reasoning was something along the lines of how, if Spain and Mid Atlantic are the only two spaces touching Portugal, then occupying both must somehow guarantee that Portugal can be taken.

So my question is, how do I get back at these blockheads 18 years later? I have given up on trying to

let go of my resentment, so don't even bother suggesting that. I want revenge.

Sincerely,
-Skippy

Dear Skippy,

You're raging sense of bitterness and inadequacy, combined with your need for petty revenge against perceived slights and intolerance for idiotic players makes you a man after my own heart. But don't get the wrong idea—we won't be holding hands or taking showers together—it's more like bromance than a romance so keep your hands to yourself and away from my dots.

Remember the Kennedy constant—don't get mad, get even. So the first thing you need to do is track down each of these losers and make sure you pack a game with your friends and supporters and then proceed to let them play, grow a little and then snuff them.

Finally wrongs don't make a right but revenge is a dish best served cold.

*Your Pal,
The GM*



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Friday, July 25

Welcome Party: 7 p.m., Location T.B.D.

Saturday, July 26

Round 1 (The Team Round)

Registration: 9 to 9:30 a.m.

Board Call: 9:45 a.m.

Round 2

Registration: 5:15 to 5:45 p.m.

Board Call: 6 p.m.

Sunday, July 27

Round 3

Registration: 9 to 9:30 a.m.

Board Call: 9:45 a.m.

Tournament ends at a predetermined time between 3 and 5 p.m. with brief awards ceremony following conclusion.

Questions? Contact us at wcwsneak@gmail.com or visit our website at windycityweasels.org/wm8 or our Meetup group at www.meetup.com/wcwdiplomacy/.



How I Lucked Into the Top Five Finish and Gained New Perspective on Helping New Players

By Edwin Turnage

I was fortunate enough this year to attend the WDC tournament in Chapel Hill. I tied for fourth place on the strength of two three-way draws (Russia and Italy)!



Edwin Turnage with the MC of WDC

I am pretty much a regular at DixieCon. I've made at least ten trips to Chapel Hill over the years. How did a fourth-place WDC finish happen?

Luck.

Circumstances just seemed to fall my way time and again. I was agile enough to take advantage, but it was still pure luck.

In both my scoring 3-way draw games, I was assigned countries on boards with a new a player in close proximity.

In the past, I may have thought of a nearby new player as meat or a source of dots. This year, however, I took a Chris Martinesque, newbie-whisperer philosophy. Because both new players struggled with the mechanics of writing orders, I helped. I was writing draft orders for

both newbies on most turns. They were appreciative and thankful. But that was unnecessary. They didn't realize how satisfying it is for a Dip player to write orders for two countries and watch them carried out consistently and effectively!



In the odd-bits department, on one of my games, I saw a convoy of an English army from Denmark to North Africa. Manus Hand and Doctor Diplome won the DixieCon Brick for that one. Incidentally, Manus Hand writes the most entertaining orders.

The society at the Con was awesome. It seemed as if the main goal of everyone there was just to have as much fun as possible. I enjoyed meeting so many international players as well as the Hobby legends and leaders, many of whom were in my games.

PEERICON 2014:

COME CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF DIP WITH ME AND A FEW OF MY FRIENDS...

The girls from Hooters, the monks from Mission San Luis Rey, and the jarheads from USMC Camp Pendleton all promise you more dots than you can handle!

By Larry Peery

As anyone who knows me will tell you, two of my passions in life are Diplomacy and Food, and not necessarily in that order. One lesson that I've learned from both is that good things cannot be hurried. From that perspective it makes perfect sense that the most recent PEERICON was held a quarter of a century ago, give or take a few years. But when Diplomacy has been a part of your life for nearly a half-century, a quarter of a century doesn't really seem that long.

HISTORY: Rod Walker and I hosted my first DipCon (IV) event in 1971 in San Diego. In those early years DipCon just finding its way after several years of missed events, no Diplomacy tournament, etc. That first San Diego event was held in a WWII era Quonset hut on what would later become the UCSD Library site. Most of those attending slept on the floor of my small one bedroom apartment. Walt Buchanan, as the oldest player present got to sleep in the only available bed. There was no formal tournament, just a lot of casual Diplomacy playing and a keen desire to move the event upscale. That happened the following year in Chicago and DipCon has never looked back.

In 1982 I had moved into a larger two bedroom apartment and my revitalized interest in all things Dip led to the first PEERICON; which followed the tradition of the early years of having small, home-based events for local friends and the occasional out of town Dipper. Again, the enthusiasm of those early players led to bigger and better things.

By 1984 we were ready to piggy-back PEERICON on the Summer Olympics being held in Los Angeles. Mike Maston and I drove up to Los Angeles to watch the Gold Medal game between France and Brasil --- 106,000 people saw the French win the gold, much to the sorrow of the 85% of the crowd that was cheering for Brasil! Later we returned to Dodger Stadium and watched the USA lose the baseball Gold Medal to Japan in a double-header that lasted 22 innings. But before that we set up a Diplomacy game in the stadium parking lot and played some Dip, getting quite a bit of attention from fans pouring into the stadium. FYI, in just two years the original 14 player, two board PEERICON had grown to 54 players on seven simultaneous boards, and out of the apartment into the local community recreation center. Keep that in mind, Adam ☺

In 1989, after the first successful WORLD DIPCON in Birmingham, England and several years as publisher of

the hobby's flagship publication DIPLOMACY WORLD, I was ready for a new challenge and hosting my second DIPCON/PEERICON (XXII) proved to be that. Still thinking of the 1984 Olympics I rattled the hobby's establishment by proclaiming the DIPCON Champion to be the winner of a variety of Dip related events, not just the individual Diplomacy Championship. Hohn Cho was proclaimed DIPCON CHAMPION and Edi Birsan proclaimed himself "North American Champion" based on his tournament score. Interestingly, Hohn Cho came back in 1993 and once again took the DIPCON championship; while Edi has yet to win another championship. Still, we had a good turnout of over a hundred and many of those attending were now at the age when they had families and some of them brought them along to take advantage of San Diego's many attractions and the resort's three pools. Ironically, after the success of the 1989 DIPCON/PEERICON I cannot recall hosting another PEERICON. Perhaps it continued or perhaps I just felt that there was no way to top the 1989 event.

In 2000 at the Hunt Valley, MD DIPCON I proposed holding a DIPCON event on board a cruise ship instead of in just another chain hotel that was like the one we'd used the year before. It took a while for the idea to catch hold but the wives and families quickly got behind it, and in 2004 by a one-half vote margin the Portland DIPCON accepted my formal proposal to host the 2005 DIPCON aboard a cruise ship on a weeklong cruise in the Caribbean. By then awards and prizes had become a big part of DIPCON tradition and the winners' usually took home a trophy, plaque, etc. Again, I decided to do something different and much to his surprise Rick Desper, who came in last in the Portland tournament, won the booby prize, a free cruise the following year. Even now, ten years later when I go to a Diplomacy event I am always asked, "When are you going to do another Dip cruise?" Ironically, although the cruise DIPCON (XXXVIII) was my idea I didn't make the boat because of a horrible car accident just a week or so before sailing. The accident, to put it bluntly, took the wind out of my sails for nearly a decade, and it was only after the 2013 DIPCON in Silver Spring, the 2013 WORLD DIPCON in Paris, and the 2014 DIPCON in Seattle that I realized how much I missed hosting DipCon events. I also realized that my years of hosting big events were behind me. But perhaps there was one last con left in the old fart?

So, why another PEERICON and why such a rush to

hold it now? Because I want to, not because I need to, and because I still can.

With that bit of background for those of you who haven't been around long enough to experience a PEERICON or DIPCON hosted by me, I'd like to invite you to:

WHAT: PEERICON 2014, SAN DIEGO DIPLOMACY PLAYERS (3RD MEET), BASTILLE DAY 2014

WHO: Host, Larry Peery; Tournament Director, Adam Silverman; Members of the San Diego Diplomacy Players, Alumni of past PEERICONS and DIPCONS, and others interested in the game of Diplomacy. Because of the limited time between now and the event dates I don't expect a lot of participants from out of the area. However, they are more than welcome; as are local volunteers who are willing to help with transportation, housing or generally hosting visitors and guests. Also, if anybody has any folding chairs we can borrow for the weekend I'd appreciate it.

WHEN: As the title suggests this three day event is really three consecutive events. Naturally, I hope you'll want to participate in all three, but if that's impossible feel free to attend just one or two. In your response please give me an idea of which events you're interested in:

PEERICON 2014 (12 July, Saturday, 1000 ?): Specifically intended for beginners and newbies, the focus on Saturday will be on teaching, demonstrating, and practicing the basics of the game; not on a competitive game. If you have a copy of the game, please bring it. If not, please find a copy of the rules of the game online, print it, and bring it. Feel free to read it before we begin and write down any questions you have about the rules.

SAN DIEGO DIPLOMACY PLAYERS (3RD MEET) (13 July, Sunday, 1000 ?): If you haven't signed up please check the San Diego Diplomacy Players site on meetup.com. That will tell you what you need to know and provide the latest information and details on the event. There will be one game played on Sunday, and I'm hoping it will produce our first real winner! I hope for at least two boards and will divide players by their ability to play to the conclusion of the game, so if you have to leave early please tell us. Since there will be only one game played the best player overall wins. There will be

prizes for the winners, but no cruise tickets for the loser (Sorry.) My place can handle two boards with no problem and three in a pinch. If I see the number of players exceeding that I'll make other arrangements. Best advice, register early to make sure you have a spot. Snacks and drinks will be available, but feel free to bring something if you like. I plan to order pizza on Sunday as that seems to work. There will be a designated area outside for smoking if you must. On Sunday the first two boards will be played on my patio.

BASTILLE DAY (14 July, Monday, 1000 - ?) Bastille Day is one of my two personal holidays each year (Beethoven's Birthday is the other.) and as my neighbors have learned I tend to go a bit over-board with the flags, music, and cannons, depending on what the gunnery range at Camp Pendleton has planned for the day. For those who are making this a holiday break I'll be glad to make suggestions on things to do locally. Oceanside in the summertime is what most Americans dream about in the wintertime.

WHERE: 3275 Navigator Circle, Oceanside, CA 92056 (Google it for a map and directions). This is just off the Highway 78 and College Ave. off ramp. You can access the 78 from I-15 or I 5. Allow a half hour from central San Diego, twenty minutes from the RB to DM corridor. I live on a cul de sac so parking is limited. I encourage carpooling and ride sharing, and if you want to do that be sure to post it on meetup. For non-drivers from out of the area you have two options: 1) Rail: AMTRAK , the Coaster, and the light rail system all stop at Oceanside and the light rail goes from the station to about 2 miles from here; 2) Air: Carlsbad Airport (United Airlines to LAX only) is about 8 miles from here, and San Diego's Airport is about 35 miles away. If you need housing there are lots of options but remember this is peak season here, so don't wait to make a reservation or ask for advice. There's a major shopping area just down the road and, sigh, no less than 3 Wal-Marts within a couple of miles. If you want to play tourist let me know and I'll be glad to make suggestions.

WHY: Why not?

If you have questions please check out the web site at <http://www.meetup.com/San-Diego-Diplomacy-Players/> or email me at peery@ix.netcom.com



Are you tired of gaming conventions where any gathering of four players masquerades as a tournament? Sick of standing in lines to buy event tickets for a convention that you've already paid for? Do you go to a gaming convention to actually play games? If so, then its way past time you tried the better alternative. WBC is unique and unlike any game convention you've ever experienced. The World Boardgaming Championships has always offered the best tournament boardgaming experience to be had on the planet. But it's now so much more! This conference concentrates solely on boardgames and you'll be hard pressed to find more like-minded players anywhere!

- Wargames are alive and well at WBC.
- Euros? The largest Euro tournaments invariably occur at WBC. 23 events drew triple-digit participation last year.
- Rail Games - nobody lays more track than WBC.
- Sports? - Only WBC has them
- Open Gaming - It is said that WBC's tournament structure is the best organized Open Gaming on Earth. But if that's not for you we still have conventional Open Gaming opportunities in abundance. Heck, we even have Scheduled Open Gaming opportunities with reserved tables and signage for players wanted.
- Tradition - Only WBC treasures and archives its past for all the world to see.

The Tuesday Auction and Auction Store offers one of the best treasure troves on the planet for both rare out-of-print jewels and bargains alike. The 13,000 sq ft tiered dinner theatre of the Lancaster Showroom is dedicated exclusively to Open Gaming from Monday through Sunday - with an expanded WBC Game Library as the focal point of the convention.

You pay only one, all-inclusive admission. There are no separate event tickets to buy, regardless of whether or not you attend the auction or seminars or how many tournaments or games you play, demos you attend, or Vendors you patronize. If competition floats your boat, or learning new games at any of the 150+ game demonstrations, the best still congregate annually at WBC where tournament play is our raison d'être. 15 Pre-Cons featuring 24 classics start the preceding weekend to make the trip worthwhile for our many far-flung visitors ... nine continuous days of gaming. Valhalla for gamers ... and only in Lancaster, PA. WBC remains a unique experience which can only be had once a year ... isn't it time you discovered WBC? Check out the program and make your reservation today.

Even if you're only stopping by for a day, be sure to pre-register to save \$20 on the walk-in rate at the door. Paypal payments (<http://www.paypal.com>) should be sent to paypal@boardgamers.org, listing complete name, address, and items purchased in the message section. Hurry! Pre-registration ends June 30th. Need a last minute roommate or ride? Check out the pre-reg list at <http://www.boardgamers.org/wbc/prereg.htm>. Explore our website for more details on the best week in gaming.

Donald Greenwood CD, cd@boardgamers.org, www.boardgamers.org



Youngstown IV – Diplomacy World Demo Game – 2013Cxm03 – “Reasonland”

The Players:

Austria: Andrew Leavey
China: Tim Haffey
England: Graham Wilson
France: Larry Peery
Germany: Andy Bate
India: Heath Gardner
Italy: Brad Wilson
Japan: Walt Buchanan
Russia: Nathan Deily
Turkey: Ernest Hakey III

GM: Douglas Kent

The Commentators:

Jim Burgess
Rick Desper
Jack McHugh

Player Bios:

Austria (Andrew Leavey): My history with Diplomacy has been relatively short and far too infrequent for my liking. I played Risk in high school with my friends, and on a random day one of them suggested trying Diplomacy. After that we (predictably) stopped playing Risk, and we held semi-regular Diplomacy games. During college I played a couple email games, and in 2011 was able to attend HuskyCon where I played, by one point, the second best Germany. This was a proud moment, as up to that point I'd been an absolute rookie, only playing within my circle of friends. I'm excited to be in this game, though my record with Austria is usually a quick death :/

Otherwise, I am a typical gamer, be they physical or digital. I enjoy cooperative games, like Pandemic or Forbidden Island, as well as grand strategy games such as Crusader Kings 2. I have been big on DOTA 2 recently, and often play that with my friends. I immensely enjoy strategy games, but will play nearly anything. As simple as it is, TinyDeathStar has sucked up a lot of time...and my phone's battery life....

I currently live in State College, PA, and work two part time jobs: one at the University and one as a Geek Squad Agent at the local Best Buy. My interesting fact is that our family has 5 dogs: 4 Pembroke Corgis and a Pug. One was a rescue, two were acquired from owners who no longer wanted the dog, and the last two are sisters that were too cute not to adopt. I also enjoy coffee.

Good luck to all the players, and to all the readers: Enjoy the show.

Auf Weidersehen, Archduke Andrew of Austria

China (Tim Haffey): Born: March 15, 1941, Died: Pending

I was born in Portland , Oregon. Lived in and around Portland until 1949 when we moved to Newberg, Oregon. A small town in the Willamette Valley where my mother was born and I was related to half the town. Old pioneer stock. I graduated from High School in 59 and joined the Navy. I went to boot camp in San Diego, CA and then went to Class A radar School in Norfolk, Virginia. After Radar school they assigned me to the USS Midway, CVA 41. My dad was also on the Midway and we served three years together on her making three cruises to westpac. He was a 1st class Electricians Mate and I was a Seaman Radar Operator striker. I did make 3rd class before I got out.

While I was in a ECM course in San Diego, I met my wife to be and we were married in Nov of 1962 when she was 19. We set up housekeeping in Oakland, CA. where we had two kids, Tim, Jr. and Deanna my daughter. Tim is a supervisor of Security for the San Francisco Giants, also the senior security training officer Oakland A's and a Asst Supervisor for the Golden State Warriors and Oakland Raiders. Deanna, my super smart daughter, is a VP and Senior Portfolio Manager for the Bank of the West. My wife and I were divorced in 1974 but we have remained friends.

When I got out of the Navy I had a tough time finding a job. But, finally, I got a job as a janitor in a locker club part time and a job as a stock boy in a watch parts distributors warehouse also part time. Then I got a full time job as an office assistant for a painting contractor and from there I became an assistant candy maker working for Hooper Chocolates in

Oakland. Then I got a job as a bill collector. This would pretty well determine my life career. No, not as a bill collector. What happened was another bill collector named Jim was also a police Reserve Officer with OPD and as we became friends he talked me into joining the reserve also so we could drive around and play cop. Well, this reserve unit had about 80 or 90 guys in it and this one fellow named Bell was a full time base security policeman at the Naval Supply Center located right there in Oakland. So I ask him about what they did there and how could I get on there. He told me and I got signed up on the federal register and then nothing happened. Then about six months later NSCO called me and I went down to their personnel department and got hired on the spot. That was in 1968. At the same time I was going to school on the GI Bill. I took the job because it allowed me to work swing shift so I could go to school in the daytime. This was tough on the family and tough on me too, but I did get my BA in 1975.

I really had no intentions of staying at NSCO but it seemed like every time I got ready to move on, I would get promoted. I finally make Sergeant in 1979, then Security Assistant/Investigator in 1980 and Security Specialist/Investigator in 1982 and then in 1985 my supervisor retired and I got promoted to Chief of Investigations, Intelligence and Records Division. In 1986 the Commanding Officer asked me to take over as director of the Department until they could advertise world wide for a new director. I did, of course, put in for the job, but they hired a guy out of Washington, D.C. It worked out well though, I was dropped down to Deputy Director and we worked well together. I retired as Director of the Department in 1997 shortly before they closed the base in 1998 as part of the BRAC commission recommendation. So I am retired and live on a nice little pension and I have a website where I sell stuff that makes me a few extra dollars every month. Like I said I was divorced from my first wife in 1974, but I got married to my second wife in 1980, after living together for three years. We divorced in 1988.

I started play Diplomacy in 1977 along with other war games. I started playing in postal zines of the time and even started one of my own called "The Diplomat". I then started attending Pacific Con Diplomacy games and St Valentines Day Massacre, a con in Sacramento and Grabarcon in Chowchilla and a couple of other I can't recall at the moment. Two primary Zines I played in were Envoy and Murdering Ministers. There were some others but I can't remember them. Then in the 90's I got on the Internet and started playing online or my pbem. That allows for much faster games. I have been playing off and on for 35 years now. For a short time I was the Editor of Diplomacy World, the job that Doug has now. I must admit he does a lot better job than I did. My big claim to fame in Diplomacy is that I have won a solo at least once with every nation. Yes, even Austria. But, I won the most games with Russia.

And, now I am looking for a win in Youngstown IV.

England (Graham Wilson): I was born and raised in Canada, and grew up in Sarnia, Ontario. Currently I reside in Toronto with my wife and teenage son. My hobby is programming computers, which luckily, people seem willing to pay me to do. I'm currently employed as a computer programmer at the Princess Margaret Cancer Center.

I started playing Diplomacy in 1975 (age 12) with my father and older brother. For many years, these were the only two players I knew. It was not until high school that I discovered the existence of other Diplomacy players. After graduating from university in 1987 I discovered play-by-mail and play-by-email Diplomacy, in which I've been playing on-and-off again ever since.

France (Larry Peery): If you can identify the following and their connection to me, you'll know more about me and my life than anybody should or would want to:

Pratkvarnarna.....October 31, 1946.....July 29, 1947.....Ryndam.....Elation.....QE2.....Noordam.....AMTRAK Cross Country Diplomacy Tour.....DC3.....Airbus 380.....DipCon IV (1971).....DipCon XXII (1989).....DipCon XXXIX (2005).....1+1 = 33.....TDA.....IDA.....Great Diplomacy Feud.....Veritas Vincit.....An Introduction to the Strategy and Tactics of Postal Diplomacy.....Xenogogic.....Peeriblah/Peeribleh.....Peerijavo.....Lorenzo Cardinal Peericelli.....Wilhelm Cardinal Peericelli.....WDC 1988.....WDC 2013.....Goteborg, Sweden.....Canberra,Australia.....DMZ.....1966O.....2013A.....1984 Olympics (Los Angeles).....1989 Spiele Fest (Vienna).....European DipCon I.....San Marino DipCon I.....Henry Kissinger.....Madeleine Albright.....First Golden Age of Diplomacy.....Poltava Opening.....From East, Alone,Toward Europe.....A Chicken's Guide to Diplomacy.....Clear Skies!.....Don Miller Memorial Award.....Rod Walker Award.....John Koning Award.....The Peeripoll.....Peer,Belgium.....Major William Peery.....James William Peery.....David William Peery.....Lawrence William Peery.....Richard Peery.....Diplomatic Monopoly.....Doomsday.....Polaris.....Cold War Game.....MUNFW.....IDS.....Doctorate of Diplomacy Program.....LTA.....Agostino Casaroli.....Anson Chan Fang On.....Annette Lu Hsiu-lien.....Margaret Thatcher.....Kathy Byrne.....dip&Dip.....

Germany (Andy Bate): I'm a grizzled Hobby veteran (forty-eight) who lives on the harbourside in Bristol, England, with my partner, Lynne. I have a son, Jake, who will turn eighteen just before Xmas, and Lynne has two kids, Bec and Aaron, who are a bit older than Jake. Bec is married to Gary and this year they have given us our first grandchild, Toby.

My interests are boardgames, sport (Arsenal, Colts, Orioles, Somerset CC, Bath Rugby, Pacers), online games (Gridiron, MSWL United and Yucata especially), Real Ale, gigs, comedy, theatre, cinema. Hmm, maybe that's why I never have any money...

Back in the day I played in loads of games in the postal games hobby, was on the committee which organised ManorCon and ran the least reliable zine in the history of the hobby, Froggy (It'll Be Out Next Week). I was also the UK Miller Number custodian and held the UK Zine Bank for a while. And then I imploded and dropped out of the hobby for ten years or more. I got back into the hobby in 2005 with a trip to MidCon, in the hope that I would be able to take Jake to games conventions, and that has panned out nicely and we have just been to this year's MidCon.

And here I am now, with my first game of any kind of Diplomacy for what must be twenty years. In the mid-eighties I was playing twice a week on a regular basis, and competing at both ManorCon and MidCon, so it'll be interesting to see how much of that I've retained. Looking forward to giving it a try and seeing how things turn out.

India (Heath Gardner): Heath Gardner finds it weird to be writing about himself in the third person. He has been involved in the Diplomacy hobby for half of his life, but that would be more impressive if he were 70 years old. He's 30.

His presence on the Diplomacy scene hasn't been a necessarily fearsome one -- he's been more notable for goofy press, as well as a regular column in the Diplomatic Pouch and the promise of forthcoming interviews for Diplomacy World.

Heath is a writer, editor, teacher and semipro poker player who just barely dodged the PhD bullet, took his M.A. in English and tried the impossible: to start his own business. HDG Word Service (www.hdgwriting.com) is off to a good start, and he also works as a transcription contractor for Rogers Word and as an associate writer for Verdant Word, both North Carolina-based word services..

As a writer, what first attracted him to the game was the voluminous press in Jim Burgess's *The Abyssinian Prince*. Those who find Heath's presence in the hobby tiresome should blame Jim Burgess, the person Heath would like to grow up to be, beard and all. Just not as an economist.

Italy (Brad Wilson): Brad Wilson, 50, been playing postal Diplomacy, generally badly, since 1979, and the game itself since 1977. I live in South Philadelphia with my 13-year-old cat, Fred, and enjoy fine wine, classical music, jazz, college football, art, international soccer, and my extensive library when not working as the *Easton Express-Times'* sports columnist.

Japan (Walt Buchanan): Education:

Ph.D., Indiana University, 1993
M.S.E., Purdue University, 1984
B.S.E., Purdue University, 1982
J.D., Indiana University, 1973
B.A., Indiana University, 1963

Registered Professional Engineer -
IN, FL, TN, OR, MA, TX

Member, Indiana State Bar

Biography:

Before arriving at Texas A&M University, Buchanan was professor and director of the School of Engineering Technology at Northeastern University. He was previously professor and dean of Engineering and Industrial Technologies at the Oregon Institute of Technology; associate professor and chair of Engineering Technology and Industrial Studies at Middle Tennessee State University; assistant professor and coordinator of the Electrical Engineering Technology Associate Degree Program at the

University of Central Florida; and an assistant professor of electrical engineering technology at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. He has also been an electronics engineer for the Naval Avionics Center; an engineering officer for the U.S. Navy; an aerospace engineer for Boeing Co. and Martin Co., as well as an attorney for the Veterans Administration in Indianapolis.

Buchanan is Past President of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) and is a Fellow of the ASEE. He is a Fellow of the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) and a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME). He is a past member of the Board of Directors of NSPE, and past chair of the Engineering Technology Council of ASEE, the Professional Engineers in Higher Education of NSPE. He is a past member of the Executive Committee of the Technology Accreditation Commission (TAC) of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

Buchanan is a recipient of the ASEE James H. McGraw Award, the ASEE Frederick J. Berger Award, the NSPE Outstanding Service Award, and the International Conference on Engineering and Computer Education Award. He is on the editorial and advisory boards of the Journal of Engineering Technology, the American Journal of Engineering Education, the International Journal of Modern Engineering, the American Journal of Engineering Education, the International Journal of Engineering Research & Innovation, and the Technology Interface International Journal, and has authored or co-authored over 200 publications. He has also done consulting for over twenty different organizations and has been a principal investigator for NSF and other grants.

Areas of Interest:

- Computer Applications
- Pedagogy
- Professional and Academic Issues

As you can see from the above Diplomacy has been a small, but interesting, part of my life. My chief contribution to the hobby was founding DIPLOMACY WORLD nearly 30 years ago (Heh,Doug, DW will be 40 years old next spring! Are you planning something special?) As a player I won all six of my early games playing each of the Great Powers except for Germany (Only a second there.) Over the years I've kept a watchful eye on DW and been pleased that it has survived and prospered.

Russia (Nathan Deily): Nathan Deily has been playing Diplomacy since his high school days, when he was introduced to the game through his AP European History teacher. After quite a lot of ftf play in high school, he moved to PBEM in college and graduate school, starting on the CAT-23 group. Later, he moved to Diplomaticcorps and was also invited to the Academy of Creative Destruction group. He has participated in the DC "Winter Blitz" for the past six years.

Since moving to Seattle three years ago, he has also become involved with the WAC Con group and has attended both their tournament and casual play.

Nathan is married with two stepchildren, four dogs and a cat. He works in HR at Microsoft and lives in Redmond, WA. He holds an Executive MBA from Arizona State University, a Master's in Labor Relations & HR from Michigan State University, and a degree in Psychology from Tulane University.

Turkey (Ernest Hakey III): Ramblings of a random gamer... Ernest S. Hakey III, aka Ernie III, aka E3, i.e. yours truly, was born and raised in southern Vermont, the first of 4 boys, and was rather a nerd, generally first in his class and without trying all that hard. Started gaming young, playing cribbage and other card games and various board games with family and later friends. Read lots of science fiction, fantasy, and other sorts of books. While still in high school got into chess and wargames, had a subscription to Strategy and Tactics magazine, still have lots of games with little square unit counters somewhere in a closet. After high school, went down to Cambridge MA and got a BS in Math from MIT -- though my grades were no longer essentially perfect (going from big fish in small rural pond to small fish in big international lake) and I got better grades in my humanities courses than in math and sciences. Got in almost on the ground floor with D&D near the end of my freshman year (spring of '76) while still playing plenty of other games, including for the first time real 7-player Diplomacy -- back in VT it was tough to get 7 players...

Significant quantities of gaming activity may well have been a factor in my grades. Another factor was my girlfriend from high school came down to Wellesley College, so we saw a lot of each other, eventually got engaged, but planned to wait until after graduation to get hitched, which worked out for the best as we grew apart during the course of our senior year,

so in a moment of facing reality -- something I had been avoiding in various ways -- we realized going ahead with the wedding would have been a mistake. Still single to this day, while she has been through hell and back medically yet managed to finally meet the right guy, have kids, etc. We're still friends after all that time though, and hang out when I go back north for reunions. In any case, made lots of fine friends at the Institute, many of whom also still live in the area, and some of us have been gaming together on a semi-regular basis since then.

As far as Diplomacy goes, IIRC, it was shortly after college that I became aware of the postal Dip hobby, into which I joined, although Dip itself was merely one of my gaming interests. I played in a few 'zines, including some which featured other games which I enjoyed, adapted for postal play, such as Kingmaker. Eventually, for a while, I published my own small 'zine, Microphage, featuring Dip and other games as well. And somewhere along there I also got involved in the more expensive PBM hobby, playing Hyborian War and later Middle-Earth PBM -- a specific friend got me involved in both of those, he had started a game of HW and asked me to come in as a standby to pick up one of the positions (I later won the game as Kush) and while he bailed and didn't play more games, I was hooked, and as for the latter, we were at a convention when the game was released and he convinced me to sign up for it. Been playing both of those almost continuously since. But with too much on my plate, and Microphage becoming more work than pleasure to publish, I basically dropped out of the Dip hobby, and have been out for quite a while. Now, the cajoling of Mr. Kent (and I don't mean Clark) has persuaded me not just to get back in the hobby, but to play Youngstown IV in DW! What was I thinking? Oh, yeah -- I was thinking I had never had the pleasure of playing that variant, and it was one I really liked. Indeed, I liked the concept enough to buy Colonial Diplomacy, even though I have never managed to get a game of that going... So, that is probably more information than anyone here is actually interested in, but there you go -- now I am the Sultan of the New Ottoman Empire, and already my harem is distracting me from affairs of state...

Commentator Bios:

Jim Burgess: Jim-Bob Burgess, a rambling history.... why Youngstown???

My history with this great game of Diplomacy began when I received my Games Research Inc. (the lighter reddish-purple box with the picture on the front) copy of Diplomacy for Christmas in 1969, when I was 12. My first games were family games with the six of us (three brothers and my parents) with some sort of adjustments that I can't recall that included help for my younger brothers, David (the one who still plays) was only 5 at the time!! I then put Diplomacy down for a while mostly, like many of that generation I was playing mostly hex games and I was designing my own War in the Pacific hexgame with carrier fog of war rules and stuff like that. I also was a member of my high school Chess Club and I came to really despise Chess for its structure and style of psychological pressure. I and my fellow Chess Club friends gravitated back into playing Diplomacy in the early 1970's. There also was a Schenectady area (where I grew up) growing Wargaming contingent of people that eventually evolved into the still continuing Schenectady Wargamers Association (<http://www.swa-gaming.org/>).

This is key for Youngstown, because at the Studio of Bridge and Games where SWA was based, we had a BEAUTIFUL Youngstown board. So I am one of those few people who has played Youngstown Face-to-Face (since it is difficult to play a variant without a map). I think they still are the only tournament, at their Council of Five Nations con, that uses that board to play Youngstown FTF, but I've never been back.

But, going back to my history, I was starting to see Diplomacy as the game of all games for some still very difficult to articulate reason. It was something about the total immersion of the personality and the soul, the way you could play the game at different levels, the sort of Zen aspect to it (this was when Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (1974) came out), and other things I could not quite put my finger on. I graduated from high school in 1975 still generally ignorant of the IDA battles and other issues in the larger hobby, but we did hear of John Boardman and Boardman numbers, so we started playing some postal games from college amongst my former Chess Club and wargaming friends that did have assigned BNs. These mostly were quite silly affairs, and most of them didn't even finish before we got busy with school and exams etc.

But I was at the University of Rochester, where organizer that I am, I organized another gaming association that is still going strong, the University of Rochester Simulation Gaming Association, they ran their 32nd SIMCON (<http://www.simcon.org>) in March of 2010 and at the first SIMCON, I ran and won my own Diplomacy Tournament (something I don't recommend, as now they don't play Diplomacy any more...). I also got myself more connected with the wider Diplomacy hobby (thanks to Gregg Dick, who was a friend of one of my high school Diplomacy friends, and was running one of the Dipszines we formed to play with those high school friends). For a period in 1982, when I was living pretty lonely quite frankly in Dallas, I was incredibly engaged in the hobby, spending hours and hours writing letters, commenting, writing press, and being (with Tro Sherwood) one of the US Orphan Service directors

helping to place orphaned postal games. This is where I acquired my Jim-Bob moniker, was elected 1982 Toady of the Year and a host of other personality driven sillinesses. This was my hobby Golden Age where I met each of the players in the game below in some manner or three. I started my own postal szine, which still is lurching along today on the web and I helped to bring hobby history to the startings of the electronic hobby in the late 1980's and early 1990's with the formation of the rec.games.diplomacy usenet group and other activities. I also got very involved in forming and reforming the FTF Diplomacy activity in the New England area a couple of times in the last two decades, and now am running TempleCon (<http://www.templecon.org>) in Rhode Island each February (come up and see me some time!!!). Somewhere in there, I became associated with this Diplomacy World monstrosity and somehow held it vaguely together so it could emerge under Doug Kent's nagging leadership again into the TRUE hobby institution it is today. Why anyone wants me to comment on this game is purely anyone's guess. I suppose I know Youngstown as well or better than anyone else around here, so I'll try to engage and entertain you. I hope they write REAL press, so you can all see some glimpse of what real postal style press was, and I'll comment on that too as desirable.

Jack McHugh: Majored in double dealing and back stabbing at Machiavelli University...worked with Henry Kissinger to successful open China and get the US out of Vietnam while still in middle school...Jack is well known among the Diplomacy crowd as being able to stab two people while having his favorite ham and cheese hoagie...also dangerous when armed with fried chicken or French fries but is easily bribed by anything with chocolate and peanut butter...last seen attempting being manipulated by Sack Kent into writing variant articles on crayon that Kent uses to decorate his refrigerator and goad Larry Peary into writing more articles about his favorite diplomacy meals...

Rick Desper: Rick Desper first discovered the game of Diplomacy as a freshman at Georgetown University in the mid-1980s. He continued to play face-to-face games after transferring to Wesleyan, and that's when he first discovered Internet Diplomacy via the Usenet group rec.games.board (which predated rec.games.diplomacy). Even played one email game with Internet gaming pioneer Eric Klien.

Then came the 90s, graduate school, and several years of playing 10+ games at a time on the Internet. Specialized in trying Gunboat games in every map variant that came along, and developed a preference for the Modern variant designed by Vincent Mous. Started getting back into FTF at the mini-con in Boston known as the Diplomatic Incident. Got a summer job in '97 in Baltimore and that led to attendance at AvalonCon. Enjoyed that enough to go to his first World DipCon in '98 in Chapel Hill. These years led to relationships cultivated with such European diplomacy luminaries as Toby Harris, Yann Clouet, and the Prince of Wales.

The next two years were in Europe, and saw attendance at WDC in Namur, Belgium, as well as participation at Manorcon in Birmingham, England. The new millenium saw a return to the US, to the DC area, which had a lively FTF hobby under the direction of the Potomac Tea & Knife Society. Rick has served on the board of the club in several capacities, from Member-at-Large, to Captain. Rick's Captaincy has been noteworthy for the capture of three small sailing vessels in the Chesapeake Bay, which have been renamed Tyrolia, Galicia, and Livonia.

Rick's FTF play has had highs and lows, ranging from a last-place finish at Portland's DipCon in 2004 to a first place finish the subsequent year in the DipCon at Sea, where ultimate victory was achieved somewhere on the Gulf of Mexico. Rick's advice to anybody who wants to win a tournament is: convince Edi Birsan that this is a desirable outcome.

Recent years have seen Rick's interest drift to several other games, including the wave of "EuroGames", cooperative games such as Battlestar Gallactica, and the epic series/game/TV show Game of Thrones. In Season Two, Rick had a small role as an extra, playing a Dothraki outrider cursed by the Wizards of Qarth who is transmogrified into a feral donkey.

Spring 1901

Austria: A Budapest – Serbia, A Klug Supports A Vienna – Galicia, F Trieste Hold, A Vienna - Galicia.

China: F Canton - Gulf of Tonkin, A Hankow – Kansu, A Peking - Manchuria.

England: F Edinburgh - Norwegian Sea, F Joharra - Thailand(ec), F Liverpool - North Atlantic Ocean, F London - North Sea.

France: F Brest - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Marseilles – Spain, A Paris - Burgundy (*Bounce*), F Saigon - Gulf of Siam.

Germany: A Berlin – Kiel, F Kiel – Holland, A Munich - Burgundy (*Bounce*), A Posen - Berlin.

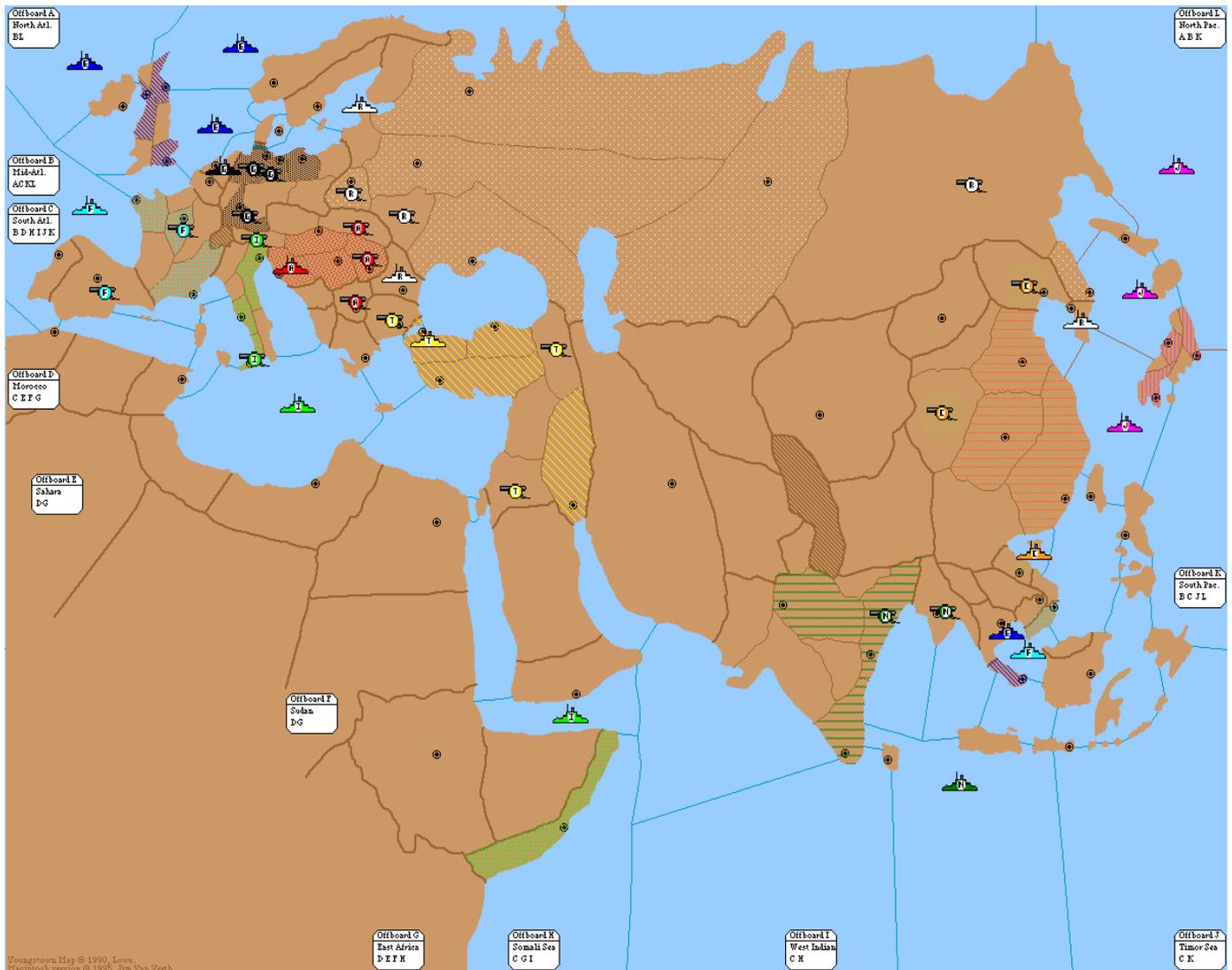
India: A Calcutta – Burma, A Delhi – Calcutta, F Madras - East Indian Ocean.

Italy: F Magudisco - Gulf of Aden, F Naples - Ionian Sea, A Rome – Naples, A Venice - Tyrolia.

Japan: F Kyoto - Sea of Japan, F Osaka - East China Sea, F Tokyo - North Pacific Ocean.

Russia: A Moscow – Ukraine, A Omsk – Siberia, F Sevastopol – Rumania, F St. Petersburg(sc) - Gulf of Bothnia, F Vladivostok – Korea, A Warsaw - Galicia (*Fails*).

Turkey: F Ankara – Constantinople, A Baghdad – Jordan, A Constantinople – Bulgaria, A Smyrna - Armenia.



PRESS

Voice of sanity to all: Fear the E/F/C/J Power Alliance

Subject: The Grand Strategy

Date: Oct 30, 2013 1:55 PM

From: peery@ix.netcom.com
To: Tim Haffey <TRHAFFEY@aol.com>, Graham Wilson <grahamaw@rogers.com>, Larry Peery <peery@ix.netcom.com>, "Dr. Walter Buchanan" <buchanan@entc.tamu.edu>

This should be clear enough to get us started.

Y4 VARIANT

THE GRAND STRATEGY (AKA TGS)

Or

THE POWER OF SIMPLICITY (Plan Simplicity, or PS, for short.): The basis of TGS is to use our combined forces for maximum efficiency, to cooperate with each other on a bilateral or multilateral basis as needed to achieve our combined goal.

To do this we propose to create a 4+2 Power Grand Alliance consisting of England, France, Germany (?), China, Japan, and India with the intent of containing, controlling and then eliminating Austria, Italy, Russia, and Turkey).

We (France and Japan) believe, based on previous discussions that England, China, and India will agree to this. We hope Germany will but if not, we'll switch the German and Italian roles in the scheme of things.

Our goal here is to set out a common goal and grand strategy. We will leave it to you to figure out bilateral strategies and tactics on a local and regional basis, and how to avoid quad lateral conflicts among the four of us.

We (France and Japan) are inviting England and China to join us as the 4 key members of this pact. If you two agree we will then invite Germany and India to join us four. If Germany declines then we'll invite Italy. In the West EFG will in effect carry out a Western Triple with support from China against Russia, and from India and Japan against Turkey and Italy.

In the East China will use its armies to conquer eastern Russia and Central Asia. Japan will use its fleets to conquer the Pacific and Southeast Asia. India will move into Central Asia from the south and push against Turkey; while Japan will move to the south against the Italians and Turks in Africa.

The English and French fleets in SEA will each take one supply center and use that center to build an additional unit in their homelands. Once that center is gained the two fleets, plus a fleet from China and a fleet from Japan will be used to secure the OTB spaces on the Eastern and Southern sides of the board. That will keep our flanks clear and allow us to concentrate on our core interests.

The idea is to contain the inner four powers so that they must turn against each other to grow or be unable to use their forces effectively.

That's the bare bones outline of the idea. If you agree on that we go forward. If you don't, let us know.

--eom--

Stay Vigilant, friends! Let's let them know we don't agree!

Berlin: 21 Mar, 1901

German Underground News (GUN)

Reliable sources in the Kaiser's court has informed this newspaper that Germany and Russia are plotting to attack England. Can it be true? The Kaiser in league with the Czar of Russia? Yeah, we know, they are related and all that. But, the Russians? We can only hope that this is not true, after all the Kaiser is related to the King of England as well.

The Dublin Observer:

There once was an infamous Czar whose empire stretched near and far his numerous neighbors requested odd favors at times their requests were bizarre

Said he, "It's no easy chore, and certainly never a bore but with carrot and stick I believe I can pick out the path to avoid all-out war"

Washington D.C. USA 21 Mar 1901

World News (WON)

Rumors persist that Italy is trying to buy a fleet of ships from America so they can invade France. The story is that the King of Italy seems to feel that Spain and Por belongs to Italy, or should in his view. However, our sources in Washington say that no such thing is possible. America would never help anyone attack France.

ROME, Nov. 22 -- The shaky and unstable government of just-recently united Italy has been overthrown by an alliance of the country's artisanal wine and food producers, disgusted by their falling behind France and Spain in international gourmet markets.

"We need a firm hand in Rome to get our products to market and to aggressively pursue world-wide markets for our products," said the country's new President, Mangia Mangia, known as "The Big Cheese". "We need new colonies to so we can have new markets."

Foreign Minister Vino Vino said that Italy was not interested in expansion in Europe but wants to open overseas territories to Pecorino Romano, Chianti, Parma ham, Gorgonzola, Barolo and more.

"Overseas does not know the glories of the Italian table," Vino said.

Ankara Bulletin: Armenian separatists have been engaging in acts of sabotage against bridges and

railroads along the border with Armenia, and orders have been given for the field army quartered in Smyrna to suppress them. Local businessmen have also become alarmed by rumors that Russia may be sailing into the Black Sea, and may be secretly supplying aid to the separatists, but the Sultan does not seem to be taking any action to prevent that -- instead, he has summoned the Black Sea Fleet to Constantinople on training exercises. Some businesses have begun preparations for relocating further south to the coast of Smyrna, whether due to fears of Armenian sabotage or Russian disruption of trade, either of which could cut into profits. In other news, rumors from Baghdad have arrived that rather than assist with the suppression of the separatists or else occupying the nearby province of Iranistan, currently in a state of anarchy, the field army stationed there has been ordered to Jordan. Jordanian 'traders' are advised to keep their less-than-legal shipping operations to a minimum during the army's visit.

Overheard outside the Imperial Palace Harem -- The head eunuch has been caught plotting with some of the Sultan's wives, though what the plot involves is unclear. He has been replaced by a new head eunuch of presumably greater loyalty to the Sultan. No disciplinary action has been taken against the wives in question, which leads the harem guards to speculation, albeit quietly amongst themselves. One theory is that the wives led the head eunuch down an unwise path just to be able to get rid of him. In any case, the new head eunuch is taking his post very seriously.

Turkey-Italy "Is there anyone in there?"

The wicked witch of the east looked up with a weary eye. "Mischief", she cackled. "Mischief"

Thailand. Home of ladyboys, Thai brides and ladies who know how to play ping pong without a bat. I think I'll have to go and visit.

I KNOW IT'S JUST A GAME BUT...By Larry Peery (France):

I am sending this directly to all the participants in the DW Youngstown Four Variant Game because it concerns all of us and with the deadline fast approaching time is of the essence. Feel free to reply to me and Doug; and I hope Doug will publish this and any responses as part of the press for the game.

There is also a second part which is game specific and directed toward the players for China, England, India and Japan; although again other players are welcome to respond and "take the pledge."

I've also included to a few extras to bring this up to or perhaps down to my usual Peeriblah standard s since this is a classic example of dip&Dip.

Nobody's mentioned this yet that I know of so maybe I'm the only one who's noticed it, or perhaps I'm the only one whose been looking at the wrong map, or perhaps I'm just the only one out of The Loop, or at least the I-495.

The issue is a question of intelligence and in this case it deals with the maps being used in the game. I've had problems with reading both of them and trying to enlarge them so I could make a playable game board size map for ease of use. Mostly I've been using the color one because the colors made it easier to read, and I hadn't really looked at the B&W one except to try and figure out Japan's home spaces. However, yesterday I discovered that there is major flaw with the colored map; at least as it shows up on my screen. The little rectangles that identify the various spaces can, in some cases, cover up the symbols indicating the space is a supply center! This is true of Cambodia and Thailand and mostly true of Vietnam. I've been negotiating with China, England, India and Japan without realizing there were "hidden goodies" in SEA that I didn't know about. Daaaaaaaaaaaah! I haven't looked at the rest of the board, but perhaps this is true elsewhere as well. I urge you all to check your maps carefully. And I suggest Doug publish a list of all 72 supply centers, just so we know for sure what's lurking out there.

This raises an interesting question for China, England, India, Japan and I: what to do about Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam? Cambodia and Vietnam have traditionally been a part of the French Indochinese sphere of influence (See the following for more information on the history of the area.

http://www.csmngt.com/thailand_history.htm

Having said that, the mere name of the area, Indo-China, suggests both India and China have some legitimate interests in the area; so these are open to negotiation.

However, my interest here is Thailand, a country for which I have a personal and special affinity. As I'm sure you are all aware Thailand was the one country in SEA to remain free of foreign domination during the colonial era. The Thais were and are very proud of this.

I first became aware of this back in the 1960s while doing some research on Thailand for a news program. I came across the story of King Rama IV's offer of white war elephants to US President James Buchanan and the response to his offer that came from US President Abraham Lincoln. You can read the story for yourself. It's quite interesting, I think.

<http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/primarysources/lincoln-rejects-the-king-of.html>

Lincoln Rejects the King of Siam's Offer of Elephants
FEBRUARY 3, 1862

In one of the more humorous events of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln politely rejected an offer of elephants from the King of Siam. While the letter from Rama IV (aka Mongkut) was addressed to former President James Buchanan, it was up to Lincoln and his Secretary of State William Seward to politely decline this offer from afar. As Lincoln points out in his reply, steam power had overtaken the need for heavy animal power of this kind.

This friendly exchange has elicited many fanciful "what-ifs." What if the Union or Confederate army had use of battalions of war elephants during the Civil War? Could there have been herds of angry pachyderms at Pickett's Charge or emerging from the forest lines at Shiloh?

King Rama IV of Siam (Wikimedia)
To the King of Siam
February 3, 1862
Abraham Lincoln,
President of the United States of America.
To His Majesty Somdetch Phra Paramendr Maha
Mongkut,
King of Siam,
&c., &c.

Great and Good Friend: I have received Your Majesty's two letters of the date of February 14th., 1861. I have also received in good condition the royal gifts which accompanied those letters,---namely, a sword of costly materials and exquisite workmanship; a photographic likeness of Your Majesty and of Your Majesty's beloved daughter; and also two elephants' tusks of length and magnitude such as indicate that they could have belonged only to an animal which was a native of Siam.

Your Majesty's letters show an understanding that our laws forbid the President from receiving these rich presents as personal treasures. They are therefore accepted in accordance with Your Majesty's desire as tokens of your good will and friendship for the American People. Congress being now in session at this capital, I have had great pleasure in making known to them this manifestation of Your Majesty's munificence and kind consideration.

Under their directions the gifts will be placed among the archives of the Government, where they will remain perpetually as tokens of mutual esteem and pacific dispositions more honorable to both nations than any trophies of conquest could be.

I appreciate most highly Your Majesty's tender of good offices in forwarding to this Government a stock from which a supply of elephants might be raised on our own soil. This Government would not hesitate to avail itself of

so generous an offer if the object were one which could be made practically useful in the present condition of the United States.

Our political jurisdiction, however, does not reach a latitude so low as to favor the multiplication of the elephant, and steam on land, as well as on water, has been our best and most efficient agent of transportation in internal commerce.

I shall have occasion at no distant day to transmit to Your Majesty some token of indication of the high sense which this Government entertains of Your Majesty's friendship.

Meantime, wishing for Your Majesty a long and happy life, and for the generous and emulous People of Siam the highest possible prosperity, I commend both to the blessing of Almighty God.

Your Good Friend, ABRAHAM LINCOLN.
Washington, February 3, 1862.
By the President:
WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

In light of the map's flaws and Thailand's historical neutrality, I call on all Powers and especially China, England, India and Japan to recognize and guarantee the neutrality of Thailand in the game and the inevitable conflicts to come, and to refrain from occupying the country with their forces. France so recognizes and guarantees.

I mentioned my special affinity for Thailand and here's a bit of history. One of the treasures in my personal archives is a copy of the script of the original Broadway play *The King and I* used by actress Gertrude Lawrence. The handbook (small enough to be carried on stage if needed) contains her personal notes on performing her role as Anna Leowens. For more about the King and I look at Wikipedia's article here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_King_and_I

And to hear some excerpts from the original 1951 production try this:

<http://www.allmusic.com/album/the-king-and-i-original-1951-cast-mw0000690357>

Years later, in the 1980s, I met my first two Thai friends and I am pleased that we are still friends. Achavarit, commonly called Vit, when I met him was a new salesman for a company called TUF, Thai Union Foods, which sold sea food: tuna, shrimp, etc. Vit's sales territory included Europe and North America, territories nobody else wanted, mostly because of language problems and because they were so far from home. Vit, then in his late 20s, ventured out to trade shows and

food fares selling his company's products one container at a time. Early on he asked me if I would help him with his English and proof read some of his sales letters, etc. I said sure, not realizing what I was in for. In the years to come the proposals got longer, the number of containers increased, and the dollar amounts in the contracts got larger. I noticed the reports to the home office were also getting more and more complex with lots of graphs and charts and such. One day I received a long, long report with a note asking me to proof it. It turned out Vit's boss, who's English wasn't very good either had discovered his skills and passed one of his reports on to him for proofing and, of course, Vit passed it on to me. Well, as the years went by the tasks grew more complicated:

"Could I buy him a new cell phone that had a fancy translation program that would turn any language into Thai, and a screen that could read Thai and translate it into English, French, etc. It only cost 5K and he'd pay for it." Then there was the time he wanted me to help him arrange to ship a new car he'd bought in the USA home to Bangkok. It was a new bright red BMW M series sports car that cost over 100K and another 50K in import duties and bribes to get it into the country. Vit was on his way. Today he's a SVP at TUF and in charge of all their international sales. From one container load of tuna at a time TUF has grown to be Thailand's largest producer of seafood with over 3B in sales a year. Oh, and what did I get out of it? Every year I get enough tuna, mackerel, shrimp and dog food to keep my local food bank happy. I always found it funny that living in San Diego, home of America's two largest tuna producers (Chicken of the Sea and StarKist) I was running tuna on the side. By the way, Vit's played Dip but the lack of a profit motive dulled his interest.

Dr. Krit, and Coco3, on the other hand, had absolutely no profit motive in him. He's a very talented doctor and works part of the time at one of Bangkok's largest hospitals in the ER. He does that to fund his real mission, which is providing emergency medical care in the far northwestern area of Thailand, right in the center of the country's drug empire. The government and most medical programs refuse to go into the area because it's too dangerous. Dr. Krit has been going up there regularly since he was a medical student. Originally he'd ride a bike around looking for wounded soldiers, police, or drug dealers who needed treatments for their wounds. Eventually word got around that Dr. Krit could bring a nearly dead wounded patient back to life. As word got around on both sides of the drug war zone it became a given that when Dr. Krit on his bike flying the red cross flag came down the path all firing ceased until he had

passed by. And then the soldiers, police and drug dealers went back to shooting at each other. As his fame grew donations for supplies and such came in from many sources including his hospital, the Red Cross and even the drug lords. Finally, out of shame or embarrassment, I don't know which, the government provided him with a tut-tut of his own, complete with radio, antenna and a Red Cross flag; and a basket in front to carry Coco3. Today Dr. Krit doesn't do much traveling in the combat zone but he still oversees a group of volunteers who have taken over his mission and the tut-tut, and fighting still ceases when it comes down the road.

I don't know what kind of Dipper Dr. Krit would make, probably not a very good one. He's too kind-hearted. Coco3, on the other hand, has clearly shown what he thinks of Dip. The original Coco got his name at my suggestion back in the 1980s when I first saw him. Dr. Krit originally was going to name him for one of the heroes of the Greek Wars but I held out for Coco because that was his color and it fit his personality. One day while Dr. Krit was at the hospital I was doing some Diplomacy related work in his apartment. I had the board set up on the coffee table and Coco was sleeping in his bed, a silk covered shoebox beside the table. Suddenly I realized Coco was chewing on something. That wasn't unusual but it was normally obvious what he was chewing on (one of his plush toys, one of Dr. Krit's socks, etc.) but this time I couldn't see what it was. I looked down at the game board and I noticed the pieces had been moved from their last position. Hmmmm. Just as I started counting I heard a "burp" and out popped an Austrian army from Coco's mouth, nicely covered with tiny teeth marks. As I reached over and grabbed the piece he took off for another room. I thought no more of it and went back to my work. Dr. Krit eventually got home and I left. Some days later, after I got home, I received an envelope in the mail with a return address in Bangkok and Coco's name on it. When I opened the envelope out fell a Russian fleet with a few tiny teeth marks on it. It wasn't until years later that Dr. Krit 'fessed up and told me he had found the piece while cleaning up one of Coco's periodic messes. Sigh.

And so concludes the story of Dr. Krit's and Coco3's Great Poo Drug Wars.

Now take a few minutes to make up that list of 72 supply centers (Just in case Doug won't.) and send me your pledge not to invade Thailand in Y4. Remember, Coco3 will be watching you.

Spring 1901 Commentary:

Rick Desper (Normal Arial)

Jim Burgess (Bold Arial)

Jack McHugh (Comic Sans MS)

I've played this variant before and liked it--I've played both the Asian and European powers--I preferred the Asian ones but enjoyed both.

Two particular areas of the map stand out to me--one, Japan and China didn't clash over the East China Sea, nor did Japan and Russia in the Sea of Japan, although the latter tends not to happen if Russia goes for Korea, as he is doing in this game.

China has decided to go south, it remains to be seen if Japan and China will cooperate--its usually a good idea for them to do so but that doesn't mean it is going to happen.

The second area is Italian-Austrian-German border area. Austria has forcefully moved on the Balkans, taking Gal over Russia's objection but carefully left his fleet to guard Tri. Meanwhile Italy has moved to Tyr while keeping the rest of his moves lined up for a Leptano with Austria down the road. Germany manages to maintain his unit Mun by bouncing over Bur so he can still go either west or south as the situation warrants.

A tame opening as everyone is keeping their options open. Given the larger boarder of this variant one would expect a longer opening game than in standard diplomacy.

As for the players--lots of press, mostly thanks to Larry Perry. I'm sure this will please my fellow commentators, me not so much, I don't put a big store in what people write in the press. I tend to believe actions speak louder than press.

Mostly looks like experienced players here--some real old time Diplomacy players like Walt and Larry who go back to the early days of the hobby as well as several long time Dippers like Brad Wilson, Graham Wilson (no relation) and Heath Gardner. I've seen and played with most of the names of the players here so I suspect most of these guys have played variants before, perhaps even Youngstown.

Should be a fun, cut throat group--I'm looking forward to seeing how this unfolds.

First, I'll say that I didn't realize quite which map we're using. The Judge version of Youngstown is notorious for stalemate lines and stagnating games. We'll have to see how this plays out.

Looked at the bios. The only names I recognize are Peery and Gardner. Not much to say there.

To the moves:

England: pretty standard stuff in Europe. England starts with F Lvp, which can pick up Ireland easily while deterring any French meddling. It's much less common to see problems in the Channel in Youngstown. France has access to Africa, and that's usually more interesting. Presumably the fleet in the Norwegian Sea will take Norway while the fleet in North Sea has any of a number of things to do. Belgium, Denmark, Skag...

I'll cover the SE Asia stuff later.

France: Standoff in Burgundy! Not all that interesting. Now France has nothing better to do than go there again. He'll also pick up two of Morocco/Spain/Portugal. I would prefer having Morocco being one of the two taken.

Both France and England have a greater need to go east in this variant than on the normal board. There's just way too much of the board to the East for them to muck about in the Channel.

Germany: I usually prefer putting a fleet in Denmark over an army. The extra army makes Germany a bit stronger here, esp. since the extra home SCs for England and France are uselessly in SE Asia. It seems that this Germany wants to go west. I'm not a huge fan of A Posen - Berlin. Saxony is far more flexible than Berlin. An army in Berlin cannot go anywhere that an army in Saxony could also go to. In particular, an army in Saxony could defend Munich from the Italians, allowing the army in Munich to go to Ruhr. Germany is a nice, solid European power in this variant.

Italy: I've always liked Italy on this map. Italy has the best access to the African dots, and there are a few of them. The army in Naples can go either to Tunis or Pentopolis, and the fleet in the Gulf of Aden can go either to Ethiopia or Yemen. I'd imagine he'd go to Yemen since he can build an army in Magudisco and walk to Ethiopia.

Austria: for players of regular Diplomacy who feel "if only Austria-Hungary started with an extra army, things would be so much easier!" this is a fun variant to play. This map changes all of Austria's neighbors dramatically, the net effect of which is that Austria is far less of a target. That first of three armies defends itself pretty well, and Serbia is just as accessible as ever. Greece isn't,

however. But the map a) makes it harder for Italy to invade, b) makes it less likely that Italy will be interested in invading, c) weakens Russia, considerably, and d) gives Turkey all sorts of other possibilities that mean that he's much less likely to just sit and wait for the shot to hit Austria. The opening here has given Austria a good position on Rumania.

Russia: oh, this is an ugly map for Russia. Whoever designed this said: you get two new neighbors who can hit your eastern flank, and you've only got two more SCs to help you. The European front is weaker since both Austria and Germany get extra home dots. The only plus is that Turkey is far less likely to be an annoyance. I tend to think the only way to play Russia here is to try to collect as many inland SCs as possible and be the major Asian land power. This Russia has opened to Korea. To survive at all in Asia, Russia needs to avoid the very-likely C/J alliance. China, in particular, is the big problem. There's a line of SCs: Sinkiang, Outer Mongolia, and Manchuria. They don't split easily. Usually one power ends up with all of them.

Turkey: Turkey starts with a tactical disadvantage. His home SCs border four sea spaces and the only fleet he's got is stuck in Ankara. (The Modern variant is kinder, as it lets Turkey start with a fleet in the Med.) It's unsurprising to see a DMZ in the Black Sea. Turkey needs to get that fleet out ASAP. Turkey faces the real problem that Italy can beat him down all by himself. But France is likely to want to get involved in Africa, too, so that gives Turkey a bit of breathing room. Like I said earlier, Turkey has a good number of options. He can work against Italy, Austria, Russia, or even India. The moves toward Egypt and Iran are pretty standard - it's unwise to ignore Egypt, as that allows Italy to grow too quickly. And that leaves Bulgaria and Iran as the neutrals to collect. With the Austrian fleet staying in Trieste, there's a chance here that Turkey could take both Greece and Bulgaria.

India: India typically tries to work with one of China or Japan against the other. The other concerns include the Russian, the Turk, and, to a lesser extent, the Italian. And, of course, the colonials in SE Asia. India covets those dots. There's usually a race with Japan to the Indonesian dots and a race with China to the SE Asian dots. If India can secure both of those groups, he's doing very well. In this case, the English have moved to the East coast of Thailand, and that choice means that India doesn't have to worry about it interfering with his army moves. The fleet will presumably land in Java, a position more advanced than Ceylon.

China: China starts with only 3 SCs (as do India and Japan), but he's surrounded by a number of SCs inland that he's got the best access to. Russia and India just cannot move armies in this area as quickly. But they can do so. And so China needs to go after one of them

relatively quickly if he wants to ever get out of Asia. An alternate plan is to work with Russia or India to try to go after Japan, but that rarely happens. In this case, China has made moves that are about as pro-Japan as possible. The fleet sailed to Gulf of Tonkin, where all it can do is pick up Vietnam. The two armies are oriented toward Russia.

Japan: Japan is very strong in this variant, as he starts with three fleets, can pick up 2-3 more fleets in the first year, and that makes his island fortress nearly invulnerable. If China is friendly (as appears to be the case here), it's a quick move to Formosa, the Phillipines, and down towards Indonesia. Russia won't be able to put up much of a fight. Right now, Japan will pick up that SC in the North, as well as Phillipines or Formosa, and he has a free fleet to harass Korea or Vladivostok.

SE Asia:

As noted earlier, England and France each start with a solitary force down here. Usually each picks up a second SC in 1901, and then they muck about for a few years before being hammered by one or more of the Asian powers. Usually England takes Thailand while the French take Cambodia, but there are other possibilities. In this case, the French could go for Borneo. The general hope here is to slow down the game in Asia.

According to a note Mark Nelson wrote me the stalemate issue is supposedly why the British prefer to play the Mercator variant instead of the Youngstown one. Mercator was specifically designed to overcome the stalemate line issues...

Yes, I vaguely recall hearing something along those lines. I don't think I've ever seen the Mercator variant.

I agree with Rick about Russia getting screwed on this map--its difficult for Russia to do well, I suspect that's probably because the map gives the illusion that she's an Asiatic power when, as Rick points out, she's actually quite weak in Asia. The Tsar is better off concentrating on Europe and writing off Asia as a lost cause.

I don't agree that the Chinese-Japanese alliance is a given since they are more like Italy/Austria of the European map, because of their proximity suspicions tend to run high between the two and it's easy to interpret your neighbors moves as prelude to stab, regardless if it is or not. Given Japan's need for fleets and the limited sea areas around China/Japan, it takes a strong willed Chinese player to not be

spooked by the Japanese Imperial fleet maneuvers around China's coast.

France and England do start out cooperating in Asia which I think helps their alliance in Europe. The biggest problem they have is their limited ability to build in Asia and the fact the rest of their units/centers are so far away. I've rarely seen England or France do much with their Asian holdings, even if they do add a few dots there, they tend to be used as a bargaining chip with the more conventional Asian powers like China and India.

I see that my fellow commentators have taken a different approach than I'm going to take to start. As we go, I'll come back to some of the themes they're raising in all likelihood. I'd like to start by commenting on the press. Remember that Diplomacy hobby is now more than fifty years old. For the first half of that time, nearly every game of note had large amounts of game press of this type. In the last 25 years, since the beginning of the Internet/Web era, we have had much less of this type of communication. About half of our players conducted most of their Diplomacy hobby play in the earlier era, about half are more recent players who may never have seen press like this. Now there are many, many styles of game press, and this game is dominated by the estimable Mr. Peery's press, or at least that's what we may conclude with strong likelihood. Larry Peery has his own unique style, sometimes dubbed "Peeriblah" for its voluminousness and wide ranging stream of consciousness connections. Let's look at what we see here in a bit more detail, as best I can decipher it. Let me work from the bottom to the top. In a brilliant expression of how only Larry Peery can take a simple question, "Just what are the 72 Supply Centers in this variant and how can I find them on the map?" and make three pages out of it, Larry shows you how you can seek out the history in the real world that might illuminate a question... or it might just make a mash--up of it.... but this post was some of the best Peeriblah I've seen in a very, very long time. I am fascinated, I wonder what WOULD have happened had Lincoln gotten a whole pack of elephants? I'm sitting here next to my huge library of Civil War books, including the classic biography of J.E.B. Stuart by John Thomason, written in about 1930. I was just reading it by chance yesterday (before I thought about what I was going to write for this commentary). How would the history of Civil War cavalry warfare been different if Lincoln had elephants? I have no idea, but it's what is brilliant about reading Peeriblah and having free association press. And then, the King and I. I just came back

from watching a more recent classic of the American Musical Theatre tradition, "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" which reminded me of the fun of the game. The main players in Dirty Rotten Scoundrels are just that, scoundrels, but they enjoy the gamesmanship. It's fun, it makes life exciting, and it's better than going home to Detroit. This is what is exciting about Diplomacy, the engagement, the excitement, the drama. The con, and the long con. And here, Larry is trying to keep Thailand neutral. Will he succeed? Too bad Monaco (where Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, I think, is set) isn't a Supply Center. I could call for the same pact over that! And then what of Coco and the great Poo Wars? I think we're destined to go WAY down in the dumps in this game.

Then Ernest is the first person to challenge the fifth dimensional play of the even more estimable Brad Wilson. Brad plays Diplomacy with a truly unique flair operating in a Big Bang Theory style vibrating in other dimensions through string theory. Brad's fifth dimension communication style is sometimes lost on more limited dimensionality players like Ernest. What does he mean he didn't hear from Brad, didn't he feel those strings vibrating? While Ernest also has some other traditional Golden Age style Turkish press (I believe it is he, anyway), discussing eunuchs and specifics about where armies and fleets might be, he misses the OTHER black press vibrating in string theory space from Rome! Is the press from Rome from Brad? I seriously doubt it. But we'll see what drinking more wine does for ALL the players here.

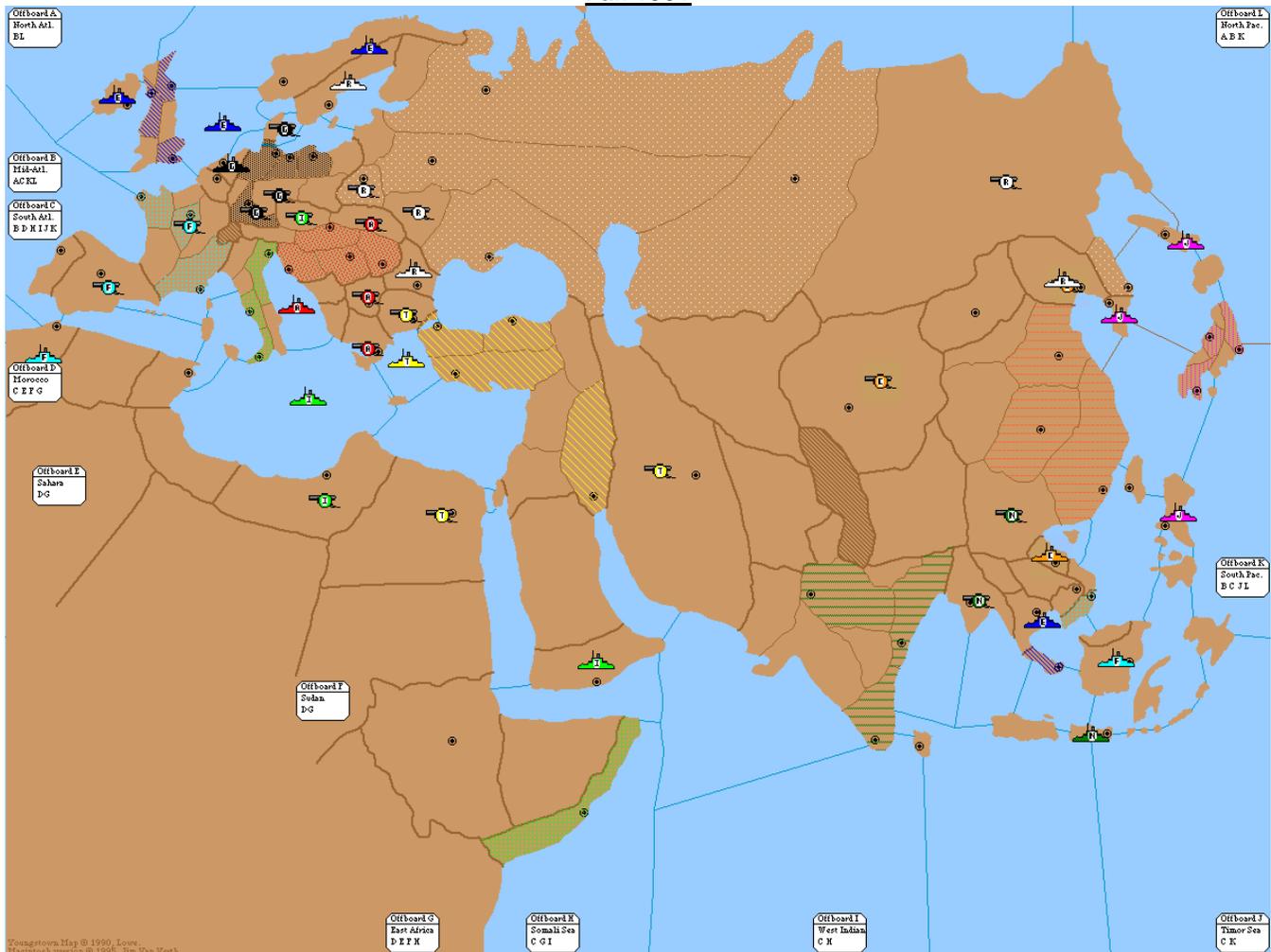
Then there are the off-board boxes, presuming some input from America? Or does Larry really think trying to form quadrilateral alliances in public really will work? Who knows, but finally, we have some PRESS to analyze! And I shall discuss it as we go.

Do I have anything else to say about Spring 1901? A little. This is a fascinating variant because some countries (like France) have colonial units, while others (like Germany) do not. Andy and Larry already are bouncing over Burgundy, so we'll see if Larry's press keeps Andy Bate's attacks at bay. The other bounce comes because Nathan Deily's quite heavily challenged Russia already is getting pressure from Andrew's Austria. He bounces from Galicia, but with this opening position, Austria could afford to support himself in. Russia is in BIG trouble unless he gets allies in this variant, and it doesn't look good for him. France and England both have a colony unit, and as one would hope for balance they decide to work together. One thing that is interesting about these sorts of variants is whether people agree to ally in the colonies while fighting in the homeland, or vice versa. That doesn't seem to be happening here yet, but sometimes people agree

to this sort of cognitively dissonant schizophrenia. Walt Buchanan and Tim Haffey are both former Diplomacy World Editors and it seems like they might have found some editorial friendship in the east. If so, it is MORE really bad news for Nathan Deily's Russia. Heath Gardner in India is a recent

generation player, but he goes heavily in the Southeastern Asia direction and right now seems to have Italy and Turkey picking up easy Middle Eastern neutrals and leaving his western flank as a large demilitarized area. Will that persist, we'll see.

Fall 1901



Austria: A Galicia - Warsaw (*Fails*), A Klug – Serbia, A Serbia – Greece, F Trieste - Adriatic Sea.

China: F Gulf of Tonkin - Viet Nam, A Kansu – Sinkiang, A Manchuria Supports F Sea of Japan - Korea (*Dislodged*, retreat to Inner Mongolia or Peking or Vladivostok or Outer Mongolia or OTB).

England: F North Atlantic Ocean – Ireland, F Norwegian Sea – Norway, F North Sea - Belgium (*Bounce*), F Thailand(ec) Hold.

France: F Gulf of Siam – Borneo, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean – Morocco, A Paris - Burgundy (*Bounce*), A Spain Hold.

Germany: A Berlin – Saxony, F Holland - Belgium (*Bounce*), A Kiel – Denmark, A Munich - Burgundy (*Bounce*).

India: A Burma – Sikang, A Calcutta – Burma, F East Indian Ocean - Java.

Italy: F Gulf of Aden – Yemen, F Ionian Sea Convoys A Naples – Pentopolis, A Naples – Pentopolis, A Tyrolia - Bohemia.

Japan: F East China Sea – Philippines, F North Pacific Ocean – Kar, F Sea of Japan - Korea.

Russia: F Gulf of Bothnia – Sweden, F Korea – Manchuria, F Rumania Supports A Bulgaria,
A Siberia Supports F Korea – Manchuria, A Ukraine Supports F Rumania, A Warsaw Supports A Ukraine (*Cut*).

Turkey: A Armenia – Iran, A Bulgaria Supports F Rumania, F Constantinople - Aegean Sea, A Jordan - Egypt.

PRESS

China-Russia: My apologies for the change in plans but to have three Russian units on or near my northern border was just too much to accept. Hope you understand.

Admiral Togo to the Japanese Fleet, 27 May 1905:

Kokoku no kohai kono issen ni ari; kakui in isso funrei doryoku seyo

"The fate of the Empire rests upon this one battle; let every man do his utmost."

Imperial Naval Academy Cadet Senior Classman

Yamamoto to his classmates, 28 May 1905: 覚えて、

西への強いおならが東の強風よりも強力です。

"Remember, a strong fart to the west is more powerful than a strong wind to the east."

5細かい理由? "Why, Why, Why, Why, Why?" Sakichi

Toyoda (豊田 佐吉 Toyoda Sakichi?, February 14, 1867

– October 30, 1930) was a Japanese inventor and industrialist. He was born in Kosai, Shizuoka. The son of a poor carpenter, Toyoda is referred to as the "King of Japanese Inventors".

Toyoda developed the concept of 5 Whys: When a problem occurs, ask "why" five times to try to find the source of the problem, then put into place something to prevent the problem from recurring. This concept is used today as part of applying lean methodologies to solve problems, improve quality, and reduce costs.

The 5 Whys is an iterative question-asking technique used to explore the cause-and-effect relationships underlying a particular problem.[1] The primary goal of the technique is to determine the root cause of a defect or problem. (The "5" in the name derives from an empirical observation on the number of iterations typically required to resolve the problem.)

Sakichi Toyoda, 31 October 1930: それはトヨタ豊田はないが、覚えている! Sore wa Toyota Toyoda de wa naiga, oboete iru! "remember, it's toyoda not toyota!"

The number one topic of conversations in Paris

salons this season is, "Would you prefer a berber carpet or a Turkish rug in your smoking room?"

La Monde headline of the day: "Quay de Orsay says headhunters of Borneo greater threat than Cambodian spear chackers!"

Russian Revolutionary Proclaims New Age, And Other News

Moscow, October 18, 1901. by Balishkov Ruskov

A major Russian separatist, Sladimir Linen, today proclaimed a new day for Russia. "Long have the Tsars ruled, suppressing our rights to drink Vodka. It is the right of every peasant to ferment his own potatoes, and drink himself stupid." was his message, delivered in what he called the Red Squad of Tsarist oppression. Linen further stated that bedsheets, made from fine Turkic silk, should no longer be permitted in Russian households, as they represent the cheap outsourcing of fine Russian made, horse hair bedsheets. The horses are imported from England, which no longer has a use for them, except in medieval reenactments.

Linen also cursed the Germans for their pointy helmets, but was later heard saying that they would be most effective "since the average Russian soldier isn't allowed a gun, they can just stick us with the pointy end."

The Russian Foreign Minister, Dimiti Jubobuv, issued a press release three days before Linen's speech stating that Austria's red looked too communist, and that his Agency would be suing Austria for three rifles and a Serb. The Serb's name is rumored to be Gavrilo Princip, however details of the current settlement talks have not been disclosed, and this information has not been confirmed. Jubobuv also stated Russia is sending medical supplies to Turkey, where 96% of the male population is suffering from the common cold. Leading physicians expect that by 1918, Turkey's men will be so sick that the country may collapse from an overabundance of female "hysteria".

Meanwhile, Russian and English soldiers plan to meet along the Swedish-Norwegian border later this year. The planned festivities include ice-dancing, ice-hockey, drinking, sausage-eating, bob sled races, and making fun of the Welsh. The event is expected to attract thousands from both nations, mostly seamen and naval officers. The death toll is expected to be in the tens of millions. And three Englishmen. When asked for comment, the German Chancellor shouted "God-ter-damn-er-teim" and stormed out of the room, apparently upset for not being invited; meanwhile, the French

Premier sent his troops to Spain instead of Denmark, claiming his compass was upside down.

Ankara Grapevine reports: Sultan buys expensive new clothes from latest fashion designers in Persia, discovers that while apparently invisible, they do not, in fact, make HIM invisible. Army sent to Persia to chastize practical jokers in the garment industry.

ROME, Dec. 5 -- The future of Italy's trading markets lies largely, but not completely, to the south, President Mangia "The Big Cheese" Mangia said in a briefing with world correspondents here.

"Our wines, cured meats, cheeses and more will help civilize Africa and create the same cultural dominance in East Africa that France has traditionally had in West Africa," he said. "We're launching new product lines that will have special appeal in those area," he said, such as non-alcoholic wines and beef-based products.

Mangia also noted that the Italian Army of the Alps was marching to offer Alpine consumers used to beer a better choice of Italian wines.

"That's another market we have our eyes on," he said.

TURIN, Dec. 6 -- Italian Foreign Minister Vino VIno called for a European wine summit to be held in Geneva next month among the top wine-making countries to discuss the long-term absorption of Spain into the Peerian Republic of Paris.

"While we wholeheartedly endorse the French political expansion to the South, it does create trade questions," said Vino on a visit to Barolo-producing vineyards near this city. "We believe that all such questions can be settled with a peaceful conference."

Vino stressed that Italy and France were firm allies and denounced English war-mongering in the region.

"The English make no win," Vino scoffed. "What kind of nation are they?"

Jordanian National Observer: Egyptian women invited to Memphis for harem tryouts. Apparently there are openings to be filled. Security forces sent in to prevent rioting mobs of women, girls, and eunuchs.

A TURKEY'S TAKE ON THANKSGIVING

"Not an easy read, but lots of food for thought"

By Larry Peery

My story may not rank up there with Art Buchwald's classic 1952 column in The New York Herald Tribune, written while he was a correspondent based in Paris,

seeking to explain Thanksgiving to the French; or Mark Bittman's (He's the Food Editor/Columnist for the NY Times) almost a classic "Everyone Eats There," a story about the California Central Valley ---our greatest food resource, that appeared in last year's NY Times, or Elaine Sciolino's might be a classic someday "Thanksgiving Day, a la Francaise," that appeared in last week's NY Times; but you may want to consider setting this article aside and enjoying it after you've had your T-Day Feast! This is a story about a typical Dipper's Thanksgiving told from a turkey's peerispective by a Turk, or something like that.

The Setting: Gathered together at Chateau Peericelli, Located in beautiful Livingston, California, where the scenic Highway 99, the not-so-polluted Merced River, and the Southern Pacific Railroad all meet 130 feet above sea level.

Located in the middle of California's Central Valley (aka "Food Bowl to America,") which is divided into two parts, the northern Sacramento Valley (north of the Sacramento River delta), and the southern San Joaquin Valley (from Bakersfield north to Sacramento). Livingston, down the road from Merced (Gateway to Yosemite), Atwater (The Heart of Bombers' Row) and just across the valley from Crows Landing (formerly an alternative landing strip with an 8,000 foot runway for the USN and NASA) is known for cheap poultry and cheap wine (e.g. rotgut).

Livingston and Merced County are a center of California's agriculture industry, which produces some 13% of the nation's food (and half of that comes from the Central Valley). Livingston's largest businesses are agriculture-related. Among these are the largest poultry producer in the western United States (Foster Farms), and a dairy, Joseph Gallo (Yes, The Gallos of "rotgut fame".), which owns the largest dairy herd in the United States. Just down the way The Chandlers of LA Times and Chinatown fame own the world's largest almond groves, 10,000 acres worth). Ninety percent of the sweet potatoes grown west of the Rockies are grown and packed in and around Livingston. The sweet potatoes benefit from the sandy soil caused by the Merced River farmers say. Grapes are also widely farmed near Livingston for wines (Although Modesto is the center of the Gallo wine making empire most of the better grapes used in their wines are trucked in from Napa and Sonoma.), raisins, and table grapes. E & J Gallo Winery does operate a major grape-processing facility just outside the city (Most of the cheaper Gallo wines include a big percentage of doctored Thompson seedless grapes, the same grapes used for raisins and table grapes). Almond orchards are a common sight and family legend has it that old man Chandler when torn between selling his newspapers or his almond groves decided to keep the almond groves because, as he said "People don't have to read newspapers, but they'll always eat almonds." Other crops are farmed in smaller quantities, including alfalfa, corn, soybeans, peaches,

melons, and berries. Oh, and did I mention the turkeys? The Central Valley is home to Foster Farms and Zacky, both family owned operations, and the west's largest poultry farmers.

The Guest List

Gathered together at Chateau Peericelli is a typical, just slightly dysfunctional Diplomacy family: seated at the head of the table on his dais is our host, Edi Birsan.

Seated at the food of the table on her bias is our hostess, Melinda Holley. At Edi's right is our guest of honor, affectionately known as "Whining Pig" Doug Kent. Gathered around the table are the players from "Sweet Spot:" Paul Milewski, Harold Zarr, Jack McHugh, and Chris Babcock; and from "Reasonland:" Andrew Leavy, Tim Haffey, Graham Wilson, Andy Bate, Brad Wilson, Professor Doctor Walter Buchanan, Nathan Deily, and "Ernie" Hakey III. Noticeably absent from the table are Heath Gardner, who is sitting at the childrens' table dressed in full Indian costume, and Larry Peery (which explain the loud crashing sounds coming from the kitchen).

Pre-Dinner Conversation

Melinda: Well, what shall we talk about this year?

Edi: Since it's Thanksgiving, let's talk about turkey!

Doug: (whining) Why can't we talk about pigs? I want to talk about pigs.

Edi: Pigs and pork are so last year. Remember the election? No, this year we'll talk about turkey.

Ernie: Edi, don't you mean Turkey?

Edi: NO! I mean turkey, as in what we're going to be eating. OK, who wants to give us a run down on the latest turkey stats?

Brad: Oh, I can do that. No problem. The price of a typical T-Day dinner is down about 50 cents this year and that's driven by the lower price of turkey. Here's the run down on the turkey trot:

Albertsons' (a major chain in the west): Honeysuckle White (47 cents a lb.), 12-22 lbs., frozen, Foster Farms (from California) (\$1.27 a lb.), 12-22 lbs., fresh.

Ralph's (a major chain in the west, part of Kroger): Jennie-O or Kroger (59 cents a lb.), 12-24 lbs, frozen; Jennie-O or Foster Farms (\$1.39 a lb.), 12-22 lbs., fresh; Fresh Simple Truth Natural Turkey (\$1.99 a lb.), no weight given, fresh.

Stater Brothers (a major regional chain in Southern California): Californian or Jennie-O (57 cents a lb.), 14-20 lbs., frozen, Butterball Premium (87 cents lb.), 12-20 lbs., frozen; Jennie-O (\$1.39 a lb.), fresh; Zacky Farms (from California) (\$1.69 lb.), 12-22 lbs., fresh.

Trader Joe's (upscale national chain): Joe's Brined, Fresh, Young (??), All Natural Turkeys (\$1.99 lb.), 12-22 lbs., fresh (from CA, MN, or PA); add 50 cents a pound if you want the Rabbi's blessing on it.

Andrew: Mazel tov!

Sprout's (mid-level, pseudo-upper class regional chain in Southern California with farmers' markets pretentions): All Natural Turkey (\$1.49 lb.), 10-24 lbs., fresh.

Williams Sonoma (upper class foodie national chain): Willie Bird Fresh Pre-Brined Turkey (\$6.42-\$7.11 lb.,

plus shipping plus \$15 delivery charge), 12-26 lbs., shipped partially frozen to arrive chilled, fresh. Williams Sonoma reports pre-selling 65,000 (that's enough to fill five semis) which will ship by UPS beginning the Monday before Thanksgiving).

Edi: Thanks, Brad. Good job of cooking the numbers. Now, who wants to sum it all up?

Andy: That's \$805 million worth of turkey this year, of which 35% will be wasted. The Big Four poultry farmers produce more than half the turkeys sold each year. Tyson Foods, by the way, make \$778 million profit last year. 254 million turkeys were produced last year.

Americans eat about 15 pounds of turkey each per year, Canadians a bit less, and the French, the number three consumers of turkey, only eat about 4.5 pounds a year.

Ernie: Or to put it another way, that's almost a THOUSAND dollars worth of turkey a year for every member of the Turkish Armed Forces! Wow!

Edi: OK, you can tell who did their homework. Catherine Rampell's article in the NY Times, "Why Is Turkey Cheaper When Demand Is Higher?" was very good.

And the big story this year was about the shortage of fresh turkeys from Butterball, and why they're having problems fattening up their birds. Any thoughts?

Harold: I did a search on Google on "fresh Butterball turkeys in short supply" and came up with 95,600 hits.

Jack: Oh, I can beat that. I did a search on "butterball fat farms" and came up with 32,120,000 hits!!

Paul: Well, apparently Butterball didn't have any problems with the turkeys they raised, slaughtered and then froze earlier in the year losing weight. It was only those they raised in the last few month and were planning to sell fresh that didn't gain weight. Somebody's suggested they changed their diet mix formula and that put the turkeys off their feed. So to speak.

Edi: Alright. Thanks everybody. Now that we've digested that, does anybody have an alternative to the traditional turkey dinner for us?

Professor Doctor Walter Buchanan: I do. Pulling a pocket flask out of his jacket pocket he sits it carefully on the table. I propose a liquid T-Day menu consisting of a bottle of Wild Turkey 101 proof per guest. At \$19.99 a bottle its cheaper. Besides, there's no cooking, no serving, and no dishes to wash! And for the non-alcohol drinkers serve them cranprune juice instead.

Edi: Very good. And here we are to celebrate another Thanksgiving or, as we call it here in Livingston...

(looking out the window) Wait a minute! What's that seagull doing sitting out on the fence?

Melinda: Why that's Jonathan Livingston Seagull. I thought you invited him.

Edi: Oh, right. As I was saying....in Livingston we call it DipDotTaking Day. We have so much to be thankful for: A Great WDC, A Great DipCon, and an even Greater ObamaCareCon!

Melinda: Hush, no politics. Remember, you promised.

Edi: Yes, dear. OK, time for a toast. Standing, pouring from a Nebuchadnezzar of Peericelli's Sparking Cypher

Juice. I propose "To all Dippers: past, present and future: May all your dots be mine!"

All: Here, here!

Edi: OK, Melinda: what's for dinner?

Melinda: Looking from right to left and back again. Well, since so many of us are on a diet this year Chef Lorenzo and I decided a small-scale Thanksgiving dinner was in order. We'll be having turkey cutlets with a Marsala sauce, risotto with mushrooms, wilted lettuce and a hint of fennel. To accompany the protein and starch, brussel sprouts roasted in olive oil, coarse salt and black pepper, and a flash of chili across the top.

Graham: What, no crackers?

Nathan: Does anybody know why Brussel sprouts cost more in Bruxelles than Brussels?

Silence.

Melinda: And for dessert, a lovely cranberry mouse.

Edi: Dear, don't you mean a cranberry mousse?

Melinda: No, I mean a cranberry mouse! You take a very fresh mouse, place it in a Champagne flute, smother it with raspberries, and drown it in Champagne. It's lovely.

Hmmm, that reminds me, Heath, did you, Foster and Zach catch enough mice this morning.

Heath: Looking up from the game of Three Blind Mice being played at the kids' table, yes, ma'am.

Melinda: For those who aren't worried about calories but still looking for something healthy, Chef Lorenzo has prepared his signature dish, Turkey Roulades Byzantine, which consists of a thin slice of turkey breast topped with a thin slice of cheese (Swiss, Mozzarella, or English white cheddar work well), topped with three pieces of steamed asparagus or a quarter of a broccoli stalk.

Whining Doug: But where's the pork?

Melinda: Oh, yes, sprinkle a few bits of crisp bacon on top. And then roll it all up. Use a circular ribbon cut from a red and or green pepper to hold it all in place. For extra oomph serve on a crepe and drizzle with a béchamel sauce. Wild rice on the side or a whole-grain stuffing with apples, sausage and pecans completes the plate. Dessert is a pumpkin ice cream with ginger snaps.

Melinda: Dig in, everybody!

Chomp, chomp, slurp, slurp, munch, munch....

Edi: Hmmm, dear, the turkey tastes a bit different this year. Did you do anything differently in prepping it?

Melinda: Well, I did butter the balls after I dressed it instead of before as I did last year.

Edi: But Melinda, I've told you at least a dozen times turkeys don't have balls --- at least not where you can butter them. They're inside the abdomen near the spinal column.

Melinda: Oh, well. Did you notice how good the basting liquid turned out? I used Mary Jane's recipe of Absinthe and Hashish, with just a pinch of Maui Powie.

Harold: And what about the burqa? Do you think it worked better than a foil wrap or a paper bag?

Melinda: Definitely.

Tim: Lovely china. Is it Wedgwood?

Melinda: No, actually it's Chinet.

Ernie: Did you all hear about the shortage of housing in Turkey? There's a shortage of cottages for large and small Kurdish families in the southeast of Turkey. Loud groans from around the table.

At that moment there was a loud crash as the kitchen door flew open and banged against the wall, sending a Norman Rockwell original, "My First Thanksgiving," crashing to the floor.

Who stole the Wish Bone? Screamed a short, fat man dressed in a chef's uniform as he waved a large chef's knife menacingly.

Melinda: Calm down, Chef Lorenzo. I'm sure the wishbone is here somewhere in somebody's roulade.

Chef Lorenzo: No, not the wishbone, The Wish Bone! I need it for the dressing. I ordered a case of it and I can't find any of it. You? You?? You??? YOU!!!! Glaring at Heath, trying to hide behind the kid's table. You took it, didn't you?

Heath: Yes, Chef. We needed something for bait for the mouse traps and the Wish Bone French Dressing worked just fine when we smeared it on a slice of apple.

Brad: Rising and yelling at the top of his lungs, You used French and not Italian Dressing? Sacre bleu!

Edi: Calm down everyone. I suggest we adjourn to the Hall of Stabs for a post-dinner coffee.

Ernie: Turkish coffee, I hope?

Edi: OK, but don't you think you're wired enough?

Taking Melinda by the arm, Edi leads the procession to the Hall of Stabs.

Edi: Now that everybody is seated. Since it is Thanksgiving and since we've already talked about turkey let's continue on that leg and talk about Turkey

Ernie: But I don't have anything left to say.

Nathan: Thank God.

Professor Doctor Walter Buchanan: Well, did you all know Akita is famous for rice farming and its sake breweries. It is well known for having the highest consumption of sake in Japan, as he pulls another flask out of his pocket. Akita is Livingston's sister city in Japan, known for its rice farming and the highest rate of sake consumption in Japan.

Tim: Yes, and they drink sake out of china cups.

Andy: How can they be china cups if they're Japanese?

Edi: Well, there have definitely been some changes in Turkey since last Thanksgiving. A year ago everyone was talking about Turkey as the new Great Power in the Eastern Mediterranean with influence everywhere: Syria, Iraq, and even Iran and Egypt were all listening to Turkey's cackle. This year not so much.

Chris: Yeah, Egypt just tossed out the Turkish ambassador because the Turkish PM keeps dabbling in Egyptian internal politics.

Melinda: Imagine, a Turkey being persona non grata at Thanksgiving. How sad. Dabbling at her eyes.

Paul: Well, even the news from Tarsus is bad. Erdogan is feuding in public with Fethullah Gulen a leader of the Hizmet movement which is using its "prep" schools to train members to take over the country, at least according to Erdogan.

Harold: Yeah, Erdogan's dream of a new Sunni axis of power ---with Turkey as an anchor, is going up in smoke. He's even making nice to the two Shite powers, Iraq and Iran. The bottom line is "Arabs don't want to be bossed around again by the Turks." They had enough of that under the Ottomans.

Edi: Quite true.

Jack: And the Turks just punched NATO in the nose when it announced it was going to buy a Chinese made missile defense system. Strange for a country seeking to lock in long-term security to be pivoting away from its two year old pivot toward the United States.

Chris: Yeah, all those pivots are starting to look like whirling dervishes

Andrew: What I want to know is, "In Turkey, can Islam and democracy coexist?"

Tim: Sure, fanaticism, radicalism, western-style democracy and military intervention can all co exist. The Americans have done it for years.

Edi: Ahem.

Graham: But don't the Kemalists see their secularist legacy under threat?

Andy: Erdogan is playing the Great Game, "He's giving a little more economic freedom; and taking away a lot more religious and political freedom; and hoping nobody will notice --- or say anything if they do." Give 'em a shopping center on one hand, take away a park on the other. Build thousands of new mosques. Stop building schools. It's a brilliant plan, as long as it works.

Brad: Isn't the whole area a tinderbox? It's just waiting to explode.

Nathan: Yeah, first the Turks invite NATO to send batteries of Patriot missiles to their southern border to protect them against missiles coming from Syria or Iraq. Then they announce they're going to buy a Chinese SAM system. Then they find out the Chinese system won't inter-face with the NATO system, so they decide to extend the bidding process. Oh, and they invite NATO to keep its missiles in Turkey for another year. In the meantime Meanwhile, the largest NATO-USA-Turkey war games in years has been going on off the Syrian coastline with not a bit of western media coverage.

Ernie: I read that Israel has moved one of its nuclear armed Dolphin missile subs out of the Mediterranean to the Red Sea/Persian Gulf/Arabian Sea area; and Iran has moved a sub escorted fleet to India and Sri Lanka on a "friendly" visit. Friendly to who, I wonder?

Paul: Remember those 900 Abrams tanks the USA gave Turkey when they pulled out of Germany? Well, they're getting old. Turkey needs new tanks, but they want to

build them themselves. Of course they don't have the high-tech skills to build them but they plan to beg, borrow, steal or buy (as a last resort) needed technologies from other Powers and assemble them all into a domestic tank called the Altay. The only catch is the president of the lead contractor is currently having a very public feud with Erdogan. That's the same Erdogan who just cancelled a contract with another company he's feuding with. And there goes Turkey's new navy corvette down the drain.

Melinda: Well, at least some things in Turkey aren't changing. The Turks and Australians are in a row over the number of Australian tourists that will be allowed to attend next year's centenary of the Gallipoli landing ceremonies. This all came about because an Australian politician called on the Government to reaffirm a 1997 motion condemning the genocide against the Armenians by the Ottomans from 1915-1922. The Turks got mad and cut the number of tourists (for safety reasons) that would be allowed into Turkey for ANZAC Day celebrations next year.

Jack: But there is a bit of good news. The Marmaray project is on its way. The first major part of the project, a \$4.5 billion, 8.5 mile rail tunnel 200 feet below the Bosphorus is open, amid debate over safety issues, but open just the same. It took ten years, but they gone it done. Next up, a new major airport to rival the one Dubai is building; and a canal that will divert traffic between the Aegean and Black Sea behind Istanbul, entirely bypassing the city.

Melinda: Since it is Thanksgiving; did anybody hear anything about The Butterballs Affair in Turkey? Rush Limbaugh was talking about it the other day but every time it got interesting my car radio would go into its static mode on me.

Deathly silence.

Heath: I know, I know! The Turkish armed forces don't need a big conscripted army any more so they are cutting the time draftees serve. Apparently young men in Turkey who regard the military as an easy career are upset, and in protest dozens of them have committed acts of self-castration. That's why they call it The Butterballs Affair.

Melinda: Oh. Well, look at the bright side of it. If they can't make it in the military they can always become castrati singers.

Edi: And on that happy, high note we'll bring this special Thanksgiving report from Chateau Peericelli in beautiful Livingston, California to an end. Happy Thanksgiving!

All: GOOBLE, GOBBLE!

Autumn 1901

Austria: Has F Adriatic Sea, A Galicia, A Greece, A Serbia.

China: Retreat A Manchuria - Vladivostok..Has A Sinkiang, F Viet Nam, A Vladivostok.

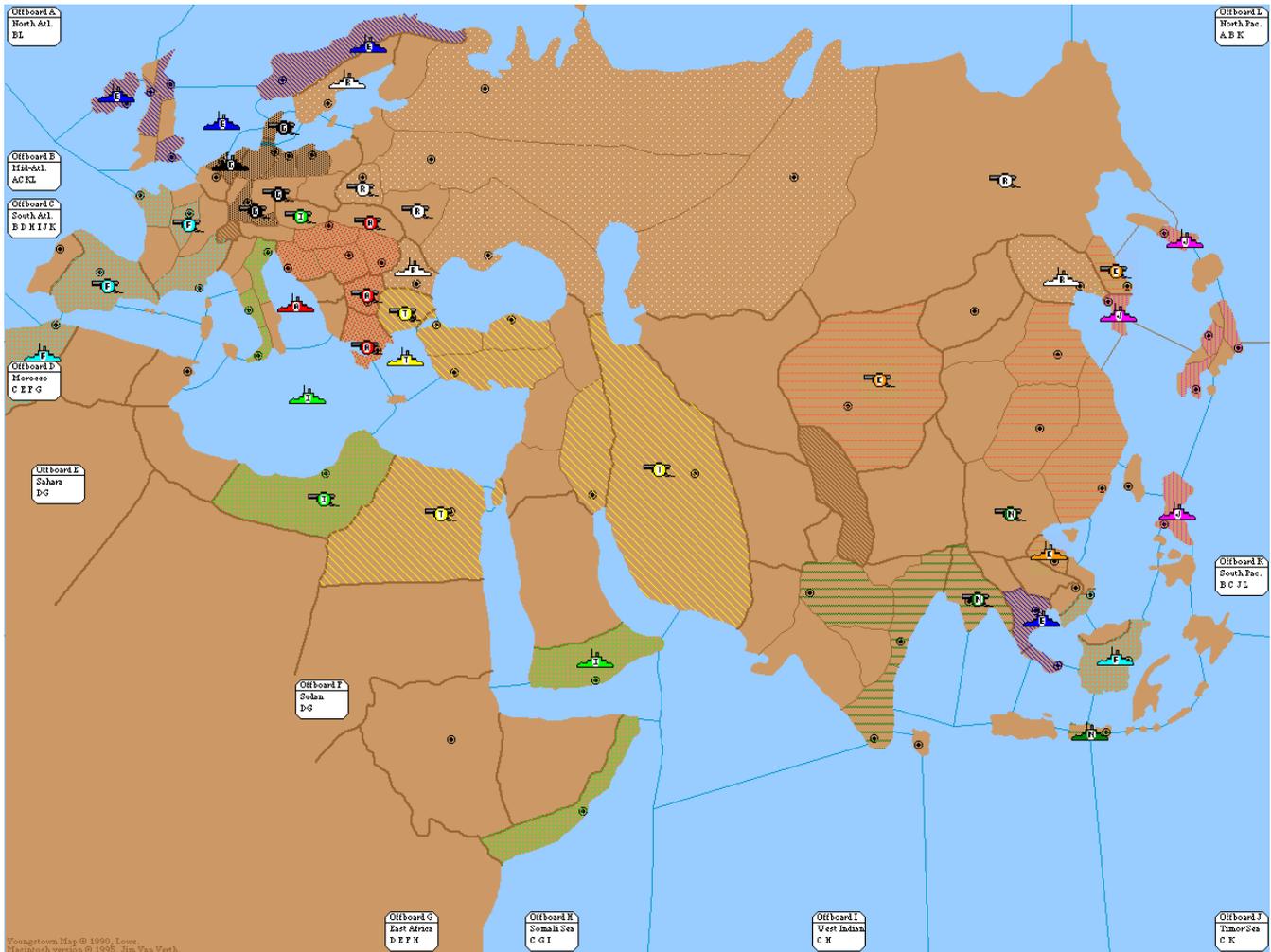
England: Has F Ireland, F North Sea, F Norway, F Thailand(ec).

France: Has F Borneo, F Morocco, A Paris, A Spain.

Germany: Has A Denmark, F Holland, A Munich, A Saxony.

India: Has A Burma, F Java, A Sikang.

Italy: Has A Bohemia, F Ionian Sea, A Pentopolis, F Yemen.
Japan: Has F Korea, F Philippines, F Kar.
Russia: Has F Sweden, F Manchuria, F Rumania, A Siberia, A Ukraine, A Warsaw.
Turkey: Has A Iran, A Bulgaria, F Aegean Sea, A Egypt.



Supply Center Chart

- Austria: Budapest, Greece, Klug, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna=6, Build 2
- China: Canton, Hankow, Peking, Sinkiang, Viet Nam=6, Build 3
- England: Edinburgh, Ireland, Joharra, Liverpool, London, Norway, Thailand=7, Build 3
- France: Borneo, Brest, Marseilles, Morocco, Paris, Saigon, Spain=7, Build 3
- Germany: Berlin, Denmark, Holland, Kiel, Munich, Posen=6, Build 2
- India: Burma, Calcutta, Delhi, Java, Madras=5, Build 2
- Italy: Magudisco, Naples, Pentopolis, Rome, Venice, Yemen=6, Build 2
- Japan: Korea, Kyoto, Osaka, Philippines, Kar, Tokyo=6, Build 3
- Russia: Manchuria, Moscow, Omsk, Rumania, Sevastopol, St. Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw=8, Build 2
- Turkey: Ankara, Baghdad, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Egypt, Iran, Smyrna=7, Build 3
- Unowned: Belgium, Cambodia, Ceylon, Ethiopia, Formosa, Outer Mongolia, Portugal, Tunis.

PRESS

The Chinese General Lu Tim Sung was quoted as saying, "We tried to think of several ways to take Vladivostok but, we never thought Russia would give it to us." Thank you Russia.

Fall and Autumn 1901 Commentary:

Rick Desper (Normal Arial)

Jim Burgess (Bold Arial)

Jack McHugh (Comic Sans MS)

Well if Jim is going to talk about Press, I'll just keep talking about moves. I have no special insights into the press other than whatever any reader can get from it himself.

Well, I probably don't either, but maybe by commenting on the press, talking about what they are doing as well, it will help people to see why writing press is fun and adds to the game.

But as to the moves...this time I'll start in the East. In particular, what is up with the Russian move?

Russia seems to be facing a C/J alliance. That's not a good thing. His response was to make a supported attack into Manchuria. Did he not see that a dislodged army could retreat to Vladivostok? With the loss of his port and his fleet trapped in Manchuria, Russia is already eliminated from being any naval threat to Japan. That might be something to worth with. He'll have to write off Asia altogether pretty soon. The only plus to that is that he doesn't have much to lose. He's only got one dot east of Omsk, and defending the Omsk/Turkistan line isn't that hard.

Within this variant Russia writing off Vladivostok is not such an illogical move. Russia is never going to have to be much of a Pacific power in this game, in fact, I would argue that Russia's holdings in Asia are more of a liability than an asset in this variant.

Yes, there is the argument that Nathan just didn't care what happened on his East Coast. In pretty much every Youngstown game I remember, this sort of thing happened. Russia's only hope is allying with one of China or Japan, and for whatever reason you just don't see it much. I also agree with Rick that defending the northern Asian line is fairly easy.

Russia usually ends up writing off Asia because this variant almost always leads to the C/J alliance (although I prefer Dragon/Whale to Elephant/Whale since Elephant makes em think of India.) India is too far away to be much help and E/F are too weak in Asia.

Quite frankly it's difficult to imagine a situation where C/J won't ally, which is one of the drawback to this variant.

Tim Haffey's style is quite straightforward, and he says it in public in his press. How can China (or Japan) have these units on or near his northern border? Russia overall is just not that strong in this variant. I believe the only way forward for Russia is convincing people of patience and passivity in the early game. Then you strike later. As Tim notes, Russia would have to promise not to build in Vladivostok, i.e. sitting there in the beginning.

Japan picked up three neutrals, including Korea. Presumably if he keeps working with China in an Elephant/Whale alliance, the Japanese whale will be moving on Formosa next, while loading up fleets to hit Borneo and turn the corner on India.

Japan definitely had a good opening move and there is no question that she plays the role of England in this variant.

So, having an engineer in Japan, Walt Buchanan is writing some really cool press, even in Japanese! I don't read Japanese, so I appreciate the translations and adding the Lean technology is interesting since we COULD use the five Why's to dig deeper into what is happening. But I'm sure most of you are just bored by Lean 101. If the Japanese just sail into India, even if the English/French outposts help, this could be the Juggernaut C/J that one usually sees in Youngstown. The wildcard is the off-board boxes, will someone send unsupported units over to disrupt Japan's growth? The time to do it is in the "setup time" when Japan hasn't quite landed on Indian shores, we'll see if it happens.

China also got three builds. And with Russia compromised, there are more to come in Outer Mongolia and a recapture of Manchuria. The Indians are in Sikang, but that's more like an annoyance than a real threat. Only a perfectly choreographed defense by India, France, and England will be able to hold back the C/J threat. Vladivostok is not an ideal place for a Chinese army, but the good news for China is that he can build in Shanghai and support an immediate recapture of Manchuria. In the longer term, China will need to do more than be Japan's land power, but that will suffice for the near term.

I'm not sure if things are quite as grim for the rest of Asia in the face of C/J alliance. India and Turkey both have the ability to bring significant power to

bear in Asia via armies since they are Asian land powers as well.

While this all is true, there isn't any guarantee that Turkey won't come after the underbelly of Indian centers as well. I find India a difficult country to play in this variant, and Heath doesn't have a plan that works to me so far. I think it IS that grim for the C/J opponents unless we get an off-board influx.

India got his two builds but the move to Sikang isn't really all that worthwhile. I think a move to Sha (what is that short for?) would have been more useful, since the army in Sikang is overextended. Well if he's knocked out, he can always retreat to Laos, which isn't that bad.

The colonials were pretty efficient getting a dot apiece in SE Asia. The French move to Borneo is stronger than a move to Cambodia - Borneo is a key part of the battleground between the Indian and Japanese fleets.

I agree, I think the question is how much EF work together in both Asia AND Europe. Let's go to the press to look for clues. First off, Larry's France goes off on the Turkey Thanksgiving tangent, one of the most BORING press themes ever devised and so obvious. When I was 17 and I did it, I thought I was cool, but Larry should know better. And more than that he stole this from himself from elsewhere. Larry also continues writing from countries that won't talk to him. He has posts from BOTH Rome and Turin this time (at least I'm pretty sure it's Larry) as Brad Wilson likely continues relative radio silence. Larry also is right that regardless of whether Borneo has headhunters or not, it is the right place to be.

On to the Middle East: the Turks have done reasonably well, and seem to have built some trust with Russia. But Turkey's problem here is that the map favors Italy over Turkey. Turkey has got two neutrals but no more easy targets. OTOH, Italy can walk into Ethiopia and Tunisia to get two more forces to hit the soft underbelly of the Turk. It becomes impossible to hold Egypt once the Italians move into the Red Sea area, and then Turkey is simply outgunned. He'll need France or Austria to go against Italy. I'm presuming, of course, that Italy and Turkey don't end up allies. It could happen!

Another weakness of this design is an issue with Turkish weakness vis-a-vis Italy/Austria. However, I think Rick is underestimating the power of the R/T alliance. While not as strong as a regular Diplomacy but it is still a potent alliance in Youngstown.

I agree with Jack here, I amaze even myself in doing so. Russia needs an ally and it likely is Turkey. I think an interesting question is what the Eastern Turkish army does next. Turkey could build a unit

and go after India, perhaps in concert with the C/J juggernaut, but more likely is working with Russia in Central Asia, to distract China and set up a line there that contains the C/J land advance.

Austria and Italy seem to be in lockstep. If that's true, they should be able to roll Turkey and maybe Russia, too, depending what happens with Germany. The fleet move to the Adriatic Sea is curious, but it may simply reflect the fact that few things are as useless as a fleet in Montenegro.

I don't know if A/I are in "lockstep"--what's up with that Italian A Boh?--but that's generally what everyone says if Austria and Italy aren't at each other's throats. I don't think A/I are cooperating as close as E/F but no one says the two western powers are allied.

Remember that Brad's Fifth Dimension negotiating style precludes any real "lockstep". It will be interesting to see how A/I relations evolve. I don't know Andrew at all and how he will react to Brad's style. No press from either of these two so far either, so far as I can tell.

France is a good power to have to pursue a global strategy along the lines of what Larry has suggested in his press. If he's serious about such an idea, we could see him moving through the off-board boxes soon. He doesn't really have to worry about Germany, presuming he's in good stead with England. And knowing Larry, I can see him trying to play the pirate as quickly as possible.

I completely agree, I think France will send a fleet west, coming around from the east, very soon.

England got the two neutrals he needs in the West, and Belgium is still up for grabs. The Germans have finally moved to Saxony and are solid, but he's going to need to break up the possible E/F alliance. Either that or he'll have to work quickly and efficiently with Austria and Italy to make some gains.

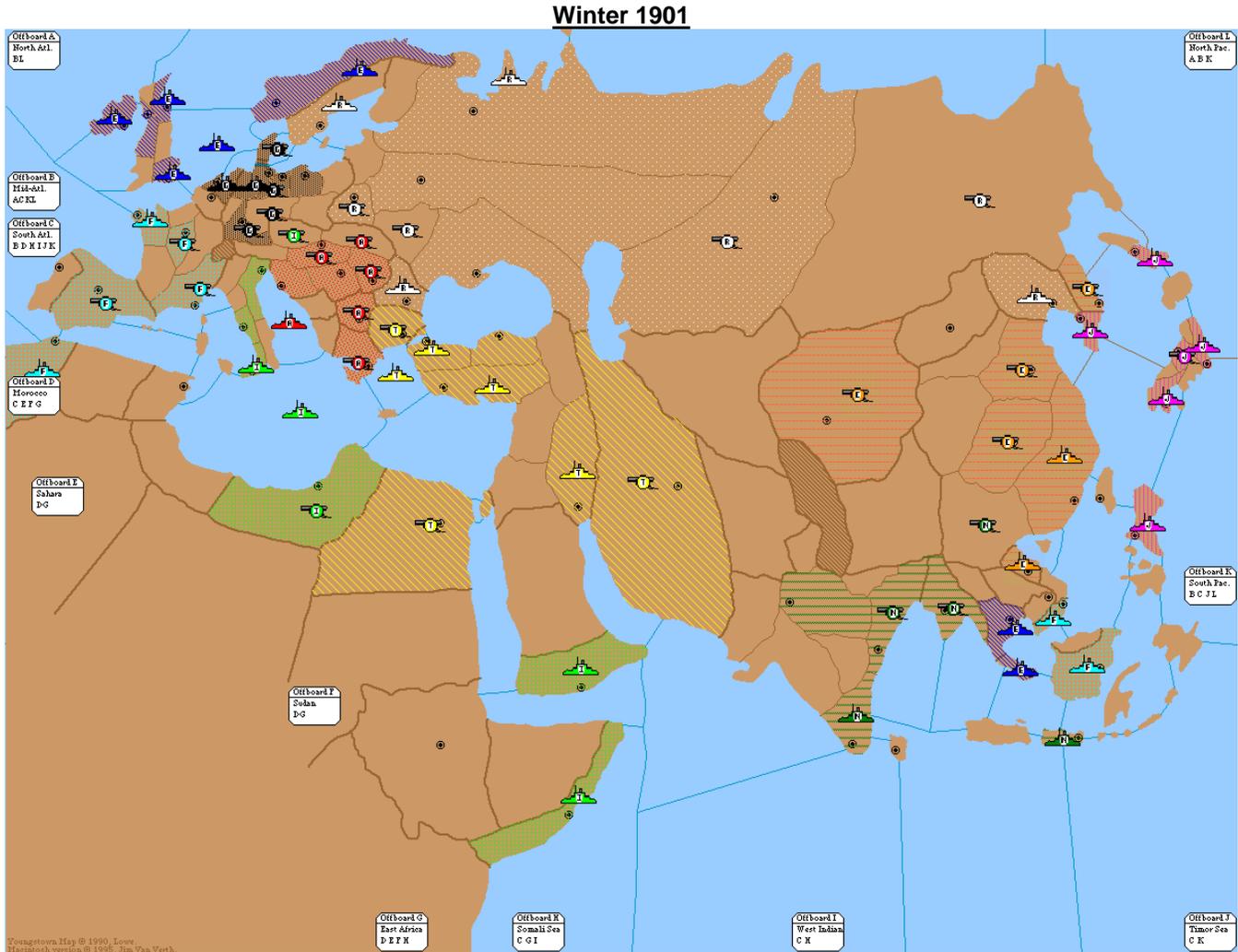
I'm not sure what is going on with Germany in the west, it appears he has take advantage of the extra unit Germany gets in this variant to aggressive pick up builds.

Right, Germany is stuck in the middle in this variant, but fairly safe from attack. One model is a bit of patience to see how things shake out, I won't be surprised if Andy Bate chooses that approach, he is a patient kind of guy.

And that brings us back to Russia/European version. Russia might be well advised to use both builds in Europe, given how bleak the Asian situation is. He'll need a force in Sevastopol to hold onto Rumania, and something in St. Pete would also be advisable. Mostly, Nathan needs to shake up the alliance situation, and soon. The natural allies right now are Turkey and Germany, but I think he'll need more than that.

Right now, just going by the map, I'd say R/T are allied and Germany is good candidate to join that alliance but it remains to be seen how the diplomatic situation breaks down--and no, I'm not going by the press for this.

Yikes, I'm agreeing with Jack again.... I'm stopping here, I need to catch my breath and check my vitals.



Austria: Build A Klug, A Vienna..Has F Adriatic Sea, A Galicia, A Greece, A Klug, A Serbia, A Vienna.

China: Build A Peking, F Canton, A Hankow..Has F Canton, A Hankow, A Peking, A Sinkiang, F Viet Nam, A Vladivostok.

England: Build F London, F Edinburgh, F Joharra..Has F Edinburgh, F Ireland, F Joharra, F London, F North Sea, F Norway, F Thailand(ec).

France: Build F Saigon, F Brest, A Marseilles..Has F Borneo, F Brest, A Marseilles, F Morocco, A Paris, F Saigon, A Spain.

Germany: Build A Berlin, F Kiel, A Posen (not built, no 3rd build earned)..Has A Berlin, A Denmark, F Holland, F Kiel, A Munich, A Saxony.

India: Build F Madras, A Calcutta..Has A Burma, A Calcutta, F Java, F Madras, A Sikang.

Italy: Build F Magudisco, F Naples..Has A Bohemia, F Ionian Sea, F Magudisco, F Naples, A Pentopolis, F Yemen.

Japan: Build F Tokyo, F Osaka, A Kyoto..Has F Korea, A Kyoto, F Osaka, F Philippines, F Kar, F Tokyo.

Russia: Build A Omsk, F St. Petersburg(nc)..Has F Manchuria, A Omsk, F Rumania, A Siberia, F St. Petersburg(nc), F Sweden, A Ukraine, A Warsaw.

Turkey: Build F Constantinople, F Smyrna, F Baghdad..Has F Aegean Sea, F Baghdad, A Bulgaria, F Constantinople, A Egypt, A Iran, F Smyrna.

PRESS

SIDDHARTHA to ALL: I would like to now lead you all in meditation - as I recite the Buddhist prayer/meditation of loving kindness.

May my allies be well, happy and at peace. May no harm come to them. May no problems or troubles come to them. And may they have the patience, courage, understanding and determination to meet and overcome the inevitable problems, troubles, and failures that come to them.

May I be well, happy and at peace. May no harm come to me. May no problems or troubles come to me. And may I have the patience, courage, understanding and determination to meet and overcome the inevitable problems, troubles, and failures that come to me.

May my enemies be well, happy and at peace. May no harm come to them. May no problems or troubles come to them. And may they have the patience, courage, understanding and determination to meet and overcome the inevitable problems, troubles, and failures that come to them.

The Viceroy's Dreams: I know not any other Reality than the lotus-eyed Krishna with hands adorned with flute, looking like a heavy-laden cloud in lustre, wearing a yellow silk garment, with His lower lip like a ruddy bimba fruit, and with face shining like the full moon.

Yokohama Bay: (2355 Japan Time, 24 December 1901): It was a cold, foggy night on Yokohama Bay and especially quiet since it was Christmas Eve. Aboard the Japanese flagship, the IJN Mikasa, a pre-dreadnought battleship, the night watch crew huddled on the bridge and observed the strange going ons. The admiral's barge had unexpectedly, quietly and without lights pulled up to the ship's launch platform a few minutes earlier. One man got out of the barge and quickly climbed the stairs and disappeared into the flag officers' quarters. He looked like the admiral but he was dressed in civilian clothes, wearing a fedora, and had a scarf wrapped around his lower face. And now the barge was returning, still quiet and without lights. The launch had barely paused before an unusually tall, slender man also dressed in civilian clothes, hat, and scarf jumped off the

launch, paused for a moment to gaze up at the still impressive but now virtually obsolete battleship, and bounded up the stairs.

At the top of the stairs the short figure of the Admiral, now clothed in dress whites with ribbons (but no medals) and sword, awaited his visitor.

"Commodore Buchanan. Thank you for coming on such short notice. I trust you had a good voyage." said Admiral Togo.

"Thank you, Admiral. It's a pleasure to meet you at last. It was a good trip." replied the Commodore.

"Please come to my cabin. We have much to discuss." said the Admiral.

"Yes, sir."

As the two walked briskly toward the flag quarters, the CPO of the watch looked puzzled "Why," he asked himself, "Is the President of the United States personal naval attache here on Christmas Eve, and why is he meeting secretly with Admiral Togo?" The officer of the watch also looked puzzled. "Well, Commodore Professor Doctor Buchanan is known as the US Navy's top gunnery officer. Perhaps that has something to do with it?"

To Be Continued.

Paris (25 December 1901): Figaro in its lead story this morning observed that the sound of exploding Champagne corks was louder in Paris last night than the sounds of cannons saluting the Christmas holiday on the eastern front; while Bon Mots noted the absence of the Indian consul at the traditional Christmas Eve festivities at the Elysee Palace.

New York, World News (WON)

Our staff of globe trotting reporters report on the goings on in Europe and Asia.

Austria: Aw so, said our contact in Vienna. It appears that Austria and Italy are more friendly than we had previously thought. His move to Serbia and Greece were very good. But, his move of the fleet to Adriatic Sea is something of a mystery. If it is intended as an anti Italian move e why not just move to Ven and get another build. No, no, something else is afoot there, we suspect. We expect Austria to build A Klug and A Trieste. A Fleet in Trieste would be a surprise and would be a strong indication of an I/A alliance.

Italy: Pretty normal moves as expected for Italy except for the Italian Army in Bohemia. Even more evidence for the T I/A alliance. As usual Italy only get one build in Europe or, if he uses his build for Yemen in Italy, he can build two units. We think he might do that. We expect Italy to build a Fleet in Naples and an Army in Ven.

Turkey: Turkey has done quite well this turn getting three builds. We also notice his fleet move to the Aegean Sea. This is a strong indication that Turkey is going after Italy. We expect him to build a Fleet in Constantinople and a Fleet in Smy. His third army maybe in Baghdad to form an attack on Panoplies. What with his move from Armenia to Iran instead of Sev and his support of Rum, it appears that Russia and Turkey are allied as well. So it would seem that there is a A/I vs R/T war building up in the East. Now let's see, which one of those are in the grand alliance?

Russia: Russia's failure to cover Sev only gives more support for the idea of a R/T alliance. So, he gets a build for Rum and Swe. In the east, we were all a little surprised to see Russia move to Manchuria which gives Vladivostok, which is his build center, to China. Yes, he did save his Fleet, but for how long. We expect to see Russia to build F StP(nc), A Mos, F Sev. Since he will not be able to build in the east.

In Western Europe:

England: In spite of all the bouncing going on we think the Grand Alliance is going well in the west, at least for now. England get three builds and according to the agreement he will have to build them all in Europe. We think he will build one fleet and two armies.

France: Playing well. We expect him to build two fleets and an army.

Germany, who only got two builds, we expect him to build one fleet and one army

Asia:

India: India appears to be making a move on China moving into Sik which is next to two of China home centers. This is certain to get a response out of China. This could mean war. India gets two builds and we have reason to believe he will build one army and one fleet.

China: Well, without a doubt Echidna will retreat to Vla and close down any building by Russia in the east. Can he hold it? Probably, my war tactics expert says. We expect him to build three armies.

Japan: If Japan builds three fleets he will be the superpower navy of the world. No one will be safe from him. Especially in the Pacific. But, don't forget about the boxes. He could come at you out of no where. We do expect Japan to build two fleets and one army.

PRAGUE, Dec, 13 -- Cheering hordes of Bohemian gourmands greeted Italian Prime Minister Mangia "The Big Cheese" Mangia as their country has been liberated from the oppression of beer, rye bread and overcooked noodles by the Italian invasion of fine wine, al dente pasta and artisanal bread. "We hope to bring our cuisine to even more of Central Europe soon," said Mangia, chucking down a shot of espresso from a newly-opened cafe in Wenceslas Square here. "These poor people have eaten so badly for so long."

Winter 1901 Commentary:

Rick Desper (Normal Arial)

Jim Burgess (Bold Arial)

Jack McHugh (Comic Sans MS)

First, let's decompose who "New York" in the press can and cannot be (unless he is being misdirecting on purpose, which certainly is possible). The speculation on Austria and not seeing why A Vie was better means he isn't Austria. It can't be Brad, nuff said. The speculation on Turkey is similarly unfounded. Russia's comments also are weak. England and France, he is not either. One might think it might be Germany; however, Germany in real TRIED to make a third build he didn't have. It doesn't sound like Heath, but it COULD have been Heath. But China built a fleet, only could have been

him if blatantly misdirecting. So maybe it is Japan, but no, it is NO ONE. Oooh, misdirections all. By the way, I think Siddhartha IS Heath Gardner.

I think the builds were interesting as usual for what they say and didn't say.

Turkey built an eastern fleet, where is that going? Is that part of Italy vs. Turkey? Does that mean that Turkey is not meddling in India or Russia/China? Yes, I think so. RT vs. AI seems to be solidified by the build choices. China building a fleet (especially

given the presumed Japanese alliance) is a bit weird, where does it go? I don't think he can afford to put it to sea right now. Maybe there was the indication that both England and France would build Eastern fleets. I think the success of a C/J juggernaut looks MUCH less likely right now. Especially given that some off-board action may be in the cards. To finish where I started, Turkey built three fleets, yikes!!!

Builds were pretty standard except for Turkey--I would expect to see at least one Turkish army built out of three builds rather than three fleets. I disagree with JB that this has anything to do with what E/F did in Asia. Rather I think this is a symptom of the comfort R/T (Nathan and Ernest) feel toward each other. Turkey feels that Russia has his northern flank thus he prefers to concentrate on fleets to expand outward at a faster rate than he could with armies.

As for C/J juggernaut, I don't see it being impacted much yet by what an countries build or don't build since it usually breaks down as standard land(China)-seapower(Japan) alliance which tends to dictate the builds of C/J rather than anything anyone else does or does not do. Russia still in a fairly fragile state in Asia and its not looking much better in Europe as there are an awful lot of Austrian armies headed into the Balkans and Italy looks like he'd rather work with Austria/Germany instead of Russia/Turkey.

The rest of the board looks pretty standard, although right now it looks like E/F vs G in the west with Italy studiously avoiding taking sides so far...in the East it looks like R vs A with T and I avoiding any overt hostilities as they maneuver for position...and the Far East is C/J taking out R and probably plotting against E/F colonies as well...

As for the press, I leave that Professor JimBob and his Diplomatic tea leaves...

Not much surprising in these builds. But there are some interesting decisions that should be noted.

Both England and France chose to build in SE Asia, though in France's case, it was either build in Saigon or waive a build, which hardly seems worthwhile. England

didn't build any armies. Germany and Russia should be happy about that. Of course, France, Germany, and Russia all build fleets that could fight England, so England may need these fleets.

I agree with this assessment, it also is important to note that it appears like England and France will work together in the SE Asian theatre, which will be very important to avoid being overwhelmed by China and Japan. Going back to Europe, there is a growing faceoff of fleets in both the north and the south. In addition to Rick's notes, how quickly the off-board boxes get used by those fleets also will be interesting to watch.

Italy didn't build any armies, either. Does he realize just how vulnerable Venice is? I'd have preferred an army in Magudisco that could walk to Ethiopia in the Spring. Armies in Africa are useful.

It does suggest that there won't be a large land battle over the interior of Europe. Only Germany, Austria and Russia are there and they could stalemate in the middle or go in different directions. And Italy's general strategy continues to evade me, I'll say more after seeing what directions they all go in the spring.

Turkey also build only fleets. These players will learn soon that the sea lanes are chock full of mini-stalemate lines.

Germany, Austria, and Russia all have sizable land forces, and this could lead to a quick bottleneck in the area of Bohemia/Galicia.

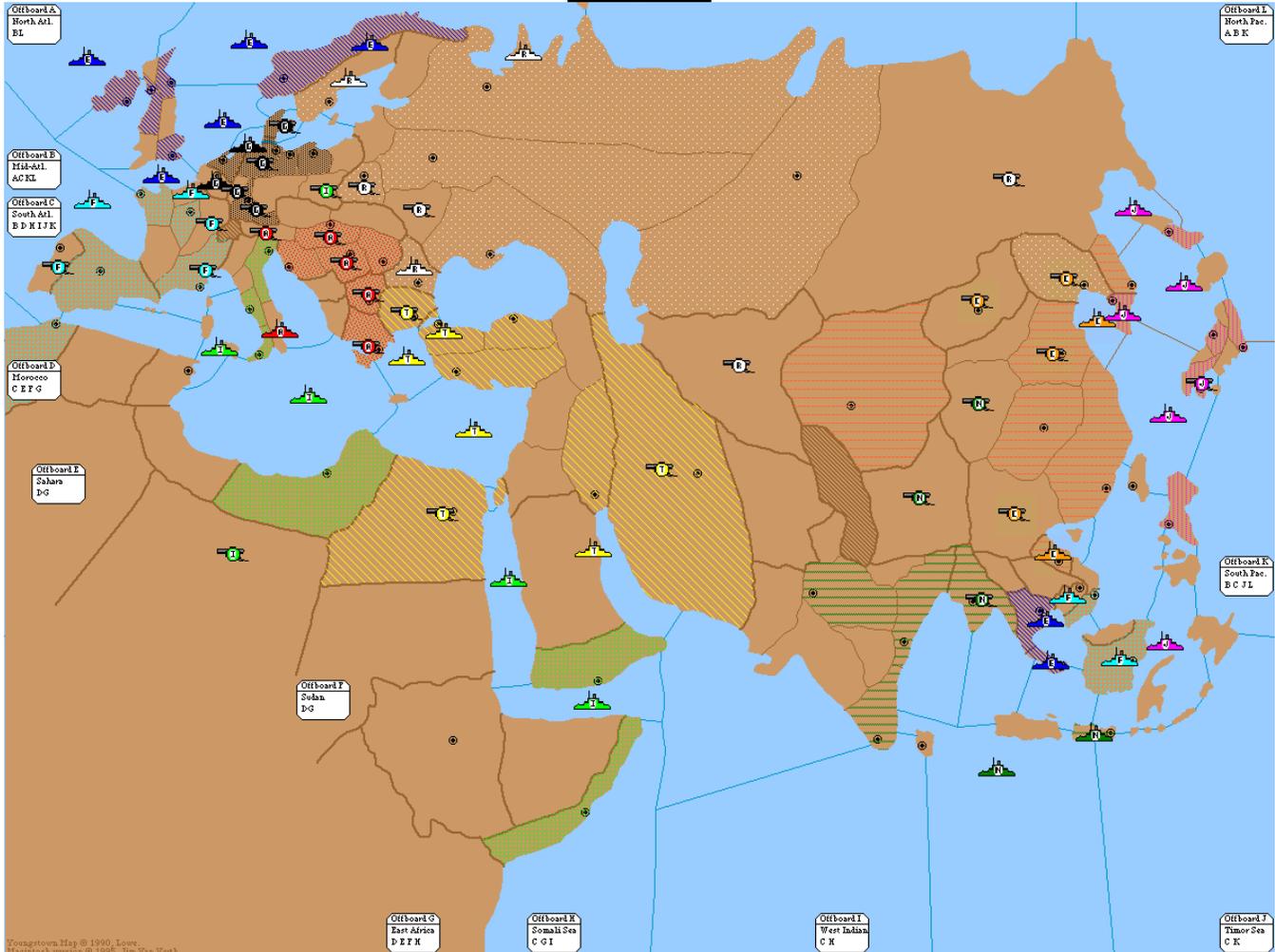
India has some flexibility, but will soon face the massive Japanese navy. It should be interesting to see how this develops. Does India want to move all his armies into China, and leave himself open to an attack from the West? If he works with Russia, that would make enough land power to contain China. But then there's the Japanese problem.

I would be very worried for long term growth as India. I don't think Russia will move aggressively into Asia, but India badly needs more land power from somewhere since Japan and China appear to be working together.

And what will become of the colonial fleets in SE Asia?

There aren't enough of them to survive unless they try to go rogue.

Spring 1902



Austria: F Adriatic Sea – Apulia, A Galicia – Vienna, A Greece Supports A Serbia, A Klug – Budapest, A Serbia Supports A Greece, A Vienna – Tyrolia.

China: F Canton - Yellow Sea, A Hankow – Sikang, A Peking Supports A Vladivostok – Manchuria, A Sinkiang - Outer Mongolia, F Viet Nam Hold, A Vladivostok – Manchuria.

England: F Edinburgh - Norwegian Sea, F Ireland - North Atlantic Ocean, F Joharra Supports F Thailand(ec), F London - English Channel, F North Sea Supports F Norway, F Norway Supports F North Sea (*Cut*), F Thailand(ec) Supports F Joharra.

France: F Borneo - Malay Sea (*Bounce*), F Brest – Picardy, A Marseilles Supports A Paris – Burgundy, F Morocco - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Paris – Burgundy, F Saigon – Cambodia, A Spain – Portugal.

Germany: A Berlin – Kiel, A Denmark Hold, F Holland – Belgium, F Kiel - Helgoland Bight, A Munich – Ruhr, A Saxony – Munich.

India: A Burma Supports A Calcutta – Tibet, A Calcutta – Tibet, F Java - Malay Sea (*Bounce*), F Madras - East Indian Ocean, A Sikang – Kansu.

Italy: A Bohemia – Silesia, F Ionian Sea - Pentopolis (*Bounce*), F Magudisco - Gulf of Aden, F Naples - Tyrrhenian Sea, A Pentopolis – Fezzan, F Yemen - Red Sea.

Japan: F Korea Supports A Vladivostok – Manchuria, A Kyoto – Osaka, F Osaka - East China Sea, F Philippines - Celebes Sea, F Kar - Sea of Okhotsk, F Tokyo - Sea of Japan.

Russia: ~~F Manchuria - Korea~~ (*Disbanded*), A Omsk - Turkistan, F Rumania Supports A Bulgaria, A Siberia Supports F Manchuria (*Ordered to Move*), F St. Petersburg(nc) Hold, F Sweden - Norway (*Fails*), A Ukraine Supports F Rumania, A Warsaw Supports A Saxony - Silesia (*Void*).

Turkey: F Aegean Sea Supports F Smyrna - Eastern Mediterranean Sea, F Baghdad - Nejd(ec), A Bulgaria Supports F Rumania, F Constantinople Supports A Bulgaria, A Egypt - Pentopolis (*Bounce*), A Iran Supports A Omsk - Turkistan, F Smyrna - Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

PRESS

There once was a man from Siberia,
who upheld a most stringent criteria
"choosing ally or foe
will require you to go
through the pros and the cons of who's near to ya"

Said he, "I have found,
That it's best all around
to let actions
(not words)
make it clear to ya"

India -> Turkey/Italy: I'm leaving my centers wide open and heading east against the evil Europeans. I'm trusting you not to walk in and take Delhi and Madras.

Figaro's headlines this morning: "GOVERNMENT SHOWS SIGNS OF PEERINOIA WITH MOVES TO PICARDY AND BURGUNDY." Le Soir's headlines last night were: "SIGNS OF A RIFF IN MOROCCO DISAPPEAR, FLEET SAILS FOR HOME." Bon Mots trumpeted: "DOES FRANCE FAVOR PORT OVER ROJA?" and our correspondent Miss Saigon wondered: "Does a Japanese fleet in the Celebes mean Tokyo has acquired a taste for java over green tea?"

ADEN, Jan. 3 -- In a surprise appearance here, Italian Foreign Minister Vino Vino welcomed the millions of Muslims who have flocked to this new outpost of the Italian Empire so they can drink Barolo, Prosecco and Soave freely. "Mohammad was a decent guy but the teetotal stuff is for the birds," Vino said as he personally poured ice-cold fizzy Lambrusco for the thirsty Grand Mufti of Yemen.

MILAN, Jan. 4 -- President Mangia "The Big Cheese" Mangia opened the New Year at La Scala with a performance of "Die Fledermaus" amid enough Prosecco to float the navy's newest battleship. He dismissed rumors of a French invasion of neighboring Piedmont. "I just sent Premier La Peery a case of the best Chianti," Mangia said. "Along with Gorgonzola Dulce. He won't be betray me!"

Yokohama Bay (2355 Japan Time, 25 February 1902):
It was a cool, damp night with just a hint of spring in the air on Yokohama Bay. There was little traffic on the Bay, especially around the Navy base, and most of the crew of the Japanese flagship, the IJN Mikasa, was on shore

leave. The night watch crew huddled on the bridge drinking green tea and tried to stay warm. The senior warrant officer of the watch looked at the officer of the watch on duty with raised eye-brows that made a bridge across the top of his nose as the admiral's barge unexpectedly, quietly and without lights pulled up to the ship's launch platform. First one man got out of the barge and, as usual, quickly climbed the stairs and disappeared into the flag officer's quarters. He looked like the admiral but once again he was dressed in civilian clothes, wearing a fedora, and had a scarf wrapped around his lower face. The watch warrant officer thought to himself that the admiral was doing most of his comings and goings of late in civilian clothes. Strange. As the admiral's barge pulled away, a second, even larger barge pulled up, to the platform. Two aides in court dress stepped awkwardly on to the platform and then scurried up the stairs. As the watch warrant officer and officer of the deck watched with wide, and only slightly slanted, eyes the Admiral came out of his quarters in full dress whites, sword, and decorations. He took his position at the top of the stairs as a third figure dressed in a Grand Admiral of the Fleet uniform with no sword but full medals and decorations, stepped on to the platform, paused and looked up at the Mikasa's profile, and slowly climbed the stairs. The Admiral, watch crew, and aides bowed deeply. "Welcome to the Mikasa, Your Imperial Majesty," the Admiral Said. "Thank you," came the reply in a deep baritone. The two disappeared into the flag officer's quarters. A few minutes later the admiral's barge returned, this time carrying the tall, slender man the watch crew had come to recognize from his frequent visits to the Mikasa. This time, however, he was in his dress whites with no sword but wearing his decorations. He quickly climbed the ladder, saluted the watch officer and headed for the flag officer's quarters.

The watch officer opened the door to the admiral's reception room, and Commodore Buchanan stepped inside, paused, came to attention and saluted his host, Admiral Togo. The Admiral returned his salute and then turned to his right as the third figure stepped out of the shadows. The Admiral said, "Your Imperial Majesty, may I present Commodore Buchanan of the United States Navy." Not sure how to deal with meeting an Emperor, the Commodore saluted and then gave a slight bow." The Emperor returned the salute. barely nodded his head and smiled at the Commodore. He spoke english well, with only a slight accent, "Before you leave Japan

We wanted to meet you personally and thank you for your service to our country and especially our Navy. We will not forget this. As a token of our appreciation and in recognition of your services We are pleased to present you with the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun. Please convey to President Roosevelt our thanks for letting us borrow you for these few months. And now we know you have things to discuss with the Admiral." And with that the Emperor walked out.

The Admiral looked at the Commodore and said, "Nice decoration. Usually you have to be an admiral or general to get that. Now, some Suntory whisky to celebrate? Two fingers or four?" and he smiled. "How about three?" the Commodore replied, smiling. A quick pour, a click of Mikasa crystal glasses, a toss of the head and the admiral turned serious. "Everything is done? We're ready to go?" "Yes, Admiral." "The 4th Fleet consisting of the new dreadnoughts Miso, Sushi, Sashimi and Tempura have finished their trials, tests and training and are ready. The 5th fleet consisting of the new dreadnoughts Takuri, Toyoda, Nissan and Honda are likewise ready. The new Ramen class cruisers: Shio, Shoyu, Tonkotsu and Negi exceeded their trial goals and are the fastest cruisers in the world with larger guns than on any other cruiser. We are ready." "Then your mission is accomplished. Please excuse me, but I have much work to do." The Commodore saluted, turned, and walked out.

"Send my chief of staff, intelligence flag officer, and communications officer in now," the Admiral ordered.

Once gathered, the Amiral looked at his aides solemnly and ordered, "ラーメン！今では、あなたの麺を使っている！

I issue Code Ramen. Now that's using your noodle!"

Hours later the War Minister cabled instructions to Army HQ in Koyoto: I issue Code 倒れたアーチ Taoreta āchi "Fallen Arches." The War Minister looked at General Kuroki Tamemoto and said, "Our Army may be small but it is the finest in Asia thanks to you." Tamemoto said nothing, but smiled.

Vladivostok, Russia (2000, 17 March 1902): Imperial Box, Primorsky Opera House. "Commodore Buchanan it's so nice of you to join us. What an unexpected surprise," said the Governor. "Yes," said the Commodore, "I discovered it was faster to get home using the Trans-Siberian Railroad to St.Petersburg and then sailing to New York; then it would be to sail across the Pacific."

"Excellent. tonight you'll be able to see a relatively unknown work by Tchaikowsky called "War and Peace." I hear the battle scenes and fireworks are quite realistic. They've even arranged for some of the battleships in the harbor to fire their cannons in time with the music. Isn't that right, Admiral Gorschkov?" "Yes, we promise an exciting night!" said the Admiral. "I'm sure it will be," said the Commodore as he smiled to himself.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Beijing, China. International Network News. The past several months have seen a disrupting turn of events. As Japan appears poised for an invasion of the mainland, Russia's major naval port at Vladivostok fell to imperialist Chinese forces. Traditionally enemies, it is possible Chinese land forces will cooperate with Japanese naval forces to secure an upper hand in the bitter winter-war.

Further south, colonial forces of Western Europe continue to oppress native populations. Symptoms of small pox have been reported. In other news, a cold snap in south-east Asia has compelled England and France to provide blankets to the native population. India presses eastward in the hopes of liberating those native people from colonial dominance.

Turkey, Italy, Austria, and Russia all dance upon a round shot in Eastern Europe. There are strong indications of an A/I alliance to counter the obvious support R/T are providing each other. The current balance of power will grind this region to a stalemate, unless something is done to break the deadlock. The industrious, if paranoid, German Kaiser has been cautious. Doubtless do the the unusual presence of an Italian army on his border. It has been widely reported that the Kaiser has taken to his study, and no official word has come from Berlin as of late.

Finally, in Western Europe there are obvious signs of longtime enemies E/F working together. The Prime Minister has remarked that it is only a matter of time before the German nut is cracked, but that he would much prefer authentic Russian nesting dolls. The acquisition of said dolls will allow England to field an actual army. Should that happen, it will undoubtedly remain in London, where it can relax and let the navy do all the work - as usual.

Germany-All "Apologies for lack of contact. Apart from Xmas and New Year, have also had son's 18th birthday and we're house hunting, too. Hopefully I'll have time to write next season."

Spring 1902 Commentary:

Rick Desper (Normal Arial)

Jim Burgess (Bold Arial)

Jack McHugh (Comic Sans MS)

Really interesting Spring turn! Let me start.

Press first: Siberia probably is written by Russia, did he just misorder in trying to support the unit that was moving (and thus was annihilated)? He did make clear where he is going, and likely working WITH India. India also wrote press to Italy and Turkey which seems to have been heeded. Other than Andy Bate's short note, I think the rest of the press is Peeriblah, where the only issue of note is that it continues to support the English/French alliance.

I'm not sure the Indian press was written by India. Why writes press saying "oh, lookie at all my undefended home SC!!!"

Austria: Recall I said with the Winter discussion that EITHER central Europe would be a cluster bounce of armies, or they would open it up and scatter. Austria definitely supported the latter approach. I think he will take Venice and put Italy on serious trouble report, as we suggested earlier. Austria, Russia and Turkey appear to have agreed to just keep everyone lined up and supporting each other in the Balkans while Italy is attacked by Austria. As I'll say below, Turkey is working in Austria's favor on this. Once Venice goes down, the other Italian home centers are in big trouble.

Interesting move. Just a disaster for Italy. He's going to lose Venice and then has problems trying to stay alive. Austria takes Venice and then, if Italy doesn't get a build, Austria will easily collect Naples and Rome.

China: China seems to be trusting India WAY too much, or that was a stab by India. India does say he is attacking the "infidels from Europe" and that is possible, but with Russia's moves, China's home centers are in big trouble.

I agree I see no reason for China to allow two Indian armies into China...if he doesn't put a stop that forthwith he deserves the stab he is about to get.

India invaded in F01. I don't think this counts as a stab. China can trade Vlad for Manchuria, and will pick up Outer Mongolia. He can even keep a home SC open for a build, presuming Japan doesn't stab. China needs to do something to dissuade his two inland neighbors. If Japan's his only ally, he's going to get nowhere.

England: In SE Asia, I would not have just "supported to hold", you have to be doing something, or others will be maneuvering against you. India is moving forward and eventually will be able to break you down. In Europe, while moving, this also is stagnating toward a line between EF vs. GR.

Criticizing E/F in Asia in this game is a waste of time--quite frankly the units are nothing more than cannon fodder to slow down C/I/J in Asia, if I were redesigning this variant I would replace them with neutral units that will simply stand and defend. It really doesn't matter what E/F do in Asia, they always end like a Russian novel, either dead or in unhappy marriages or both....

Unless England has completely toadied to somebody, he might have sailed that fleet in Singapore. Even if he's just a speed bump, he might as well do it with style.

As for your Europe, I'm not feeling the love at all--mostly a lot of CYA by all three western powers and Russia (with that build in StP(nc)). It's not so much stagnating as staggering toward an E/F vs G/R.

I'm not feeling a lot from England here except for defensiveness. You can't grow in Youngstown playing defensively. You've got to take a chance and find a good ally right away. There are too many powers to fall behind.

France: The story is very similar. But in SE Asia at least Borneo saved itself for this year with a judicious bounce, and Cambodia will be picked up safely with no one threatening Saigon.

Nothing really to add here, although I'm surprised Italy isn't more concerned with France's A Mar, but their mutual policy of studiously ignoring each other seems to be working for both so who am I to criticize?

France snags Cambodia in the East. The West features many forces converging on Belgium. We'll find out exactly what's going on there in the Fall.

Germany: Lined up on a good line to the west, but what will the rogue Italian in Silesia do? Unfortunately, protecting Berlin probably is necessary.

There's no point in defending Berlin when Posen is undefendable. Tactics have been sloppy so far. We'll quickly see if Germany can talk his way into something.

I suspect Germany would like to ally with both Russia AND Austria but, clearly based on the positions on the board, this won't be possible, thus exposing the inherent geopolitical contradictions in the *Drei Kaiserbund* (or Three Emperor's League) policy that

Bismarck used to isolate France for over 20 years. This policy only worked as long as Bismarck could keep Russia and Austria from clashing over the Balkans, which is exactly what is happening in this game....

I think a RAG is quite possible (maybe not at the moment) and ought to be pretty strong. A well-coordinated R/G should be able to take Norway from England. But with the English in NWG that won't happen. Ugh, this is a mess. Germany is probably going to lose a force...

India: I was really worried about Heath, but he seems to have made the right tactical and diplomatic moves, as noted above the question is: allied with China or attacking him?

You worry too much Mama JB--India is pretty hard to mess up in this variant, you're a central power but no one is close enough to hurt you unless they telegraph it by coming straight at you. No one will do this unless you completely rogue and give the board a reason to snuff you. As for your question, that's probably exactly the choice India is giving China--would you like to attack with me or be attacked by me?

I think India is attacking China, and probably with help from Russia. But the problem is that the only inland SC for India to go after is Hankow. He'd be better off going after the dots in SE Asia. He could take Sinkiang, but that's too isolated to be very useful for India.

Italy: Losing Venice this turn could be the start of a serious downturn for the Italians who look uncoordinated. Is anyone his ally??

I'm not as worried about Italy as JB is--if Austria attacks him now what does he get? Two centers, at most, meanwhile France gets into the mid-Med and the big winner is Turkey who gets rid of all those pesky Italian fleets and picks up Italy's African holdings. And Turkey is still firmly allied to Russia, Austria should only consider stabbing Italy *AFTER* Turkey stabs Russia and not one second before. I still A/I as soild, now if that A Tyr debouches to the south, I'll have to re-evaluate their relationship...

If Austria is working with Turkey, Italy is toast. And if that's what's going on, this is a terrible move for Italy. He'll lose Venice right away. And he's one force short to do all of: defend Naples, take Tunis, defend Pentopolis, defend Yemen, take Ethiopia. He's pretty much forced

to take Posen since that army is too far from home. And he seems to be in full anti-Turk mode.

The move to Silesia is killing him here. Well, if he takes Posen, he should get a build even if he loses Venice. An army in Rome would be useful.

Or he could abandon the boot and build an army in Magadisco. Re-center his mass in Africa, figuring that Austria won't chase him across the Med.

Japan: The main worry for Japan is what happens to his Chinese ally now? Otherwise, no one threatens Japan, and this is one of the issues with this variant, Japan is unthreatened until it can reach a stable 8-10 centers. But where will he be attacking at that point, check back in a game year or two.

Ack!...you worry too much Mama JB, this was always going to happen if C/J allied so one can hardly expect Japan to be too surprised or upset--in the early game Japan and China are pretty much one in the same, what's good for one is good for the other and vice-versa, later on, not so much...and didn't we just agree India is getting too close to China--well I'm sure that for all the problems that creates for China, it does wonders for Japan's peace of mind....

Screw China. Japan can add Vladivostok and Formosa to the empire.

I don't know why Japan put his army in a place where only one fleet could convoy it, as opposed to a step to the North, where it could have been sent into Russia. Convoying to Formosa would be silly. He really should be convoying to Vladivostok and landing the fleet in Formosa, but his army's in the wrong place.

Japan might decide to move into South China Sea now, rather than waiting. It would mean delaying the capture of Formosa, but I think Japan might want to hit the gas while he can.

But he'll probably take the dot.

Russia: Other than the eastern disorder (which didn't matter), Russia made some good moves, and maybe he can form a line on both fronts to avoid further bleeding, but taking that home Chinese center is important. Is India on China's side or not? That's important to Russia.

I think Russia, considering how unbalanced this design is for Russia, is doing fine...He might have Indian helping him in Asia, better than most Russia's do and he's got a nice solid line in Europe and a decent shot

at allying with Germany AND Turkey...always a good thing for Russia...

The good news is that he cannot lose Vladivostok, since it's not his. The fleet is sunk, but it was useless anyway. He's in good shape to pick up Sinkiang, presuming that India doesn't block him. Russia caught a break when Austria moved away. But his European position is still crappy.

Turkey: Is stable for the moment, and then if Italy collapses, Turkey is poised to make major gains next game year.

So generous JB...Turkey is stable???..that would be great if it were a recovering from a gunshot or a car accident, damning with faint praise here...Turkey is in a good position--hasn't done a whole lot but then hasn't been presented with many opportunities...this is another country not favored by this variant so I have lower expectations for Turkey than say China or Italy...

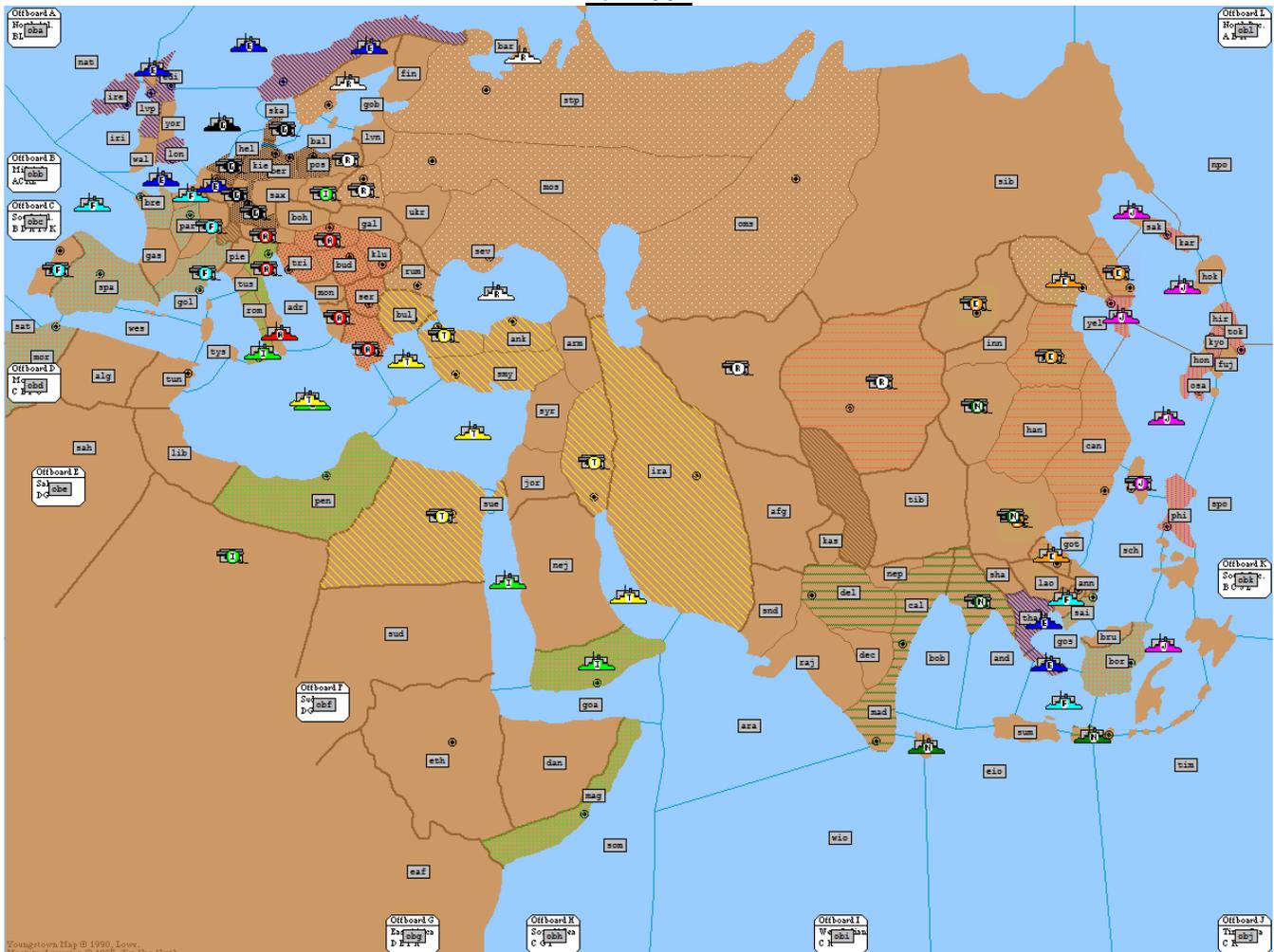
Hmm...what's his next build? Nothing this turn, but he can probably blast into the Ionian and get position on Pentopolis.

My big question here is: is anybody allied with anybody else? In these large map variants, it's a huge strategic advantage to have an alliance that is growing faster than the powers on the other side of the board. So far the board is a mess, with some powers stronger than others, but nobody seems to have found the David Hood-type alliance, that quickly settles its own part of the board to be able to move with strength across the board in the midgame.

I like Rick's last comment, the killer alliance has not emerged yet. It may soon, but it hasn't yet. Let's keep watching.

Other than to say I find it interesting that Rick and I are opposite on Italy--he's a strong sell and I'm a strong buy--I have nothing to add.

Fall 1902



Austria: F Apulia Supports F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea, A Budapest – Vienna, A Greece Supports A Serbia – Albania, A Serbia – Albania, A Tyrolia – Venice, A Vienna – Tyrolia.

China: A Manchuria – Vladivostok, A Outer Mongolia Hold, A Peking - Hankow (*Bounce*), A Sikang – Hankow (*Dislodged*, retreat to Shan or Laos or Canton or OTB), F Viet Nam Hold, F Yellow Sea – Manchuria.

England: F English Channel Supports F North Sea – Belgium, F Joharra - Malay Sea (*Fails*), F North Atlantic Ocean – Clyde, F Norwegian Sea Supports F Norway, F North Sea – Belgium, F Norway Supports F Norwegian Sea (*Cut*), F Thailand(ec) Hold.

France: F Borneo - Malay Sea, A Burgundy Supports F Picardy (*Cut*), F Cambodia Hold, A Marseilles Supports A Burgundy, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean Hold, F Picardy Supports F North Sea – Belgium, A Portugal Hold.

Germany: F Belgium Hold (*Disbanded*), A Denmark Hold, F Helgoland Bight - North Sea, A Kiel – Holland, A Munich - Burgundy (*Fails*), A Ruhr Supports F Belgium.

India: A Burma Supports A Tibet – Sikang, F East Indian Ocean – Ceylon, F Java Hold, A Kansu - Hankow (*Bounce*), A Tibet – Sikang.

Italy: A Fezzan Supports F Red Sea - Egypt(ec), F Gulf of Aden – Yemen, ~~F Ionian Sea – Western Mediterranean Sea~~ (*Dislodged*, retreat to Tunis or Libya or Pentopolis or Adriatic Sea or Tyrrhenian Sea or OTB), F Red Sea - Egypt(ec) (*Fails*), A Silesia - Berlin (*Fails*), F Tyrrhenian Sea – Naples.

Japan: F Celebes Sea Supports F Borneo - Malay Sea, F East China Sea Convoys A Osaka – Formosa, F Korea Supports A Manchuria – Vladivostok, A Osaka – Formosa, F Sea of Japan Supports F Korea, F Sea of Okhotsk Supports A Manchuria – Vladivostok.

Russia: F Rumania - Black Sea, A Siberia – Sinkiang, F St. Petersburg(nc) - Norway (*Fails*), F Sweden Supports F St. Petersburg(nc) – Norway, A Turkistan Supports A Siberia – Sinkiang, A Ukraine – Warsaw, A Warsaw – Prussia.

Turkey: F Aegean Sea - Ionian Sea, A Bulgaria – Constantinople, F Constantinople - Aegean Sea, F Eastern Mediterranean Sea Supports A Egypt, A Egypt Supports F Ionian Sea - Pentopolis (*Void*), A Iran – Baghdad, F Nejd(ec) - Persian Gulf.

PRESS

Cable to POTUS: TOP SECRET In Transit aboard the Trans-Siberian RR (31 October 1902): Media reports on the decisive Japanese-Chinese victory over the Russians at the Battle of Vladivostok are largely correct. The Russian Pacific Fleet no longer exists. Vladivostok was occupied by Chinese Army which then occupied Manchuria. Three Japanese fleets are supporting the Chinese offensive. Japanese-Chinese strategy, tactics and equipment have been superior throughout. Russians are no longer a factor in the Western Pacific. Vladivostok and Manchuria are in Chinese hands. Korea and Western Pacific are in Japanese hands. Situation in SEA still confused.

RAT to the World: Out of the quagmire of Balkans has emerged the greatest alliance on the board:

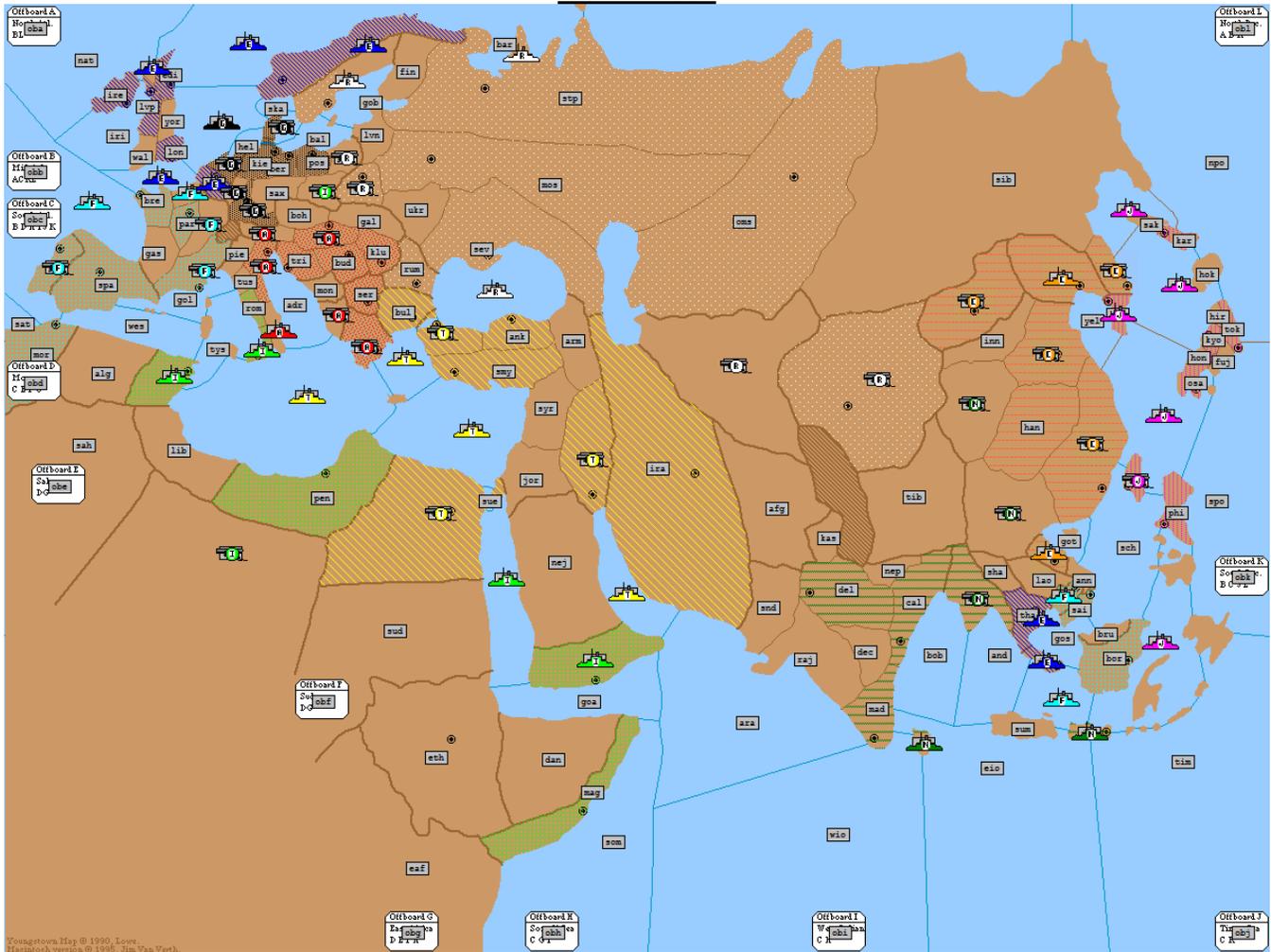
Russia/Austria/Turkey. Love us or hate us, we will still crush you!

J/C to RAT: Oh yah? We'll see what you say when there is a Japanese army in Omsk and a Chinese army in Iran! Just have to deal with pesky India and these colonial Europeans first.

China Declares War on India. Anyone want to join in? Preferably on China's side.

Germany-All "Apologies again - full of cold germs so even the extra week hasn't allowed me to send any emails."

Autumn 1902



Austria: Has A Albania, F Apulia, A Greece, A Tyrolia, A Venice, A Vienna.

China: Retreat A Sikang - Canton..Has F Manchuria, A Outer Mongolia, A Peking, F Viet Nam, A Vladivostok, A Canton.

England: Has F Belgium, F Clyde, F English Channel, F Joharra, F Norwegian Sea, F Norway, F Thailand(ec).

France: Has A Burgundy, F Cambodia, F Malay Sea, A Marseilles, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean, F Picardy, A Portugal.

Germany: Has A Denmark, A Holland, A Munich, F North Sea, A Ruhr.

India: Has A Burma, F East Indian Ocean *[should be F Ceylon]*, F Java, A Kansu, A Sikang.

Italy: Retreat F Ionian Sea - Tunis..Has F Tunis, A Fezzan, F Yemen, F Red Sea, A Silesia, F Naples.

Japan: Has F Celebes Sea, F East China Sea, F Korea, A Formosa, F Sea of Japan, F Sea of Okhotsk.

Russia: Has F Black Sea, A Sinkiang, F St. Petersburg(nc), F Sweden, A Turkistan, A Warsaw, A Prussia.

Turkey: Has F Ionian Sea, A Constantinople, F Aegean Sea, F Eastern Mediterranean Sea, A Egypt, A Baghdad, F Persian Gulf.

Supply Center Chart

Austria: Budapest, Greece, Klug, Serbia, Trieste, Venice, Vienna=7, Build 1

China: Canton, Hankow, Manchuria, Outer Mongolia, Peking, Viet Nam, Vladivostok=7, Build 1
 England: Belgium, Edinburgh, Ireland, Joharra, Liverpool, London, Norway, Thailand=8, Build 1
 France: Borneo, Brest, Cambodia, Marseilles, Morocco, Paris, Portugal, Saigon, Spain=9, Build 2
 Germany: Berlin, Denmark, Holland, Kiel, Munich, Posen=6, Build 1
 India: Burma, Calcutta, Ceylon, Delhi, Java, Madras=6, Build 1
 Italy: Magudisco, Naples, Pentopolis, Rome, Tunis, Yemen=6, Even
 Japan: Formosa, Korea, Kyoto, Osaka, Philippines, Kar, Tokyo=7, Build 1
 Russia: Moscow, Omsk, Rumania, Sevastopol, Sinkiang, St. Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw=8, Build 1
 Turkey: Ankara, Baghdad, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Egypt, Iran, Smyrna=7, Even
 Unowned: Ethiopia.

Fall and Autumn 1902 Commentary:

Rick Desper (Normal Arial)

Jim Burgess (Bold Arial)

Jack McHugh (Comic Sans MS)

What is Italy up to here? He misreads the map and tries an impossible attack on Berlin instead of the unstoppable attack on Posen? He ignores Ethiopia completely and instead tries an attack on Egypt which, had it been successful, might have forced Egypt to retreat to an Italian dot? He's only still at six SCs because Austria and Turkey forced him out of the Ionian Sea so he could retreat to a dot. Had he gone to Ethiopia and Posen, he'd have gotten two builds and could have put up a good fight in Africa.

Just a disaster.

Looks like Rick was completely right and I was completely wrong on Italy. Rick's sell advice was sound, my buy advice was totally wrong. In my defense, I didn't expect Austria's stab for reasons I outlined last turn. It is one the best stabs I've ever seen and I don't see how Italy can possible recover in this game. This means Austria will soon be at war with or working with France as well as Turkey. I think Austria will come to a modus vivendi with France, some temporary agreement since France will likely want to concentrate on the West and the Far East and Austria will have his hands full with R/T/G. Of course, given where Austria now is in Tyr, Austria could play a role in the West by putting pressure on Germany.

As for the East, it looks like Russia and Austria have both stood down--Russia is going north against Germany/England and Austria is busy swallowing Italy. The big question to me is where do Austrian-Turkish relations stand now that Italy is no longer much of a factor? Answer that and I'll be able to tell you a lot more about what I think will happen in the Balkans and Near East.

Let's not get ahead ourselves here though, from west to east—I'll start with England. England manages to pick up Bel with an assists from France but loses the North Sea to Germany. That is not as bad as it sounds as England in Cly, Nwy, Nwg, and Eng so other than Lon/Edi, which England can cover from Eng and Cly, there isn't much risk of the High Seas Fleet breaking out. Other than Bel going to Eng, its all quiet on the Western Front so far....

In the Far East, Eng/Fra continue to work on their limited positions, I see some possibility for a some small gains as India stabs China but overall the position remains bleak for the Western powers in Asia. Japan is doing very well and that's a bad sign for European holdings in Asia.

Andy's Germany has major problems, not so much from the loss of Bel—I thought Andy made the best of a bad situation by moving into Nth with his F Bel—but because Russia has moved two armies from the Austrian/Balkan front to the Russo-German frontier. The only reason Germany didn't lose a center was because not only did Brad's Italy lose three dots but he forgot he's playing Youngstown and not regular Dip and tried to take Ber instead of Pos from Sil.

I've played with Andy a few times so I wouldn't be surprised to see him talk his way out of this—if I were Germany, I'd be trying to convince Russia and Austria that they need me to hold back the E/F alliance and to keep Germany on the stalemate line—although it's not a true stalemate line, it's as close as you can get in Youngstown.

Russia has written off Asia, but this is to be expected and not fatal in my opinion. Nathan has an excellent position in Europe—both Turkey and Austria are moving away from Russia's home centers. The biggest problem Russia faces now is where to pick up more centers. Germany seems the obvious candidate but care must be taken not to allow other countries to gain too much from Russia's heavy lifting.

I've discussed Turkey a lot already, I only want to add that Ernest is in a good position to pick up Italy's centers in Africa and then he can decide if he wants to go East or West. A very good position for any Diplomacy player to be in and Ernest is one of the better players.

Heath's India continues his straight up attack on Tim's China. China gambled on going after Russia but that stab isn't paying off because all the gains are being lost to India. Good play by Heath as the mistake many players make with India is to sit in the middle of the board and wait for the game to come to them, I think that is a mistake and attacking is a better play. India is doing very well so far in this game.

Although Tim's China is hurting, I don't consider the position hopeless there is still time to hold off India and China has Western colonial centers that can be taken for growth. The biggest threat is now from Japan—Walt could easily decide to stab Tim and work with Heath instead.

Finally we have Japan—Walt is doing the best so far but considering that this game favors the Asian powers that not a real surprise. However Walt is doing well even by this standard—no other powers near his home centers and he's managed to pick up four neutrals and he's getting ready to pick up more from either China or the Western powers in Asia.

Jack's Power Rankings for Autumn 1902:

1. Japan
2. Austria
3. India
4. Turkey
5. France

6. England
7. Russia
8. Germany
9. China
10. Italy

This is shaking out to look like central powers vs. peripheral powers.

Austria and Turkey are going to roll over Italy. This set of orders by Italy is particularly weak, as he tried to go from Silesia to Berlin, a move that's not possible on this Youngstown map. Posen was the place to go, not out of any hostility to Germany, but effectively to allow Italy to build a new force on the boot. As things stand, he's only spared the need to disband because he was allowed to retreat to Tunis. Mind you, he could have also taken Ethiopia, too, and given himself two builds. An army build in Magudisco would have been quite useful. Italy also tried to take Egypt, but failed when he ordered F Ion - Wes instead of F Ion - Eas. Of course, had he actually taken Egypt, the Turk could have retreated to Pentopolis.

OK, so that was the most exciting action of the turn. Roaming from there...France picks up Portugal and supports the English into Belgium. Germany loses Belgium but picks up the North Sea. The Russians move to Prussia, possibly to help the Germans defend Posen. The Press section declares that there's a RAT alliance, and certainly the moves support that claim. If so, then we should ask how Germany fits into all of this. Join the RAT or the E/F? He claims to have been too ill to communicate.

Moving to Asia...although it looks like India has invaded China, given that China has a build in hand, Italy is not going to be able to take any of those Chinese SCs unless he has help from Russia or Japan. Japan might want to do this, or he might want to turn the corner around Indonesia. That naval front looks very tough if the colonials cooperate with India.

General Situation: With a large variant, it often the game breaks down into regions and certain large gaps appear. In this game, the Off-Board boxes remain unused, and there is that big slash down the middle of the board with no units. Another thing that happens (with just one neutral left) is that some powers begin to fall behind by not building. Italy is one of those. As we discussed last season, Italy and Turkey are the first to stagnate, and Turkey may have the upperhand on Italy, so Italy may be the first actually to go down.

Some specifics going east to west:

Japan: Still working with China for the moment, the time has come for Japan to decide whether to be the first to use the Off-Board boxes and send something across to Europe or stagnate for a bit. He did support France this turn, which suggests he may make some move to split England and France.

China: While still growing because Japan helped him to Vladivostok, China still appears to be in trouble. Russia won't help him, his press won't help him, and India is on him.

England and France in the Far East: The bounce suggests that working together in Europe isn't translating to SE Asia. France may turn on England now. But we will see next turn. Maybe that was an unwanted support for France and they were trying to bounce?

India: As long as India's western frontier remains unsullied, India will keep growing in the East, until he comes up against Japan. If Japan stays friendly with the others, India will be in huge trouble in two game years.

Turkey: Though Turkey didn't build this time, I think his position is better and he will grow next time. And eventually when he stabs India, he will grow some more. I like Turkey's long term prospects.

Russia: Russia could be the next player to think about joining the Moves into the Off-Board boxes, but maybe not. I'm still a bit unsure of what Russia is up to in the long term. Working with India means that he could gain some space back in China.

Austria: Italy's homeland will be eventual roadkill for the Austrians, with help from the Turk. The stray Italian army in the north (as noted by Rick, he didn't read the map very well) is turning out to be useless, and Austria will grow by two next game year, I think.

Germany: This situation is picking up, Norway may fall now, and once England gets in some trouble, then Germany may be able to do quite well despite the central position he has.

Italy: Why bother, he's road kill.

England: While still working with France, England looks about to start bleeding some centers, and then he may leave France friendless.

France: The short term looks good for France, but soon he may have to decide what to do as Italy and England collapse.

Winter 1902

Austria: Build F Trieste..Has F Trieste, A Albania, F Apulia, A Greece, A Tyrolia, A Venice, A Vienna.

China: Build A Hankow..Has A Hankow, F Manchuria, A Outer Mongolia, A Peking, F Viet Nam, A Vladivostok, A Canton.

England: Build F London..Has F London, F Belgium, F Clyde, F English Channel, F Joharra, F Norwegian Sea, F Norway, F Thailand(ec).

France: Build F Brest, A Paris..Has F Breast, A Paris, A Burgundy, F Cambodia, F Malay Sea, A Marseilles, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean, F Picardy, A Portugal.

Germany: Build F Kiel..Has F Kiel, A Denmark, A Holland, A Munich, F North Sea, A Ruhr.

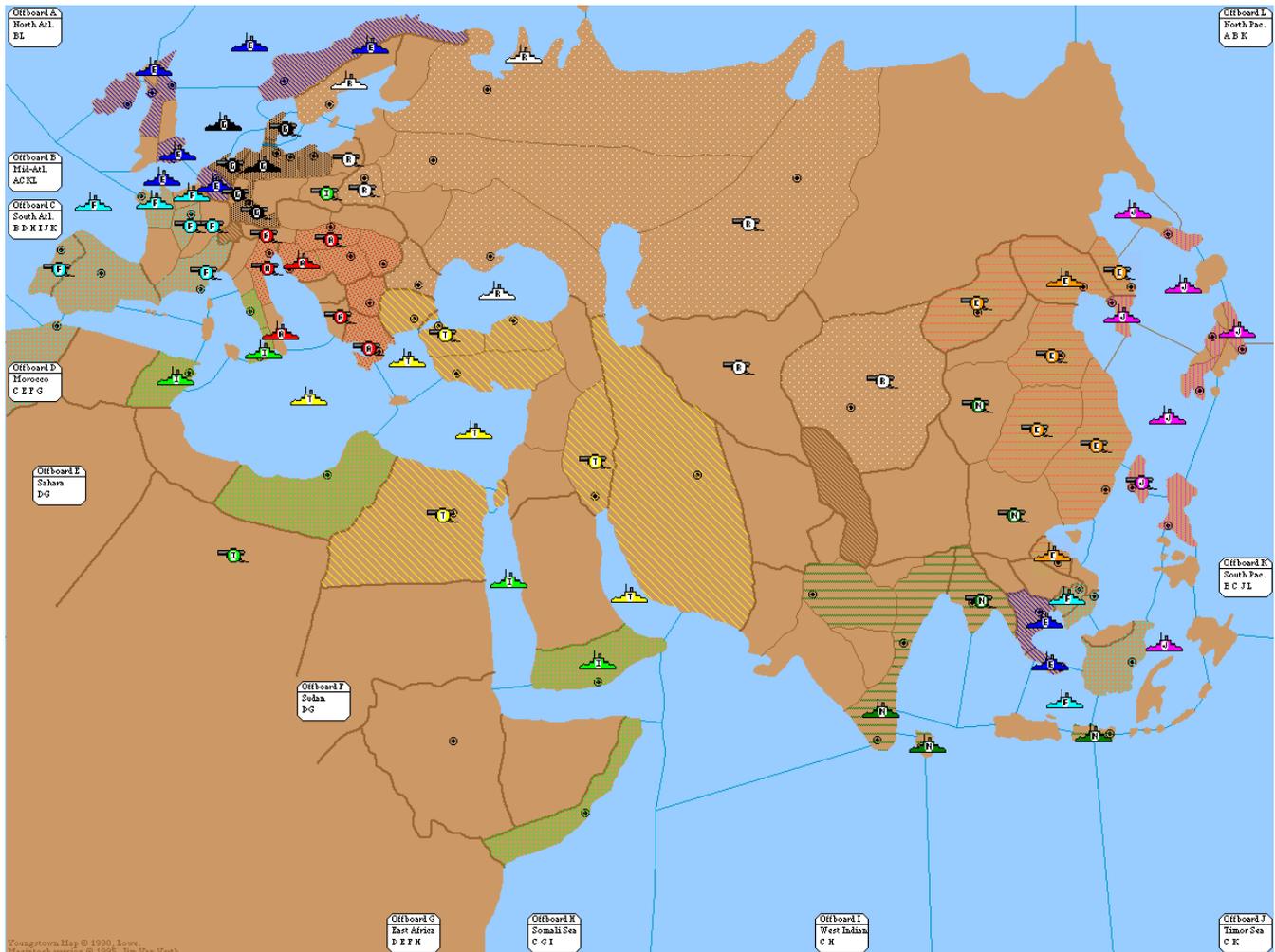
India: Build F Madras..Has F Madras, A Burma, F East Indian Ocean [*should be F Ceylon*], F Java, A Kansu, A Sikang.

Italy: Has F Tunis, A Fezzan, F Yemen, F Red Sea, A Silesia, F Naples.

Japan: Build F Tokyo ..Has F Tokyo, F Celebes Sea, F East China Sea, F Korea, A Formosa, F Sea of Japan, F Sea of Okhotsk.

Russia: Build A Omsk..Has A Omsk, F Black Sea, A Sinkiang, F St. Petersburg(nc), F Sweden, A Turkistan, A Warsaw, A Prussia.

Turkey: Has F Ionian Sea, A Constantinople, F Aegean Sea, F Eastern Mediterranean Sea, A Egypt, A Baghdad, F Persian Gulf.



PRESS

Brest: The First Lady of France, Madam Hollande, attended the commissioning of France's newest battleship, The Madame Pompadour, recently. Coming behind it are three sister ships: Catherine de Medici, Catherine de Valois, and the Catherine Deneuve.

Paris: The President of the Republic, Monsieur Hollande, was seen walking his pet rotweiler Trierweiler in the gardens of Les Invalides as he greeted recruits for the newest army being raised in the current emergency.

Paris: The President of the Paris Taxi Drivers Association announced the members had approved a plan to transport an entire division of French soldiers to the eastern front with only one refueling stop in Reims.

Press: "Come in, Commodore. The President will see you now."

"Thank you."

"Walter. It's good to see you again. I hear you had quite an adventure in Vladivostok. Tell me about it."

"Good to see you, Mr. President. Well, the Russians have always considered Vladivostok to be the 'Gibraltar of the Pacific,' but it appears the Chinese and Japanese had a different idea. They're already using The Battle of Vladivostok as a war game model down at Annapolis. I was at the Primorsky Opera House's grand opening the night it happened. The Grand Duke Michael was there as Governor of Siberia with all the brass of the Russian Army and Navy, the nobility, and the rich merchants in attendance for the performance of a new opera 'War and Peace' by some child prodigy composer named Prokofiev. They even worked in a performance of Tchaikovsky's '1812 Overture' into the opera and the Russian naval ships in the harbor were supposed to fire their guns at the climax of the battle scene. The entire population of the city was down on the wharfs to see the gun fire and fireworks! There was even a large crowd gathered in front of the train station to greet three trains arriving from China.

The first train had a big banner in Chinese 熊貓特快列車 - 友誼, 中國和俄羅斯之間的歡笑 and Russian PANDA ЭКСПРЕСС - дружба между Китаем и Россией НАВСЕГДА (Panda Express Train – Friendship Between China and Russia Forever).

The second train had a big banner in Russian Крадущийся тигр ПОЕЗД - FRIENDSHIP между Россией и Китаем СЕГОДНЯ ВЕЧЕРОМ and Chinese 虎藏龍火車 - FRIENDSHIP俄羅斯與中國的TONIGHT (Crouching Tiger Train – Friendship Between Russia and China Tonight).

The third train had a big banner in Russian Затаившийся дракон ПОЕЗД - FRIENDSHIP между Россией и Китаем, НО НЕ ЗАВТРА and Chinese 丹山飛火車 - FRIENDSHIP俄羅斯和中國之間, 而且不是明天 (HIDDEN DRAGON TRAIN FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN RUSSIA AND CHINA BUT NOT TOMORROW).

The third train pulled into and past the station, as did the second, before stopping. The first train pulled into the station and stopped in front of the crowd of thousands. Its passenger cars' doors opened and dozens of Chinese actors dressed in panda costumes poured out and began to mix with the crowd, dancing as they went accompanied by a Chinese band, flag twirlers, etc. Nobody paid attention to the first two trains or the freight cars on the back of the first train.

While the crowd was distracted by the panda dancers, the doors of the freight cars on all three trains opposite the crowds opened and black dressed soldiers poured out and headed for the Theater and the two main fortresses, Tsar Alexander and Tsarina Alexandra. Apparently the Japanese had an agent on the roof of the Theater and when the 1812 Overture started inside he flashed a signal to the Chinese troops and Russian fleets off the harbor. As the Russian cannons outside the Theater and the Russian fleet cannons began to fire their salutes, the Japanese fleet's new pre-dreadnoughts and battle cruisers began to fire their fireworks shells to get the range of their targets and then began salvos of live fire onto the key fortresses protecting the city.

As the Russian crowd in front of the train station and Primorsky Theater stopped to watch the fireworks the dancing pandas began pulling out knives and swords and attacked the crowds around them, apparently picking women and children as their first targets. The crowds fled in terror, leaving hundreds dead and dying in the square, and blocking the streets around the station and Theater. The pandas moved quickly into the Theater and took the Governor, military leaders, nobility, and merchants' hostage; demanding the Governor order the surrender of the city and fortress or all would be slaughtered.

"Wow!" the President said. "Who was the Chinese Commander?"

"A young captain named Ang Lee organized and led the attack. I've heard he's been promoted to head of the Chinese Army by order of the Empress."

"Impressive." said the President. "What's the current situation?"

"The Chinese have a fleet in Dalien in addition to their army in Vladivostok. The Japanese have several fleets off the coast and in Korea. The Chinese are still holding the Governor and military commanders, but the nobility and merchants have been released after paying a huge ransom."

"So how was your trip home," asked the President?

"I caught the last Trans-Siberian Railroad train out of Vladivostok, and by the time we got to Omsk there were already train loads of Russian soldiers heading east. In fact clear across Siberia you could see trains filled with soldiers heading east. It looks like Omsk will be their jumping off point in the battle for Siberia. We stopped in Moscow for a day and the Kremlin and Red Square have been turned into camps for Russian soldiers that are pouring into the city. By the time I got to St.Petersburg the size of the defeat and disaster was sinking in."

"Our naval attaché in St.Petersburg arranged for me to meet Crown Prince Nicholas and he told me the Russians were determined to stop the Chinese-Japanese and recapture Vladivostok. I don't know if it was arranged because I was there but I saw a large map of the world on a conference table with flags showing Russian naval fleet positions. It looked like they may be planning on sending their fleet in Kronstadt to the East."

The President asked, "Is that even possible. That's a huge distance to travel."

"Its possible if and it's a big if, the British and French grant refueling rights to the Russians. The Russians will have to refit in Madagascar and either Singapore or Cam Rahn Bay. The question is, will the Russians be able to fight when they get there, and will the Japanese wait for them to get ready for battle?"

"One thing is obvious. The Russians are taking this seriously. The Tsarina donated her favorite string of pearls (A wedding gift from the Tsar, the meter long string of 150 perfectly matched pearls was the envy of every female royal in the world.) to the war effort. Rumor has it that the Crown Prince of The Netherlands and Royal Dutch Shell jointly bought it for USD 5 million, about the cost of a battleship at that time, as a gift for the young Queen Wilhelmina to celebrate the first successful birth of her daughter Juliana."

"Amazing." said the President. What did you think of their battle performances?"

"The Russians have some good leaders but their soldiers are peasants and their ships are practically worthless. The whole military is still possessed of a Baklava mentality. The Chinese were a surprise, but they don't really have a modern army or navy. The English army attaché in St.Petersburg told me that one Gurkha with a kukri was worth a thousand boxers. The Japanese have the best navy in the western Pacific. Their army is small but top-notch. Their leadership is excellent. I expect them to win."



Roosevelt puffed on his cigarette-holder at a 45 degree angle, a sure indication he was fully engaged in thought. "If Britain and France help Russia, then we have to help Japan. It's the only way to preserve stability in Asia. Japan needs China the way England needs India. And Siberia is the prize they both want."

"Well, Commodore, you've been very informative, as always. Before I tell you what your next assignment is, I want you to see these."

Roosevelt opened his Resolute desk drawer and pulled out a small case, opened it, showed the two two-stars of a rear admiral," He grinned as he closed the case and put it back in his draw. "I'd better hang on to these for now. You know how admirals are when commodores get promoted, but don't worry the commission is signed and sealed and in your file."

"Thank you, Mr. President."

"Now, Walter. I need to know what's going on in the Mediterranean. The Turkish navy controls the Eastern Mediterranean and is knocking at Malta's docks. The Austrians have invaded Italy from the north and south. It looks like the RATs are getting hungry," he said with a large grin.

"You're right, Mr. President. So you want me to check it out?"

"Yes, the USS Kentucky (BB-6) is waiting in the lower Potomac. Less attention that way. I want you to see how fast she'll move to Gibraltar, and then cross the Mediterranean to see what's happening. Stop where you need to. Then transit the Suez Canal, Aden, Goa, Calcutta, Singapore, etc. Get a good look at the Japanese navy before you head into Tokyo. And cable me if you learn anything interesting."

"Very well," said the Commodore, as he headed for the door to the Oval Office.

Winter 1902 Commentary:

Rick Desper (Normal Arial)

Jim Burgess (Bold Arial)

Jack McHugh (Comic Sans MS)

First the press, Larry Peery is responsible for all the press again. The convoluted Russian story is quite the essence of bombastic Peeriblah. I'm not that worried about the Russians, with the army build in Omsk, even if the Chinese and Japanese continue to work closely together, no further Russian losses will come this game year. Similarly, as France further notes in his own press, it is hard to see how the

French advance with or without the English. Perhaps he should think about moving toward Italy, either to prop him up or participate in carving him up.

So, the builds were not surprising, but they move the questions forward. For Japan, a build in Tokyo says almost for sure that he's planning to hit the

Offboard Box this year. Still, this move is so slow and so telegraphed, that it only is the **RUSSIAN** success against the English that gives it a chance to succeed. I had thought China was in more trouble, but after the build and studying the position more carefully, as long as China has the Japanese ally, then India makes no more progress in her homeland, and China's main problem is that it's stuck until Japan opens up some opportunities in either the north or south. England built in London, but is stuck with no line against the Germans, imminent loss of Norway, and then four Russian/German fleets coming at him, along with perhaps a Japanese rogue. For India, the position is wrong. The fleet moved back from East Indian Ocean to Ceylon, but that's right on the map, but not on the listing. We'll see next time what happens with that. Then he builds F Madras. It is unclear what the Indians are up to now that the attack on China is impotent. That's pretty much it for the builds. Expect the Austrians to convoy successfully into Naples in the spring and Italy goes down hard.



Not much to say about the builds. But there are a few things.

Yes, the army build in Omsk pretty much seals the Russian front against Eastern invasions. Japan won't be able to get inland but his dominance of the seas won't be threatened.

China's army build will keep the Indians at bay, at least until Japan stabs. Japan's fleet builds make it seem unlikely - I expect he'll be either going off board or trying to swing into Borneo somehow.

The Austrian fleet build is neat. I always love the Admiral von Trapp strategy. And yes, Austria will need that fleet. Once Italy collapses Austria will need fleets to either go against France or turn on Turkey.

Germany built F Kiel, indicating yet again that he's counting on poorly drawn maps to defend Posen. England built F Lon, which was pretty much forced. But he's still in trouble, esp. if Larry aims his Peeriblah at him.

Larry did something worth noting: he used a build from a center taken in SE Asia to increase his forces in Europe. Let's see how he can use that extra army.

For the next phase, we'll have to keep an eye on the alliances, esp. the apparent RAT. Will Russia and Turkey go after India? The West is also up in the air, as is Indonesia.

I agree with my fellow commentators, the builds were fairly predictable with the exception of Germany's F Kie. That looks like a clear sign of E/F vs R/G alliance, of course without Italy, Germany will have to convince Austria or Turkey to take Italy's place.

Nothing interesting happened in the East-- India continues to square off against China but no sign from Japan of any interest. I did find Russia's build of A Oms to signal that Russia feels fairly secure in his alliance with the Germans, other than that, not much to say.