

DIPLMACY WORLD

ISSUE 81



From the Archives:
Treasures From the Golden Age

Notes From the Editor and Hobby News

Welcome to another issue of Diplomacy World. Winter is just about over, so maybe we'll be surprised to see the Dip hobby take a cue from Spring flowers and start to bloom a bit. In the meanwhile, here's a bit of hobby news since last issue.

Michael Lowrey has released the latest issue of the Zine Register. ZR is an occasional publication that lists every known Diplomacy zine currently being published in North America, plus a number of those published overseas. The zine includes detailed information of frequency, cost, games played, and reviews contributed by hobby members (like me). If you're considering adding a zine or two to your hobby reading, the ZR can be a great tool for deciding which ones fit your needs. A copy of ZR can be purchased from Michael Lowrey at 6503-D Fourwinds Drive, Charlotte, NC 28212. The cost is \$2 in the U.S. and Canada, \$3 elsewhere.

Elsewhere in your envelope you will find a copy of the 1996 PDORA Auction Booklet. Each year PDORA auctions off items donated by hobby members, and then uses the proceeds to help fund needy hobby services. Take a look through the booklet to see if there is anything that catches

your eye. Remember, you're helping the hobby when you bid in the auction. If you have any questions please let me know. **Publishers: Please reprint the booklet in your zine, or at least tell your subbers that they can get a copy directly from me.**

Eric and Claire Brosius have released the 1996 issue of Roar of the Crowd, the official publication of the Runestone Poll. It contains a detailed accounting of all the votes each zine/subzine/GM received, as well as the Controversy Index and Fred Davis' listings of Hobby Leaders. It also has an article by Larry Peery. If you'd like to get a copy, they can be had for \$5 from Eric Brosius at 53 Bird Street, Needham, MA 02192.

I may as well mention I still need 1 more player and 1 more commentator for the next DW Diplomacy Demo Game. If you're interested, get in touch with me as soon as possible.

That's about it for this issue. The deadline for submissions for Diplomacy World #82 will be May 15th. Why not take some time, write up an article, and send it in? We're only as good as the articles you people write! Check out Larry Peery's article on page 15 for a special incentive!

New Blood

The following people are either newcomers to DW or have expressed an interest in seeing samples of Diplomacy zines

Stuart Carnochan	47 Forsythia Close, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 1XN, UK
Robert De Condo	1200 Noyes St., Utica, NY 13502-4428
Stefan Frandsen	Tomsgaardsvej 103, st.tv., 2200 Copenhagen NV, Denmark
Randall Heath	10628 Alabama Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311
David Hertzman	40 Ramsey Crescent, Hamilton, ON L8S 2N2 Canada
Philip McCabe	1107 Oakland Ave., Sheboygan, WI 53081
Lynn Mercer	1120 S. West St., Findlay, OH 45840
Scott Morris	12110 Shelbyville Rd., Louisville, KY 40243
Alan Stewart	702-25 St. Mary St., Toronto, ON M4Y 1R2, Canada

Upcoming Conventions

Some of these conventions offer Diplomacy tournaments, while others do not. Please be sure to contact the convention directly for full details before you make any final travel plans.

Mar 6 - 9	PrezCon '97; Charlottesville, VA. Info: POB 4661, Charlottesville, VA 22905.
Mar 14 - 16	Gamer's Con; Cherry Hill, NJ. Info: 266 Spruce Dr., Brick, NJ 08723; multigenre@aol.com
Mar 20 - 23	AggieCon; College Station, TX. Info: MSC Box J-1, College Station, TX 77844.
Mar 28 - 30	World DipCon VII/GothCon XXI; Goteborg SWEDEN. Info: Ostanvagen 10, S-61135 Nykoping, SWEDEN.
Apr 18 - 20	PointCon XX; West Point, NY. Info: POB 62, West Point, NY 10996.
Apr 18 - 21	Cowpens '97; Greenville, SC. Info: 2756 Laurens Rd., Greenville, SC 29607.
May 23 - 25	DixieCon XI; Chapel Hill, NC. Info: David Hood, 2905 20th St. NE, Hickory, NC 28601; dhood2966@aol.com.
Jun 26 - 29	DragonCon; Atlanta, GA. Info: POB 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362.

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Subscriptions are four issues for \$10.00 in the US, \$15.00 in the Canada or overseas surface and \$20.00 via overseas air mail. The last issue will appear on your label. All overseas subscribers are urged to use the International Subscription Exchange listed elsewhere in this issue. All subscriptions and address changes should be sent to the Managing Editor listed above. **Make checks and money orders payable to Douglas Kent (not Diplomacy World) in US currency. UK subscribers can purchase Diplomacy World subscriptions directly from Stephen Agar at 79 Florence Rd., Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 6DL. Subscriptions for persons in the UK from Stephen are L7/4 issues - that's more than 40% cheaper than the \$20/4 issues airmail price!**

Contributions are welcomed and will earn you one free issue per submission published unless otherwise stated. Persons interested in the vacant 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.

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E-Mail and the Future of Postal Diplomacy

by Jamie McQuinn

[This is a revised version of an essay that originally appeared in Absolute! #50]

Sometimes I worry about the future of the Postal Diplomacy Hobby. One of the best, and one of my favorite zines, "Perelandra" has folded after 130+ issues. Actually, in the world of zines, that was an incredible run, and I hope Pete enjoys the rest he deserves. But it came at a time when several other fine zines had folded, and others have indicated that they are running down to a fold. The number of zines, and the number of Postal Diplomacy players has shrunk severely since its peak in the 1980's. Hundreds (Thousands? I have no idea) play Diplomacy by E-mail, some of them not even aware of the existence of the Postal Hobby. Will the growth of E-mail and World Wide Web zines completely replace the Postal Hobby?

I have played Diplomacy by E-mail, and will probably continue now and then. However, Judge produced adjudications, and electronic zines filing my disk drive will never replace the anticipation I feel when I open my mail box and find the latest issue of "Maniac's Paradise" or "Making Love in a Canoe." I like the feel of "hard copy" in my hand. I like carrying it around with me; reading snatches here and there; while eating my breakfast, a coffee break, the doctor's waiting room. I like the permanence of the printed zines. The E-mail zines are only a delete key away from oblivion.

While my preference remains with the Postal zines, there is one Electronic zine that has caught my attention and respect: The Diplomatic Pouch (<http://wr~w.snet.net/~mhand/DipPouch/>). The brainchild of Manus Hand, TDP has become THE place to find information on the Diplomacy Hobby on the Internet. Of course, the most extensive information contained in TDP is on the who/what/when/where of the E-mail Hobby, however, Manus has also created separate sections for both the Face-to-Face and Postal Hobbies. In addition, he publishes a zine five times per year, mirroring the phases of the Diplomacy game year (Spring, Spring retreats, Fall, Fall retreats and Winter adjustments). Each issue contains articles on strategy and tactics, statistics and humor, plus a demo game running in real time (that means one game year equals one calendar year!). By including info on Face-To-Face and Postal Diplomacy, TDP has the potential to serve as a bridge between these similar, but sometimes distant factions of our Hobby.

Unfortunately, Manus can't do it all himself. He has several people serving on his DipPouch Council. However, he still hadn't found anyone to head up the Postal or FTF Sections. So, when Delphi, my Internet service provider started offering space for World Wide Web home pages, I saw this as my opportunity to fill one of those gaps.

On my new job this past year (I am an academic librarian) I have had the opportunity to learn to use HTML to create Web pages for the University of Dayton (<http://www.udayton.edu/~Library/>), so I could now use this new skill to beef up the Postal Section of TDP. Manus had started a Postal Zine Registry, a list of Postal zines from the both the U.S. and Europe. I have since used resources such as Zine Register and rec.games.diplomacy (the Internet discussion group) to add more titles to the list, with brief descriptions and contact information. The new Postal Zine Registry (<http://people.delphicom/~mcquinn/p-zines.htm>) contains information on zines from nearly a dozen different countries. In addition, I have included Runestone Poll results, the E-mail version of Pontevedria, and a section with links to articles about the Postal Hobby (some from the Diplomacy World home page (<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/DiplomacyWorld/>)).

So, how is all this stuff on the Internet going to help the Postal Hobby? In the past year that I have been involved in both the E-mail and Postal Hobbies, I have noticed an interesting and encouraging phenomenon. Many email regulars have tried Postal zines, and find they like them. They are attracted to the slower pace and smaller community that Postal Dip zines provide. The majority of the newest subscribers to my zine, "Crossing the Rubicon" (excerpts available at <http://people.delphi.com/ctr.htm>), have been or are regular emailers. It is my hope that these pages will provide information enough to encourage others to give the Postal Hobby a try.

Some have suggested that the Postal Diplomacy Hobby is dying, because of the lack of growth. I think that what we are seeing is a slow transformation. It is hard to say where the Postal Hobby will be five to ten years from now, but I think we are seeing part of it right now. The Postal zine of the future will probably consist of games being played where all the players have some sort of email access (pretty soon, your cable TV company will be offering it!). Negotiations and orders will be handled online, but the results will continue to be published in "hard copy." By my unscientific estimate, I would say that more than half of the Postal Diplomacy players today already use E-mail to negotiate with other players and send orders to their GMs. As the Internet finds its way in to more and more homes, this number should continue to grow. We will continue to see new and greater synergies as our disparate Hobbies continue to grow closer. I hope that TDP can serve as one of the facilitators of that synergy.

{Jamie McQuinn publishes the very popular Diplomacy zine Crossing the Rubicon.}

The Schwarz-Woo Paradox

by Andy Schwarz

As far as I can tell, all Diplomacy paradoxes stem from non-simultaneity introduced into what is an otherwise simultaneous game. In particular, these paradoxes arise when the success of one type of move is made contingent on the success of another move **during the same turn**. Not all contingent movement is rife with paradox, of course. Successful movement of a unit is in some sense contingent on the success or failure of other units. In Spring 1901, A Mar-Pie will fail if A Ven-Pie is also ordered, but will succeed otherwise. However, the resolution of these events is simultaneous, in that we don't look at whether A Ven-Pie succeeds before deciding the fate of A Mar.

However, any rule in Diplomacy, like the dislodgment rule for disrupting convoys (or the various Suez Canal control rules in Colonial Diplomacy) which make the success of one unit's actions contingent on the **success** of some other event during the same season will kill simultaneity and introduce room for paradox. This is a subtle distinction, which I may not be making clear enough, but consider the famous convoy paradoxes, such as Pandin's Paradox, which all rely on the issue of whether the convoyed units can cut the very support needed to ensure the success of their convoys, to beleaguer a garrison, etc. If the fleet is disrupted, the convoy fails, making the armies move contingent on the success of the convoy move. Unlike a bounce resolution, we know have to see if the convoy succeeds before we can move the convoyed army. So, if we decide it does succeed and transport the army across the water, it can have an impact on the adjudication we had to perform to determine if the convoy succeeded. This is what I mean my non-simultaneous contingency.

Since the Diplomacy Convoy has been repeatedly analyzed, I would like to cite two new milieu in which the rules introduce non-simultaneous contingency and how that leads to paradox. From Colonial Diplomacy, I'll use the Suez Canal rule as an example. And from Machiavelli's first edition, I'll discuss the Piombino/Sicilian Straits rule.

Part 1: Schwarz's Suez Paradox

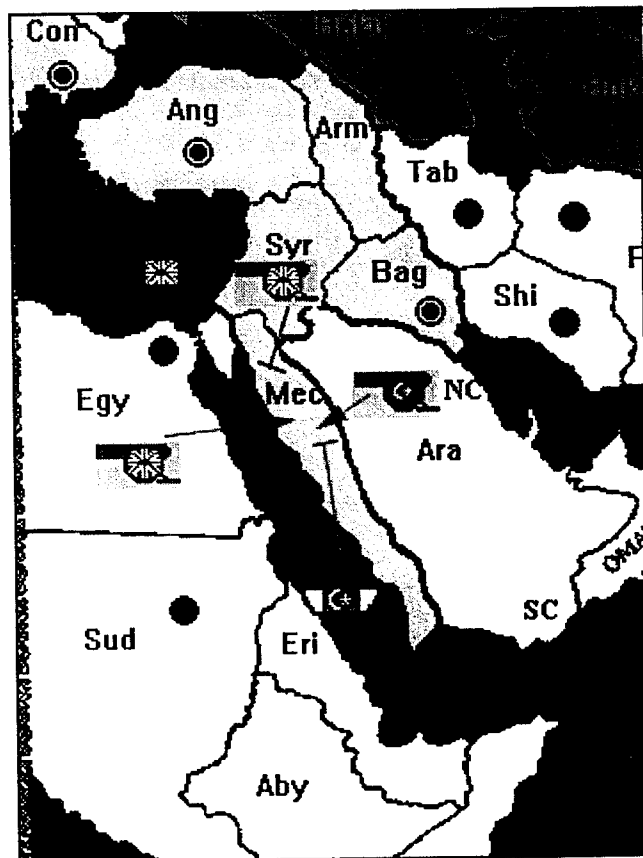
Consider the following rules from Avalon Hill's Colonial Diplomacy:

"9.31 You must have a unit in Egypt the entire turn in order to use the canal"

"9.33 The unit in Egypt may have an attack order so long as it results in a standoff and the unit in Egypt stays in Egypt."

Clearly, this introduces non-simultaneous contingency. The attack may be ordered but it must result in a stand off, meaning we need to resolve the move from Egypt before we

can determine the success or failure of a move through the canal. This opens the door for what I modestly have named Schwarz's Suez Paradox. For example:



England: Army Egypt -> Mecca.

England: Army Syria SUPPORT Army Egypt -> Mecca.

Turkey: Army Arabia-Mecca.

Turkey: Fleet Red Sea SUPPORT Army Arabia-Mecca.

If the unit in Egypt were not required to stay put by rule 9.33, this would be easily resolved; the Med-Red move would cut the Red Sea's support and Egypt would move to Mecca having 2 strength to Arabia's one.

However, by rule 9.33 and rule 9.31, we know that this easy resolution would result in the Mediterranean fleet NOT being able to use the Suez Canal because that would allow the unit in Egypt to leave, violating 9.31, and thus NOT preventing the attack on the Red Sea fleet.

So, then the Red Sea's support is NOT cut, which means both Egypt and Arabia move to Mecca with strength of two, resulting in a standoff.

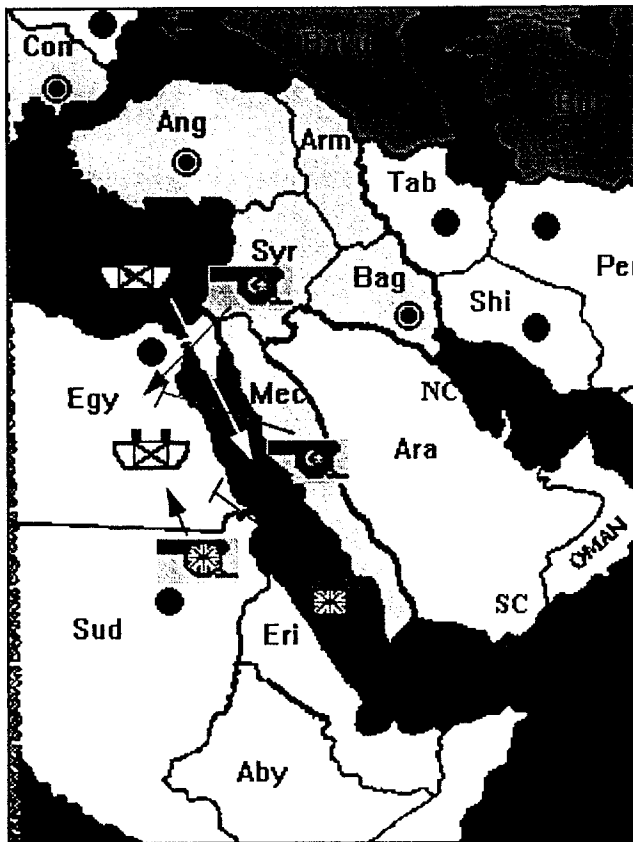
Which, by Rule 9.33, means the Move from the Med Sea to

the Red Sea is legal, which means the support is cut, which means the Egyptian move succeeds, which means the support is **not** cut, ad infinitum.

But it gets worse!

"9.36 If a superior force dislodges the unit controlling Egypt, a fleet ordered to use the canal will be prevented from doing so."

Again, we've introduced non-simultaneous contingency. Just like a convoy's dislodgment determining the success or failure of a convoyed armies move, now the dislodgment of a unit in Egypt determines the success or failure of a "Suezing" units move. This creates the Schwarz-Woo Paradox, found by Andy Schwarz (me), with assistance from Alexander K. "Smiley" Woo. Consider the following:



Russia: Fleet Mediterranean Sea -> Red Sea.
Russia: Fleet Egypt Hold.

England: Army Sudan -> Egypt
England: Fleet Red Sea SUPPORT Army Sudan -> Egypt.

Turkey: Army Syria-Egypt.
Turkey: Army Mecca SUPPORT Army Syria -> Egypt.

If we ignore the 9.36 rule, the move by the Mediterranean fleet cuts the support of the English fleet in the Red Sea on Egypt, making the Sudan army attack with strength 1 and thus allowing the Turkish assault, with strength 2 to succeed.

This of course, dislodges Egypt. However, now we need to consider rule 9.36, which says that dislodging Egypt invalidated F Med-Red. So the support of Red Sea is **not** cut, which means both England and Turkey attack with strength 2, which invokes the beleaguered garrison rule, meaning Egypt is **not** dislodged. So, thus we SHOULD allow the Med-Red order to go through after all, which in effect, dislodges Egypt. Repeat ad infinitum.

One solution for these two paradoxes is to add a rule which says that a "Suezing" unit cannot cut support of a unit in the Red Sea (or Med Sea) supporting action on Egypt. This is how the convoy paradox was removed in standard Diplomacy (saying that a convoyed unit does not cut the support of any unit supporting an action into a body of water), but the result is that one can interpret this to mean that even if the Red Sea is DISLODGED its support is not cut. For an example of this consider the same set up as above, but now add an additional Russian Fleet in Eritrea:

Russia: Fleet Mediterranean Sea -> Red Sea.
Russia: Fleet Egypt Hold.
Russia: Fleet Eritrea SUPPORT Fleet Mediterranean Sea -> Red Sea.

England: Army Sudan -> Egypt
England: Fleet Red Sea SUPPORT Army Sudan -> Egypt.

Turkey: Army Syria-Egypt.
Turkey: Army Mecca SUPPORT Army Syria -> Egypt.

If you don't prevent Suezing units from cutting support of units in the Red or Med Seas, the paradoxes will remain, but if we do interpret it this way, we get a "Ghost Ship" problem where a dislodged fleet ends up adding valid support, which is unsavory from an intuitive point of view. In the above adjudication, for example, a blanket prohibition on Suezing fleets cutting support would mean that Med-Red succeeds and dislodges the English fleet in the Red Sea but that the dislodged Red Sea fleet still provides support for Sudan-Egypt. Otherwise, we're back in a paradoxical loop.

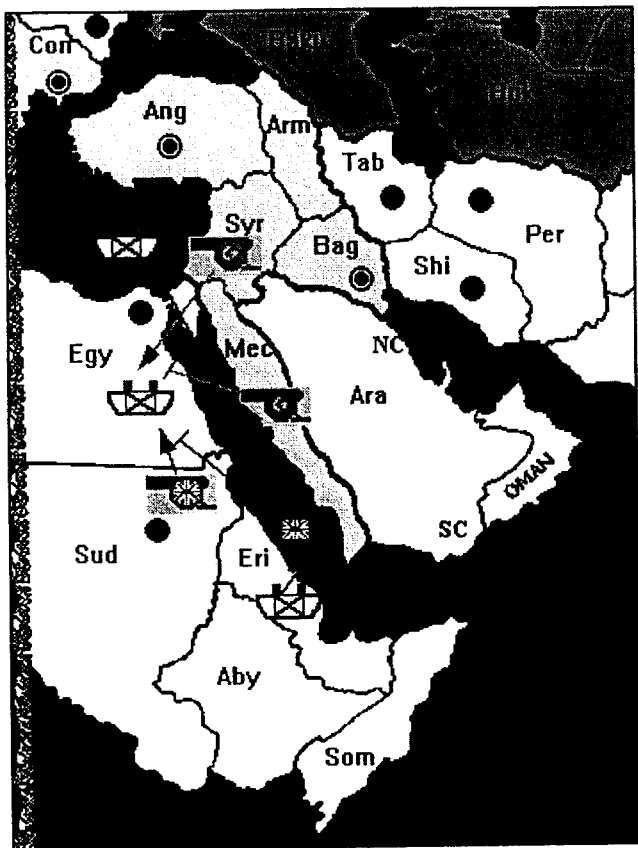
Part 2: Schwarz's Straits Paradox

In the old version of Machiavelli there was a similar problem. Although Avalon Hill's second edition removes the Straits rule, the Judge's still use the first edition, so this has more than just curiosity value.

The First Edition Rules state:

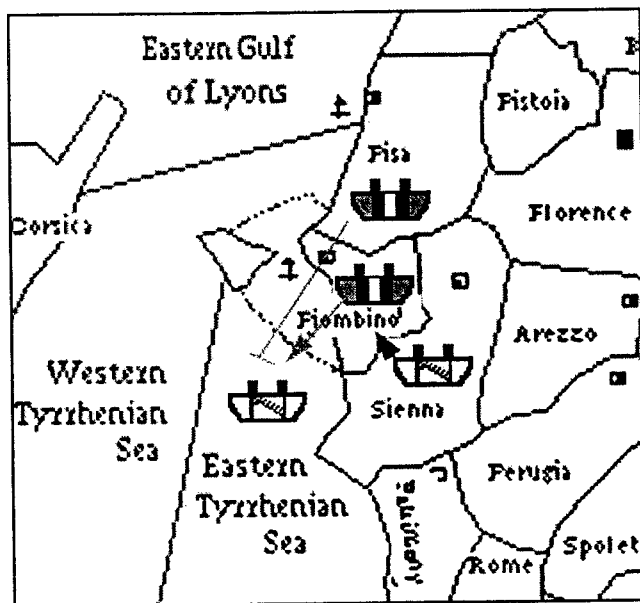
Piombino: This province includes the offshore island of Elba. A fleet in this province controls the straits between the mainland and the island.

An army unit in this province does not control the straits. The straits are not a separate sea, but are part of the Eastern



Naples: Fleet Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea Hold.
 Naples: Fleet Sienna -> Piombino.

(The term blocked is used by the judge to indicate that an otherwise legal move is disallowed because the unit in question did not have permission from the owner of the critical space for controlling the Straits).



Tyrrhenian Sea. If they are not controlled by a Fleet unit in Piombino, a hostile Fleet could move directly from Pisa to the Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea or vice versa, or transport an army from one to the other.

Sicily: A fleet in Messina similarly controls the straits between Messina and Otranto. As long as there is a fleet in Messina, no hostile fleet could move directly from the Gulf of Naples to the Messina and Otranto. As long as there is a fleet in Messina, no hostile fleet could move directly from the Gulf of Naples to the Ionian Sea or vice versa.

If a fleet successfully advances into Piombino or Messina in the same turn as a hostile fleet attempts to use the straits, the movement through the straits is blocked. As long as a fleet unit is in the controlling province, no other player's units may use the straits without the controlling player's permission. If a player wishes to allow another player to use the straits, he must include an "alliance power" command with his movement orders.

Notice again how this rule introduces non-simultaneous contingency, namely the status of any unit "using" either strait (for movement or support) is contingent on who ends the turn in the critical space. Focusing on Piombino, consider Schwarz's Straits Paradox:

France: Fleet Pisa SUPPORT Fleet Piombino -> Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea. (blocked)
 France: Fleet Piombino -> Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea.

Note that NAPLES owns Piombino b/c it gets control of it during the course of the turn, as proper according the second paragraph above. However, if Naples has control of the Straits, then Pisa is effectively blocked from supporting into East Tyrrhenian Sea, because Pisa and ETS are only contiguous if the player is allied with the Piombino owner. This is why the Pisan order is marked as **blocked**, indicating Pisa was NOT granted permission to use the straits for support. So, in theory, the move by France from Piombino OUGHT to have failed, since its support was blocked/invalidated. But in that case, F Sienna-Piombino would bounce, leaving Piombino in French hands. Of course, that would make the support by Pisa valid, would dislodge ETS, thus vacating Piombino, thus allowing Sienna into Piombino. But that would invalidate the support, killing the attack, etc., ad infinitum. The Classic "Non-Simultaneity Paradox" is seen here in all its glory.

In response to this paradox (which really came up in a judge game I was moderating), Charlie Eldred posed a different sort of paradox arising from the same set of rules. All of the paradoxes I have discussed until now involve loops of inconsistent logic. Jamie Dreier, Professor of Philosophy at Brown University and an all-star Diplomacy player, makes the analogy with the liars paradox:

L: This sentence, L, is false.

The adjudication of a Diplomacy (or Machiavelli) turn is

akin to determining which of a series of statements are true (moves succeed) and which are false (moves fail). Statement L cannot be properly adjudicated. Assume it is true, then it is false (it says it is false, after all). But if it is false, then it is true. Jamie calls this an ungrounded and paradoxical statement. This is the Schwarz's Suez paradox (and the Pandin's Paradox and the rest) in a nutshell.

However, following S. Kripke's landmark paper, "Outline of a theory of truth", Jamie offers up a second type of paradox (or quasi-paradox) which is ungrounded but not (technically) paradoxical. For example, consider the following statement:

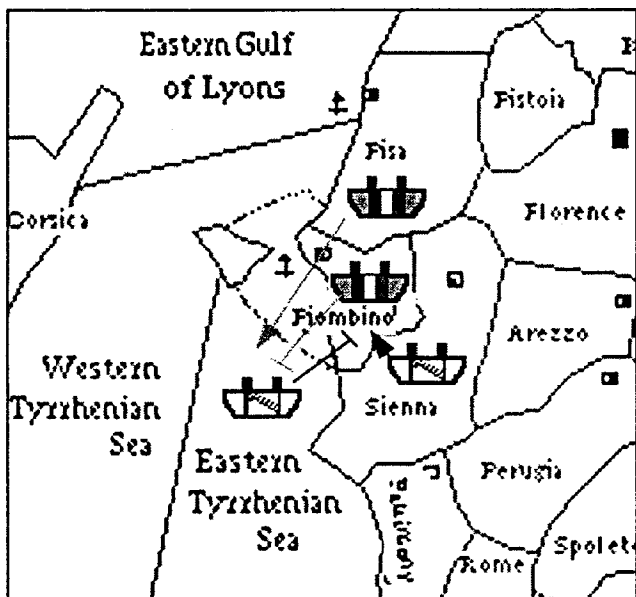
T: This sentence, T, is true.

On the surface, it seems simple enough. If it is true, then it is true. Viola. Except, what if we say it is false? Then it is also false. So it is ungrounded (we have no other way to determine if it is true or false) but it is not paradoxical, because once we assume it is true (or false) it remains true (or false).

The Eldred Piombino Paradox is this sort of quasi-paradox (and ungrounded, non-paradoxical move with two equally valid adjudications), as seen below:

France: Fleet Pisa -> Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea. (blocked????)
 France: Fleet Piombino SUPPORT Fleet Pisa -> Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea.

Naples: Fleet Sienna -> Piombino.
 Naples Fleet Eastern Tyrrhenian Sea SUPPORT Fleet Sienna -> Piombino



The move Sienna to Piombino cuts F Piombino S Pisa-ETS, without question.

If we assume Piombino is successfully dislodged by the supported attack from Sienna, then the support of ETS is not cut, and the Piombino is legally dislodged, fully consistent with our assumption of dislodgment.

But if we say ETS's support is cut by Pisa, then Piombino is not dislodged, cutting the support by ETS, again fully consistent with the assumptions of cut support.

So, rather than creating an infinite and unresolvable loop (a paradox), Charlie has created two equally valid solutions, which are contradictory (an ungrounded statement).

Nonetheless, both the Schwarz's Straits paradox and the Eldred Piombino Quasi-Paradox are the result of a non-simultaneous contingency, in this case who ENDS the turn in Piombino (or similarly, in Messina for the Sicilian version).

Part 3: What do we do?

I think that introducing more conditional, non-simultaneous moves into Diplomacy via Colonial's Suez (in addition to the long-standing convoys) was a step in the wrong direction. Removing such moves, as we've seen in the removal of the Straits rule with the release of the second edition of Machiavelli is the correct approach. The rule on using the Suez canal should be something to the effect of: "To use or permit the use of the Suez canal, a power must start the turn with a unit in Egypt." That's it -- no rules on bouncing or having to stay in Egypt the whole turn. The can of worms that the current rules open is far worse than the benefits of realism. By making use in Fall conditional only on the status at the end of Spring retreats (Colonial uses years rather than seasons, but you get the idea) or Spring moves conditional only on the status at the end of winter, you do not introduce non-simultaneity/contingency, and thus you avoid paradoxes like the Schwarz Suez and the Schwarz-Woo. Ditto on the Schwarz Straits and the Eldred Piombino.

The only other solution is to live with the paradoxes, which is often phrased as "All units involved hold." However, try neatly defining "all units involved" and you need an algorithm that boggles my mind, though it does exist. My feeling is that we are stuck with convoy issues because the game is over 35 years old and convoys have been there since 1959. But, we ought to root out the Suez evil while the game is still young, just like Avalon Hill removed the Straits issue with its recent rules revision for the second edition. Heck, if we can add a land bridge to Sakhalin, we can change the Suez rule a tiny bit, replacing 9.31 with "You must have a unit in Egypt at the start of the turn in order to use the canal" and eliminating 9.33, 9.36, and perhaps the now innocuous but unneeded 9.37.

By the way, when I first brought the Suez paradox to the attention of Avalon Hill, they seemed ready to make a quick

fix via The General. However, after Smiley and I developed the second paradox, AH told me they had gone back to the designer to rework things, and a pronouncement would eventually follow.

Has anyone had seen such a pronouncement? I have not.

Author's note: In case anyone was wondering about the TSR, here's a short analysis:

Rule 9.23 begins by saying "A unit using the TSR may only be transported to an unoccupied province." If we interpret this to mean that it is not even valid to order a unit on the TSR to attempt to enter a space that **began** the turn as occupied, then I do not think the TSR order will create paradoxes, because since TSR units are never allowed to reach an SC that is occupied, it is impossible to use TSRs to cut support, dislodge other units, or to support a beleaguered garrison, which are the main causes of paradoxes through non-simultaneous contingency.

Assuming my interpretation of 9.23 is correct and TSR units can't be ordered to spaces that begin the turn as occupied, then the TSR rule basically just makes the TSR unit get to make a series of mini-moves contingent only on the success of its OWN previous mini-moves. Therefore, it is possible that the TSR has avoid the pitfalls of the Suez Canal.

However, it has been pointed out to me that Avalon Hill (in the General, V30, N4) has clarified that TSR units **CAN** attempt to enter occupied provinces in the hope that they become unoccupied as the turn moves on. This would normally open up some interesting paradoxes. Consider the simple:

China: Army Krasnoyarsk -> Mongolia.

China: Army Mongolia -> Irkutsk.

Russia: Army Omsk TSR Irkutsk

This normally would allow for a paradox: If Omsk bounces Mongolia-Irkutsk, then Krasnoyarsk cannot leave and so the TSR cannot go through, so it does not bounce Irk, so Kra **CAN** leave, so it does go through, so it bounces, so Kra stays, so TSR fails, etc.

However, and very wisely I might add, Avalon Hill added the following proviso and example:

9.25 - A curious example of this rule applies if an enemy unit attacks from one province to another along the line of the TSR at the same time that a Russian unit is railed through these provinces in the same direction, such as:

Russia - A VLA-TSR-OMSK

China A KRA-OMSK

This results in a standoff in Omsk. The Chinese unit stays in Krasnoyarsk and the Russian unit stays in Irkutsk. The theory being that Krasnoyarsk is left empty by the Chinese at the same time the Russian unit moves through. Thus both units attack Omsk and cause a standoff.

In other words, the very ATTEMPT (and not the success) of a unit to leave a space is enough for the TSR to be allowed to TRY to get through. Notice that by linking the success of the TSR's attempt to move to attempted movement, rather than successful movement, rule 9.25 turns non-simultaneous contingent movement into standard diplomacy movement. By 9.25, in my example above the TSR is allowed to try its luck in Irk and it fails, bouncing Mon, which bounces Kra and no one moves. Paradox avoided.

However, while I think this successfully avoid paradoxes, it creates a situation where I unit can jump over a foreigner on the TSR, or so it seems. Consider the Avalon Hill example in rule 9.25, but with a slight twist:

Russia: Army Irkutsk TSR Omsk.

Russia: Army Perm SUPPORT Army Irkutsk TSR Omsk.

China: Army Krasnoyarsk -> Omsk.

As far as I can tell, this is a fully legal move and Russia's Irk army is allowed to try for Omsk b/c China tried to vacate Krasnoyarsk. And now, Russia has legal support (it is legal to support a TSRed unit into a vacant square, just not to support an TSRed attack on a unit), so Russia **GETS** Omsk. So Krasnoyarsk stays in place and the Russian has leap-frogged over the Chinese unit on the TSR route. And if you scoff at this and say that's ridiculous, that the general rule of no leapfrogging has precedence, remember if you try to resolve this without that 9.25 interpretation, you trade this silly result for a paradox without any resolution. Which is better, ridiculous consistence or non-ridiculous unresolvability?

Finally, let me add an interesting side effect of this rule. In the situation above, if China had ordered its army in Krasnoyarsk to hold, the TSR would have failed and the Irkutsk army would not have been allowed to move. So in this case, while this is not an adjudication paradox, we have a situation in which if China **TRIES** to bounce Russia, Russia does not bounce, but if it does not try to bounce it, Russia does bounce. This is a very deep thing, beyond the scope of this article. I think this is like the Zen belief of only getting something you want if you really don't want it, and I will leave the TSR here for others to ponder.

{Andy Schwarz is a regular name around rec.games.diplomacy. I'm sure he'd love to see any Diplomacy or Dip variant paradox you've stumbled across, so send them in!}

The Strongest Country on the Diplomacy Map

by Thaddeus Black

Which of the seven countries on the Diplomacy map is strongest? In what order do the other six follow after? The members of Cat23 debated those questions for a time back in November of 1996. Thanks to the combined efforts of Mark Nelson, Conrad Minshall, Doug Massey, Nick Fitzpatrick and Geoffrey Bentz -- Thaddeus Black has been able to compile the actual statistics that settle the debate.

avg	points	wins	2	3	4	5	6	7	losses	win%	
-8.0	Austria	-27840	269	112	169	150	50	13	4	2718	7.7%
+1.7	England	+6054	287	161	258	182	51	15	4	2527	8.2%
+8.9	France	+31086	341	156	269	188	64	17	4	2446	9.8%
-0.1	Germany	-498	314	135	202	128	63	16	4	2623	9.0%
-15.2	Italy	-53089	213	111	160	139	59	15	4	2784	6.1%
+10.9	Russia	+38135	427	121	173	119	55	13	4	2573	12.3%
+1.8	Turkey	+6152	310	138	251	146	53	13	4	2570	8.9%
+2.1	3485 games		2161	467	494	263	79	17	4		62.0%
std dev											

POINTS FOR EACH RESULT ON THE STANDARD WHOLE-NUMBER ZERO-SUM TABLE

win	+360
2-way draw	+150
3-way draw	+80
4-way draw	+45
5-way draw	+24
6-way draw	+10
7-way draw	zero
loss	-60

(Did I say that these statistics settle the debate? A debate amongst Diplomacy players? Perhaps not.)

THE SAMPLE'S COMPOSITION

986 UK postal games in the 1960's, 70's and 80's
 802 North American postal games in the 1960's and 70's
 583 North American postal games in the 1980's and 90's
 458 Continental postal games in the 1970's, 80's and 90's
 565 Judge e-mail games, mostly in the 1990's
 91 hand-adjudicated e-mail games

 3485 total games

Only ordinary seven-player Diplomacy games have been included. No press and orphan games have been excluded.

Mark Nelson has quite properly pointed out that the strongest-country table includes a heterogeneous sample of Diplomacy results from different media -- postal and e-mail -- and different eras. Or, in other words, with a particular medium during a given era among a certain circle of players, the actual strengths of the countries are likely to differ

wildly from the strongest-country-table strengths. Or, in other other words, don't put too much stock in the table; it doesn't even necessarily apply to you. It is a curious Diplomacy fact that the very perception among a particular circle of players that one country is stronger than another has a big impact on the game; if England, Germany, Austria and Turkey all believe that Russia is next-to-unstoppable, for example, then you had better hope that you don't get stuck with Russia, hadn't you, because those guys are going to knock the poor Tsar back to Siberia.

The basic difficulty in compiling a strongest-country table is that, in any one medium and era, the sample size is just too small. Even in a thousand games, the standard deviation on the country averages would be around four points. In Judge e-mail Diplomacy, we have 565 games to work with -- standard deviation: +-4.6. (That figure would be even higher, except that Judge games seem to end in many fewer solos and two-ways than do postal games.)

To get the standard deviation down to +-0.1 would require results from about 1.6 million games. Go to it, readers; you've got your work cut out for you.

HOW TO CALCULATE THE STANDARD DEVIATION ON THE COUNTRY AVERAGES

A. Multiply the number of games that ended in wins by the square of the award for a win:

$$2161*(360*360) = 280,065,600$$

B. Multiply double the number of games that ended in two-way draws by the square of the award for a two-way draw:

$$(2*467)*(150*150) = 21,015,000$$

C. Multiply triple the number of games that ended in three-way draws by the square of the award for a three-way draw:

$$(3*494)*(80*80) = 9,484,800$$

D. Multiply four times the number of games that ended in four-way draws by the square of the award for a four-way draw:

$$(4*263)*(45*45) = 2,130,300$$

E. Multiply five times the number of games that ended in five-way draws by the square of the award for a five-way draw:

$$(5*79)*(24*24) = 227,520$$

F. Multiply six times the number of games that ended in six-way draws by the square of the award for a six-way draw:

$$(6*17)*(10*10) = 10,200$$

(The square of the award for a seven-way draw is zero, so just ignore the seven-way draws.)

(continued on page 11)

The Iberian Gambit

by Chris Warren

The history of French openings reads with two sets used overwhelmingly, both set for A Par-Bur and F Bre-Mid. One is the "Maginot" opening A Mar S A Par-Bur, and the other is known simply as the Burgundy opening with A Mar-Spa. Both these openings offer defense against a German strike into Munich and the easy opportunity to pick up both Iberian supply centers in 1901.

The third opening provides A Mar-Spa, F Bre-Mid, and A Par-Pic, known as the "Picardy Opening." This is subtly pro-German, as it hints to an accommodation over Burgundy while still giving the French player a voice in Belgium. This can be a very good thing, as F/G alliances, while hard to set up early, can offer wonderful late-game stability, and explosive growth once England is dispatched. However, the French player is often caught declaring his intentions in the fight for Belgium in Fall 1901.

By this time, England knows how to position its build for defense, and the lone French fleet is away in Iberia, a full 2 years from an English supply center. I propose an opening known as the "Gascony Opening", but that I like to call the "Iberian Gambit." The Iberian Gambit opens A Par-Gas, F Bre-Mid, A Mar-Spa. While leaving Burgundy open, this is no weaker defensively than the Picardy Opening, as Gascony borders all three home centers. Of course, this is best used with good German relations. In Fall 1901, A Spa continues on to Portugal and A Gas goes to Spain, capturing both Iberian centers, and leaving the French fleet free to move. Anti-English options are to move the fleet to the English Channel, Irish Sea, or North Atlantic, while the threat of going to the Western Mediterranean as an Italian blitz also exists. While not as devastating against Italy as England, the opportunity to do so is very important. It means that the Iberian Gambit can be promoted as a strong Western Triple to England, or as just an Italian blitz, pushing England toward Russia (and ideally, a fleet in the Barrents Sea at the end of 1901). With a fleet already in English waters, and a second fleet built in Brest (and possibly a third in Marseilles) the French can get a quick early leg up in the fight for the British Isles.

Of course, a "gambit" entails risk, and this is of course true. While this opening is as safe defensively for 1901 as the Picardy opening, it is not as strong as the Burgundy or Maginot. Of course, if you have a strong German ally, this is hopefully not a problem. What can be a problem, however, is the fact that both your armies are in Spain and Portugal come 1902. Even a good German ally can only take so much temptation. This is why I recommend 1901 builds of F Bre and A Par. A fleet in Marseilles, while more immediately useful, will have to work its way around Spain to get to a useful position in the Atlantic, trapping the Portugese army for yet another year. Of course, in the case

of friction with the Italians, or an Italian who will acquiesce to you moving F Mar-Lyo, this becomes more palatable.

In short, the Iberian Gambit is France's best method for immediately projecting naval power north, and probably the most potent weapon a Franco-German alliance has against England. Its defensive shortcomings are minor, especially when compared to pro-German variations, and it's a surprising move. Furthermore, it doesn't get bogged down in the fields of Belgium. If only Napoleon had known.

{Chris Warren designed the Youngstown variant Youngstown XV, and is an occasional contributor to DW.}

(The Strongest Country on the Diplomacy Map - continued from page 10)

G. Add up the table's loss column. Multiply that sum by the square of the penalty for a loss:

$$(2718+2527+2446+2623+2784+2573+2570)*(60*60) = 65,667,600$$

H. Add your results from steps A to G.

$$378,601,020$$

I. Divide that number by seven times the number of games in the sample.

$$378601020/(7*3485) = 15519.6$$

J. Find the square root of that number.

$$\text{sqrt}(15519.6) = 124.6$$

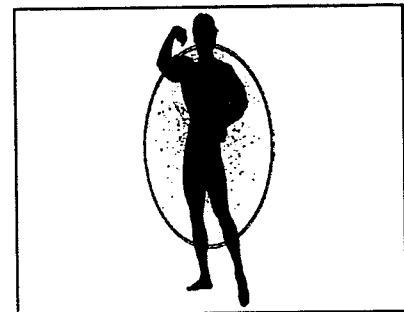
(That is the root-mean-square game result.)

K. Divide that number by the square root of one less than the number of games in the sample.

$$124.6/\text{sqrt}(3485-1) = 2.1$$

The last step gives the standard deviation on the country averages.

{Thaddeus Black lives in northern Idaho, and plays hand-adjudicated e-mail Diplomacy among that worthy and untrustworthy circle of veteran diplomats and warriors known as Cat23. His e-mail address is tblack@tkblack.com}



A Hobby on the Brink? - An Interview with Conrad von Metzke

by Conrad von Metzke

PREFACE: Greetings. I seem to have talked my way into becoming DW's "new" Interviews Editor, and as such it is my hope that I can provide you with regular probing investigations into major hobby personalities and dominant issues that drive the hobby as it marches across President Clinton's bridge to the 21st Century. Beginning next issue, I will do that. For this time, however, my original plans for a spectacular opening salvo - which have changed three times in the 24 hours I've been working on this, and have fallen apart each time - will have to be shelved in favor of an approach which may seem rather pompous, but which may actually be useful in the long run. For my first interview with the DW team, I'm going to interview a long-time hobby figure of occasional (though erratic) importance, someone who has seen the hobby ebb and flow almost from the beginning, and who has participated at virtually every possible level at one time or another - in short, one of the tiny handful of true "old-timers" left in our midst.

I'm going to interview myself!

THE INTERVIEW:

DW: Give us, please, a capsule introduction to yourself, and to your place in the hobby today.

CONRAD von METZKE: Gee - I'm really surprised you asked! But since you did - I'm a California native (1944, San Francisco) and have lived in the State of Lunacy my whole life - in San Diego since 1957. I've had a career in various capacities with the U.S. Postal Service, which I suppose gives me a vested interest in the future of PBM gaming. I'm presently in charge of the registered mail division in San Diego - and I'm now verging on retirement. I'm married with two teen-aged sons, God help me, and apart from gaming my free-time interests include voracious reading, classical music (both listener and performer), keeping tropical fish, philately and doing just enough household and garden work to keep from becoming sedentary.

I first discovered the game Diplomacy in a classified ad. in "Saturday Review" in 1961, bought a game set by mail, and enjoyed many long evenings of FTF gaming with friends for some while. (I even tried to start a PBM game in mid-1962 when some of our local group went off to college and/or the Air Force, but the attempt failed.) Along the way I had occasion to write to the designer concerning a rules question, and this letter got my name on his mailing list. Thus, one day early in 1965, I received in the mail a solicitation to play Diplomacy by mail in a new 'zine called "Wild 'n' Woolly," published by Steve Cartier. I quickly signed up and thus learned of the tnen-fledgling PBM hobby founded

by Dr. Boardman. In April '65 I started my own 'zine, "Costaguana," which came and went for years before folding entirely in 1976 - and then restarting in 1984, since which time it hasn't stopped.

I've been Boardman Number Custodian (1972-74), Miller Number Custodian (on a brief interim basis in 1973), Orphan Games Honcho (same time frame - I was busy then!), editor of "Diplomacy World" (1976-78), two-time Runestone Poll winner (1987 and '88), and will be taking over again as Boardman Number Custodian later in 1997. I've also done an immense amount of publishing, using a variety of formats - but these days I confine myself to "Costaguana" (20 pages of games and drivel every few weeks), an e-mail effort concerning the game Railway Rivals, and later this year I'll resume editing the hobby statistical 'zine I started twenty-five years ago, "Everything."

DW: So - you've been a hobby "leader" on and off, and you seem to be angling to resume that role. Can you give us an assessment of the "state of the hobby," its vitality and health, its prospects for the future?

CvM: Aren't you supposed to ask one question at a time? Well, no matter - I'm frankly concerned that the postal hobby is in a state of terminal decline. Actually, I'm not so much concerned as convinced of it. My fear is that hobby participation will continue to narrow to the point where it won't be possible to mount games any longer, because the circle of participants will be too small to provide significant variety in a player base.

So far, this decline seems mainly to have affected America, where computers are gradually taking over. In Europe and elsewhere overseas, the postal hobby still has great following and much life to it. But I suspect they'll follow our lead eventually.

I see evidence of this decline everywhere. The number of 'zines published has been in a downslide for years. The number of NEW 'zines is quite small - once upon a time they seemed to pop out of the woodwork every few minutes, but now they've become a rarity and a real event. The number of gamestarts is down dramatically. Interest in variants - once a good bellwether of interest in the hobby and the game itself - is close to nonexistent (except anonymous, or "Gunboat," Dip, but I think that's significant too as I'll discuss in a minute). Participation in the Runestone Poll (of 'zine popularity) is no longer of much interest. And, curiously, I think the fact that the hobby no longer has much interactive bickering among its personnel - i.e. no 'feuds' - is a bad sign as well.

DW: Sounds ominous. Do you have any idea why this decline has set in?

CvM: Obviously I have several ideas, or I wouldn't be sitting here talking to you right now. My feeling is that the several contributing factors, which seem to have converged all at once, are: (1) the emergence of e-mail gaming, (2) a decline in interest in the type of game Diplomacy is, (3) a social trend toward depersonalization and efficiency, and (4) a dropoff in interest in board gaming in general. Of these, the first is of course paramount - the bald fact is that computers are taking over, and will continue to do so. And once someone has a computer in place, e-mail becomes quick, cheap and generally reliable in ways that postal mail is not.

Let me relate my own experience, which may not be 'average' but is probably representative. Apart from one quick on-line fling in 1987, I didn't get into the on-line world until about nine months ago - I'd had computers and modems all along, I just hadn't bothered to use them. But when I finally did, and established an e-mail "presence," my world shifted almost instantaneously. Previously I'd gotten tons of postal mail, and eight to ten 'phone calls close to my deadline day; but e-mail cut the postal delivery down to almost nothing (except other people's 'zines), and the 'phone never rings any more. And this for a person who had made no effort whatsoever to collect a subscriber list that was on-line. It simply happened. Now, this doesn't mean that all these people actually PLAY their games by e-mail - obviously not, because that's not what I'm running. But they could just as well, and more cheaply at that (no game fees or sub costs), and as the e-mail gaming community expands to allow more variety in matters e.g. of deadline, I strongly suspect that the on-line people will be slowly winnowed from the postal hobby.

But that's not the only factor. Read any news magazine or journal of social commentary, and one of the common themes is the depersonalization of society as a whole in the '90s. Postal letters are a personal touch; even when they're just bare-bones game orders, the writer usually feels some obligation to include a personal "hi, how are you?, we've had lousy weather" note, or at the very minimum a personal comment bemoaning that (s)he doesn't have time to include a personal note this time. But by e-mail, no such; very often all I get is a print that says "Game XXXX, Spring 19XX," followed by orders. Often not even a signature - not needed, as the sender's name appears in the electronic transmission data at the top of the message. Of course exceptions are there, but the percentages are not exactly "warm and fuzzy."

It's this kind of insularity to which I referred when I mentioned the continuing popularity of Gunboat - a good deal of it no-press Gunboat at that - and of the disappearance of hobby feuding. If there is anything more impersonal on this planet than no-press Gunboat, I am

unable to conceive of it. (It also has the side "benefit" of allowing a GM to operate effectively with a narrow player base; as identities aren't known, the same people can play over and over without ever really becoming "inbred.") As to feuds, I'm not for one minute suggesting that personal invective and continuous bickering are wonderful things, but consider for a moment: They did force an interchange among personalities like nothing else has ever done. They represented a form of energy and vitality - negative, to be sure, but energy nonetheless.

And then there's the general decline in board gaming overall, and the specific decline in the kind of political game that Diplomacy is. It was devised in a political-science atmosphere in a day when the international stage was of more interest to the population as a whole, and it grew and matured in the socially-active '60s and '70s. But the '80s and '90s have spawned a retreat from that focus, and game popularity has followed suit. Shelves in the game stores I know no longer reflect variety and diversity; everything is now children's or "family" games (a retreat into one's own little world?), or "party" games for those who still entertain friends and neighbors. There's also apparently a rage in card-based games, many of which feature quick gaming results and a focus on acquisition ("I have more 'Magic' cards that you do!") rather than on actual player interaction. I don't involve myself in this stuff, so I may well be a bit off base here, but I do know what the game shelves at the shops reflect because I've looked, and I'm not happy.

DW: But don't you see a diversification developing out of the very decline in socio-political gaming? Don't postal 'zines show a variety of games these days instead of the old "dip-and-variants" staples?

CvM: Sure. That's good, and it helps immensely. Word games, for instance, seem to have scored some big points in recent years - those games don't require negotiation or interaction, but can still represent a "family" of players within a given 'zine. Shorter and smaller games than Dip crop up a lot too - fewer turns, fewer players, thus more chance of actually completing the game before players lose interest or the 'zine folds. In the respect that 'zines seem increasingly inclined to vary their games base, I'm encouraged - not so much that the hobby itself will rebound in any massive way, but rather that it can retain a 'niche' where a more limited hobby would eventually succumb.

DW: Did you just say that you think the postal hobby can make a comeback of sorts, or not?

CvM: What I said, if you'd been listening, was: There's a fringe area that can continue to be occupied by purely postal-based gaming, and this will be true for some time to come no matter what happens with the electronic world, IF (and I suspect ONLY IF) diversification continues to the point that enough people can be gathered in one place to keep 'zines and games viable.

There was a time in the past when my 'zine, "Costaguana," had a circulation over 200, and it could have gone higher if I'd pushed it (and found some way to make the copies - in those days I used a spirit duplicator, and 200 was about the upper limit of possibility). Today, when I could theoretically make infinite copies, I'm down to about 50 - again I could push it up some if I tried, but I have a healthy respect for my own limits of time and money, so I don't. But I cannot imagine pushing it all the way to 200 again, unless I sent it to random names as unsolicited "junk mail." More to the point, at least a fourth of my 50 people are "deadwood" in the sense that they receive and presumably read, but don't play or contribute. My most popular game at the moment, a word game, started with about 24 participants (out of 60 at the time) and is just now ending with 18 (out of, to be exact, 49). That's something like a 40% participation rate - but translate this to Diplomacy, and it would be very difficult to sustain very many regular Dip games when there were only 18 players willing to join, as the player lists would get pretty repetitious.

None of which really addressed your question. I think there's absolutely no way the postal-based hobby can ever be rekindled to the way it once existed, and I think continuing compression is inevitable. I suppose eventually postal gaming will vanish altogether, probably by transmuting into something wholly alien to our current concepts - but I'm not expecting to live to witness the denouement, just the run-up.

DW: Well, gee whizzers...if the decline and fall is inevitable, why don't we just chuck it right now and be done with it?

CvM: Because of Yogi Berra - "It ain't over 'til it's over." Despite the increasing limiters, there's a good deal of fun still out there. With a couple of exceptions, I haven't seen a whole lot of creativity in the on-line community, but it's still there in the dangling remnants of postal-dom. If I really felt that all that's left is the hobby's wake, I wouldn't be here now.

DW: Perhaps then the postal hobby ought to be thought of as "creative chaos" and left to do its own willy-nilly thing, without further effort at any formal trappings.

CvM: In other words, why not dismantle all the hobby 'projects' and 'offices' and let the hobby turn back into a free-fall 'happening'? Oh, I think that's already under way. As examples, I don't see the "Zine Register" and the Runestone Poll lasting very much longer; the support is just not there. Miller Numbers for variant games can probably be forgotten pretty soon, too - apparently a few people still care, but not many, and with the whole variant hobby largely moribund I don't see much point. But other things will last a while longer - Boardman Numbers, "Diplomacy World," the orphan rescue service - because they still have some utility and because they serve to keep the hobby

elements connected to one another

DW: You mentioned earlier a decline in board games overall. Do you think Diplomacy - the commercial game - is on its way out?

CvM: I'm not in touch with the Avalon-Hill people and have no inkling as to their business decisions. But I wouldn't be at all surprised if production were discontinued at some point in the near future. It's already disappeared from most of the game shelves I know anything about in San Diego - the last time I found one on a shelf, it was so faded that it had obviously been there since the Great Flood. Perhaps there's a small mail-order market for it, or maybe more cosmopolitan cities than mine still peddle it successfully, but I'm pretty dubious.

DW: If the commercial game goes, won't the hobby inevitably follow suit?

CvM: Of course, after a while. It's pretty tough to snag new blood if the game can't be bought; there are limits to what can be done with conference maps and photocopies of rulebooks passed around hand-to-hand. Some of us diehards would linger on for a while, of course, but in the last analysis, without game sets to be had, I don't see any way to stop the sand from running out.

DW: You know, your whole attitude sounds pretty negative. It almost seems as if you think you and your ilk are dinosaurs trapped in a tar pit. Aren't you helping to kill off whatever hobby remains by that sort of approach?

CvM: Maybe, but I'm concerned that some of us are flailing in the wind trying to sustain something in ways that just aren't viable. I'd be much more comfortable with a reality-based approach to postal gaming - it's small, it's getting smaller, and there's no point in trying to make it come roaring back when it simply can't do that.

But if you want some positives, they're there all right. The most positive thing I can come up with is that there are at least ten postal 'zines, based in the U.S. or Canada, that I really look forward to receiving and reading - plus a batch of foreign ones. Yes, it used to be twenty or more. But ten isn't bad at all, and in those 'zines I find some of the most scintillating creativity I've ever known - even compared to the ostensible "golden age" of the hobby, which by the way wasn't all as "golden" as some people seem to think. In some ways, the restriction of the hobby is a good thing: It now makes it possible to keep up with most of everything, rather than have to pick and choose. But mostly, the people remain animated and exciting - editors and contributors alike. Okay, maybe such people are fast becoming anachronisms. So what? Anachronism can be a lot of fun as long as you don't expect it to be something else, or try to force it to conform to a mold. And if the ranks really do dwindle, I'll just spend more time with those who remain.

DW: Well...this has been fascinating, and certainly immensely informative. Could you wrap it up now with a succinct summary of how you see the hobby now, and in the near future?

CvM: Me - succinct? Well, why not? - I like a new challenge. I see the postal hobby in a state of flux, trying to "reinvent itself" (to steal from Al Gore) to carve out a place for itself in a world that is trying very hard to pass it by. And I think it will work far better if the hobby carves out that niche on its own terms instead of someone else's terms. Postal Diplomacy no longer lends itself well to formalisms - structure, forced cohesion and artificial skeletal trappings. If the hobby continues to posture as in any way "serious," it will evaporate very quickly; but if it can accept itself as a relaxed gathering-place, there can be a lot of fun to be had still. This isn't to say chaos is the answer; but that's not going to happen anyway, because the games themselves are

the focal point of the hobby and they necessarily have structure. No, it's more an attitudinal thing - we postal types just aren't on the cutting edge any longer, and we might just salvage a perfectly fine hobby if we'd stop bemoaning this change and get on with it.

DW: That was succinct? How long will it take you to tell me the time of day?

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NEXT ISSUE: An interview that actually involves two people! - and some contrasting ideas worth considering.

{Conrad, as he mentioned in the interview, has at one time or another done just about everything in this hobby. He is currently the DW Interview Editor.}

An Archives Update

by Larry Peery

The various Diplomacy Archives don't usually make much news. After all, dust is dust, right? However, things have been happening in the various hobby Archives lately, and they just may affect you. Here's an update.

The Walt Buchanan Collection is now in the hands of Jamie McQuinn in Dayton, Ohio. Jamie is a professional librarian and will, I am sure, be putting this invaluable resource to good use in the near future.

The Diplomacy Archives, which remain in my care, recently acquired another major addition to its collection with the donation of several thousand items by Rod Walker. These items date back to the earliest days of the hobby and include vintage issues of zines from the hobby's Golden Age.

It looks like Europe will soon have its own and first Diplomacy Archives outside of the UK. Michael Liesnard, the founder of the Belgian Diplomacy hobby a quarter of a century ago, has asked me to arrange the transfer of his collection to a new home. A group of Belgian Diplomacy fans are currently deciding how best to house and use this treasure. Hopefully, the transfer will be completed this Spring and, for the first time, Diplomacy fans on the continent will have a resource of their own to refer to.

Diplomacy Archives have three tasks: (1) collection of materials; (2) preservation and protection of materials; and (3) use of materials. After all, as someone said, "Knowledge, unless used, is worthless." Don't ask, I don't know who said it. I just made it up.

Let's talk for a moment about that third category, use of materials.

How do we use materials in and from Archives? Here are three possibilities and how I propose to implement them:

Recycling: Beginning in this issue of Diplomacy World you will see a new series of recycled articles taken from some of the best Diplomacy publications from the hobby's Golden Age. That's one way.

Lookie, Touchie, Feelie: Old Diplomacy publications are, in a word, fragile. Many of the earliest ones that were published by ditto or mimeo are nearing the end of their physical life-cycle. The ink is going, the paper is going, and the zines are deteriorating to the point where they will soon be, quite literally, dust! That cannot be prevented, but before it happens I have made a decision, which some may not agree with: to get these publications out of their folders and file cabinets and into the limelight for one last hurrah! I am putting together several travelling exhibits which I hope to send to face-to-face Diplomacy events and gaming Cons for display purposes. Each exhibit will include a variety of publications and other items representing the whole span of the hobby's time and physical being. You may remember the exhibits at some of the early Peericons or DipCon XXII here in San Diego. It's that kind of display I am thinking about. Each exhibit will come self-contained and ready to ship. The host will only be required to accept responsibility for the exhibit and pay for shipping costs. I hope to have the first one ready in time for WDC VII in Goteborg. Let's see, 2 pounds of zines and 250 pounds of living Perriblah come to... (if you are interested in hosting such an exhibit let me know.

Freebie Golden Oldies: The hobby's major publications, Diplomacy World and The Diplomatic Pouch, need material to publish. Without it, we would not have these

publications. Without them, well...it's too horrible to think about. But writers also have their needs: inspiration and incentive are two examples. Perhaps The Archives can provide a bit of both. If you submit an item for publication to either of these magazines and it is accepted for publication, I will send you a selection of items from The Archives. It will be a random selection of magazines, most likely from the 70's and the 80's, by a variety of publishers from various countries. The package will weigh in the area of 2 pounds or 1 kilo. To get it, all you have to do is send

a \$3 USPO stamp, or a kilo's worth of IPCs (US\$ equivalent to the postage is also OK) to Doug or Manus (or me, with a copy of the article). What's included? Well, for example, you will get a copy of the 100th issue of Rod Walker's famous zine Erehwon, an early issue of Graustark, or perhaps even a Don Miller pub.

{Larry Peery maintains the Hobby Archives, which is the largest collection of Diplomacy material in the world.}

From The Archives - Treasures from the Golden Age

An Introduction to the Series by Larry Peery

The Golden Age of Diplomacy. Did it really exist? Who says so? What proof is there? The answers are simple: Yes, I do, and here it is.

Among the items that Rod Walker recently turned over to The Diplomacy Archives was a plastic trash bag (well, maybe it was a grocery bag) filled with 16 articles copied from various hobby publications. Each article had been carefully copied from the original source, a few had been retyped so they could be more easily read, and each one had its publishing history with it. As I looked through these articles I realized Rod had selected a very representative collection from the hobby's Golden Age. I also realized that I had an obligation to see that these articles were brought to light, many for the first time since they were originally published some three decades ago.

In these 16 articles, some 50 pages or so in combined length, by 6 principal authors you will find that the subjects hobby members were writing about then: tactics, strategies, NMR's, alliances, correspondence (and the lack thereof), victory conditions, and ethics were little different then what we are writing about today. In addition, you'll find the odds and ends, and even a blooper or two, that made the hobby fun even then.

Allan Calhmer is a name known to all of us, but only a few of us have had a chance to play The Game against The Master. Two of our articles were written by Allan over thirty years ago. They'll show you why he was and is The Master.

Edi Birsan is perhaps the best known player still active from those days, but Gene Prosnitz, who still contributes an occasional item to the hobby press and for all I know still plays somewhere, was just as good a player as Edi, and we'll have two articles Gene wrote some thirty years ago.

Don Miller, one of the true gentlemen in the early days of the hobby (and for whom the Don Miller Memorial Award is named), published a huge variety of magazines during the 1960's. We'll have three articles, if you can call them that,

that Don published. They're as timely now as they were a quarter of a century ago.

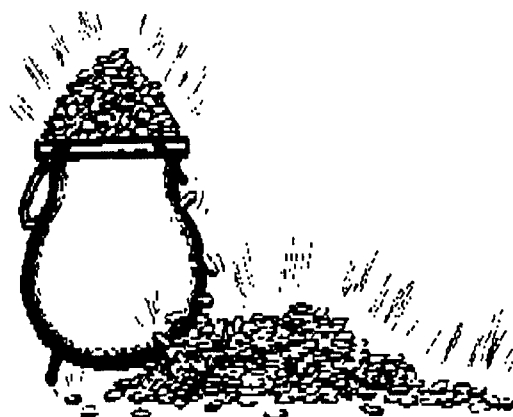
Jared Johnson is not a household name in Diplomacy, even to me, but based on his contributions to this series I deeply regret never meeting him. He must have been one interesting person.

Ted Holcombe published the first Dip zine ever done in color as far as I know. Color? Back in the 60's? Sure. Colored crayons. Yep, he did. The maps were works of art, and so is his article on France.

Brobdingnag was one of the premier publications of the Golden Age, and Dick Schultz was its first publisher. He also proved that even editors and publishers could and did make mistakes. He was also the first in the hobby to ponder the question "Why did WWI start in 1914 if Diplomacy started in 1901?"

And now, come back to a time when many of you were just a dream in your mommy and daddy's eye, back to the Golden Age of Diplomacy.

{Larry Peery publishes the zine World Diplomacy.}



The Tactics of Diplomacy

by Allan Calhamer

with an Introduction by Larry Peery

Originally written in 1961, well before the postal hobby came into being, this article was first published in August of 1965 in Graustark, when only a handful of PBM games had been started. In 1986 Rod Walker reprinted it in the Postal Diplomacy Library.

This is a discussion of opening strategies and tactics for all the Great Powers. The true significance of this article is that it shows that Allan could not only design a game like Diplomacy, he could also play it. As if anyone needed reminding about just how good a player Allan was, Calhamer played a FTF game at the Fredericksburg, VA DipCon in the mid-1980's and achieved a win by concession with an 11-center (about to be 15-center) Germany.

The first two moves, of course, are usually devoted to the capture of supply centers which are not occupied at all at the start of the game. Typical results are as follows:

England: Norway	Austria-Hungary: Serbia
France: Spain and Portugal	Russia: Sweden
Germany: Holland and Denmark	Turkey: Bulgaria
Italy: Tunis	

Belgium, Greece, and Rumania fall variously depending on the situation.

The game tends to reach a balanced state in which players continually shift their weight against the strongest: therefore, it is unlikely that any game will actually continue until it produces a winner. Normally we play for three or four hours, then discuss what we think would have happened if we had continued.

There have been many opening variations, as well as other concepts, developed in the course of play here. Normally, England and France will agree to leave the English Channel open on the first move. England will then play A Lvp-Yor, F Edi-Norwegian Sea, F Lon - North Sea. If France violates the agreement, the Army drops down to London on the Fall move. Norway can still be attacked with one support. If France does not enter the Channel, the Army may be convoyed through the North Sea to Norway. The Norwegian Sea Fleet may support. If this action is unnecessary, the Norwegian Sea Fleet may go to the Barents Sea to prepare an attack on St. Petersburg. If France should move in to the Channel on the Fall move, England raises a fleet, based on the capture of Norway, in London.

If Russia wishes to play an anti-England game, she will order F StP-Bot and A Mos-StP. The other two pieces will be deployed according to purely southern considerations. On the Fall move, the Fleet is ordered to Sweden and the Army

to Norway, which adjoins St. Petersburg at the top of the map. This action compels England to tie up two pieces in the attack on Norway. If Russia occupies Sweden, she then repeatedly attacks Norway with either Army or Fleet, supported by the other. This ties up two English pieces. Now if either Germany or France attacks England, she may collapse.

If Russia prefers a southern game, the Moscow Army goes to Ukraine on the first move. The northern Fleet still moves to Sweden.

Normally Russia and Germany agree that neither will move pieces into such spaces as Livonia, Prussia, Silesia, and the Baltic Sea. Then if either should attack the other, he would have to enter those areas first. The areas are not supply centers; so at no material loss the attacked party gets warning, and may move the appropriate pieces or scramble back into defensive positions, as the situation permits. Such a "self-enforcing" agreement has a tendency to last a long time but you cannot count on a player accepting realities and playing accordingly in the absence of an agreement. He may not understand the situation. Also the mere absence of such an obvious agreement may raise suspicions which may provoke an attack. If these two countries get into an early war with each other they usually get tied down, without either accomplishing anything, and then they are both very vulnerable to attack by other countries.

A typical German deployment is F Kie-Den, A Ber-Kie. The Munich Army may do various things. If the Russian A War has not attacked in the rear, the Army in Kiel occupies Holland in the Fall. If the Russians should attack in the Fall, Germany would simply raise units in her path. The Fleet in Denmark may be used to attack Sweden in the Fall. This costs Germany nothing, since she will win either Denmark or Sweden but not both, in any case; but it can prevent Russia from taking Sweden. Germany may use this threat as a bargaining lever to secure the neutralizing treaty with Russia. In any case, if Russia attacks Germany on the first move, Germany will certainly play the attack on Sweden on the second move, to keep Russian strength down and to keep Russia away from Denmark.

On the southern Russian frontier, a fleet in the Black Sea exerts a great deal of influence. Occasionally an alliance succeeds in which Russia and Turkey agree to leave this space open. The Russian Fleet is ordered to Romania, to pick up the supply center. A Turkish Army is ordered from Constantinople to Bulgaria, and the Fleet to Constantinople. Thereafter the fleet proceeds to the Aegean Sea. Often this alliance is offered by an experienced player to a beginner, however, and then promptly broken. Other experienced

players should warn a beginner against this during the first diplomacy period. Russia and Turkey can often make a sound alliance in which both order their fleets to the Black Sea move after move, thus assuring that it will remain empty, while their armies attack Austria-Hungary.

In this situation it is sometimes possible to pretend that each country has stabbed the other in the back, and mask the fact of alliance for a few moves, after which both countries may be much strengthened by spoil from the Balkans and Austria-Hungary. Russia may request that Turkey raise fleets primarily or entirely, to insure that, after Austria-Hungary is beaten, she will expand against Italy rather than Russia.

If Turkey wants an anti-Russian game, she may order her Smyrna Army to Armenia on the first move.

Italy normally spends the first two moves with her Fleet in the acquisition of Tunis. She may proceed through either the Tyrrhenian or Ionian Sea. Normally she chooses the Ionian, because this gives her the option of foregoing Tunis for a couple of moves and attacking Greece or supporting either Austria-Hungary or Turkey into Greece.

If Italy wishes an anti-Austrian game, she may play A Ven-Tyr and A Rom-Ven (the "Obrieni Attack"). If those moves succeed, in the Fall she has the option of single attacks on Vienna and Trieste, or a supported attack on Trieste alone. Austria may gamble on some such Italian deployment, and leave Trieste undefended on the first move, in order to dash into the Balkans. If this gamble succeeds, however, she must in any case send sufficient defense back to Trieste on the Fall move, as an open supply center next to an enemy piece is an invitation to attack. If Italy has an inkling that Austria is going to make this gamble, she may order A Ven-Tri on the first move. If this move succeeds, then with normal follow-up play Austria-Hungary will collapse quickly.

Also, if the Obrieni Attack succeeds, Austria will normally collapse quickly, because of her surrounded position and wide-open landward frontiers. The trouble with this result, for Italy, is that she cannot ordinarily hold her gains in Austria. With the Adriatic separating her advance forces from her newly raised forces, she is quickly dispossessed by two other Powers which have been strengthened by the downfall of Austria-Hungary: Russia and Turkey. Turkey particularly, due to her secure corner position, rapidly becomes a menace to all Europe. Therefore, the player of Italy usually does not attempt to bring Austria-Hungary down.

An early Italian attack on France, however, usually doesn't work. Italy sometimes plays a waiting game with her armies, to see which side will weaken. Occasionally she has made a tenuous attack on Turkey with Fleets, or a picaresque invasion of Germany through Tyrolia. This last,

though seemingly unsound, on one occasion succeeded in recreating the Holy Roman Empire in toto.

An alliance between Austria-Hungary and Italy is often very strong, because it cannot be taken in the rear, unless other Powers, particularly France and Turkey, recognize it at once and make a very strong naval commitment in the Mediterranean. It is, however, subject to internal problems, because of the vulnerability of Venice and Trieste to the ally, if these are left undefended.

Austria-Hungary normally agrees with Germany that each will stay away from the other's frontiers. They commonly agree that neither shall enter Bohemia or Silesia. If these two Powers fight early in the game, both are likely to be taken in the rear and destroyed. Austria has a difficult game at the outset, but if she gets off to a good start she often gets a strong game. Usually she will play A Bud-Ser in the Spring of 1901. This piece may attack Rumania, Bulgaria, or Greece in the Fall, without fear of failing to be in a supply center in the Fall, and if she gets a stand-off she will slow the growth of another Power. There are a variety of ways of playing the other two pieces. Often the Fleet goes to Albania and the Vienna Army goes to Trieste. This permits F Alb-Gre with support from Serbia in the Fall. If Italy and Russia have not invaded in the North, Austria will raise two Armies and get a good game. If the Russian Warsaw Army has invaded Galicia, the Trieste Army may be ordered to either Vienna or Budapest, leaving the other open, and hoping to outguess the Russians. Shading one's guess can become psychologically and technically a deep proposition.

If Austria suspects that Italy will attack Tyrolia, she may order A Vie-Tyr, F Tri holds. Now if the Russians invade Galicia, the Austrian Army which is still in Vienna (due to a stand-off in Tyrolia) and the Army which moved Bud-Ser in the Spring, may both be ordered to attack Budapest. They stand each other off, which keeps the Serbian Army in place, so that Austria may build after the move; they also keep the Russian Army in Galicia out of both Vienna and Budapest. Austria has substantially no chance of capturing Greece, however, if she elects these Spring moves. Also, if Italy does not attack Tyrolia, the Vienna Army unexpectedly flies into this province, after which it is out of position to make the self-standoff in Budapest. Thus, if the Serbian Army is ordered back to Budapest in the Fall to keep the Russians out, it may unexpectedly move there, and Serbia will not be occupied after the Fall move. Thus Austria cannot raise a new unit.

A solution to this dilemma is for Germany and Austria to agree both to attack Tyrolia in the Spring. They stand each other off, neither moves out of position, and Italy is kept out of Central Europe entirely. If Germany and Austria agree to

(Continued on page 21)

Improving New Improved Diplomacy

by Baron Powell

I read Stephen Agar's article "New Improved Diplomacy" in issue 80 of Diplomacy World with interest. Not surprisingly, Stephen made suggestions I liked and others that didn't appeal to me at all. Just for the sake of argument, I thought I'd add my own opinions to the debate and see what the response might be.

One comment that caught my attention was Steve Rennie's assertion that "in considering options I think history matters not a jot, the game is all." I disagree completely. My experience with games based on historical events is that the closer they come to replicating history without actually forcing the players into historical outcomes, the better the game. Since I feel Diplomacy is based on history, I believe this axiom applies. Diplomacy attempts to replicate (in an abstract yet satisfying way) the political and military situation that existed in Europe at the turn of the century. If we examine this time period more closely, we may find answers to the question: how do we improve the game?

Allow me to address each of the rule changes made in Stephen's summary of Diplomacy II (page 17 of Diplomacy World).

1. The map - I agree with nearly all of Stephen's map changes. I think it's a great idea to include the entire African coast. This change not only makes Turkey more vulnerable (which it should be), but also restores territories that were the source of much of the tension in Europe at the turn of the century. England and France nearly went to war over control of Egypt (never mind that the Turks thought they controlled Egypt). Italy and Turkey did go to war over Libya (in 1911). I agree with the logic behind the changes in and around Italy. I think it is a good idea to separate Moscow into two provinces. I also like the idea of making Iceland, Ireland, and Switzerland passable. In particular, I feel a passable Switzerland creates some interesting scenarios.

The trouble is Stephen doesn't go far enough. This isn't the map of Europe in 1901! This is Europe in 1914. If we redraw the map to reflect the 1901 borders, the situation in the Balkans and in North Africa changes.

For starters, there should be a Turkish province, Macedonia (Mac) that stretches from Constantinople to the Adriatic sea (see map). Macedonia borders on Constantinople, the Black Sea, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia (discussed shortly), the Adriatic Sea, the Ionian Sea, Greece, and the Aegean Sea. The presence of Macedonia is sure to alter the dynamics in the Balkans and surrounding areas if only because it touches so many key territories. More directly, creating Macedonia means Bulgaria is no longer sure to go to Turkey. Turkey's only sure neutral becomes Greece, a center that often goes to

Austria-Hungary. Bulgaria, in fact, may stay neutral in 1901 as Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Turkey each lack the power to take it by force if the occupation is opposed.

Next, we should create the province of Bosnia (Bos) (see map). Bosnia borders Serbia, Trieste, the Adriatic Sea, and Macedonia. This province actually consists of Bosnia itself, Herzegovina, and Montenegro. The first two were under Austro-Hungarian administration, but were still technically part of Turkey. Montenegro was independent. From a historical perspective, creating Bosnia restores the identity of a region that was a political flash point (in 1900, in 1914, and recently). From a gaming perspective, creating Bosnia prevents Austria-Hungary from moving to Macedonia on the first turn and denying Turkey access to a neutral in 1901.

Turning to Africa, there is a need to separate North Africa into two provinces, North Africa (consisting of Algeria and Tunisia) and Morocco (see map). The new province of Morocco (Mor) borders North Africa, Western Mediterranean, Spain, and Mid-Atlantic Ocean. By 1901, both Algeria and Tunisia were firmly under French control. Because of this, I would merge them together (and move the supply center on the map from Tunis to Algiers). Morocco, on the other hand, was considered "open" to all of the powers. French attempts to alter this arrangement nearly resulted in war.

Incidentally, even though Norway and Sweden were legally one country in 1901, Norway was independent for all intents and purposes. This fact was (wisely) recognized by Sweden in 1905. Because of this and because I believe the game plays better with an independent Norway, I feel it's best not to merge Norway and Swede into one country.

In summary then, I would create the following new spaces:

Ara Arabia
Bos Bosnia
Col Cologne (*) (Formerly Ruhr)
Egy Egypt (*)
Ice Iceland (*)
Ire Ireland
Lib Libya (*)
Mac Macedonia
Mil Milan (*)
Mor Morocco (*)
Pal Palestine
Sib Siberia
Swi Switzerland (*)

2. Supply centers - Some changes Stephen proposes I agree with wholeheartedly. I agree with his proposal to make Egypt a supply center. I also agree with his decision to not

make Ireland a supply center. In 1901, Ireland was considered an integral part of Great Britain (the Irish might not have thought so, but their opinion hardly mattered outside of England). Finally, I agree that it's a good idea to move the supply center from Venice to Milan.

Other changes (or lack of changes) don't excite me as much. I disagree with not making Switzerland a supply center. Doing so makes Switzerland the only independent minor country that is not a supply center. Oddly enough, French, German, and Italian claims to Switzerland may result in it being neutral for some time. I would also make both Libya and Morocco supply centers. Finally, I would make the Ruhr a supply center and change the name of the province to Cologne (which, interestingly, is how Allan Calhmer had it on his original map). I'll discuss this proposal more later on.

3. Unit changes (additions and alterations) - I have a problem with giving Russia the option of starting the St. Petersburg fleet in either the north or south coast. While I like the flexibility this gives Russia, I can't think of any realistic reason why the other players wouldn't know where the northern Russian fleet is located. It's not like the Russians could transport their ships overland from one port to another. I think the fleet should start in St. Petersburg as it does currently.

I would start a French army in North Africa. This option gives France a unit that can be used to occupy nearby supply centers (Libya, Morocco, Spain) without distracting the army units in Metropolitan France (of course, England and Italy might have a lot to say about how much freedom of maneuver this new French unit has). Being able to keep two armies in France (instead of sending one to Spain) should help counterbalance the negative effects the Milan variant has on France's performance. The armies should also help France resist Germany's enhanced offensive capability (as explained below).

As mentioned earlier, I would redesignate Ruhr as Cologne and make it a supply center. I would then start a third German army there (giving the German player three armies and one fleet at game-start). Germany was arguably the predominant military power in Europe (it certainly had the finest army). It was able to conduct a two-front war (albeit with help from Austria-Hungary) for three years and emerge victorious in the east (and nearly so in the west).

In Diplomacy, Germany is disappointingly weak. Since the time period is 1901, not 1850, it seems appropriate to establish Germany in its rightful position of prominence. This shouldn't preclude the need for the German to be a diplomat. On the contrary, when others see you as #1, you have to work harder to ensure they don't gang up on you. The additional unit should also help offset the advantage France has been given (i.e., the additional army starting in North Africa and easy access to more centers).

I would have Austria-Hungary start with three armies instead of two armies and a fleet. First, the map changes I'm proposing make it even more difficult for Austria-Hungary to get fleets into play. Second, despite the naval victory over Italy in 1866, Austria-Hungary had no tradition as a sea power. The true military power of the empire originated from its army. Since Greece is now unlikely to fall into Habsburg hands, the additional army should compensate for the lack of a build.

Finally, I would start a British fleet in Egypt. This has two positive effects. First, it reflects the historical reality that Great Britain was a major power in the Eastern Mediterranean. Second, it forces more communications between the players. Currently, the two wicked witches might occasionally exchange letters, but they seldom have any direct interaction until the end game (if at all). With an English fleet harbored at Alexandria, the situation changes. Turkey will have a vested interest in maintaining friendly relations with England, not only to prevent English aggression (now we can recreate a Dardenelles campaign), but to keep other parties out of the Mediterranean (as I'll explain later).

4. Building in neutral or another country's supply centers - I don't at all like Stephen's suggestion to allow builds outside of the home country. I get the impression based on the comments in Stephen's article that I may be in the minority here. While there might be some justification for doing this (from a historical perspective) if Diplomacy recreated the Napoleonic wars, it doesn't make sense for the twentieth century. Additionally, such a rule completely overturns the advantages of having shorter lines of communication. Logically, if France is at war with Russia, it should be more difficult for France to sustain the effort the closer to Russia she gets (just ask Napoleon). Conversely, Russia should have an easier time of it as her forces fall back into Mother Russia. I think a new French unit should have to march to Russia from Paris rather than be able to pop up in Warsaw.

Along these lines, I would not allow England to build in Egypt or France to build in North Africa despite the fact that they start with units in these two provinces. Egypt and North Africa are just like any other neutral supply centers. Possession of them entitles you to a build, but you can't build there.

F. Victory conditions - There are now 40 centers. I'm not sure, however, that this means a player should have 21 centers to win. Eighteen centers may still be a good number. I say this because I'm confident my revised map does not prevent the possibility of stalemate lines. These stalemate lines might be irrelevant, however, if only 18 centers are needed for a victory since a country could conceivably get the centers it needs without crossing the stalemate line. Without play testing, it's hard for me to tell what is best.

6. Unit movements - I like being able to move units directly from Ireland to Clyde and vice versa. I also like the idea of forming a 4-way junction at Gibraltar between Mid-Atlantic Ocean, Morocco, Western Mediterranean, and Spain. To these moves, I would add the ability to move naval units from Egypt to Mid-Atlantic ocean and vice versa. This reflects the presence of the Suez Canal and the ability to go around the Horn of Africa (each turn does take 6 months after all).

7. Italian weakness - I do not think any of the proposals I make do much to address the fact that Italy is the weakest power in the game. Historically, this was certainly the case. The Ethiopians have the distinction of being the only African nation to defeat a European army. Naturally, their victory came against Italy, a nation that has embarrassed itself on nearly every battlefield since Italy was established. Even the decrepit Ottomans were managing to hold their own against the Italians until the Balkan League forced the Turks to surrender Libya and focus on matters closer to home. In this case, however, I'm not sure good history makes for a good game. Unfortunately, I can't see a way to fix the Italian problem that doesn't completely ignore the historical realities.

This doesn't mean Italy is doomed to be a non-factor. On the contrary, I think Italy will play a key role in the alliance structures that develop over the course of the game. I simply think it remains tougher to win as Italy than as any other country.

Well, I think I've rambled on long enough. If anyone has any comments on some of the things I've discussed, I'd be interested in hearing them.

{Baron Powell is a member of a rare breed of individuals - people who send unsolicited, but much appreciated, articles into Diplomacy World for publication. More people should try to emulate him.}

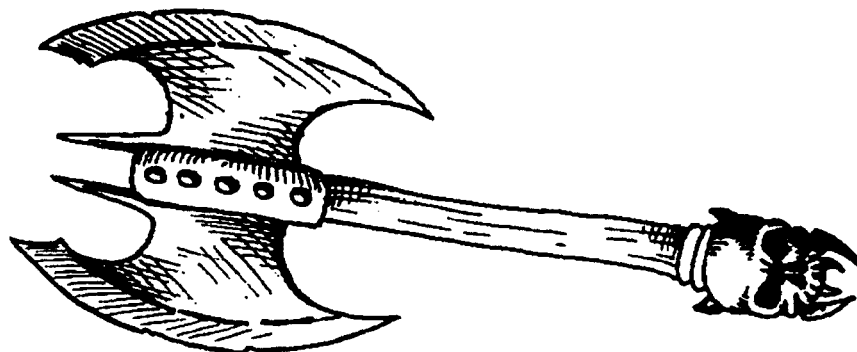
(The Tactics of Diplomacy - Continued from page 18)

do this, they should notify Italy during the first diplomacy period. Italy will be more likely to choose an anti-French deployment if she knows that the roads to both Germany and Austria are blocked.

A normal French deployment is F Bre-Mid, A Par-Bur, A Mar S A Par-Bur. If England has not played F Lon-Eng, the French Fleet proceeds in the Fall to Portugal. An Army is ordered Mar-Spa. If Italy has not entered Piedmont, the order is A Bur-Bel. Generally France would like to prevent a German thrust into Burgundy, which ties most of the French pieces down to defense of supply centers. If France wants an anti-Italian development, she may play the above Spring 1901 moves, except A Mar-Spa. On the Fall move, the Spain Army occupies Portugal, and the Fleet moves F Mid-Spa(sc). If Italy did move to Piedmont in the Spring, the Burgundy army must be told to go to Marseilles. If the result is a stand-off, again a Fleet may as raised there but if the result is a move to Marseilles, raising a new unit there is not allowed.

There are other interesting first move developments which arise from time to time, and choosing among early developments is often based on positional considerations which flower later in the game. Strategy is still evolving, too, because no idea cannot be anticipated and adapted to in a subsequent game. In any case, diplomatic considerations can override the technical. Alliances sometimes hold together in situations in which neither ally is adequately defended against the other. Sound technical alliances founder on distrust, or are pulled apart by false advice or tempting offers from the outside. A country that has "lost the diplomacy" and finds itself fighting superior numbers can rely on tactics only to delay the issue while it tries to save itself diplomatically.

{Allan Calhamer is the inventor of Diplomacy.}



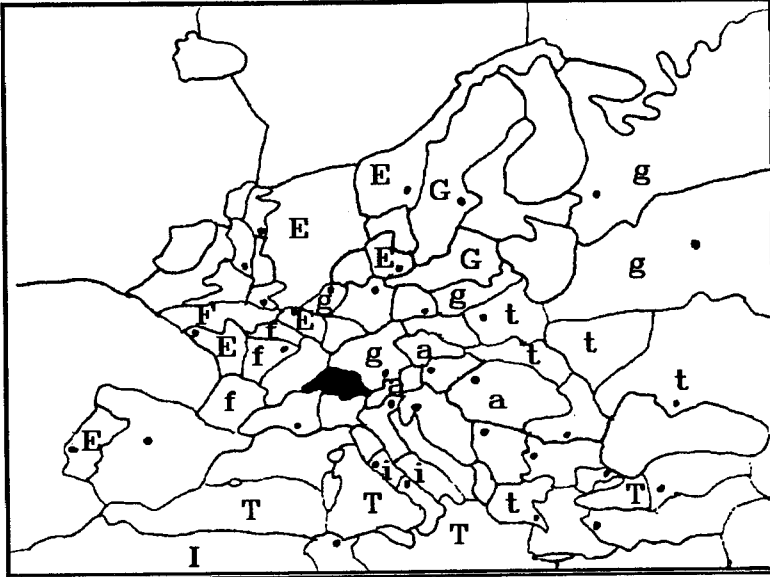
The Diplomacy World Demo Game

Flapjack - 1995HD

The Players: Austria - Dave Partridge
England - Mike Gonsalves
France - Paul Milewski
Germany - Stephen Koehler
Italy - James McQuinn
Russia - Jerry Ritcey
Turkey - Mark Fassio

The GM: Douglas Kent **The Commentators:** Brian Cannon
Jim Grose

Winter 1905/Spring 1906 Results:



Austria: A Gal-Boh,A Tri-Tyr,A Vie-Bud.
England: Bld F Lon..F Mid-Por,F Lon-Nth,F Bel-Ech,
A Pic-Bel,F Bre H,F Nwy-Swe,F Den-Swe.
France: Ret F Mid-Ech,Bld A Mar..A Par S A Bur-Pic,
A Bur-Pic,F Ech-Bre,A Mar-Gas.
Germany: Ret A Bel-Hol,Bld A Ber..A Ber-Pru,
A Mun-Kie,A Hol-Kie,A Mos H,A StP S A Mos,
F GoB-Bal,F Swe-Nwy.
Italy: Bld A Ven..A Ven-Apu,A Rom S A Ven-Apu,
F Tun-NAf.
Turkey: Rem A Ser..A Bud-Gal,A Gre H,A Ukr-War,
A Rum-Ukr,A Sev S A Rum-Ukr,F Bla-Con,F Aeg-Ion,
F Ion-Tyn,F Tyn-Wme.

PRESS

Turkey: A wizened Dip veteran told me to always follow through on a stab, once undertaken. While I believe that advice in most cases, this instance is different...at least I hope so. Turkey's self-interest and (hopefully) security dictate the current approach. May Allah have mercy on me if I trusted people wrongly, and may greater glory await us if I trusted correctly!

France - Nobody in Particular: I was surprised at my success in retaking Paris, especially after what I confided in Germany. My retreat may look questionable, but I generally prefer the aggressive and unexpected. If England hadn't picked up Denmark, I could do some real damage. Now the question is, what will Germany do this time? The nice thing about my situation is that no matter what I do, I'm bound to look better than Russia. Rolling over and playing dead is not a class act.

Turkey - Neighbors: Quote of the day, taken from Ngo Diem (Vietnamese leader), who stole it from Mussolini (Oct 1926): Follow me if I advance! Kill me if I retreat! Avenge me if I die! We're off to the races!

Turkey - Germany: Your letter arrived too late to affect world affairs. Besides, you're the Big Kid on the block now; can't let you grow much bigger. En garde...

Austria - Turkey: So, have we ended this farce yet?

Turkey - England: Mike, what's up? I didn't anticipate the support for MOS, so I did this instead. What's your status here?

Turkey - France: Bold, audacious, and shrewd, oh noble Gaul! Here comes the cavalry...

Turkey - Commentators: Schizophrenic enough for you?

Brian Cannon - As an old hero of mine once said ...

"Fascinating!" Faz has succeeded in surprising me and, with the new alliance structures, the game dynamics have gone spinning off in a new direction.

First the pertinent facts: 1) Turkey makes peace (apparently) with BOTH Italy & Austria - and they BOTH go along with it. Italy vacates Tunis and heads west (!), Austria eschews any attempt at a defense against what could have been a Turkish advance and works out an apparent dot swap (Bud for War), and Turkey (rather precipitously) uncocks the hammer (at least against Austria - he could still make a move on Italy, especially if Austria was "in on it") and moves against Germany's Russian holdings (as Austria moves against Munich).

2) Germany and England BOTH play status-quo defense with each other - neither one trying to grab a dot from the other and both trying to defend the dots they already have. Both make minor moves against an opponent (Germany against Turkey with his move to Prussia, England against France with his slide into Portugal) but nothing definitive since most of their forces are uneasily watching each other.

3) France counter-attacks England annihilating an English army and setting up the liberation of Brest in the Fall - which, of course, will only balance the loss of Portugal to England. France also sets up a convoy into the British Isles. However, he faces a possible loss of Spain to Turkey (probably to the Fleet, though an army convoy from Greece is possible) if he tries both the convoy and the retaking of Brest. His choice "may" depend on feedback from and dialog with Faz during the season. Since England & France are just trading dots (Brest for Portugal) England should be able to rebuild his annihilated unit in the Winter (as long as Germany doesn't stab him during the Fall).

Now here's some of what it "may" mean. 1) The aborning T/I/A stands to be very successful against E/G (unless France joins E/G pretty quickly) as long as it lasts. With the German loss of Munich (to Austria) & Warsaw (to Turkey) Stephen could keep armies in Ruhr/Kiel/Berlin, Fleet in Baltic, & Army in StPete. Coupled with English support from Norway I/A/T would be stopped from Switzerland north - "IF" France covers Burgundy! In the Med, an E/F alliance "could" plug Gibraltar but runs a grave risk of being unable to also protect Spain & Marseilles, both of which "should" fall to a determined I/T attack by 1908 (possibly as early as 1907) unless E/F is very, very careful (and lucky). The main problem for a western alliance is that it only has three armies to work with and the Austrian taking of Munich, coupled with an early I/T attack on Marseilles and Turkish threat to Spain will most likely place those armies in Burgundy, Marseilles, & Gascony. If I/T are able to grab Spain, then Marseille will become untenable & vice-versa. And once France begins losing dots the few armies E/F has will begin to disappear hastening the collapse. A successful

E/F defense (again, assuming that France is even interested in dealing with England) will call for E/F fleets in Por/Spain & MAO/Bre/Ech (or MAO with two other supports). Getting there looks like it will require some guesses to go their way - we'll see.

2) Italy & Austria have got to be aware that sooner or later Faz will stab one or both of them. However, that just means they need to (by moves & negotiations) seek how to gain a secure enough situation to defend themselves before that happens. If Turkey continues to bypass Tunis, they should both get a build this year and have at least a chance to rebuild their fortunes. If they are to be successful, however, I think it will require three things: skillful manipulation of the other players so that Faz continues to "need" them more as allies than as fodder (they want I/A/T to advance, but not so easily that Faz can cast one of them aside); they need to maintain a defense in their rear so that Turkey isn't enticed to stab by the sheer nakedness of their backsides (while still maintaining some kind of presence on the front line so as to benefit from alliance gains); and they would do well to form an (I/A) alliance within the (I/A/T) alliance, an arrangement of mutual defense to dissuade Turkey from attempting a strike on either one of them.

So the Three big questions to watch now are: 1) Will Germany trust England enough to stop A/T north of Gibraltar (and will England work with him to that end)? 2) Will France keep after England or join him to stop I/A/T in the south (and will they guess right so as to get a stalemate line set up)? 3) Will I/A/T hold together long enough for A/T to secure themselves against a Turkish future stab (and, given time, will they be successful in establishing a defensible situation for themselves)?

Jim Grose - Last time I asked if cooperation between former enemies for their joint benefit was asking too much. I was referring to England and France but it was Austria-Hungary and Turkey who saw the light.

I also questioned Germany taking Moscow from Warsaw rather than StP since this left a gap that Turkey could exploit. With Austria-Hungary switching sides this gap just became a chasm. In Fall 1906 Turkey can take Moscow while Austria-Hungary can take Munich. One of them also takes or keeps Warsaw.

Given that England and France can't see into the Med, France retreated F MAO - Eng, as expected. England's response (and entire strategy) is extremely puzzling. If England and Germany are not already allied, they'd better become so damned quickly and stop wasting units from Holland to Norway. England should have built F Lvr and ordered F Den - Nth, F Lon S F Bel - Eng, A Pic holds, F Lvr - Wal. England's gamble of letting French F MAO

retreat north only makes sense if he can quickly reduce France. To do so requires mutual trust and cooperation between England and Germany, which we've seen none of lately. Surely England doesn't think he can knock off France and then Germany all by himself?!

Germany should play the part of mediator in settling the E-F war and forming an E-F-G alliance, since he's about to face the full force of the renewed A-T alliance.

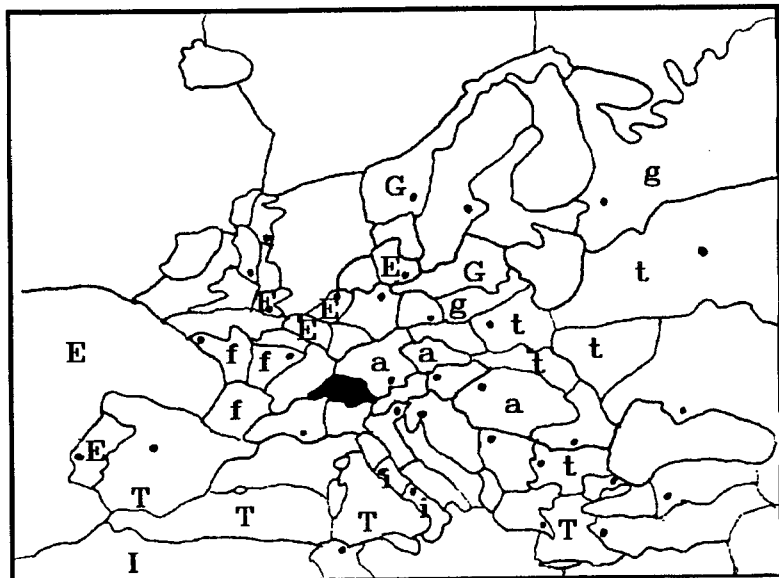
Allah is smiling on Turkey - at least for now - but what will Austria-Hungary do after taking Mun and Bud and building two or three?

Turkey and Italy appear to have a deal whereby Italy will support Tur F WMe - MAO, but what are we to make of A Ven - Apu? I can understand if Turkey dictated that no fleet was to be built in Nap, but why not A Nap? Perhaps A Ven was simply to discourage A-H A Tri - Ven.

France is making good progress against England, retaking Bre and playing a guessing game at Lon and Bel this fall, but can he defend himself against the Turkish fleets?

Rather than label him schizophrenic, I admire Turkey for his ability to see the big picture and to reconcile with Austria-Hungary.

Fall 1906 Results:



Austria: A Tyr-Mun,A Boh S A Tyr-Mun,A Bud H.
England: F Por S F Bre-Mid,F Bre-Mid,
 F Bel S F Nth-Hol,F Nth-Hol,F Den-Kie,
~~F Nwy StP(ne)~~(ret Bar,Nwg,Nth,Ska,OTB).
France: A Par S A Pic-Bre,A Pic-Bre,F Ech-Lon,
 A Gas S A Pic-Bre.
Germany: A ~~Hol-Bel~~(ret Ruh,OTB),
 A Mun-Kie(ret Ruh,Ber,Bur,OTB),A Pru-Sil,
 A ~~Mos-War~~(ret Lva,OTB),A StP S F Swe-Nwy,
 F Swe-Nwy,F Bal-Den.
Italy: F Naf-Mid,A Apu-Nap,A Rom S A Apu-Nap.
Turkey: A Gal-Sil,A Sev-Mos,A Ukr S A Sev-Mos,
 A War S A Sev-Mos,A Gre-Bul,F Con-Aeg,
 F Wme-Spa(sc),F Ion-Tyn,F Tyn-Wme.

Supply Center Chart

Austria	Tri,Vie,Bud,Mun=4	Build 1
England	Lvp,Edi,Bel,Den,Hol,Por=6	Even
France	Mar,Par,Bre,Lon=4	Even
Germany	Kie,Ber,Swe,StP,Nwy=5	Remove 2
Italy	Ven,Rom,Tun,Nap=4	Build 1
Turkey	Con,Smy,Ank,Bul,Sev,Rum,Ser,Gre,Mos,War,Spa=11	Build 2

PRESS

Turkey: I just couldn't bear to see a fellow Wicked Witch getting pummeled by a growing coalition, so I decided to try and sail for Iberia and help him out. The devil made me do it (didn't you Jamie? Yuk yuk).

Bohemia - Munich: We're back!

Turkey - England: Hey, Mike, how are the beaches on the peninsula this time of year?

Austria - World: Anyone else have a sense of Deja Vu here?

Turkey - France: Nothing personal, *mon ami*. Figured you might get a couple this turn, and could possibly spare a handout to a panhandler like me.

Turkey - Austria & Italy: Let's see: two turns ago we were knee-deep in trenches, yelling nasties about our moms to each other.

Now Dave's back in Mun and Jamie might be in the Mid. I would hope the commentators have a choice word or two to say about this?

Faz - Steve: If you took a shot at War, you got it baby. If not, circle your wagons in the Reich and be prepared to come under siege for a little while. Had you written in the early game years and sounded sincere about working together, I would've bought the pitch. For now, however, reality is the board, and I wish you well.

Fall 1906 Commentary

Brian Cannon - What a wild & wooly year!! Ten (count 'em) 10 supply centers change hands - and the prime beneficiary is <what a surprise> Turkey! Last time I listed three questions to keep an eye on. So far the apparent answers are ... (1) G/T don't look like they want to stop Turkey in the north, but that could "still" change; (2) E/F war continues as I/T prepare to force the Gibraltar straights; (3) I/A/T hold together to Turkey's great advantage. 1907 may well be a watershed year in this game - if you're going to watch any one year, make it this one !!!

Faz comments in the Press "I would hope the commentators would have a 'choice' word or two to say about <the sudden I/A/T>." I reply "Why, Faz, of COURSE !!! How's this?"

Turkey inches toward the point where he will have a Solo in the palm of his hand. He already has supremacy in Russia, a good position for reclaiming Austria & the Balkans in the not too distant future, and military superiority in the Med (and a good springboard from his control of Ionian & Tyrrhennian to launch the destruction of the Italian homeland when he is ready). If Italy remains cooperative for a couple of more seasons he should shortly have a firm foothold to the WEST of Gibraltar (with a couple of fleets) and barring solid cooperation by England, Germany, & France that should net him some western dots to go with his (presumed) conquests of Austria & Italy to put him over the top for the win.

Italy & Austria stay alive, thanks to their Faustian deal with Faz - and yet still only total a combined strength of 8 to Turkey's 11. Not to mention that Turkey's builds come squarely in A/I's rear and his only path to the front lies "past" I/A's home supply centers. This seems to leave I/A with a devil of a decision: whether to cooperate with Turkey, extend their lives, gain a slight (perhaps 1 in a 100) chance to recover, but most likely end up feeding home dots to a Turkish solo victory; or to take arms against a sea of Turkish troubles, almost certainly die sooner, but by that sacrifice purchase for the rest of the board a "chance" to unite and stop the leader. What are Dave & Jamie made of? The stuff of William Travis, Jim Bowie, & Davy Crockett? If so, who will play Sam Houston in this little drama? Their sacrifice, even if given, will be for naught if no one can rise to "that" challenge.

England & Germany move from defense to offense but only succeed in trading dots (Holland for Norway). In the process, however, England's grab of Holland costs him London (to France) and Germany's grab of Norway costs

him Moscow (which he could have held this season given Turkey's means of attack). The E/G bickering doesn't strike me as very smart - with I/A/T allied and France antagonistic, this really seems like a case where E/G must "either hang together or they will assuredly HANG separately." They could "still" stop I/A/T in the north if they find a rapprochement and begin cooperating. The center & south, however are more dicey and depends on France (and Italy).

France, unlike E & G, seems to have shifted to Plan "C" in this game. If Plan "A" is to Win & Plan "B" is to be in the Draw, then Plan "C" is R E V E N G E !!!!! With no attempt to hold Spain, France forfeits a build and allows I/T to set up a Flank attack which threatens to spell the end of both England AND France. Perhaps a case of "I die happy if I can drag you down with me."

Interestingly, France's grab of Brest was a case of overkill - England had nothing to support his fleet with so France "could" have taken Brest with only one support leaving an army free to cover Spain (which would have given him a build). Instead he threw in an unnecessary support, lost Spain, and could shortly lose Marseilles too as a consequence.

The Big Three questions to watch this time are similar to those raised last season.

1) Will E/G cease their bickering and coordinate their removals/moves so as to stop A/T in the north?

2) Will France take the "I'll see you in Hades" tact with England or will E/F manage to make common cause with Germany to try and stalemate the Eastern-Triple before it's too late? As a point of interest, there ARE stalemate lines they could establish even after losing the MAO - I've done it before myself.

3) Will I/A continue to fuel the Turkish expansion until Faz is able to stab them for the win? Will they find a way to turn the tables or will they settle for simple survivals (if that)?

OK you G/I/E/F/A Dipsters, let's see what you're made of.

Jim Grose - As I study the map, moves and press (or lack thereof) I simply shake my head in disbelief.

France retakes Bre from England - understandably - yet he

does so with an unnecessary second support and loses Spa. Why didn't he order A Gas - Spa to bounce Eng F Por - Spa, if not Tur F WMe - Spa?

England should be given credit for taking MAO from Bre, but that's it. He allows France to sail into Lon unopposed, apparently considering taking Hol from Germany more important! His attacks on Germany, made entirely by fleets, are the biggest mystery. What good to him are fleets in Bel and Hol when those centers should be supplying armies (his own or Germany's) around Mun? His fleets should be eliminating the rogue French fleet (but only after trying diplomatic means), defending MAO, either supporting Germany in Scandinavia or seizing it all for himself and convoying armies to the mainland. English fleets in Bel and Hol are short-sighted, dead-end positions.

Even if England and France were allied (which they're obviously not) neither should attack Germany until they can do so in force. Any other approach simply paves the way to victory for their true enemy, Turkey. Are they really blind to this?

Perhaps I'm being too critical of England, and Germany is the real culprit. He seems to have assumed that A StP S F Swe - Nwy was more important (and more likely to work) than A StP S A Mos. Still, rather than cede Mos and concentrate on protecting Sil (for position), why didn't he

try a supported attack on War (for a center)? Turkey assumed he'd take Mos but lose War to Germany. Position is great but you also need units to hold it with.

My apologies to Italy: In my Spring 1906 commentary I assumed he held Nap. Austria-Hungary took Mun, to no one's surprise. Italy certainly seems to have Rom and Nap secure. What will these two build and where will they move next?

Turkey was lucky to take both War and Spa this fall, although he was guaranteed to take them next year. Full marks to Turkey for pulling off an A-I-T alliance. I am truly impressed. The question is, how long will it last? Apart from Por, Mar and StP, for Turkey to continue growing he must stab one of his two allies. Since Austria-Hungary is also hemmed in, watch for him and Turkey to stab Italy in 1907.

Judging from their sparse press and myopic strategies (and I'm being kind), England, France and Germany apparently continue to assume that diplomacy and alliances are unnecessary in this game. Even their grasp of simple arithmetic is so bad that they apparently can't subtract 11 from 18, or 6 from 11, let alone realize the implications.

Based on their demonstrated impaired skills and Turkey's superior diplomatic performance I'm predicting a Turkish rulebook win.

Swords and Daggers

The Diplomacy World Letter Column

Fred C. Davis, Jr. [Ellicott City, MD]: I'd like to comment on the "Diplomacy II" variant printed in DW #80. I'm flattered that a lot of this is so similar to the thinking I did when I created "Abstraction." There is, however, another variant already given the name "Diplomacy II." In the NAVB Catalog this is classified as "rv16/07" by Riley Geary. Stephen may want to obtain a copy from Lee Kendter, Jr. to compare it with what he's accomplished. I think the original "Dip II" is a rather complex game, as the Catalog shows there are 7 pages of rules. Stephen may need to call his design "Diplomacy III" since that name has not yet been taken.

I suggest that the map show the 4-way crossing at the Spain-NAF-MAO-WMS intersection. And the map doesn't make it clear whether Sicily is simply part of the Naples space, or is a separate space, like it is in Abstraction and several other variants. I know that on the German Dip board, it's clearly shown that Sicily is part of Naples.

I would still favor adding the "Croatia" space between Venice and Trieste instead of the A Milan solution. But, in

either case, it would be an improvement over the current board. I also like the idea of making Switzerland passable, but not a SC.

There is some misunderstanding in the reference to "splitting Galacia." It is **Budapest** which has been split in many of my designs, with the new province called "Transylvania." However, in "Woolworth II-D," Gal is made an independent SC. I found this necessary to balance the Eastern side of the board.

I favor the idea of giving Russia the option of starting with F. St. Pete either NC or SC. And how about having Armenia either touching Siberia, or having another space east of Arm touching Sib. I've done this in several of my designs.

{A further discussion of Stephen's article can be found in Baron Powell's response article "Improving Improved Diplomacy" elsewhere in this issue.}

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Demonstration "Railway Rivals" Game (1064CT)

Final results and Endgame wrap-up

February 10, 1997

If you're just joining us, a word of explanation. This feature is meant to explain the game "Railway Rivals" to those who have never played. Follow the results and commentary, and you may decide to sign up for a game yourself. "Railway Rivals" is invented and marketed by David Watts ("Rostherne", 102 Priory Rd., Milford Haven, Dyfed UK SA73 2ED,) and is played in many zines.

Comments before Round 12. These are based on the game board as it appeared after Round 11.

Tony Robbins. Well, I did say I needed a bit of a lead before this round. Can't believe Conrad didn't enter any races last time, even though it wasn't a good selection for him. With Mike only entering two, it was bound to be a benefit for myself and Jim. Mike could have entered Race 34, with a shorter route than mine; though it would have cost him 9 to do so, he did get 7 from Jim for WLLS' entry. Quite a turnaround in fortunes since the end of the building rounds, but this shows again how important it is to continue to generate revenue from races. Shortest routes, some coverage to all sectors, and a certain amount of luck—both in the actual town race pairings and the die throws—*should* win through (red's a good colour too...)

Mike Morris. Interesting situation for the last turn. DULL seems to have first place locked up, but only 11 points separate the next three places. Although I always enjoy winning, I will do all I can to come in second rather than third or fourth! With that in mind, I am racing somewhat conservatively, running on mostly my own track in Race 37, and all my own track in Race 42, rather than going for the longer shot of renting track, but still not having a sure win. I do have what looks like a couple of locks, so I am hoping for a solid second place finish.

Conrad von Metzke. Yup—too late for builds. Too bad, as I now see one critical hex I could really use...

Round 12 Races and Final Standings

November 9, 1996

- | | |
|---|---|
| 36. Linslade (46)–Hitchen (53)
+20 DULL (13) [3→WLLS]
+10 WLLS (14) [2→ARNE, 5→DULL] | 40. Thame (25)–London (64) <i>Upset for 2nd!</i>
+20 ARNE (22)
+10 WLLS (23)
COX (22) |
| 37. Aylesbury (42)–North (Special 4) <i>Upset!</i>
+20 ARNE (8→B'ley) [1→WLLS]
+10 WLLS (7→B'ley) [2→COX, 2→ARNE]
COX (8→B'ley) [2→ARNE] | 41. Amersham (33)–Shopping Trip (Special 6)
+20 WLLS (11→Ldn) [1→ARNE]
+10 ARNE (11→Ldn)
DULL (11→Ldn) [3→ARNE, 2→WLLS]
COX (11→Ldn) [2→ARNE] |
| 38. Windsor (15)–Rickmansworth (35) <i>Upset for 2nd!</i>
+20 DULL (9) [1→ARNE]
+5/+5 ARNE/WLLS JR (12) [0+1→DULL]
COX (11) | 42. Princes Risborough (26)–Dunstable (51)
+20 WLLS (10) [1→ARNE]
+10 ARNE (10) [2→WLLS]
COX (14) |
| 39. Slough (16)–London (63)
+20 COX (8) [4→DULL]
+10 DULL (8) [4→COX] | |

Players.

Red—Dunstable, Umfolozzi & Luton Lines (DULL) Tony Robbins

Orange—Chilterns Overland Express (COX) Mike Morris

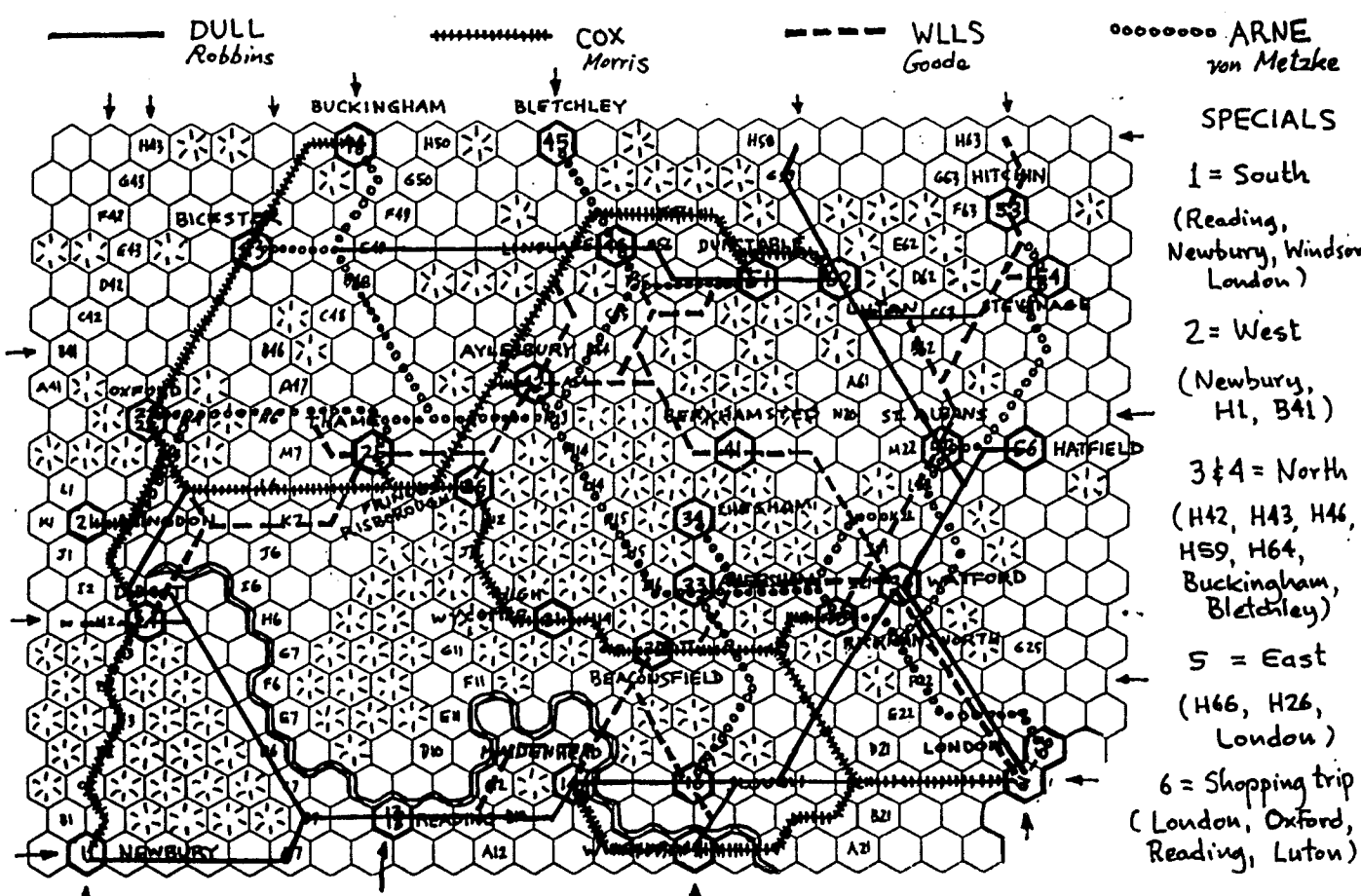
Lime Green—Will Lloyds of London Survive? (WLLS) James Goode

Blue—[tune to "Hail Britannia"] (ARNE) Conrad von Metzke

Financials.	Line	Start	Races	Rentals	Finish
	DULL	379	+50	-13, +10	426
	ARNE	270	+65	- 3, +14	346
	WLLS	276	+75	-14, + 8	345
	COX	281	+20	- 8, + 6	299

Endgame comments: Due next time

Target Date: November 30, 1996



- SPECIALS**
- 1 = South
(Reading, Newbury, Windsor, London)
 - 2 = West
(Newbury, H1, B41)
 - 3 & 4 = North
(H42, H43, H46, H59, H64, Buckingham, Bletchley)
 - 5 = East
(H66, H26, London)
 - 6 = Shopping trip
(London, Oxford, Reading, Luton)

3rd edition 21 May 95 redrawn by E. Brosius. Original c. 1980 by Ian Spittles.
 Railway Rivals by D.G. Watts, "Rostherne", 102 Priory Rd., Milford Haven, Dyfed UK SA73 2ED

Endgame Comments February 9, 1997

Line	Start	Races	Rentals	Builds	Cities	Payments	Finish
DULL (Robbins)	20	+410	-108, +67	-17	+48	-10, +16	426
ARNE (von Metzke)	20	+325	- 74, +75	-21	+39	-27, + 9	346
WLLS (Goode)	20	+340	- 88, +82	-27	+21	-16, +13	345
COX (Morris)	20	+175	- 31, +77	-17	+60	- 6, +21	299
<i>Total</i>	80	+1250	301	-82	+168	59	1416

Endgame comments. Here are some final words from the players:

Tony Robbins—Winner. This was a much more evenly-matched game than the final scores seem to indicate. Many of the races must have been very close, and Mike could just as easily have finished 2nd as 4th. However, although there was obviously quite a bit of luck involved—in our opening moves, the race pairings and die throws—there were significant differences in the final networks which played a part, e.g.

1. The northwest gaps. With hindsight, the Amersham gap looks a better bet than High Wycombe—it's more central, nearer to the north and northeast towns, but with Oxford still accessible. Conrad showed how to develop this route with links to other sectors, but could have done with a better connection to the 10s.
2. The London area. With so many races to the 60s, it was an advantage to connect to as many sectors as possible; having two exits from London was a definite bonus for me.

3. Coverage of sectors. Although you're never likely to reach every single destination in postal RR, it is important to build a network that has access to all sectors, so you can maximise your potential race entries (and income.) Mike was doing well on town bonuses, but lost out in the second half of the game for not having good connections to the northeast and south.
4. Opportunism. Taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves is just as important as having some sort of overall plan; I was lucky to get the breaks in early sparring with Jim in the east and south, though I would probably have pressed on to Reading even if Jim had been able to get there before me.

I enjoyed the format, and would be interested to hear what any spectators thought of the game. Thanks to Conrad, Jim and Mike, and especially to Eric for all his hard work.

Conrad von Metzke—2nd Place. The bald fact of the matter is that the final result is an outrage. My line finished second based on spectacularly lucky die rolls in the final races, yet it is clear to me that the only appropriate place for my line was dead last. (Tony's win, however, is no outrage at all; he has a delicious track.)

After Round 1, Jim and I had built the same line—a good one, to be sure, but not so useful when shared with another. So Jim proposed a separation—he would go one way while I went another, and so we did. At that point I made the first of three critical errors that doomed my company: I failed completely to evaluate the logical extensions of Mike Morris' track, and thus built in areas I could not wrest from him at the expense of other areas where I needed to be more competitive. Next, I focused on the north and west and cost myself the chance to enter usefully into the northeast. And finally, I made no effort at any time to challenge in the south. The result was a bad line, and by Round 7 I knew it. I also knew it was beyond repair, as a couple of feeble efforts into the omitted sectors proved.

At that point—Round 8 or 9—I freely confess that I lost interest. I resolved to learn from my failure, take my lumps here, and worry about it next time. As a consequence I didn't pay all that much attention to the races, entering only those of obvious nature and ignoring a few that were "iffy" and would require real analysis. And I stopped building—why throw bad money after good?

And yet I came in second place. That is luck, my friends—purely, simply chance. Good for me, bad for Jim and Mike. Both of them deserved better. But all is not negative—Tony at least certainly got what *he* deserved, and I admire him very much (as so often in the past) for it.

James Goode—3rd Place. Thanks, Eric, for a fun and well-run game.

Just looking at the track now that the last race has been run, I like Conrad's line the best. A clean shot through the middle with spurs at the ends will win many games.

I don't really begrudge Tony's win; he deserves it. However, I do still hate the segment 3a die roll. A roll of 3, 4, 5, or 6 would have put me into Maidenhead and opened the southwest to me before Tony. A roll of 1 would have put us into Maidenhead together. But the die came up 2, I was stuck at the river, and Tony took control of the southwest. I really believe that one die roll cost me the game.

So, Eric, how about giving us a re-match of some kind?

GM Comments. Thanks to everyone for participating: the players for playing, Doug for giving us a spot in *Diplomacy World*, and each of the readers for paying attention. "Railway Rivals" is a wonderful postal or e-mail game. The main obstacle it faces is that the game reports are impossible to follow without a map, so potential players have a hard time getting interested. I hope this game will help to alleviate that problem.

This was a representative game in many respects. It's certainly no surprise that Tony won; he is the world's top-ranked player. Why did he win? All four players built solid lines, but the interaction among them made the difference. The financial summary above shows that Tony out-earned his rivals by a wide margin in the races. This more than made up for the extra money he spent on track rentals. Most (though not all) games are won by the player who earns the most in the races.

How did he win so many races? As the players commented above, his routes had less competition from rival track. There is no better line than one that faces no opposition. Tony was behind early, so his rivals may have ignored him somewhat to focus on each other. In addition, when Jim tried to out-race him for the south, a critical die roll went Tony's way, putting him one hex ahead and giving him an important advantage.

Among good players such as we had here, luck can be a factor. On the other hand, a good player makes the most of the luck that presents itself. It's hard to ascribe an 80-point margin of victory to luck alone.

Jim asked for a re-match. I'll be happy to run another game (in my own zine *ark*, not *Diplomacy World*!) If any *Diplomacy World* readers would like to participate, they are welcome to write to me and sign up. Write to Eric Brosius, 53 Bird St., Needham MA 02192. I'll see you there!

Hobby Services:

International Subscription Exchange(ISE): The ISE coordinator acts in concert with ISE's of other nations to allow easier exchange of foreign currency between hobby members. This allows Dip players in one country to subscribe to a zine from another country without the hassles of currency exchange. Ideally there should be one ISE coordinator in each country with a postal hobby: In the US and Canada (although he prefers US dollars if it can be done) the ISE is Jim-Bob Burgess at 664 Smith St., Providence, RI 02908-4327 or via Internet at burgess@world.std.con. In the UK it is Iain Bowen at 5 Wiggen Terrace, York, YO3 7JD, UK.. In Australia it is John Cain at P.O. Box 4317, Melbourne University 3052, Australia.

Boardman Number Custodian(BNC): This person records Diplomacy gamestarts and finishes, and assigns Boardman Numbers to each game. In the US the current BNC is W. Andrew York at PO Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307.

Miller Number Custodian(MNC): Records variant gamestarts and finishes (a BNC for Diplomacy variants): Lee Kendter, Jr., 1503 Pilgrim Lane, Quakertown, PA 18951.

Zine Register: Zine Register is a detailed guide to all known Diplomacy zines in the North American hobby. Currently handled by Michael Lowrey, 6503-D Fourwinds Dr., Charlotte, NC 28212.

Novice Packets: Tom Mainardi, 45 Zummo Way, Norristown, PA 19401 offers Master of Deceit. Fred C. Davis of 3210K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043 offers Supernova. I believe Fred is asking a \$1.00 for Supernova, and Master of Deceit is available for free upon request. Bruce Linsey of 170 Forts Ferry Road, Latham, NY 12110 offers Once Upon a Deadline (a novice packet for publishers) for \$5.00.

North American Variant Bank(NAVB): NAVB is a catalogue of variants and all are for sale from the NAVB Custodian. The current NAVB Custodian is Lee Kendter Jr., 1503 Pilgrim Lane, Quakertown, PA 18951.

Pontevedria: A list of known game openings in Dip zines in North America. **A must for all people actively looking for Diplomacy and Dip variant game openings!** Available for \$0.50 from W. Andrew York, P.O. Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307.

Diplomacy World Anthologies: Larry Peery offers anthologies of Diplomacy World issues. There are currently 7 volumes available, plus two more due for publication in the Fall of 1995. Larry also has a stock of back issues of DW on hand. You can contact Larry at 6103 Malcolm Drive, San Diego, CA 92115. His Email address is peery@ix.netcom.com.

Game Openings

The following are some zines that currently list game openings available. It is suggested that you request a sample of any zine before you decide to play there - choosing one zine over another is truly a matter of personal taste. Samples issues are often free, but a courtesy payment of \$1 or a few unused stamps is recommended. For a more complete and detailed list of current game openings, order a copy of Pontevedria (information in the column to the left).

Blut und Eisen - Tom Butcher, 12532 Oak Knoll Road, #A14, Poway, CA 92064. Openings include Diplomacy, Conquistador, Stellar Conquest, 1830.

Carolina Command & Commentary - Michael Lowrey, 6503-D Fourwinds Dr., Charlotte, NC 28212. Openings include Diplomacy, Destroyer Captain.

Crossing the Rubicon - Jamie McQuinn, 236 Rubicon, Dayton, OH 45409. Openings include Shift Diplomacy, Black Hole Diplomacy, Scrabble, Pax Britannica.

Dippy - Jim Benes, 417 S Stough, Hindale, IL 60521. Openings include Diplomacy.

Forlorn Hope - Richard Goranson, 10 Hertel #208, Buffalo, NY 14207. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat, Modern Diplomacy, Gunboat Modern Diplomacy, Gunboat Colonial Diplomacy.

Grand Hyatt - Doug Kent, 10214 Black Hickory Rd., Dallas, TX 75243. Openings include Colonia VII-B, Gunboat Colonia VII-B.

Graustark - John Boardman, 234 East 19th, Brooklyn, NY 11226. Openings include Diplomacy.

League of Nations - Mark Kinney, 3613 Coronado, Louisville, KY 40241. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat, Necromancer.

Making Love in a Canoe - Brent McKee, 901 Ave T N., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7L 3B9, Canada. Openings include Diplomacy.

Maniac's Paradise - Doug Kent, 10214 Black Hickory Rd., Dallas, TX 75243. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat Diplomacy, Balkan Wars VI.

Northern Flame - Robert Lesco, 49 Parkside, Brampton, Ontario, L6Y 2H1, Canada. Openings include Mitotic Diplomacy, Gunboat Diplomacy.

Rambling WAY - Andy York, POB 2307, Universal City, TX 78148. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat.