

DIPLMACY WORLD

ISSUE 82



A Visit to the Asylum

Notes From the Editor and Hobby News

Okay, I'll admit it, the Diplomacy hobby does seem to be shrinking a bit. Certainly the postal side of the hobby is a mere shadow of what it once was, and even the on-line hobby seems to be lacking a sense of excitement or expansion these days. Trying to get this latest issue of Diplomacy World assembled was a clear reminder of that fact. When my May 15th deadline rolled around, I wasn't even close to the amount of material I needed. Fortunately a few additional begathon emails resulted in some late submissions - enough to fill out the issue nicely.

With that in mind, let me take this opportunity to remind you that each issue is only as good as the articles submitted for it. Except in the case of one particularly long article (8+ pages), I have not had the good fortune to be in possession of **too much** material for any issue of DW since I took over as editor with issue #74. Nothing would please me more than to have enough submissions to say "Hmm, these three articles will have to be held over until next issue, I already have enough material for this one." Help me realize that dream! And don't forget, you get a credit of one issue to your subscription for every article I publish of yours.

I'm also going to ask that if you enjoy DW you mention it to some of your Diplomacy friends. As the hobby changes, it becomes harder to locate new subscribers through the usual channels. The larger DW's circulation, the more possible contributors we have, and the more people we inform about the Diplomacy hobby. Remember, at some time all of us knew about the game of Diplomacy, but knew nothing about the hobby itself. Reaching people in that situation should be the hobby's number one priority.

Now, on to hobby news. Effective immediately, Conrad von Metzke is taking over as editor of Pontevedria, the game opening service zine which Andy York has been publishing for some time now. As soon as Andy is able to get the next issue of Everything out in the mail, Conrad will take over as the Boardman Number Custodian as well (Everything is the service zine of the BNC). Both of these changes were

expected, and Andy had announced them months ago. In more recent news, Andy has decided to fold his fine zine Rambling WAY, although he will continue to GM his games via flyer until they've finished up. It is always sad to see a publisher close up shop, but as usual Andy does it with class, taking care of his own games instead of orphaning them to other GMs.

In happier news, old-time-hobbyist Dave Grabar has announced that he will be restarting his old zine Italiano Pribe, where he will run a game of Nuclear Holocaust: WW III, which is a sixteen player game. The last time I heard from Dave he still had a few spots left in his game. You can contact Dave at 1583 Truman St., Chowchilla, CA 93610.

There's another new zine I want to mention. This one is an email zine called Festina Lente, coming out of Canada. David Caldwell is the publisher, and he'll be running Diplomacy, Gunboat, African Diplomacy, Colonial Diplomacy, Modern Diplomacy, 1712, and more! David plans on a weekly turnaround. You can contact him at caldwell@worldchat.com.

The International Subscription Exchange (ISE) has a new UK contact person. Taking over for Iain Bowen is John Harrington, 30 Poynter Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 1DL. For those of you unfamiliar with the service, the ISE allows a Dip player to subscribe to a foreign zine without having to deal with currency exchange. You contact your nation's ISE person, sending them local currency and instructions about what zine you wish to subscribe to. The ISE person then contacts the ISE person from the nation where the zine is published, and they coordinate the currency exchange between themselves. Right now there are ISE contact people for The U.S.A., the UK, and Australia. Contact info for all ISE personnel can be found on the back page.

I guess that is about it for this issue. My deadline for Diplomacy World #83 will be August 22. Until then, happy stabbing!

New Blood

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

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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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Statistics and the Strongest Nation

by Paul Milewski

What is an average? Say we are literally pulling numbers out of a hat, numbers written on slips of paper such that the person reaching into the hat does not know which number is on which slip of paper. To keep the example simple, say there are only three slips of paper, the number 5 written on one, the number 7 written on another and the number 12 written on the last. The average of those three numbers is 8. To a statistician, the average is the best guess at what the number will be that is written on the slip of paper the person pulls out. By best guess we mean that the error (the difference between the pulled number and the guess) is minimized by guessing the average. We will call the guess the expected value and the pulled number the observations.

Observed	Expected	Error
5	8	-3
7	8	-1
12	8	4

It is important that each slip of paper has an equal chance of being the one selected. Importantly, using the average as our guess, we will not be right no matter which slip of paper is pulled from the hat (no slip of paper has the number 8 written on it), but our expected error is the smallest of any guess we can make. The errors sum to zero. For any guess other than the number 8, the errors will sum to a value other than zero. Whether a slip of paper is to be pulled out the hat only once or whether there will be repetitions (the slips of paper replaced and another pulled out, over and over), the number 8 is still your best guess. This is an example of what a statistician would call an error-minimization technique. That makes it sound very impressive, but it illustrates what I mean when I say that an average is an expected value to a statistician. One more thing. A statistician will call the average the mean (that's pronounced the same way as when the word means nasty). I will, too.

Standard deviation is another name for standard error. What is it? Graphically, the horizontal line is the mean or expected value. The vertical lines are the vertical distance (or amounts) of the difference between the observed value and the mean. If the difference is negative, the line goes downward. If positive, the lines goes upward. Error minimization means we want to minimize the combined length of those vertical lines, whether they go up or down. Numerically speaking, we are interested in the absolute values of the errors (The absolute value of -3 is +3, whereas the absolute value of +3 is +3, so numerically we are expressing the same concept of vertical distance whether upward or downward.) Rather than be so clear and direct, statisticians square the error and then take the square root.

Same thing, right?

Since we have three equally likely outcomes, for each we square the error, multiply by its relative probability of occurring, which is one-third of the time, add these up and take the square root. A statistician would say that the population is the three numbers in the hat, that each has an equal chance of being selected, the population size (n) is 3, so we divide the squared error by the population size. Sounds impressive, doesn't it? The statistician would also use the capital Greek letter sigma (Σ) to represent summation. The formula looks something like this:

$$\text{Population standard deviation} = (\Sigma((1/n)(\text{observed} - \text{mean})^2))^{0.5}$$

Algebraically, that simplifies into all series of things. What is its numerical value for our numbers in the hat? Roughly 2.9439203 (my calculator carries answers to eight digits). The standard deviation used to be called the root mean square (or squared) error, which was self-descriptive but has gone out of use. It is literally the square root of the mean (or average) squared error.

Why bother to calculate the standard deviation? Many things that occur in nature, such as the heights of men in a town or the weights of carrots in a field, are what is called normally distributed. Most observations are near the mean, the numbers of observations decrease the farther from the mean we go, and the shape of the observations graphed resembles a bell, high in the middle with sloping sides tapering off into what are called the two tails of the distribution. A statistician calls this a probability density function. A certain proportion of the observations fall within plus or minus a certain number of standard deviations from the mean. Testing a sample essentially boils down to assessing the probability the sample came from a population with a particular mean. The neat thing is that the distribution of sample means (not the observations, the means of all possible samples of a given size) will approximate the normal distribution even when the underlying population is not normally distributed. Try it. Suppose you have a hat with ten slips of paper on which are written the numbers one through ten, respectively. The means of all possible samples of size three (three slips of paper out of the ten) will have a somewhat bell-shaped appearance even though the underlying population appears flat as a pancake. The larger the population and the larger the sample size, the better the approximation.

In "The Strongest Country on the Diplomacy Map" (Diplomacy World #81, pp. 10-11), Thaddeus Black asks the question, "Which of the seven countries on the Diplomacy map is strongest?" A statistician would test the null hypothesis that there is no difference between the probability

of winning playing one country than if you were playing any other country. This is similar to testing whether a coin is honest by tossing a coin many times to see how often it comes up heads or tails. Even an honest coin can not be expected to come up heads and tails exactly the same number of times in a given number of tosses. Likewise should it not be expected that each country win exactly the same number of times in a given number of games. Based on a normal or near-normal distribution of sample means, we can assess the fairness of a coin, or in the case of Thaddeus Black's question, the fairness of the game of Diplomacy, using statistical tests based on the normal distribution.

In the data presented in Thaddeus Black's article, we have the number of times each country won in 2,161 games that ended in a win. The Chi-Square Distribution (Chi is a Greek letter with the ch pronounced as a hard c, as in chianti wine, and the i-sound is the same as in the word eye) is particularly suited to testing this sort of thing. Chi-square is $\Sigma((\text{observed} - \text{expected})^2/\text{expected})$. If the Chi-Square of our sample exceeds the critical chi-square looked up in a table, we reject the null hypothesis that the game is fair. Here is a calculation of chi-square for Thaddeus Black's data on wins. The calculated 85.10596945 chi-square is compared to the critical value with six degrees of freedom in a lookup table. The critical value is 16.81 for an alpha of 0.01, so we reject the null hypothesis that the game is fair.

Degrees of freedom literally means the number of free variables in a system. In physics, a point that can move freely in three-dimensional space has three degrees of freedom. In this example we are said to have seven points (each of the seven the entries in the observed-wins column is a point), one of which is not free, since if the other six are known, it is determined. Alpha (often represented by Greek letter α), is the probability of rejecting a true null hypothesis as being false. This is called Type 1 error. Type 2 error is accepting a false hypothesis as true, denoted by the Greek letter β . Statisticians generally focus on Type 1 error so as not to find a treatment effect where there is none. For example, if you are testing to see if a new medicine causes patients to improve, the null hypothesis is that patients treated with the medicine do no better than patients treated with a placebo. To find a medicine to have a significant beneficial effect when it does not is a Type 1 error. Using an α equal to 0.01 or one percent, our confidence level is said to be 0.99 or ninety-nine percent. In our case, if Diplomacy were a fair game, there would be less than one chance in a hundred of obtaining those results in 2,161 games. In something I published in issue #33 of Doug Kent's Maniac's Paradise, again based on data gathered by somebody else, the null hypothesis that each country has an equal chance of winning could not be rejected using chi-square. The distribution of wins was A 22, E 33, F 35, G 21, I 22, R 39, T 29. Here we have more data. However, with the data on inclusion in draws, I was able to reject the null hypothesis that each country has an equal chance of

being included in a draw, be it a 2-way, 3-way, or whatever. However, I was only able to do so with an α of .05, not .01 (a statistician would say my results were significant, but not highly significant). The number of times included in a draw (of whatever kind) was A 65, E 96, F 89, G 65, I 70, R 64, T 70.

Why do I only look at games won? Examine the "points for each result on the standard whole number zero-sum table." Is Diplomacy a zero-sum game? In article mine that appeared in issue #18 of Tom Nash's Been There, Done That (December 1990), I quoted from a lively discussion that went on in several issues of House of Lords:

In HoL #17, Bill Salvatore began his remarks by saying: "First you have to figure out what the object of the game is." He concluded with "well, as I read the rules, the object is to gain 18 centers; failing that, to prevent every other player from gaining 18 centers, and simultaneously to be part of the final draw, preferably the strongest country in it." In the same issue of HoL, David Hood wrote that "Everybody plays a 'system' of some kind - whether it is based on winning, surviving, or some sort of non-outcome motivation. The goal of a scoring system is simply to try to standardize the motivations of the players by offering incentives to certain methods of playing The Game." In HoL #18, John Caruso wrote that "it shouldn't matter if you come in a strong second or get blown away in 1902. You've lost. Draws are just a group win. Thus it shouldn't matter if you drew with one center, or with 15. The one center worked just as hard (if not harder) to survive and get to be part of the draw." In the same issue, David Hood put forth that "the bottom line is that a good system needs to award wins/draws, certainly, but should also award (in some manner) a showing which is two or three centers better than the next guy's showing. Otherwise, the little powers, which usually have no chance of drawing, will simply play for revenge or some other undesirable goal. Incentives are the key." In HoL #22, Pete Gaughan commented that "I guess the fact that I think three 2-ways is worth more than a win and two eliminations shows why you've got a Ratings section."

That article was about scoring systems in tournament play, among other things. In a zero-sum game, the payoffs to all players sum to zero (expressing the sum of what the winning player(s) win in positive numbers and the sum of what the

losing player(s) lose in negative numbers, the payoff to everybody sums to zero). Poker is usually cited as a good example of a zero-sum game, particularly because the object is money and winning and losing are unambiguous concepts in Poker. Thaddeus Black's "Points for Each Result on the Standard Whole-Number Zero-Sum Table" asserts a payoff to the players it is not reasonable to assume occurs. Of course, the payoff is not in money, but the assumption inherent in the table that Diplomacy is a zero-sum game does not appear to be supported by empirical data. I realize Allan Calhamer thought it was a zero-sum game when he designed it. As I wrote in the article in Been There, Done That referred to above:

In "Allan Calhamer Ruminates On The Game Of Diplomacy" (DW #35, pp. 18-19), Mark Berch summarized comments made by Calhamer at DipCon in 1983. These comments included one that no one

thought that games would actually be won when the game was designed. "The idea was that people would play for 4 or 5 hours, and then discuss how the game might have been concluded, if there had been more time. Plans were sometimes made to resume play at a later date, but it was found that when people gathered again, they preferred to start a fresh game..." "He also indicated that it was generally assumed that if a player moved into striking distance of a win, all the other players would naturally move to stop him. The notion of players settling for second or third was an unexpected (and for him unwelcome) development."

{Paul Milewski published the Dip zine Yellow Pajamas.}

	Observed Wins	Expected (1/7)	o - e	(o - e) squared	divided by e
Austria	269	308.7142857	-39.7142857	1577.224489	5.1090378
England	287	308.7142857	-21.7142857	471.5102040	1.5275228
France	341	308.7142857	32.28571428	1042.367346	3.3769143
Germany	314	308.7142857	5.285714285	27.93877551	9.0509e-2
Italy	213	308.7142857	-95.7142857	9161.224489	29.675414
Russia	427	308.7142857	118.2857142	13991.51020	45.321874
Turkey	310	308.7142857	1.285714285	1.653061224	5.3546e-3
	2161	2161	0.00	26273.42857	85.105969

On the Play of Postal Diplomacy

by Allan Calhamer

with an Introduction by Larry Peery

This article first appeared in Graustark in October, 1966; and was reprinted in the Postal Diplomacy Library of 1986.

This article is mostly about correspondence in postal play, using 1963B, in which Calhamer played Germany, as an example. It includes a GM review and a supply center chart.

Two hobby truths were evident, even in 1963B. First, "Winsome Losesome." Allan went to 14 centers in 1908, but ended the game in 1918 with only 2 centers (having dropped from 10 in 1914). Second, little about the play of the game has changed. You could take a PBM Dipper today and put him back in that 1963 game and he'd have no problem. The reverse is also true. Well, there was one difference. Back

then the victory criteria was a "majority of the units," not "18 supply centers."

In postal Diplomacy, there is no time for discussions back and forth between two parties; consequently, when an offer of alliance is sent, possible objections to it and questions about it should be anticipated and answered beforehand.

Over-the-board play shows that even alliances which are genuinely good for both parties are frequently questioned by the offeree. Frequently he 1) wants to know the exact variations visualized by the offerer and 2) wants to know what the alliance will do at very long range, that is, after they have knocked out their first Great Power target. Thus enough exact variations should be included to give the other

player some feeling of security that you won't attack him, that you have a real intention of attacking the named enemy, and that the two of you have the capability to defeat the named enemy. The long range request is probably not a reasonable request, but nevertheless it is a frequent request, so some reasonable long range plan should be included, if there is one.

The result of all this is quite a lot of work on the first move. Later, however, the simplest notes serve to hold alliances together. Only occasionally is it necessary to write something lengthy, to a single player later in the game (then you want him to make a major change of policy and have a reasonable case for it in terms of mutual interest).

In the RURITANIA game, 1963B, I wrote messages of the following lengths to different countries in the first move (I played Germany. The messages were single-spaced):

Austria-Hungary 1/2 page; Italy 1 page; Austria-Hungary & Russia 1 1/4 pages; England & Italy 1 page; Austria-Hungary, Russia, & Italy 2 pages; France 1/2 page; Turkey a few lines; Russia 1 page

The message to Russia, Italy, and Austria-Hungary asked for a four-way alliance ("RIGA", from the initials of the countries). The message to Russia and Austria-Hungary asked for a three-way alliance, calling for the same neutralized zones as the four-way alliance, in case Italy did not join. The message to Russia called for a two-way alliance consistent with the three-way alliance, in case Austria-Hungary did not join; similarly the letter to Austria-Hungary alone.

These messages laid the basis of my intended policy: alliance with Austria or Russia, preferably both, still better the three in one alliance; still better Italy, too. The remaining letters discussed minor points, opened channels of communication, hopefully lulled suspicions, laid the basis for other alliances if the eastern alliance misfired, and so on.

Russia and Austria-Hungary accepted; Italy did not. It would have been silly to offer the four-way only, because then I would have been left with nothing. There would have been no time to come forward with a three-way after learning Italy's intention, and he might decline by just not writing. As it was, England and Italy misplayed, and we swarmed over them. Turkey was overwhelmed, too, leaving four countries. I attempted to win by blitzkrieg against France and went up to 15 supply centers; but I miscalculated and had to cover my homeland to hold it against Austria-Hungary and Russia, so could not raise beyond 12 pieces. Eventually Austria-Hungary and Russia prevailed against Germany. It was still a pretty successful game for Germany, and the serious mistakes were not in the opening.

It is well to remember that players who live closer together can communicate back and forth faster, they can then iron

out more difficulties between them. Consequently they are more likely to ally at the start, and much more likely to drift into alliance later, even if they oppose each other at the start, than players who live far apart.

In 1093B, Germany was in Boston, Austria-Hungary and Russia in Los Angeles, and the other four in New York. I felt certain that the New York four, connected by ten-cent phone calls, would drift together eventually; hence I mobilized the other three, which were well-placed for an alliance on the board anyway. As it was, I had hoped to fool England into a German-English-Italian attack on France, without telling him that the RIGA alliance was in the background. Before I sent the letters, I realized that Italy would spill the beans to England, because they both hailed from a place called East Paterson, New Jersey; they couldn't talk about the game day after day without sooner or later telling each other all they knew. Consequently I should have rewritten the letter to Italy to remove references to formal alliances with Austria-Hungary and Russia but seven pages of letters are enough, so I let the matter ride, and Italy rejected the four-way alliance, and England and France allied instead of fighting.

The press releases can be used for propaganda value. In general, I think they should be used to attempt to justify one's actions in terms of the realities of the situation, to assure allies that you are with them (in the language of a statement to the world, of course), and so on. For example, Boardman, as Turkey, tipped me off that Bruce Pelz was playing Russia under an assumed name and described Pelz as a "Germanophile." Consequently, I sent in releases full of Teutonic clichés about Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia building a new order in Eastern Europe, destiny, culture, etc. These releases became especially mysterious and beautiful around 1904, when it became necessary to attack Russia by surprise, in order to seal the upper reaches of the Baltic before I wheeled against France.

I do not believe that releases taunting or belittling the other players are diplomatically wise.

Where players play many games, it might be wise for them to save copies of their best first-round letters and copy or even duplicate them in other games. Amendments can be written in, stuff can be stricken out, blanks can be filled in, and so forth. In due course, one might have more than one set of letters for each country. If as Russia you want to attack Turkey first, you send out the "Russia A" letters; if you want to attack Austria-Hungary first, you send out the "Russia B" letters. If you like letters you receive, you copy them in later games. (Thus, perhaps, "I sent him my version of Calhaver's RIGA letter. He sent me Smythe's ITA.") This "canned correspondence" would apply only to the first move, of course, but it is precisely there that you need long letters.

[Allan's letter doesn't touch on one of the most salient points in the game: that the Austrian player, Diane Pelz, was the wife of the Russian player, Bruce Pelz (who played under the name of "Adhemar Grauhugel"). In Graustark 87, John Boardman (who played Turkey and eventually became GM for the game, gives the following review:]

This second postal Diplomacy game was organized by Dave McDaniel, and included many of McDaniel's fellow Angelenos and members of the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society. The Russian player entered under the name of "Adhemar Grauhugel", but it soon became common knowledge that he was actually Bruce Pelz - husband of Austro-Hungarian player Dian Pelz. The Pelzes cooperated with Diplomacy inventor Allan Calhmer, playing Germany, in a very effective Dreikaiserbund. Weak play by Tom Bulmer as Italy, and lack of coordination among the other players generally, led to the triumph of the Dreikaiserbund. By 1905 Calhmer concluded that he would be the next victim of the Family Compact, and anticipated this development by attacking the Pelz forces. An ill-timed double-cross of his sole remaining ally, Jock Root's France, started the German Kaiser downhill, as France promptly joined the combine against him. In 1910, McDaniel ceased publication of Ruritania, and it passed to my management.

Calhmer and Root also decided to withdraw, and their countries passed to Roland Tzudiker and John McCallum respectively. These two, in alliance, fought a well-played resistance against the Pelzes until Tzudiker was called up by the Air Force in 1916. (The game year 1916, of course.) McCallum, eliminated as France, carried on as Germany for two more years. The failure of Austria-Hungary to build a unit to which it was entitled at the end of 1917 meant that at the end of 1918 only 33 units were on the board. Of these, Russia had a majority, and hence was declared the winner.

[Prior to the Revision of 1971, the Rulebook's victory criterion was "majority of units", not "18 supply centers". For those who are curious, the supply center chart:]

	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
AUS	05	06	07	07	10	10	10	09	09	11	11	12	12	12	12	13	15	15
ENG	05	04	03	02	00													
FRA	04	05	05	06	05	05	05	04	03	03	02	01	01	01	01	00		
GER	06	06	07	08	11	11	12	14	12	11	10	10	10	10	09	05	04	02
ITA	04	04	03	02	00													
RUS	06	06	06	06	07	08	07	07	10	09	11	11	11	11	12	16	15	17
TUR	04	03	03	02	01	00												

{Alan Calhmer was, is, and will always be the man who invented the game of Diplomacy.}

Diplomacy and Star Trek or How I'd Kick Spock's Pointy Butt any Day

by Warren Goesle

I was reading the commentary on the Diplomacy World Demo Game written by Brian Cannon in DW #81, and noted his interesting opening remark: "As an old hero of mine once said ... 'Fascinating!'", an obvious reference to Mr. Spock of "Star Trek" in its original form. Since I'd had several beers at this point, it got me to thinking, "How would Spock actually do in a Diplomacy Game?". I don't believe this to be a trivial question. Well, ok, maybe it is, but it was cheaper than writing to allies that weren't writing back (and we're not naming names here but you DO know who you are) and much cheaper than dialing 1-900 numbers, which were the only other options after 8 beers on a Saturday night.

But I don't believe that it's a trivial question to Diplomacy players. Check out "Maniac's Paradise", Doug Kent's fine monthly, and you'll find several pages of subzine dedicated to Trekmania. I suppose it started as filler material, but it has certainly taken on a life of its own. More than once Dip players have sent me messages with "live long and prosper" or "make it so" written in the margins. I actually find it a little strange that this marriage hasn't yet been taken to this logical conclusion before. So let's speculate...

How would Spock approach a Diplomacy game? Logically

I suppose, he'd approach it logically...I suppose. But do logic and Diplomacy mix? Well...

So Spock goes on liberty and can either sign autographs at the Star Trek convention, or head down the block and check out DipCon. Looking for something new, and noting that the Diplomacy crowd appears a little saner, or at least doesn't dress alike, he wanders in and looks for a game. He's read up on the rules, checked a few strategy articles on the net, and feels ready to go. He draws the country card and gets...Austria. A tough draw for a first-timer. But the strategy articles say it is doable, so Spock doesn't get discouraged. Well, it's not like it's in his nature to...

He looks at the board. Italy is the first concern of course. Trieste and Venice must get along if either is to survive. Russia and Turkey are already talking, and England, France and Germany are in their own world for now. Let's get an alliance with Mr. Italy, as it is only logical. Talks go well, no hostility is detected, phasers are holstered. Italy is worried about Turkey, and is very concerned that Turkey and Russia are chatting. Lepanto is suggested, and planned for. Mr. Italy heads for Mr. Turkey, while our resident Vulcan decides that a talk with Mr. Russia is in order. Must break up the R/T.

Mr. Russia, of course, vehemently denies the R/T exists, and says that he was only trying to delay the invasion he expects from the South. He'd like help slowing down the Sultan. Logically, of course, this is in Spock's plans anyway. Russia will take Rumania from Sevastopol in the Fall, opening it up for a build to force the Black Sea, and take out his southern neighbor. So far, Spock is definitely in control. Italy and Turkey are still in conversation, so Spock heads for a chat with Mr. Germany.

A DMZ in Tyrolia and Bohemia is quickly agreed to, and a non-aggression treaty is mutually accepted. Spock looks forward to a good mid-game ally. Let's see, do we need to talk with Turkey now?

The Sultan appears a little down. This seems logical, as he has three neighbors coming for him. But no, he says it's because Russia and Italy have apparently decided to squeeze out both Austria and Turkey, with German help, and France and England aren't going to interfere. Austria and Turkey's only chance is to ally quickly and break up Russia and Italy. Spock's eyebrow raises. Could all that conversation actually have taken place already? Turkey says that Russia has vetoed the R/T for now, but might do it later...if Turkey is still around. Turkey says he wants none of that, and wants to hit Russia now. Can he at least get Austria to lay off while he tries talking England and Germany into helping again? Maybe Austria can even get in on it, and get a couple of SC's out of it?

So our hero goes back to the table to write his moves. What to do? Someone has obviously lied to him. That's part of the game, and is logical. Turkey's story is the least believable, but how much can Russia actually be trusted? A quick move to Galicia would be bad. Does that have to be defended? And what of Italy? Even if Turkey falls quickly, will Austria be next, squeezed between the Pope and the Tsar? And Germany, France and England all do seem to be getting along; could all three be heading this way? Paranoia doesn't translate well into Vulcan, but it's starting to.

Spock's Austria falls quickly of course. Russia stabs Austria immediately, and the Juggernaut forms. Italy, lured by the possibility of a stab of Turkey by Russia, gets his share of Spock rather than launch a Lepanto he really didn't care to do anyway, with an ally that was completely unsure of his footing. Spock's only sympathy comes from England, who was getting pummeled as Spock left the board.

Spock thinks. It wasn't logical for Russia and Turkey to ally. All the others would ally against them. It wasn't logical, once the Juggernaut formed, for Italy to attack him. This game isn't logical. Game theory doesn't work. There is no way to maximize the minimum gains, and get a plus out of it. One has to hope that someone has a common interest, and there is no guarantee of that. This isn't like 3-D chess, where a logical Vulcan mind could go up against a mere human like Kirk, and make game theory work. Of

course, every now and then Kirk's illogical moves worked too...

Spock enters another game. His France doesn't last long either, as Germany doesn't care that it is illogical for him to invade France with Italy and England, as he'll just get squeezed between them. Spock watches the game progress from the sidelines, and sees that he is correct on this point. So the game does have logic to it. Spock leaves the board as England, Italy and Russia are deciding the game among the three of them.

Spock draws Russia in his final attempt. Six potential allies. Four potential first victims. 108 possible first moves. Which is the best? And Spock's brain latches on to the answer: it depends. Specifically, it depends on what the other six are going to do. It depends on what six illogical humans decide to do. Six illogical humans with their quirks, their foibles, their fallibility. Six illogical humans who might tell you nice things and then invade you because they don't like the shape of your ears.

Spock's Russia falls to a very illogical Austrian-Turkish alliance. Spock watches for awhile afterwards, and watches the A/T sweep most of the board. Fascinating. Illogical, as Austria must wonder when Turkey will attack from behind. Illogical, as England should not have let Turkey out of the Med in the first place, even though it got him a short-term build. Illogical, as France should have seen that taking out Italy with Austria would only lead to England invading from behind. Illogical...

Spock heads back to the Enterprise. Kirk notices that Spock spends a lot of time playing 3-D Chess with the Ship's computer.

I fear that Spock would not do well in Diplomacy. It has nothing to do with his diplomatic skills. It has nothing to do with his grasp of game theory. It has everything to do with the fact that our beloved game really isn't logical. Seven Vulcans in a Diplomacy game would probably be pretty tedious to watch. No one would get eliminated, as that would be illogical.

Diplomacy and Star Trek. There are lessons to be learned here. I suspect that Kirk or Picard would have different approaches to the game. After all, they're human. Let's put them in a game with six Vulcans and see how they do. Fascinating.

{The author would like to thank the following people for helping in his research on this article: Brian Cannon, Doug Kent, Jamie McQuinn, Steve McKinnon, and his sister, Jean Goesle. Warren Goesle is The Kind of Engineer Your Mother Warned You About}

A Discussion of House Rules

by W. Andrew York

I. INTRODUCTION

It has been suggested that a series discussing House Rules, how to write them and what they mean would be a help for potential GMs and for the players in various Diplomacy games. Thus, I will attempt to give you my viewpoints about House Rules. Contributions will be most welcome, as will contrary viewpoints.

I plan to divide this into five parts. The first part (this one) will cover the reason for House Rules and some important items to be included. The second will cover press. The third will deal with order formats, "how to" submit them and other information on the mechanics of House Rules. The fourth is planned to cover variants and other games often played in the Diplomacy Hobby. The last will be a wrap-up, touch on Tournament Rules and anything that I may have to add.

Please note I will usually refer to postal play. This is for convenience only and, for the most part, also apply to fax or EMail based games.

II. WHY HOUSE RULES

Diplomacy was originally conceived to be a boardgame to be played face-to-face. The Rules as Written (RAW) are designed to cover that type of play and, without some modification, are ill suited to postal play. For instance, sections on writing orders and conducting Diplomacy can't be used as written in postal play.

The GM routinely makes other modifications to the RAW. For instance, most postal games allow draws which is not allowed in the RAW. Also, the concept of press is not detailed; but which is an important part of the postal games.

The use of House Rules allow the GM and the players to know what the changes to the printed rules are and how the GM will oversee the game. Of course, situations may arise that are not covered under the House Rules and, which, may mean that they will be rewritten for future games.

III. WHICH RULES AND A REALITY CHECK

The first, most important, portion of House Rules deal with which version of the published rules are being utilized to GM the game. Published rules exist in the United States in three versions. There are also a number of other versions of the rules as published in foreign countries. It is vital that everyone uses the same set of rules so that every nuance in them will be known to all.

For those players who have earlier or later editions of the

rules, sometimes the GM will provide a summary sheet of the differences. However, in the end, it is the players responsibility to know the set of rules used by the GM. The most common rules used are the 1982 (2nd Edition) and the 1992 (3rd Edition) published by The Avalon Hill Game Company in the US.

By "Reality Check", I'm referring to something I've put in my House Rules for Rambling WAY (RW). Other GMs have used comments akin to it, and I may have well taken the concept from one of them. However, I've had more feedback (and all positive) about this single one:

"16) FINAL WORD: Diplomacy, and all games associated with RW, are played for fun, and that is the primary reason for RW. I welcome any thoughts on increasing your enjoyment and participation in the newsletter. Also, keep that thought in mind when you conduct your negotiations and write letters or press to other players; after all, it's only a game."

HOUSE RULES, PART II -- Press

In PBM games, press is the replacement for general public discussions between players and the GM that usually occur over the game board. In Gunboat games, many times this is the only way for the players to communicate. Also, for some players, it is another enjoyable aspect of the game where they take on a persona (either historical or hysterical). They then conduct their diplomacy in that guise and/or provide storylines for the enjoyment of all participants and observers.

In your House Rules, it is important to identify the types of press normally allowed in your games. This allows every player and observer to know the style of the press. Of course, in the specific guidelines for a game, your usual practice may be revised. In these cases, it is advisable to include the type of press in the header of each game report; such as "Black-Press Gunboat" if you normally use only white press in your games.

It is also an acceptable practice to put limits on the press. For instance, most house rules include a statement that says, in effect, "press may be edited for vulgarity and/or space by the GM". This informs writers ahead of time that their press may be edited; and allows them to indicate whether their press must be run unedited or not at all.

There are primarily three kinds of press that are allowed in games. Called White, Black and Grey, each has its advantages and disadvantages; and there are players that won't play with certain types of press.

WHITE PRESS: All press is identified by who wrote it.

Usually this is the country name, country capital or abbreviation of one of them.

GREY PRESS: Anonymous press is allowed. This press may be from Switzerland, Washington DC, the Moon, etc. Usually the only protected press bylines are the various countries/capitals, player names and a location for the GM to write from (such as having all press from Geneva originating from the GM).

BLACK PRESS: Anything goes! All press bylines are open for use and if it says it is from Berlin, it may or may not be. This allows quite a bit of freewheeling conversation between the players. However, in a Gunboat game, makes every single communicate suspect at best.

There are some variations, or shades, of the three types of press. For instance, I use what I call "off-white" press. The only grey press allowed must come from Switzerland or Geneva. There are almost Black press games which protect a limited number of bylines for each player to conduct actual press. This may be allowing black press from every where except from the country names. Only the actual country can use their name to write press (and, thus, is the only press that can be "trusted").

Further, some GMs allow non-players to submit press. Except under Black Press, all guest press is anonymous. However, a regular contributor may adopt a nom-de-plume to signify their particular writings.

There is also a variation to many games. No-Press variants always have had some following, as the games usually are tactical in nature. This allows players to hone their performance (as opposed to negotiating) skills. A few No-Press games allow tacit communication, such as permitting an impossible order "A BUR sends a peace envoy to Russia" or "A BUR s ENG A Stp-Mos". However, most GMs will convert such orders to "A BUR holds".

Knowing the type of press allowed in a game is important. It provides the perimeters of public negotiations between the players and, in Gunboat games, can be critical in successfully winning. The House Rules (as modified for an individual game) should be the best source of information for the player and all questions about press should be directed to the GM early in the game's course. Press can be a pleasure or a curse, and in a number of cases one of the most enjoyable parts of the game.

HOUSE RULES, PART III -- Orders

It is important to let every player know how you wish orders to be submitted and the conditions on using them. It should be clearly stated about deadlines and whether you have NMR insurance. Lastly, in your house rules, you should include a section on what you, as the GM, do with ambiguous or poorly written orders.

Order submittal has to do with how you expect your players to send their orders to you. All GMs (except those running EMail only games) accept player orders by post. Ensure that you let all the players know what address to use (if you have multiple addresses) and, it is best, if you include the zip+4 to speed the letters along.

If you accept EMail, fax or phone orders, let the players know when and how to use them. For instance, if you only want orders sent to one EMail address make sure that your house rules specifically state that. For phone orders, it is recommended that you include the hours that you want calls (otherwise you may get calls at 4am). Further, if you don't want your family members or housemates involved in taking orders, clearly state that.

Many GMs that accept phone orders have a caveat in the house rules akin to "however the orders are written (or transcribed from the answering machine) is how they will be used". This takes the burden from the GM in trying to understand orders spoken onto an answering tape while the speaker is chewing on a carrot; or the GM who can't read his own handwriting after scribbling down orders after being awakened in a deep sleep.

It is also recommended that you put into your house rules that orders for each game be submitted on a single sheet of paper, and that there should be writing only on one side. This allows a GM to easily file the orders for a game in its folder without cutting or, in the case of two games on opposite sides of the same sheet of paper, going to the copy shop. For EMail, depending on how you process the orders, you may wish to have the orders in one long file (with appropriate spaces between games) or in separate messages.

In each issue of the newsletter, make sure that your deadlines are clearly stated. If you have a set formula for the deadlines (such as the last Friday of every month), you can state that in your house rules. However, every set of house rules should include a statement that "it is the player's responsibility to ensure that their orders arrive by the stated deadline".

You may have different deadlines for different types of submittal. For instance, mail deadlines are typically "mail delivery of the indicated day" for the specific address. On the other hand, EMail, phone or fax orders may be accepted only until a certain time. There are some GMs that have a deadline of the evening before the mail deadline for phone orders; or a fax deadline (using the machine at work) being 5pm on workdays.

If you use NMR insurance (where the GM attempts to contact the player if orders are missing), make sure that the conditions for using NMR insurance are plainly stated in the house rules. This should include when you will use them,

(continued on page 15)

Economic Enhancement Diplomacy

This Diplomacy variant (Play tested on Colonial Diplomacy) adds an economic dimension to the game while preserving and perhaps enhancing the necessity for negotiation. Here is the altered turn order:

1. Diplomacize
2. Write and carry out orders
(Optional rule: Roll dice for random events)
3. Pay for any purchases made in those orders
4. Pay for unit maintenance
5. Collect income
6. (If last turn of year) purchase new units

Diplomacizing is identical to the original except funds may be secretly or publicly exchanged among nations. Writing orders is identical except you can order units to build agricultural, industrial, and cultural enhancements on territories they occupy (they may do nothing else that round). You can only construct such improvements where a unit has a STATIONARY presence that round and on territories you have owned since the beginning of the year. Each territory has capacity enough for one of every enhancement. A player must enhance his territory by building improvements in a specific order: first cultural, then agricultural, then industrial. If the building unit is dislodged on the turn of construction, the order is canceled and building investment is lost. There will be an explanation of enhancements later on.

Paying for enhancements is very straightforward. You MUST pay the following sum for each improvement you build:

Cultural: 4
Agricultural: 6
Industrial: 12

If, for some reason, you have inadequate funds to pay for your order after it is carried out, you must forfeit ALL money and receive NO enhancements.

Next, it is time to pay upkeep for your units. For each of your units that have engaged in combat that turn (Any combat with units of OTHER nationalities whether it be defensive OR offensive intermingling) you must pay 6 currency units. For units NOT engaging in combat with other pieces you must pay 4 currency units. The exception to the rule is as follows, if you defend or attack with more units than is required for victory, you pay standard maintenance (4 currency bills) for the "extra" unit. For example: If England attacks Berlin with 3 units (2 supporting) and only one German unit defends, then England pays combat fees only for the two NECESSARY units. The loser of a battle must pay for ALL units involved. If, for some reason, a nation does not have adequate funds to pay upkeep for his units, then he must disband units and

improvements for half their buy value until he has the necessary cash. A player does NOT keep any "change" from this process. For example: If a player has a deficit of 1 currency unit and he disbands a unit (buy value: 6) for 3, he does not keep the 2 change.

Collecting income is very straightforward: Collect 6 for every original home supply center (whether it be of your nationality or not) and 4 for every conquered supply center. The exception to this is War, for which Russia 4 collects. Also, be sure to add on the income effects of your improvements (effects described later). You must occupy newly conquered territories until the END of the year before you can start collecting income for them. Also, new improvements do not take effect until the END of the year (no matter when you build them).

At the end of every year, you may purchase as many units as you like paying 6 for each new army or fleet. Note that your treasury will have to last you until the end of next round and that you WILL have to pay upkeep for newly created units.

Improvements

Culture: costs 4, adds 2 to land income
Agriculture: costs 6, adds 50% to land income
Industrial: costs 12, adds 50% to land income

NOTE: The total value of a land is calculated by adding the effects in this order: Culture, Agriculture, Industry (thus the very high cost of industry)

Territory base value

ORIGINAL Home Supply Centers: 6 (Except for Warsaw which always yields 4)

Conquered Home Supply Centers: 4

Unaffiliated Supply Centers: 4

Unit prices

Cost: 8

Maintenance in unit conflict (attack or defend): 5

Maintenance in peace: 4

Note: A player only pays conflict maintenance for the units NECESSARY to win a battle. Example: France attacks Berlin with 1 leading and 2 support. Berlin is defended with only 1 army. This turn, France must only pay conflict costs for 2 of units because the third was unnecessary in battle. The losers of a battle must pay conflict fees for ALL their units involved, regardless.

Prices and effects of domestic enhancements

Cultural

Cost: 5

Effect: Increases land value by 2

Agricultural

Cost 10

Effect: Increases land value by 50%

Industrial

Cost: 15

Effect: Increases land value by 50%

Clarifications:

1. If a territory is conquered in the first round of a year, neither the previous nor new owner collects income from it.
2. If an enhanced territory is conquered, all but cultural improvements are destroyed.
3. If a unit is disbanded DUE TO COMBAT the owner does not need to pay upkeep for it that turn.

Optional Randomn Events

Before reading the orders of each nation, one player must roll three dice to determine the randomn event for that turn. The resulting number will coincide with one of the following events.

- 3: Assasination attempt made on Italian monarch. All units within the Italian homeland must hold this turn.
- 4: Bolshevik uprising in Moscow. Russia is in Civil Disorder for this turn.
- 5: Nationalists in Turkey oust the current Ottoman leader from his thrown. Ottoman Empire is in civil disorder for this turn.
- 6: Siesmic activity near Mount Vesuvius results in mass destruction. Any unit in Naples must hold this turn.
- 7: Irish nationalist uprising near dublin. Any unit in London must hold this turn. Any BRITISH units in Liverpool must hold that turn.
- 8: Serbian uprising in the Balkans. Any non-Russian units in Serbia or Bulgaria must hold this turn.
- 9: Serbian uprising in the Balkans. Any non-Russian units in Serbia or Bulgaria must hold this turn.
- 10: Standard circumstances.
- 11: Standard circumstances.
- 12: Standard circumstances.
- 13: Harsh weather conditions in Northern Europe. If summer, then units in Belgium, Ruhr, and Burgundy must hold. If winter, then units in Ukraine and St. Petersburg must hold.
- 14: Harsh weather conditions in Northern Europe. If summer, then units in Belgium, Ruhr, and Burgundy must hold. If winter, then units in Ukraine and St. Petersburg must hold.
- 15: Harsh weather conditions in Northern Europe. If summer, then units in Belgium, Ruhr, and Burgundy must hold. If winter, then units in Ukraine and St. Petersburg must hold.
- 16: Harsh weather conditions in Northern Europe. If summer, then units in Belgium, Ruhr, and Burgundy must hold. If winter, then units in Ukraine and St. Petersburg must hold.
17. Economic crisis in West. France and England must immediately pay 2 currency units.

18. Paris suffers record floods. Any unit in Paris must hold this turn.

Note: During civil disorder, no money is gained or lost.

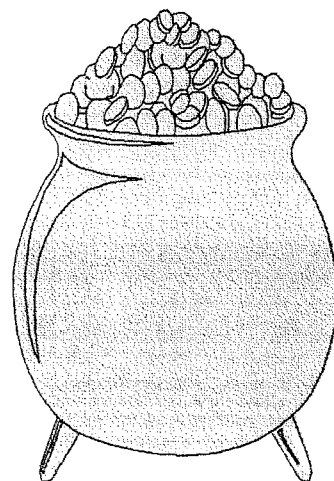
What are the strategic implications of the economic variant? Firstly, because it does not rely soley on mathmatics, last minute "turns in tide" can occur. For example: If Russia holds a signifigant advantage over Austria Hungary and seems ready to begin its final offensive, there may well be a Bolshevik rebellion in Moscow fouling up invasion plans.

Also, as nations grow larger and larger, the need for authentic diplomacy does not decrease (as it does in the standard version) but rather it INCREASES. A far flung empire may often have difficulty maintaining its units. Russia immediately starts off with this disadvantage, having 4 units and an income of 22 (remember, Warsaw reaps only 4 currency units regardless of its owner). If somehow, the "Motherland" finds all her units in combat situations (which could occur if Britian is unwilling to divide Scandinavia peacefully) then bankruptsy will immediately ensue (maintaining 4 units in combat costs 24).

Another way economics enhance the diplomacy aspect of Diplomacy is that nations suddenly have a currency, besides trust, in which to barder. Many a time in our test games, stronger economic powers would fund vulnerable nations against a larger enemy. (This relationship is likely to occur between France and England should Germany grow too large).

Finally, this variant offers less aggressive players an ALTERNATIVE to military conquest. Although this alternative demands a larger investment and offers less immediate rewards, domestic developement can turn a one supply center nation into a super power (provided that its neighbors find it an unattractive territory).

Please feel free to distribute this variant (if you deem it worthy) and give feedback.



So What's a Pratkvarnarna, Anyway?

By Larry Peery

WDC VII has been over for some two months now and I'm still writing about it. That says something, although I'm not sure what. Here's an abbreviated report from my peerispective.

Nine Americans, including one Canadian, took part in this year's WDC event in Goteborg, Sweden held over last Easter weekend. They were among 114 players from 11 countries who played a total of 48 games during the five rounds of the event. The biggest round was the fourth one; which included the team championship event.

Included among the nine Americans were six coming from the United States: Pitt Crandlemire, last year's WDC champion; Edi Birsan, Tom Cobrin, Manus Hand, Dan Mathias, and myself. Interestingly, all six of these players also attended WDC VI in Columbus, Ohio last year. I guess WDC fever really can get into your blood. Joining us in Goteborg were: Dan Barnes, coming from Germany; Vincent Mous (our Canadian), coming from Denmark; and John Robillard, coming from Sweden!

Although the complete final results of the gaming events are not available yet, most of the major results are in thanx to Per Westling. They include:

The Top Board of the Individuals Tournament: (1) Cyrille Sevin, France; (2) Roger Edblom, Sweden; (3) Borger Borgersen, Norway; (4) Toby Harris, United Kingdom; (5) Sid-Ahmed Sidjai, France; (6) Thibault Constans, France; and Per Danngarde, Sweden.

Best Powers were: Austria: Toby Harris, 18 centers; England: Tom Corbin, 16 centers; France: Mattias Jerrewing, 17 centers; Germany: James Hardy, 15 centers; Italy: Roger Edblom, 16 centers; Russia: Edi Birsan, 13 centers; Turkey: Per Holmgren, 15 centers.

Best Negotiator was Toby Harris. Best Tactician was shared between Johannes Nesser and Cyrille Sevin. Toby also set a best personal mark for the amount of alcohol consumed by a Brit at a WDC event!

There were 30 teams competing in the Team Event. The top three teams were: Pratkvarnarna: (1) Borger Borgersen, Daniel Barnes, and Larry Peery; (2) Imperial Frogs: Cyrille Sevin, Sid-Ahmed Sidjai, and Fleure Lefeuvre; (3) Huddinge S-F: Joel Gronberg, Per Larsson, Jens Persson.

Although there were four Americans among the top 12 players going into the last round, no American ended up on the final Top Board of the Individuals Tournament. Why? Some American players have already claimed that they were "victimized" by other players because of their past record,

"ganged up on" by members of a foreigner cabal, "disadvantaged" because the individual standings were published after each event, or that the scoring system "discriminated against" them in some way. I don't know. I do know that I have yet to hear any American admit that any foreigner played better than he did! I have a suspicion that what actually happened is that some Americans, like everyone else, tried to "play the system," but didn't play it quite as well as some of the foreigners who were more used to it. One American, who will go nameless, told me he wasn't going to play in the team event because he had other obligations. He told other Americans he wasn't playing because he wanted to sit out that round, so he would go into the last round in a better position to win the event.

As for these specific charges, I can only say that when I was "ganged up" on in my first two rounds I fully deserved it. It wasn't because of my past record, I am sure, but because of my terrible performance in those two games. The only foreign cabal I ran into was based on language, and our table soon routed them. I think the players who were interested in the standings after each round would have learned what they were regardless of whether they were posted or not. Those who didn't care, such as myself, never bothered to look at them. As for the scoring system, perhaps I should have studied it more. It might have made a difference in my final standings. But then it might not. It certainly would not have made a difference in the way I played.

As I said, my first two games were disasters, typical Peery performances. My third game was part of the Team Event. After giving up my attempt to get three teams of three Americans each, I settled for putting together a pick-up team consisting of Dan Barnes, another American; Borger Borgersen, the event's lone Norwegian; and myself. Dan and Borger both won their events. I did well enough, --- or perhaps more accurately I did not do poorly enough to prevent it ---, to make sure that their two wins gave us the team championship. There is a real irony to all this, however, but that's a story I've told elsewhere.

In my last game I had one objective right from Spring 1901. It was to put together and keep together a western triple. We did it. England, France, and Germany took on Italy, Russia, and Turkey after they had wiped out Austria. Here I might have actually "won" a game (e.g. gotten the most points) had I been playing the scoring system. Instead I was more interested in keeping that alliance going. I think this was the best tournament competition game I have ever played.

As for the results of the event, I can only say that I think the over-all level of play was the highest I have seen at any

WDC event yet. There were strong groups of players from Britain, France, Belgium, and of course Sweden. My only regret was the absence of the Norwegians, although Borger did quite well carrying the flag for them. It was also disappointing to note that there were no Austrians or Italians present. Still, it was a big improvement over Columbus in terms of foreign participation. I have seen Cyrille Sevin, this year's WDC individual champion, play in person and in PBM Diplomacy before. He is very good. More importantly, in my opinion, he's a nice guy; and contrary to what you might think nice guys do do well at WDCs. And I think all the complaints by the American players I mentioned above fall before one fact: Cyrille won in Goteborg only a month after winning the European championship in Namur. If that didn't make him the number one target in Goteborg, I don't know who was. Be that as it may, I was very proud of the group of Americans who did turn out. They came, they saw, they learned, and they taught!

The host event, GOTHCON XXI has been putting on a "ORIGINS" or "AVALONCON" type event for over twenty years. They've got it down cold. The WDC event made up only about 10% of the entire GOTHCON event, but I still got the impression we were something special, a feeling I never had in Columbus. The Swedish organizers who put on the Diplomacy event did a fine job. Congrats to Leif Bergman and his helpers for a job well done. As I've already told the Swedes, this was the best WDC to date in my view. They've set a high standard for future WDC events.

Ah, that brings us to the next two WDC events which are scheduled for Chapel Hill, North Carolina, next Memorial Day; and for Namur, Belgium in August (I think), 1999! Having visited both venues I think Europeans and other foreigners who come to Chapel Hill and Americans who go to Namur will be pleasantly surprised. Both places are relatively small, rich in history, and beautiful locales; and I haven't even talked about the Diplomacy! Even the Gods of Travel are smiling on us. A new airline, CityBird, is bringing direct, inexpensive RT flights from the USA to Belgium for the first time. And from what I remember and what I've seen, other big-ticket item prices in Namur will be considerably less than in Goteborg.

If you want to know more about WDC VII or my travels in Scandinavia, you can check out my reports in TDP or some other hobby publications such as Per Westling's LEPANTO 4-EVER, Berry Renken's BLUES MOBILE, Jef Bryant's DIPLOMANIA. or you can drop me a line or email me at peery@ix.netcom.com.

So what's a Pratkvarnarna, anyway? It's a Swedish word, as you might have guessed. When I went to register my pick-up team; I had to have a name for them. Coming up with one that suited two Americans and a Norwegian wasn't easy. The only thing I had noticed about Borger (who I

knew from the Net) and Dan (who I had met only a few minutes before) was that both of them could talk as much as I could! I asked the registrar what the Swedish word was for "chatterbox," e.g. a person who talks alot. Well, that's it, Pratkvarnarna. Literally it means "flying woodchips." But unless you've cut down a tree, that bit of Swedish wit may be lost on you!

{Larry Peery is a regular contributor to DW and a frequent traveler to World DipCon events.}

A Discussion of House Rules (continued from page 11)

how you will attempt to contact the player and any costs that the player may incur if NMR insurance is used.

A common manner of using NMR insurance is to state that "one attempt will be made to contact the player by phone the evening of the deadline. Any time NMR insurance is used, whether they were contacted or not, the player will be charged the cost of one issue."

How the GM will handle ambiguous or poorly written orders is vital to have in your house rules. For instance, the use of NOR in a movement order could be to Norway, North Sea or Norwegian Sea (as in F Edi-Nor); F Por-Spa could mean either coast; or a player could give the same unit two valid orders, such as A Bur- Mun and A Bur-Par. Most GMs include a list of "approved" abbreviations to use and/or state something akin to "ambiguous or poorly written orders will be converted to a HOLD order for the unit involved." With this house rule, the all three units (F Edi, F Por and A Bur) would hold for that season.

By plainly stating how orders are to be submitted and what format to use in the house rules, the players know what the GM expects of them. Further, by explaining what will happen with ambiguous or poorly written orders saves the GM from pitfalls and complaints during the course of the game. Also, if there are any questions on how these situations will be handled or on how orders should be sent to the GM, they can be cleared up before a player NMRs or becomes upset with the GM.

{Andy York, while scaling back his hobby activities right now, has served admirably as Boardman Number Custodian for some time.}



Thoughts on Euro DipCon and World DipCon

by Cyrille Sevin

First, Namur. Actually it was my third time in that town since I have taken part in the last three DIPLONAMs (That's its usual name, even if it's not a World Diplomacy Championship event.).

So, I have come to know the town. It is quite nice, indeed, but not quite as nice as Brussels.

This year I came with fourteen friends from France, but only four of them were there to play Diplomacy. The others, especially the girls, were not really there for the event.

We stayed in the inexpensive hostel accommodations arranged by our hosts; which was about two and a half miles from the event site. Fortunately we had made the trip in private cars, so we had local transportation.

The Convention is held on the grounds of the Namur Citadelle, a beautiful site for playing Diplomacy. On Saturday afternoon we saw a demonstration by a group of local medieval combat enthusiasts, who showed off their old armor, weapons, and combat techniques..

There were a lot of French players in the Diplomacy tournament, somewhere between thirty and thirty-five, and it was a great success despite the fact that there were only fifteen Belgian players.

But the number and quality of foreign players from Sweden, the UK, etc. made for some beautiful games!

In the final round top board game it was clear that there would be a third French European Diplomacy Convention (out of seven events held to date) champion since all seven of the players were French!

Finally, after much effort I won the game playing England. Perhaps it was as much because Xavier Blanchot, who is not the most popular player in the French hobby, was playing Russia as for any other reason. One example of Xavier's diplomacy style: Just after the game, Xavier told me that mine was not such a great victory and that England always wins the final game. (????) Maybe it is his style of diplomacy that accounts for the fact that Xavier is not so popular among French Diplomacy players.

Anyway, I had a lot of fun at this Convention. In Belgium there are so many great beers and friendly people --- more than in France, I must say.

So, after the gaming we joined a private party on Saturday night. Our hosts were Belgians that we had met the year before. It was fun, but it made it hard on me when I faced that last game on only five hours of sleep.

On Sunday evening we came back to France with my prizes in tow: a lot of good Belgian beers, a certificate for the victory, and the most ridiculous cup, --- a "gift" from the City of Namur for the European Champion ---, I have ever won. It must have been all of six inches high! But the happiness of the victory was more important than the trophy itself, hopefully.

A few weeks later a harder challenge was waiting for me in Gothenburg, Sweden. I had never been there before, and I was wondering about what I would find there.

I decided to go because it was a good excuse to spend the week before the WDC in Denmark, where a friend of mine lives with his Danish girlfriend. I had a good time there with some lovely people in spite of the cold weather and a very expensive way of life.

But in fact it was good training for Sweden, where the weather was really cold, at least for me who lives near Paris. I was hoping to find the sun there, and not just the freezing wind of Denmark.

After winning the European Championship, I was in Gothenburg more for fun than to win the event. There were many reasons for my feeling that way. I knew many good players would be waiting for me. It was also the first competition where I would have to speak a lot of English, and I am not really confident in that language. I must say that, on this point, it was better than I hoped. In fact, the only time (except in the final game) I had to face another French player was the one time I didn't win. It was a guy named Olivier Robbe, and I had taught him how to play the game only three years ago. In our game he was playing Italy and I was playing Austria. It didn't help. He beat up on me all during the game. He ended up with three centers for all of his efforts, and I with one.

The only good thing about this was to see the reaction of the other players on the board. They all thought we would automatically play together because we were French. So, we have provided a good example that this is not always so.

The games were very long in Gothenburg. I had one game that started at 0900 on Friday and did not stop until 0200 on Saturday, so I did not have a lot of time to socialize.

The organization of the event was such that nobody played in all the rounds, so we each had one period where we could see the sights in Gothenborg.

Saturday I played my second game during the Team Tournament. My team, the Imperial Frogs, did well but a brilliant victory went to an international team with two

Americans (Dan Barnes and Larry Peery) and a Norwegian (Borger Borgersen), who was also on the top board in the final round.

I did win my two other games, all in the last year, and all with just one center more than the second place finisher, but I did win! And so I joined the final game another time.

It was assumed that the top three players of the tournament after the first four rounds would be the first three players on the top board of the final round. This is a good thing, I think, because it avoids manipulations on the other tables in the final rounds.

I played Turkey and was very afraid at the beginning of the game when I heard that Edi Birsan, the inventor of the Lepanto Opening, would be playing Italy!

Despite Edi's promises, I decided to trust Russia and to move Ankara to Constantinople instead of the Black Sea in Spring 1901. I saw then that Edi was really moving against France, and so I came back to fight Russia.

Finally, I did win, in part because the Swedish player was playing England was not a very good diplomat. Even Bjorn von Knorring was better! :-)

After the games, I received my trophy from the hands of Pitt Crandlemire, the previous World Champion. But that was only the beginning. The World Diplomacy Championship was part of GOTHCON, Sweden's premier gaming event, and the organizers crowned me like a king, in a hall with several hundred people looking on. It was really unexpected and quite wonderful.

After that, we spent a great night in an Irish pub called The Dubliners with many of the Brits, Swedes, and French players. It was the best social experience I have had with Diplomacy players, especially from overseas, and it gives me the will to try again.

The next morning we took a plane back to Paris. I was carrying my Cup and that brought comments from the crew members.

{Cyrille is obviously an avid face-to-face Diplomacy player..if you see him at a convention, watch your back!}

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.

DipCon XXX - Dragonflight Gaming Convention, Seattle, WA. August 22-24. There will be 3 rounds of Diplomacy: 7PM Friday, 9AM Saturday, and 9AM Sunday. European style - 8 game year rounds, DIAS at the end of Fall 1908. Scoring on wins and draws only. Contact Buz Eddy at BuzEddy@aol.com for a brochure or more info.

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| Jun 20-22 | Michicon Gamefest '97; Warren, MI. Info: POB 656, Wyandotte, MI 48192. |
| Jun 26-29 | DragonCon; Atlanta, GA. Info: POB 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362. |
| Jul 17-21 | Origins; Columbus, OH. Info: POB 1740, Renton, WA 98057; 206-204-5815; andon@aol.com |
| Jul 30-Aug 3 | AvalonCon; Hunt Valley, MD. Info: 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214. |
| Aug 7-10 | GenCon; Milwaukee, WI. Info: 201 Sheridan Springs, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. |
| Aug 22-24 | DipCon XXX - See above for more details |
| Aug 28-31 | European GenCon; Leicestershire, UK. Info: 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, England. |
| Sep 12-14 | WinCon; Winnipeg, MB. Info: POB 28073, 1453 Henderson Hwy., Winnipeg, MB R2G 4E9, Canada. |
| Sep 26-28 | Shorecon; Asbury Park, NJ. Info: 266 Spruce, Brick, NJ 08723; multigenre@aol.com . |
| Oct 10-12 | OurCon; Birmingham, AL. Info: 319 85th St. W, Birmingham, AL 34206; dragontdl@aol.com |

Winter 1901: The Three Build Opening

by Mike Scott

You have just started another game of diplomacy. Your fix of lies and deception is on the way. Sure, you can start the game conservatively, slowly make allies, and build your coalition. **THE HECK WITH THAT!** You want builds and you want them **NOW!** The population of your country is in the middle of a fascist frenzy and they need new Supply Centers to pay the bill for expansion.

Can you achieve the elusive three build winter of 1901? The first question you ask is, "Can you get three builds?", and the second, what does it do to your chances of victory?

I went back and reviewed 56 games in the Diplomacy archives of American on-line. Of those 56 games 28 games had one or more countries with three builds in 1901. A very nice round 50%. So maybe the three build winter is not so elusive after all! In those 28 games three countries never got three builds (0/28). Lets look at them.

The Have Nots

ENGLAND - Forget it. If you can get three builds for England by the winter of 1901 you are not playing Diplomacy you are working for the CIA! England gets Norway easily enough. Just ship over one of your fleets to the North Sea and then sail on in to Dock. The Prime Minister has a shot at Belgium and Holland via Convoy or with your other fleet but where will the third build come from?

The only way I can see England getting a third build is for England to talk France into putting it's fleet in the English Channel and then forgoing a build to convoy across your Army to Holland. **NOT AN EASY TASK!**

ITALY - It is possible for Italy to get three builds, but just barely. Tunis is yours, there's one. Italy would then have to take both Marseilles and Trieste to get three builds in the first year stabbing France AND Austria. Even if Italy could pull that off, good luck with negotiations in 1902 with two very agitated neighbors!

TURKEY - The Sultan gets Bulgaria with a flick of his wrist. The second center **HAS** to be a stab of Russia by your fleet in the Black Sea taking Sevastapol. Russia would probably notice that army in Armenia. The third build has your army in Bulgaria roll either north to Rumania or south to Greece with your army in Smyrna moving Constantinople to Bulgaira. **NOPE!** I'm sure it has happened but not more than once or twice.

The bottom line here is that if you draw any of these countries you have to have a long term view of the game. It is very hard to set the world on fire in the first year. Two builds is a Major victory for any of the Have-Nots.

The Have's

GERMANY - If you want that three build winter the Kaiser can get it done! He has easy access to Denmark, Holland and Belgium. With some savvy negotiation you are there. Germany had a three build opening in 8 out of the 56 games studied. Unfortunately, of those eight games Germany went on to win **BUTKUS! ZIP. NADA.** The Kaiser closed the deal zero of eight games after a three build opening. This tells us that Germany, more than any other country on the board, is susceptible to early leader syndrome. When you have five neighbors and you expand quickly your odds of being noticed are greater.

AUSTRIA - Austria got three builds in 4 out of the 56 games. All with Serbia, Greece and Rumania. While Austria was only half as successful as Germany in the first year, Austria went on to victory an impressive two times out of four. One of them that rare jewel a solo win! A victory as Austria is a must have for any Diplomacy player who stakes a claim as "expert".

FRANCE AND RUSSIA - If you want three builds in 1901 you want either of these super starters. Both of them built three times in 10 out of 56 games played. That is nearly 20% Of those 20 three build openings they went on to partake in the win 8 out of 20 games. Russia earning five wins and France three. Most impressive. It is not suprising that these two countries have a higher ratio of wins in much more scientific studies than mine! (see last issues great article by Thaddeus Black) France and Russia clearly win more games than the other countries.

In the final analysis of my sample games (admittedly a small sample) we can learn a few things. First in 50% of the games some country gets three builds in 1901. of the 28 times a country **DID** get three builds they went on to win or partake in the win 10 out of 31 times. (in a few of the 28 games more than one country got three builds) So if you connive and struggle your way to three builds you now have improved your odds of winning to about 33% Unfortunately this means the others gang up on you and beat you down the other 67% of the time, However these odds sure look better than the 8-12% percent chance of victory you had in Spring 1901. So get out there and Build!

{Mike Scott is a big fan of multi-player games, Diplomacy being just one of many.}

A Visit to the Asylum

by Anonymous

Hello, my name is Henry. I'm a diplomat. Oh, I don't mean that I work for the government or anything, I mean that I play Diplomacy. And, if I may say so for myself, I'm rather good at it.

You may wonder what I'm doing in a place like this. Well, I'm visiting an acquaintance. The world championship is coming up you see and I'd heard a rumor that he'd be out in time to attend. Perhaps I ought to give you a little background. There have been a lot of rumors floating around lately, and it's probably time that someone set the record straight.

It all started a couple of weeks ago when we got together for a friendly game one weekend. As always, he drew Turkey. Somehow this always happens. Doesn't matter if he draws first or last, he ends up Turkey. More annoyingly, he always wins as Turkey. He's a decent player mind you, but he's just not that good. Give him Germany or France and he'll bobble his share, but give him Turkey and his neighbors turn into simpering idiots, every guess goes his way, and alliances against him fall apart over the smallest detail, one even collapsed over an argument about who's pencil it was between them!

Well, not this time. I knew he'd draw Turkey at the worlds, and I'd been preparing ever since last year. Now it was time to put those preparations to the test.

Things started out as normal. The poor Austrian was from Slovakia. He was still trying to locate just where his homeland was on the map when his last unit was removed from the board. Italy only had to make a small break in his stride to avoid the backswing of the door from Milos's exit and he was gone as well. That old familiar self-satisfied gloat started to spread across his face and you could see that he was already anticipating the win and his chance to gloat. Oh yes, he ALWAYS gloated. I had prepared France well however, and as the fleets began to move south, that gloat began to fade, then it turned to a look of aggrieved fury, sort of the look you figure the Lord had when Adam took a bite out of the apple.

He took France aside and if you'd seen a picture out of context, you'd have thought it was someone chastising a puppy who had just made a mess. He knew it wasn't the puppy's fault, he just didn't know better, and if he could only explain it to him, he'd understand and do the right thing. Then, as the awareness came across him that this puppy was doing it on purpose, the air began to blister with his comments. To give him his due, he had a certain artistry with his words, a mastery of invective worthy of respect.

It was a battle of epic proportions, and it all came down to

the wire. One last set of moves and it was stalemate or a Turkish win. We worked through the orders and the grin returned. First he began to chuckle, then it was a chortle, then he positively began to cackle with glee. He capered and cavorted growing louder by the moment, so that it was a fair bit before the French player's quiet protestations could be heard. Finally, it sunk in to him that someone was debating his conquest.

"What?!?" he demanded.

"I just don't see it" replied the Frenchman.

"You don't see what?," he intoned?

"Well, I don't see how you've won..."

He leaped toward the table and stabbed out a finger, "Right there, I took Brest...WHERE'S MY ARMY? Gascony took Brest, WHERE'S MY ARMY?! Okay, look at the orders, WHERE ARE THE ORDERS?" he yelled, his voice rising to a shriek at the end.

The Frenchman tried to explain to him how he'd gotten bean dip on the orders, and maybe some of the pieces, and well, you can't really blame a dog for loving bean dip can you? He never made it through the explanation though as he finally snapped. Only gibberish was coming out by the time they came to bring him here for a rest.

Anyway, that's why he's here. I'd heard a rumor that he was much better and would be discharged soon, so I dropped in to see. What, oh how's he doing? Well, I don't think he's going to be out any time soon. That's him you heard screaming a little while ago. Actually he seemed to be doing pretty well when we first got here, we had a pretty reasonable conversation for a while. I guess it's partly my fault, I should have remember that association might have brought back bad memories. You see, I was feeding my friend here his favorite snack, these little pressed tidbits, just about the size of a Diplomacy piece. He really loves them with a bit of bean dip on them. Well, he noticed me doing that and gave a kind of a shake, then he bent down to the floor and said "You, you cost me that game, you know! What's your name anyway?" Then he read his tag and sort of gagged. He straightened up, looked at me with his eyes practically spinning, gasped out "you... you" and collapsed.

They gave him some tranquilizers and led him away. The doctor said it might be a couple of months before they'll even allow him visitors again. Gave little Pavlov here and me quite a start I'll tell you.

{This article was written in crayon.}

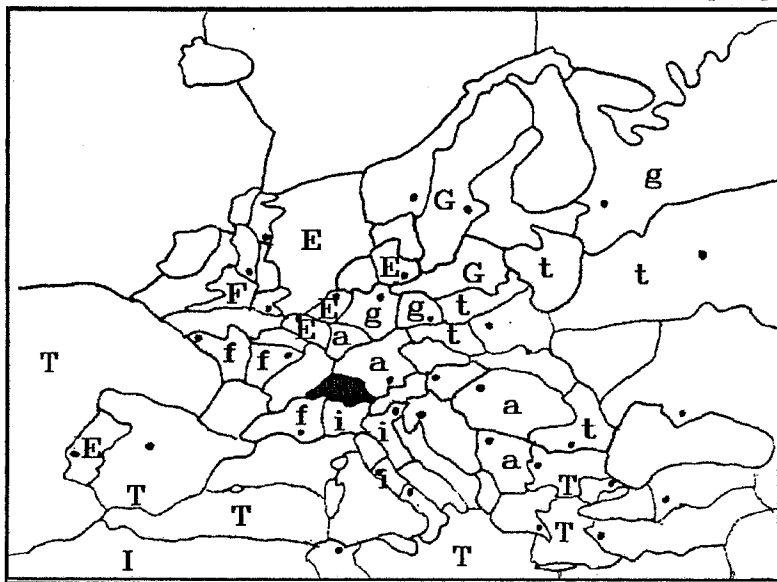
The Diplomacy World Demo Game

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 1906/Spring 1907 Results:



Austria: Bld A Tri..A Mun-Ruh,A Boh-Mun,A Tri-Ser,
A Bud S Tri-Ser.

England: Ret F Nwy-Nth..F Den S F Hol-Kie,
F Hol-Kie,F Nth H,F Bel S F Nth,
F Mid S F. A Gas Spa (ret Nat,Iri,Ech,Gas,OTB),
F Por S F Mid.

France: A Par-Pic,A Bre-Pic,A Gas-Mar,F Lon-Wal.

Germany: Ret A Hol-OTB,A War-OTB,A Mun-OTB,
Bld A Kie..A Kie S F Bal-Den,F Bal-Den,F Nwy-Swe,
A StP H,A Pru-Ber.

Italy: Bld A Ven..F Naf S T. F Wme-Mid,A Ven-Pie,
A Nap-Rom,A Rom-Ven.

Turkey: Bld F Smy,F Con..F Con-Bul(sc),F Smy-Aeg,
F Aeg-Ion,F Tyn-Wme,F Wme-Mid,F Spa(sc)-Por,
A Bul-Rum,A Gal-Sil,A Mos-Lva,A Ukr-Mos,
A War-Pru.

PRESS

Turkey - Austria: Just to reassure you, I'll cite the famous Rocky and Bullwinkle line, "Look, Rock, nothin' up my sleeve...presto!" Onward at the foe, with...ahem...fleets in the fray!

France - Austria: Is that anything like dreaming in your sleep that you're in a DW Demo game and waking up to find out you are?

Turkey - Italy: To my other skittish ally, I urge you to release the larnd armies on coastal watch and get them ready to travel...via sea or overland, your choice. Thanks for the African support.

Sarejevo: Polish refugees moved en masse across the Serbian border from the temporary refugee camps they had been occupying in Hungary. They demanded that the Turkish government compensate them for lost property and provide them with the basic necessities of life.

Turkey - England: If you got Spain, bully for you! Please realize, this Mao thing isn't so much against you, as it is to "help" you vs. your foe(s), past and future...

Germany - Board: Am I the only one who wanted to win this game other than Faz??? You all are bending over and grabbing your ankles for him! Sheesh.

Turkey - France: Please realize, htis Spain thing isn't so much against you, as it is to "help" you vs. your foe(s), past and future...deja vu all over again! Paul, you're a welcome breath of fresh air in this one, after the previous dudniks we had in R and F.

Turkey - Germany: Silence of the lambs, I see? Well, let's see what you removed, and how much this is gonna cost us both...hope you hunkered down for a Reich defense, as opposed to an Eastern campaign.

Brian Cannon - Germany remarks (in the press) about everyone else bending over for Faz. While this is largely true it is still somewhat ironic coming just as he (Germany) fails to protect StPete against Turkish capture. Still, he may figure that with England still attacking him, and France still (apparently) attacking England (Lon-Wal can take Liv this time), and I/A working with Faz that there is little fun to be gained from a lone defense against the onrushing hoards.

Austria is doing more than "just" puppeting to Turkey. At least his taking of Serbia (possibly arranged with Turkey) serves to give him another build and a better chance at a defense against the likely eventual Turkish stab. The continuing E/G feud allows Austria to slip into Ruhr and break the stalemate line in the center. It will be interesting (though probably meaningless) to see whether E/G finally try to band together to slow down the advance.

Of more significance will be whether Austria takes Rumania as well and uses the two builds to counter attack Faz while his units are busy elsewhere. Even if he can't get a solid ally from among the other players the resulting confusion might open up additional possibilities for his survival and reemergence. On the other hand, as Germany falls, he has to face the prospect of Turkey freeing up several armies and possibly building more to stab "him" with. With Turkish naval supremacy in the Med, a foothold beyond Gibraltar, and Italy vulnerable to a lightning naval stab, Austria (even with several armies) could find himself surrounded with no one in position to help him hold off the Turkish sarcens.

Barring Austria turning on Turkey soon (Italy lacks the units or position), or some brilliant Diplomacy from someone else, we may very shortly be lunging into the endgame enroute to a Turkish solo. What will the Fall hold ??

Jim Grose - Turkey continues to make excellent progress on all fronts. He even has Italian armies at his disposal should Austria-Hungary get greedy in the Balkans.

What should we make of Austria-Hungary moving to Serbia with support? He could take Rumania next but maybe the move was simply defensive, or even previously agreed to by Turkey. Sliding A Mun - Ruh and A Boh - Mun means he may actually take Kie this fall rather than just cutting its support of A Ber for Turkey.

Italy trusts Turkey, or at least realizes that he has no choice but to work with him (England, take note). Together Italy and Turkey should be able to take Spain this fall and, with help from Austria-Hungary if necessary, Marseilles next year. It's certainly in Austria-Hungary's best interests to see Italian armies moving west rather than east or north.

France is making the best of a bad hand. The fact that he considered English F Bel - Pic to be more of a threat than

Austro-Hungarian A Mun - Bur speaks volumes.

England continues his bizarre strategy of softening up Germany for Austria-Hungary and Turkey to finish off, but only attacking with fleets. Let's optimistically assume that once Germany is eliminated, England will be holding Nwy, Swe, Den, Kie, Hol, Bel, Bre and home. That's only ten, well short of eighteen. It also means that Turkey could take eighteen while leaving six for Austria-Hungary and/or Italy. I suggest that England reread the Object Of The Game and seriously rethink his strategy.

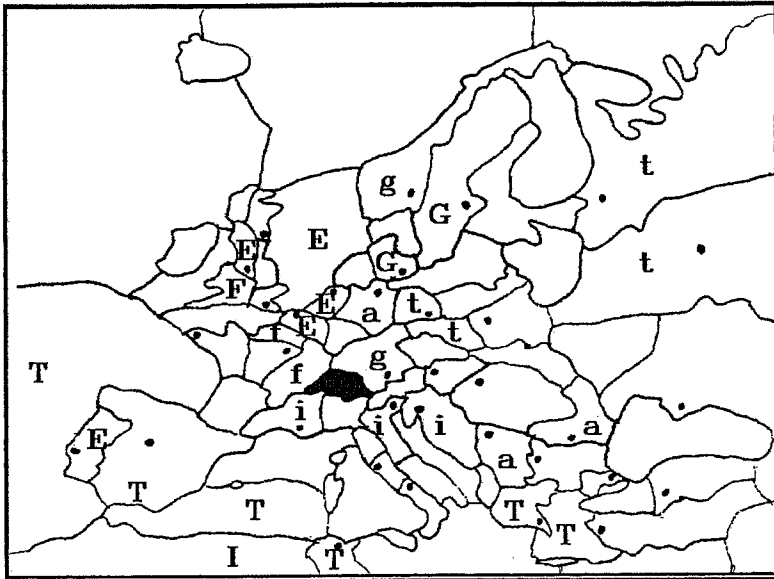
Turkey's moves to Prussia, Livonia and Moscow were clever since most would have expected A Mos S A War - Lvn, A Ukr - War. Even so, Germany should have at least tried A StP - Mos. I cringe whenever I see a unit ordered to hold when it could have tried something useful, even if its chances of success were remote. In this case the loss of StP would have been delayed from Fall 1907 to Spring 1908.

To his credit, Germany may well retake Norway since England can't both defend it and retake London. Leaving on F Bal also keeps the outcomes uncertain in Denmark, Berlin and even St. Petersburg.

The Germany - Board press has a great deal of truth to it. I still think he should be furiously negotiating with England and France to form an alliance while they're still strong enough to mount a decent joint defence. Will England only understand the gravity of the situation when he loses Liverpool - to a Turkish fleet?!



Fall 1907 Results:



Austria: A Bud-Rum, A Ser S A Bud-Rum, A Mun S G. A Ber (ret Ruh, Tyr, Boh, OTB), A Ruh-Kie.
England: Ret F Mid-Nat., F Nat-Lvp, F Nth-Lon, F Bel-Ech, F Hol S A. A Ruh-Kie, F Den S A. A Ruh-Kie (ret Hel, Ska, OTB), F Por H.
France: A Par-Bur, A Bre-Pic, A Mar S A Par-Bur (ret Gas, OTB), F Wal-Lon.
Germany: A StP-Nwy, F Bal-Den, F Swe S F Bal-Den, A Kie-Ruh, A Ber-Mun.
Italy: A Pie-Mar, F Naf-Mid, A Ven-Tri, A Rom-Ven.
Turkey: A Rum-Bud (ret Gal, Ukr, Sev, Bul, OTB), A Lva-StP, A Mos S A Lva-StP, A Sil S G. A Ber-Mun, A Pru-Ber, F Bul(sc)-Gre, F Aeg S F Bul(sc)-Gre, F Ion-Tun, F Wme S I. F Naf-Mid, F Spa(sc) S I. A Pie-Mar, F Mid-Ech.

Supply Center Chart

Austria	Vie, Bud, Ser, Rum, Kie=5	Build 1
England	Lvp, Edi, Bel, Hol, Por=5	Remove 1
France	Par, Bre, Lon=3	Remove 1
Germany	Swe, Nwy, Mun, Den=4	Even
Italy	Ven, Rom, Nap, Mar, Tri=5	Build 1
Turkey	Con, Smy, Ank, Bul, Sev, Gre, Mos, War, Spa, StP, Ber, Tun=12	Build 1

PRESS

Italy - Turkey: This had better work. If I don't get my two, and I've pissed off my neighbors, it's going to be a long, cold winter.

Con to Vie: Be advised that we are, unfortunately, again in a state of war. Your naked aggression in pillaging one (doubtless two) Turkish centers--far behind friendly lines, and completely unnecessarily--shows that you have ulterior motives far beyond "the good of the alliance." As such, I call on the nations of Europe to deal you a smarting blow. Hopefully you'll rejoin the Community of Good Neighbors after such a rebuke. We could've had it all, but nooo....trust apparently wasn't in the cards regarding your large rearward neighbor, and now it's all unraveled.

France - Germany: I'm not sure I care for the grabbing-your-ankles remark if it means what I think it means. However, I agree with you that everyone pursuing his own perception of his self-interest is playing into the hands of Faz, although it is not evident to me that anyone, including Faz, is going for 18 centers. I would venture to say that what Faz has been doing can best be described as coalition building. Unfortunately, you do not seem to be destined to be included in his coalition.

Tur to Ger and Ita: Are "attaboys!" deserved this turn, or was I the one who was bamboozled? Like the Panteen commercial girl says, "Don't hate me (because I took a center of yours in the process)." I gave you your requested supports, you're both spared from the Red Meance's plans for your doom, and are competitive for the rest of the game. Would it be wrong to say I'm looking forward to further cooperation and expansion???? Mr Team Player, at your service.

Italy - Austria: Nothing personal. Call it revenge for the first stab, or call it opportunism, whatever you like. You might also call it suckered in by the Silver-Tongued Turk. We shall see.

Tur to E/F: What you guys do against each other is no business of mine. Call me if you need or want help; I'm honestly "sailing aimlessly" in the event someone wants me....If you don't mind, I'll sail to Scandanavia and link up with my A StP, ok????

Fall 1907 Commentary

Brian Cannon - There's a line from the film "Battle of the Bulge" about "The changing fortunes of war." Here in Flapjack, Turkey helps Italy vs. France, but grabs Tunis

(from Italy); Turkey helps Germany vs. Austria, but grabs StPete & Berlin behind his back; England helps Austria vs. Germany; as France tries for London and moves to attack

Belgium; in spite of the I/T assault on Marsailles; Germany & Austria swap dots (Mun for Kiel); as Germany presses his attack on England (taking Denmark). Austria throws off the shackles of Puppethood and becomes the only real current stay in the advance of Turkish dominion over Europe; and gets stabbed by Turkey's other puppet (Italy) for it.

Faz's weakness is his lack of units at home. In spite of his snatching dots from both his current Italian puppet and his (possibly) new German puppet [puppet: someone who serves you & your interests no matter what you do to them], he only gets one build. If Italy continues helping Faz and going after Austria, that build should be enough to spell doom for Austria. However, any calculations must take into account the fact that Faz (being at 12) only needs 6 more dots for the solo victory. With England & France both removing this winter, and Faz already having a lock on Portugal and 4 fleets in the vicinity of the Atlantic (and Germany tied up in his struggle with England) it is not difficult to imagine Faz picking up three of those dots from Portugal, Brest, and Liverpool (over the next few years). The retaking of Rumania & Serbia (as I/T dismantle Austria) would put him at 17. The 18th could come from Munich or from a final stab of his Italian puppet.

Is it too late in the day for Gonsalves & Koehler to come to a settlement (since the dots they were fighting over are largely lost to Faz and his minions anyway)? And how about France. Paul made a comment about Faz's coalition building. It seems to me more a matter of coalition "shuffling" but still begs the question whether France has any notions of doing anything other than fighting his own battles while the rest of Europe blows in the (Eastern) wind. An E/F/G rapprochement could go a long way to pulling many of them back into the hunt - or at least arranging for a new (temporary) coalition between them and Turkey.

At the moment, the real key would seem to be Italy. Given Faz's weakness at home and the builds both Italy & Austria are getting - an I/A could be especially significant here. That is, if Dave (Austria) is willing to overlook (for the moment) the Italian stab into Trieste and if both he and James (Italy) are willing to trust each other far enough to go after Faz. Such a strike could force Faz to pull back portions of his far flung forces and give an opportunity for the remaining peoples of Europe to regroup.

Of course, since the non-Turkish inhabitants of Europe mostly got where they are by infighting and squabbling it could be argued that a Pax-Byzantium is actually the best thing for all concerned. To finally bring peace to the war torn countryside.

Jim Grose - Ten supply centers changed hands this fall. The chaos centered in Germany, with Germany losing Kie and Ber but retaking Mun.

Germany apparently follows the philosophy that if you can't beat them then join them. England and France probably made his choice easier.

Italy took a gamble, but only a slight one, by invading both France and Austria-Hungary. Turkey has demonstrated that he is a level-headed ally with a long-term approach so I suspect that as long as Italy abides by the terms of their alliance then he will survive - and prosper - for some time to come. Watch for Italy to climb into second place by Fall 1908.

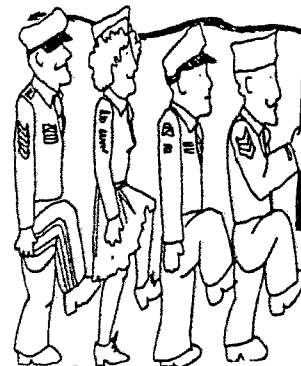
Turkey could have taken Por but saw the importance of helping Italy take Mar first, before French A Bur arrived. Turkey can still annihilate English F Por - on a spring move - or, should Italy act up, could annihilate Italian F NAF. Turkey has virtually unchallenged control of the Mediterranean.

Austria-Hungary may have limited Turkey's net gains to one while netting one himself, but what's next? To his credit he persuaded England to support him into Kie, but he now faces a G-I-T alliance with no Russia to save him. Turkey will retreat A Rum - Sev, build A Con and recall A Mos and possibly one other army. Italy will head for Vie next. With two armies trapped behind Ber and Mun, Austria-Hungary's fate is sealed.

English F Nth couldn't do three things at once so while he held Lon he lost Den and allowed Germany into Nwy. I've said it before, but England should be fighting Turkey, not Germany and France. He is now on the defensive everywhere. To his credit he did form an alliance with Austria-Hungary, something one doesn't see too often.

France should abort his ill-fated English adventure and ally with England. He could remove A Pic while ordering F Wal - Iri in preparation for a joint E-F attack on MAO or, should England not agree to this, he could remove F Wal and order A Pic - Bre. Above all he must form sort of alliance with England.

Has either England or France approached the other yet about forming an alliance against Turkey, and now Germany? Throw in Italy as an enemy and the situation begs an E-F alliance. How much more impetus is required?



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 John Harrington, 30 Poynter Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middlesex EN1 1DL, 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 Conrad von Metzke, 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117.

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 (and many foreign zines as well). 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 Conrad von Metzke, 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117.

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.

The Game of Diplomacy - The only hardcover book written on the game, by Richard Sharp. Authorized photocopies of the 149-page book are available from Fred C. Davis at 3210-K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043. Prices are \$7 in the US, \$7.50 in Canada, and \$8.50 elsewhere. It is also available directly from Richard Sharp at 46 Whielden St., Amersham, Bucks HP6 0HY, England. Cost from Richard directly is 3 Pounds, or the equivalent in French or Swiss Francs.

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).

The Abyssinian Prince - Jim Burgess, 664 Smith, Providence, RI 02908. Openings include Colonial Dip.

...and then there were six... - Tim Lurz, c/o JE Technology, Chung Cheng 2nd rd, #141, 4fl-1, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, ROC. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat, Hardbop Downfall, Colonial Dip, Black Hole Dip.

Batyville Gazette - Ralph Baty, 4551 Pauling, San Diego, CA 92122. Openings include Diplomacy, Anarchy, Invasion.

Diplodocus - Steohen Koehler, 2906 Saintfield, Charlotte, NC 28270. Openings include Gunboat, Gunboat Colonial Diplomacy, Machiavelli.

Grand Hyatt - Douglas 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.

History of Canada - Kevin Burns, 2659-4 Tsukahara, Minami Ashigara, Kanagawa 250-01, Japan. Openings include Diplomacy Colonial Dip, Civilization, Britannia, Republic of Rome, Machiavelli, Empires in Arms.

Tactful Assassin - Eric Young, 4784 Stepney, RR #2, C2, Armstrong, BC V0E 1B0, Canada. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat, Mitotic Dip.

Yellow Pajamas - Paul Milewski, 7 Mallard Dr., Amelia, OH 45102. Openings include Diplomacy, Gunboat, Colonial Dip.