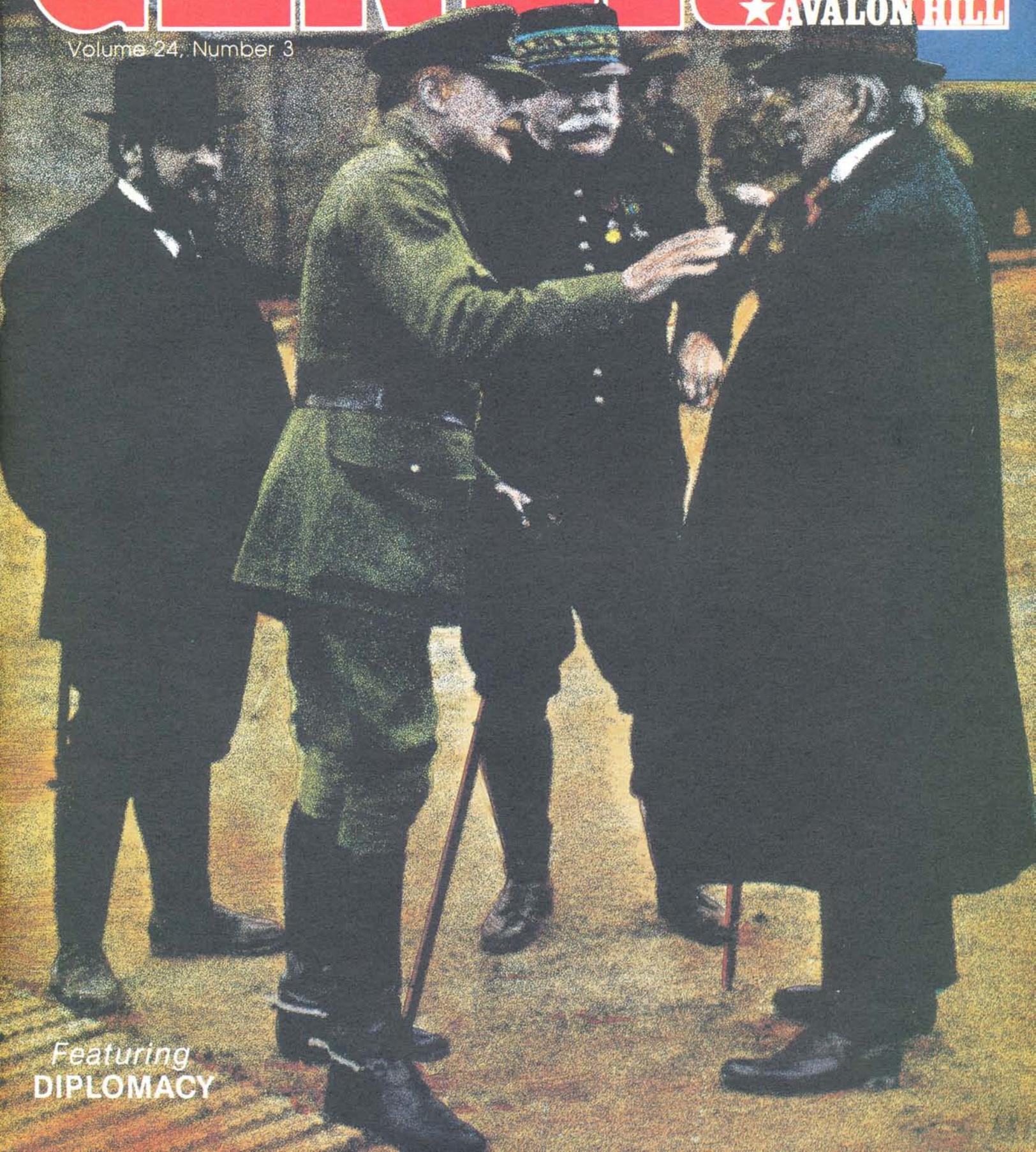


GENERAL

\$3.00

★ AVALON HILL

Volume 24, Number 3



Featuring
DIPLOMACY

★ ★ The AVALON HILL GENERAL

The Avalon Hill Game Company's *GENERAL* is dedicated to the presentation of authoritative articles on the strategy, tactics, and variation of our games of skill. Historical articles are included only inasmuch as they provide useful background information on current AH titles. The *GENERAL* is published by The Avalon Hill Game Company solely for the cultural edification of the serious game aficionado, in the hopes of improving the game owner's proficiency of play and providing services not otherwise available to the game buff. The Avalon Hill Game Company is a division of Monarch Avalon Industries, Inc. The shares of Monarch Avalon, Inc. are publicly traded on the NASDAQ System under the symbol MAHI. For information about the company write to Martha Burman at the executive offices at the company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214.

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Questions must be based on rules of play (not historical or design

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on more than one game must be listed on separate pages and

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AH Philosophy Part 123

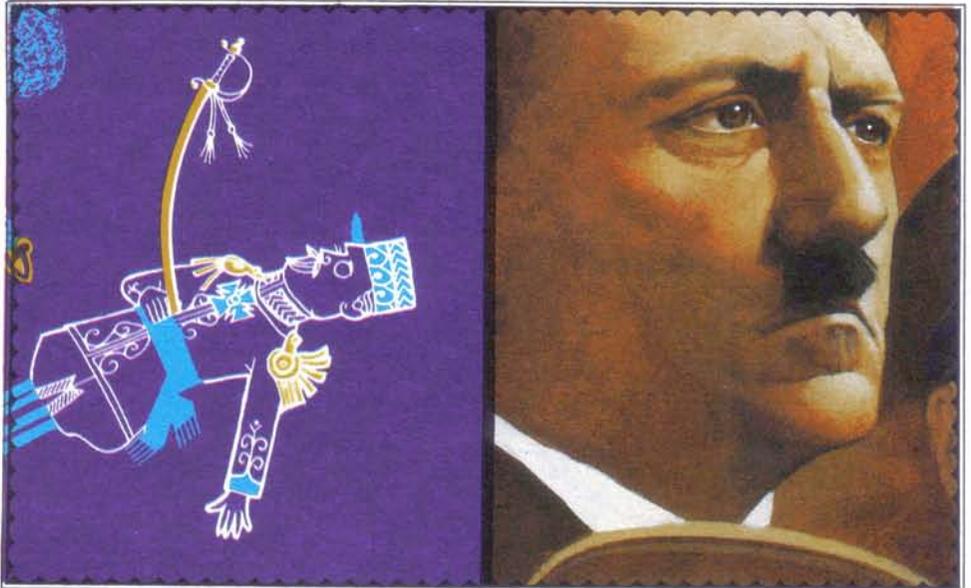
As I sit down to draft this column of my ramblings, it is but a couple of days before Christmas. As they always seem to at this season each year, my thoughts turn to the past, tradition and nostalgia and the good times. Those things, readers and friends, are very much part of our philosophy. And very much a part of this Philosophy.

Rumor has it that the folk who decide such things, GAMA, have decided to drop the names "Charles Roberts" and "H.G. Wells" from their annual awards presented at ORIGINS for game excellence. They plan to apply some generic label ("Origins Awards") to these awards that have such a long tradition and such high recognition among the gaming fraternity. It is inevitable that some other organization or periodical will, I suppose, quickly apply these names of the "founding fathers" of our hobby to their own awards; after all, they aren't being used.

Change simply for the sake of change? I suspect so. The wargaming industry has been infected by that curse of our '80s society, becoming ever more frantic each day. As sales fluctuate through ever wider swings, companies appear and disappear with distressing regularity. "Hot" new games are published, and then vanish within a couple of months, unloved and unplayed by wargamers who can't be bothered to devote the time necessary to master their intricacies. Wargame periodicals change ownership and editorship so often (not to mention the several started each year only to fold by December) that even a scorecard doesn't help.

In this whirlwind of activity, akin to the Tea Party in Wonderland, a few rocks of tradition have remained. For good reason. They provide we wargamers with a foundation for our interest. AHKS

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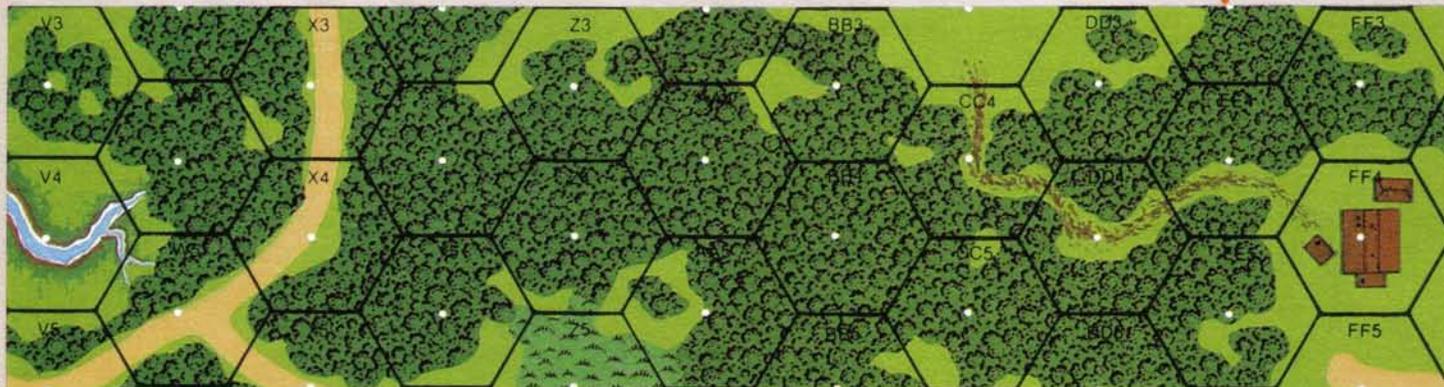
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PARTISAN!



March 29th, 1942...A cold breeze blows down the Rhodopes Mountains as Greek "bandits" take cover along the edge of a clearing, setting up the machineguns they had acquired only hours earlier during a bold dawn raid on a camp of Bulgarian occupation troops. Soon their Bulgarian pursuers will begin emerging from the forest at the far side of the clearing, and probably will suspect nothing as they proceed out across the open ground—right into the sights of their own machineguns.

June 6th, 1944...For a year the Borgerlige Partisaner have wanted to attack the German-controlled Globus radio factory on the outskirts of Copenhagen, but the multi-building complex, guarded by Danish SS troops, has always seemed too well protected for the small group to attempt it. Now however, they know the factory has begun manufacturing V-2 rocket components—and the urgency of this new situation demands decisive action. So, with every man and Sten gun they can muster, they must attack and blow up the V-2 works...

August 12th, 1944...The Home Army in Warsaw, confident of quick relief by the Red Army, has risen up against the Nazis. But the Soviets have ceased advancing, and now the Germans are mounting strong counterattacks against the Polish strongholds. In the Old Town shells are falling all around as the Poles await the imminent assault. Their ammunition has run low, forcing them to hold their fire until the last minute—so, until they can be assured of "a German for every bullet", they can only watch as the Nazis advance with flamethrowers and Goliaths...

August 17th, 1944...Partisans of the People's Army of Liberation have cut the road into Palesnik, trapping its large but weak garrison of Croatian troops. The Croats lack the strength to break out—yet dare not surrender to the Partisans, for Tito's guerrillas yearn to avenge past Croatian atrocities. Suddenly the sound of gunfire cracks through the clear mountain air, and on the hillsides they see cavalry attacking the Partisan positions from the rear. The cry rings out: "The Cossacks are coming!"

This is PARTISAN!—the fourth ASL module. The eight scenarios contained herein focus on historical World War II battle situations involving the Resistance forces of various countries vs the German and Axis Minor troops occupying their lands. PARTISAN! will challenge your abilities in basic infantry combat as you maneuver and fire your squads, leaders and supporting weapons in scenarios whose forces run the gamut from elite Germans to poorly equipped but highly-motivated freedom fighters, to low-grade occupation troops. Experience—as only ASL can let you—the vicious, no-quarter ambushes, surprise raids and set-piece assaults that characterized guerrilla warfare in the cities, forests and mountains of Europe. Regardless of your preferences (including solitaire play), if you're an ASL infantry-grogard you're bound to find something pleasing in the wide assortment of PARTISAN! scenarios, which range from the large, high-piece-density type to the small, quick setup kind. One is even "three-dimensional", with most of the action occurring underground, using separate boards for the above and below-ground levels.



PARTISAN!, along with its eight scenarios, contains one countersheet of Axis Minor infantry and support weapons—and also includes two boards: 10, with new, revised artwork; and 32, which features dense woods, a stream and a small cluster of buildings. Only ASL, BEYOND VALOR, and SQUAD LEADER boards 1-4 are needed to play PARTISAN!.



PARTISAN! is now available for \$15.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company, Baltimore, Maryland 21214. Please add 10% for shipping and handling expenses to all orders (20% for Canadian orders, and 30% for overseas). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.

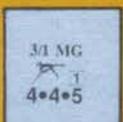
THUNDER AT CASSINO



THUNDER AT CASSINO is the story of that third battle of Cassino. It is a fascinating struggle of sweeping contrasts. Bitter street fighting in which gains were measured in rooms instead of blocks characterized the battle in the town. Whole divisions had to settle for the clearing of a single house as the prize for their day's work—accomplished at terrible cost. Towering above them, assaults were launched and repulsed by both sides across the rocky slopes of Monte Cassino. And on Castle Hill, a medieval siege was reenacted with machineguns and mortars replacing catapults and arrows as German paratroopers stormed the feudal castle. Tanks, restricted by rubble and the mountain, proved decisive but could be brought to bear only with the greatest difficulty. Artillery and machineguns ruled the battlefield. It was indeed a return to the horrors of The Great War.

THUNDER AT CASSINO recreates the eleven days of the Third Battle for Cassino with a variation of the award-winning *STORM OVER ARNHEM* game system which preserves the "feel" of simultaneous-movement games without the hassle of written moves. By alternating fire or movement impulses, the traditional action-reaction scheme of sequential-movement games is maintained, while realizing constant player interaction as players answer each enemy action with an option of their own. The excitement level remains high throughout as the Allies seek to overcome a tenacious German defense made even more formidable by the rubble of the bombardment. Few wargames give as good a feel of the "Combined Arms" aspect of warfare as the player is forced to position his infantry, armor, artillery and heavy weapons in the correct proportion or pay a fearful price. The fall of the rubble and initial German casualties which precede each game guarantee that no two games will be the same. Unique night and smoke rules turn this slugfest into a surprising game of maneuver and counterattack worthy of the valor displayed by both sides. An extremely simple wargame to learn, it defies mastery in a rare elegant marriage of historical simulation and competitive game. Several two-turn introductory scenarios are provided for quick play variation and a fast introduction to the game system before tackling the main game. A six-turn end game scenario also provides a quick-play alternative to the entire battle.

THUNDER AT CASSINO is available now for \$22.00 from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214. Please add 10% shipping and handling to all orders (20% for Canadian orders; 30% for overseas orders). Maryland residents please add 5% state sales tax.



GREAT BRITAIN DECLARES WAR ON GERMANY.

SUMMARY REJECTION OF BRITISH ULTIMATUM. ALL EYES ON THE NORTH SEA INVASION OF BELGIUM.

The following announcement was issued at the Foreign Office at 12.15 a.m.—
"Owing to the summary rejection by the German Government of the request made by His Majesty's Government for assurances that the neutrality of Belgium would be respected,

HOME FLEETS.
SUPREME COMMAND.
SIR JOHN JELlicoe,
K.C.B.
**THE KING'S MESSAGE
TO THE FLEET.**

By the King,
I have the honor to inform you that the King has just received the French Government's declaration that the Germans have invaded Belgium in great force.



7.30 a.m. EDITION.
**FIRE AND SWORD
IN BELGIUM**
**GREAT GERMAN
ADVANCE.**
BATTLE NEAR LIEGE.
TOWNS ABLAZE.

From our Special Correspondent,
Liege, Tuesday, 7.30 a.m.—
The Germans have invaded Belgium in great force. They have captured Liege, and are advancing towards the Meuse valley, blowing up bridges.

**GERMANS
KILLED.**
From our Special Correspondent,
Maastricht (in Holland, near the Belgian frontier), Tuesday Evening.
(By telegraph to Amsterdam.)
The Belgian frontier town of Vlod, about eight miles from Maastricht, was taken by a body of German infantry and artillery this afternoon.
An engagement took place and lasted several hours.
The retreating Belgians blew up a bridge over the Meuse, but German engineers, covered by heavy artillery fire, built a new bridge and crossed the river. Vlod is practically destroyed.

positive would be transferred to Belgium.
A German airman has been killed—
Reuter.
GERMANS IN GREAT FORCE.

**ATTACK ALL ALONG THE
FRONTIER.**

From our Special Correspondent,
Paris, Tuesday.
Here has just reached the French Government that the Germans have invaded Belgium in great force. Numbers of men in armoured motor-cars and trains have entered the country near Vlod, holding the great fortress of Liege, which dominates the Meuse valley, blowing up bridges.

**WILL ENGLAND DELAY
KING ALBERT'S VISIT
TO THE FRONTIER?**

From our Special Correspondent,
Brussels, Tuesday.
King Albert was cheered to the echo today when he entered Parliament to address the united Chambers. His visit is being guarded by the

7.30 a.m. EDITION.
**30 GERMANS
DROWNED.**
TORPEDO BOAT SUNK.

From our Special Correspondent,
Copenhagen, Tuesday, 11.30 p.m.—
A German torpedo-boat today suddenly sank at the Ojstør Lightship, six miles from Ojstør, off the north Danish coast.

From the lightship it was observed that some sailors jumped overboard when the torpedo-boat sank, and a boat was dispatched for assistance. It picked up a few survivors and men were drowned. The boat was declared that the boiler on the torpedo-boat exploded.

From our Special Correspondent,
Paris, Monday Night.
German aeroplanes appeared today over the French frontier, and dropped three bombs, causing some damage but no loss of life.
Tuesday, 1.30 p.m.—
The Germans have razed the village of Malmedy, near Nancy. They have shot the village priest.
Paris, Tuesday.
A German airman is reported to be in

**THE NATION
CALLS FOR
LORD KITCHENER.**

**IS LORD HALDANE
DELAYING WAR
PREPARATIONS?**

**WHAT IS HE DOING AT
THE WAR OFFICE?**

What is the Lord Chancellor doing at the War Office? Lord Haldane is, as everybody knows, an excellent and admirable Lord Chancellor, a great lawyer, and an extremely stout and valiant soldier, but why is he occupying himself at this moment with affairs that have nothing to do with the War Office?
We had seen on Monday that Lord Kitchener, without doubt the greatest military commander, had been called to London when at the front and it had been said that it was "impossible" for him to leave the front. We should see the right man in the right place.
But the fact is that for the last two days it is not Lord Kitchener, nor even Mr. Asquith, the Secretary of State for War, who has been the presiding power

A STAB IN THE DARK

DIPLOMACY With Strangers

By Rex A. Martin

*If you take a flat map
And move wooden blocks upon it strategically,
the thing looks well, the blocks behave as they
should.
The Science of War is moving live men like
blocks
And getting the blocks into place at a fixed
moment.*
by Stephen Vincent Benet, *John Brown's Body*
(1928)

Back in early 1985, Larry Peery (editor at that time of *Xenocogic*, a 'zine devoted to PBM *DIPLOMACY*), with whom I had been corresponding for some time, invited me to "sit in" on one of the games that he regularly reported in the pages of his publication. In fact, he downright insisted. I had been writing about the *DIPLOMACY* hobby in the *GENERAL*, reporting on developments among that select group of fanatics. He felt, with some justification, that I should have more first-hand knowledge of that about which I spoke.

I have played, and thoroughly enjoyed, *DIPLOMACY* for years—since my dissolute days of college in Helena. It is and remains, I believe, the best multiplayer game for the devious and clever on the market; and I always fancied myself as one of those who would be successful playing it. I get along tolerably well with most people, and always felt that I could bend them to my will if I exerted enough pressure—moral, verbal, and physical. When I came to The Avalon Hill Game Company as editor of this magazine, I wanted to help promote the game. So Larry's invitation appealed to me.

But to play with people I didn't know? Ah, there was the question. Would they all be *DIPLOMACY* sharks? How much pressure and persuasion could I exert on folk that were hundreds (or thousands) of miles away? I hadn't played the game, despite my interest in it, for some years; and I had only played in a couple of casual PBM games before I went overseas in 1976 (and been thoroughly embarrassed in both). Would my name, and position at Avalon Hill, make me suspect in the eyes of the

other players? Would I be too tempting a target? Or would they feel inhibited in their play and their press if it was known that I was playing? Hard to say, but a number of letters between Mr. Peery and I crossed discussing these points.

The bottom line was, however, that it would be fun. Too, I could use it to formulate an article on playing by mail, giving readers who've never had the opportunity the chance to vicariously experience the horror and humiliation. With Larry's agreement, a pseudonym was arranged. When Larry lined up one of the best GameMasters (GM) in the hobby to adjudicate our game, Ken Hager was kind enough to also agree to this mild deception. Ken, in a lengthy letter which accompanied his house rules (setting out deadlines for orders, telephone usage, turns, "press", removal and replacement of players, and other necessary business), explained some of his philosophy of playing *DIPLOMACY* by mail. I think it bears repeating:

I've run scores of postal Dippy games. Some of them have been great ones. Some have been disasters. But each has been a unique experience for the players and for me. Unfortunately, to my mind, the hobby stresses perfection in its games. Players expect perfect performances from their GMs and GMs expect perfect performances from their players. It just doesn't happen that way. At best, house rules can deal with probable and likely problems that may arise in the game; beyond that they indulge in needless fantasy. Better than any house rule is a spirit of comradeship and goodwill among all involved in the game. If that spirit exists in the beginning and continues to surround the game, then I think you will enjoy your experience. To me, winning or losing a PBM Dippy game is not worth losing a friend—or a potential friend. I refuse to take the game that seriously. So relax, have fun. You'll make mistakes. So will I. But we can still have a good time.

So, I was ready to start. First, though, the game was registered by Ken with the folk who keep track of all the PBM *DIPLOMACY* games. The office of the "Boardman Number Custodian" was originally founded to record the players and results of postal games played to conclusion. To this end, each new game "start" is given an alpha-numeric code (this is done simply by the GM requesting one from the current custodian, a post that rotates through volunteers from within the ranks of the hobby) consist-

ing of the year in which the game begins, followed by a letter code. Our game, so Ken informed all of his players, was to be 1985HC (meaning it was the 81st begun in 1985).

At the same time, we got the word of which nations we would each be playing. My worst fears were confirmed; I was targeted to take on the role of Germany. Now, it is said that there are worst countries to play than Germany when facing experienced *DIPLOMACY* players. And, it is said, Germany can win. But I have always been uneasy when surrounded by potential enemies and have no board-edge to put my back against. My mettle would be sorely tested; it was a hell of a way to be reintroduced to the play-by-mail ranks.

Undaunted, I launched my first postal blitz, sending out two-page introductory letters to all the other players. I had decided on my strategy for this game, and was eager to put it into practice. I set out to play the game with three considerations in mind. First, I didn't want to be any more devious than I could help. I wanted to draft an article on this game, and I thought it might be interesting to see how an "honest man" fared in this desperate world of cut-throat diplomacy. Second, I wanted Germany to be one of the surviving powers so that I could write about the game from a first-hand viewpoint right through the final turn. (Where the first consideration clashed with the second, the second was to take precedence.) Finally, I wanted to see if I could, and for how long, play my threatening neighbors off against each other. To that end, I decided to make allies of two of them—Melinda Holley, an accomplished veteran of the PBM *DIPLOMACY* hobby (who was playing England), and Caleb Tower, who like me was a relative novice (and who was playing Russia).

In the following account of my successes and failures in 1985HC, I have divided the game into annual increments. The notation of each season's moves come from the regular reports we received from Mr. Hager. The specific unit notations that are used has been the standard method of reporting results in the hobby's many 'zines for some years.

Fleets are noted by the abbreviation of "F"; armies, by "A". The locations are represented by the first three letters of the province or sea occupied or being moved to, except where these may be ambiguous (for example: "Nor" can be construed to be Norway, Norwegian Sea, or North Sea); in the ambiguous cases, he used abbreviations which could be readily recognizable to the players (for example: "Nwy" for Norway, "Nth" for North Sea, and "Nwg" for Norwegian Sea). Where Ken underlined intended moves on his reports, I have printed the intended move in red.

The accompanying maps show positions at the conclusion of each Fall turn. The areas controlled by players (i.e., last to occupy) are shaded: grey for Germany, light blue for France, dark blue for England, green for Italy, magenta for Austria, yellow for Turkey, and tan for Russia. Sea areas have been shown as controlled only if a fleet is currently occupying them.

The "newspaper headlines" for each season come courtesy of Mr. Hager, who used these in his reports to highlight his view of the progress of the game. (Readers can find a more detailed overview of the game by Mr. Hager in the accompanying sidebar.) I have also taken the liberty of reproducing some of the "press"—comments by players for public consumption—from his missives. And, I have quoted and excerpted bits and pieces of some of the many letters I received in the course of this game. For any embarrassment that this may cause my fellow players, who did not realize that I was planning this article, I apologize.

Holdings at the end of Fall 1901

1901

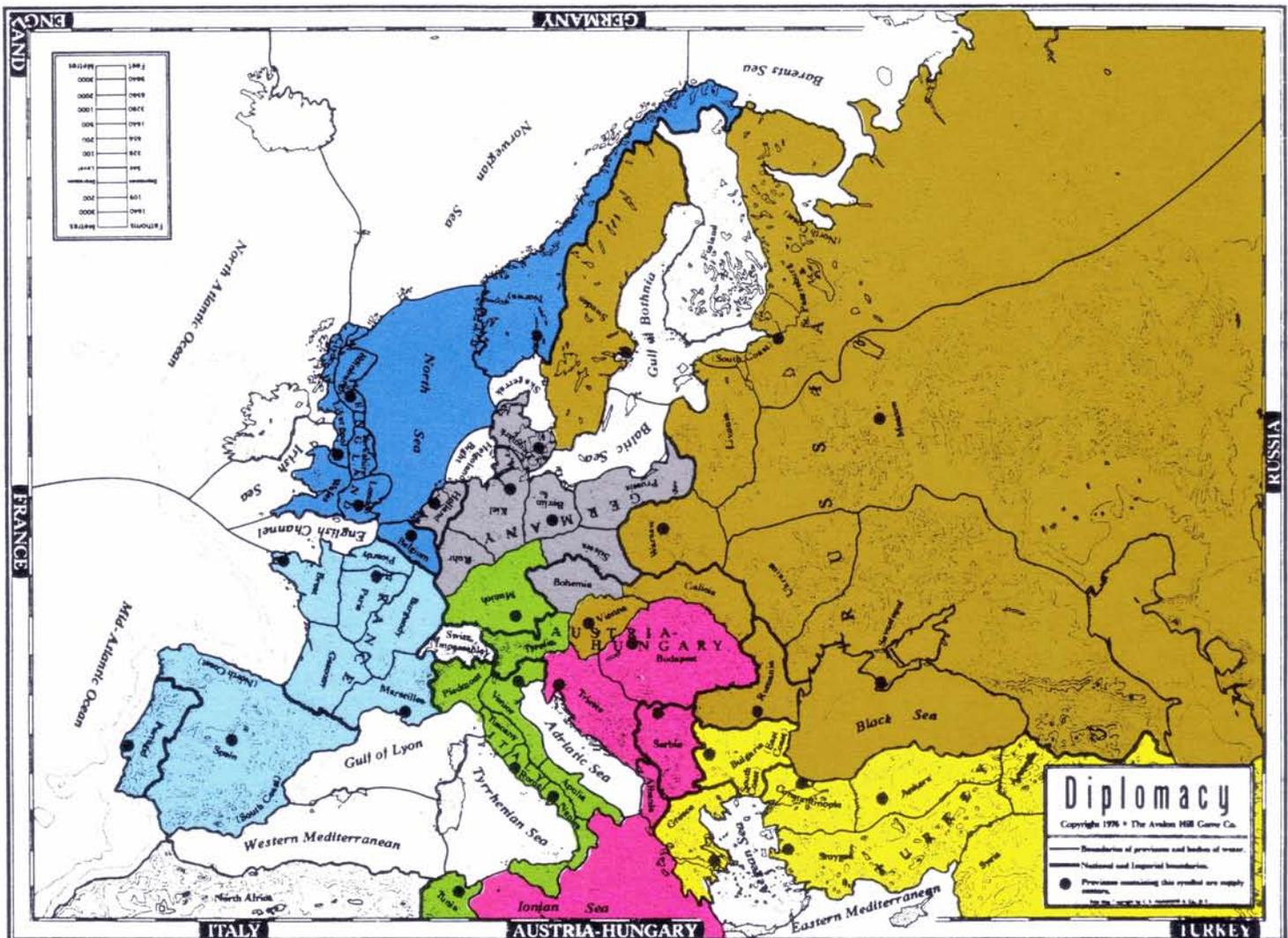
Having decided on my course of action, I wanted to forge a triple alliance between Germany, England and Russia. I figured that, in this manner, I could get them to help me against France and Austria—two other neighbors, ones who had not responded promptly to my opening letters. I was quite willing, given that I was not playing to win this game but to simply survive it, to accede to whatever Melinda and Caleb might want. I wanted to have five or six units on the board for the course of the game. Then Germany would have enough power that she could not be dismissed as insignificant and the others would negotiate with me, but not so large as to be perceived as a threat to win the game (which does terrible things to one's credibility when negotiating). So my plans were modest and I would support my allies to the maximum so long as they kept faith with me.

If you are going to enter into an agreement with someone in postal *DIPLOMACY*, offensive or defensive as may be, you must supply some detailed plans as a basis for negotiation. So I wrote a lengthy letter to Russia and England outlining my plans for the first two moves, my suggestions for their moves that could coordinate, and even sent along a map depicting what I hoped we could accomplish. The first year is usually just a matter of each player grabbing the nearest unclaimed supply centers, but I wanted more. I suggested to the Russian that we both cross the Austrian border, and then try to seize one or more Austrian dots. For England, she would surely take Norway; but I also wanted her to put an army ashore in Belgium. This would serve as

a shield for me, and might even be able to cooperate in an offensive into France.

But first I must assuage any suspicions that the other players might have. And, at the same time spread a bit of disinformation. In *DIPLOMACY*, you can never be sure that what you say (or in this case, write) is not being spread to those who you have not confided in. Whether they are then believed is, of course, another matter. That depends on how they are themselves viewed by their fellow players. This does mean that a player with the aura of honesty can convince others to believe the most outrageous lies. In postal play, since you can't signal honesty with body-language (the smiles, back-slaps, handshakes, and other physical patina of sincerity in our culture), you must do it with words on paper. This is harder than you might imagine.

I've always felt that the best course was to tell as much of the truth as you could, and lie only when necessary. To Italy, I wrote informing him of plans that England and I had regarding France and inviting him to join us. In a second letter, dated just five days before the deadline for our orders to be in to the GM, I told him of my move into Bohemia. I encouraged him to join in either assault. I didn't want to move into Tyrolia (as Caleb had proposed) since I had no wish to appear threatening to the Italian as I hoped that we could later work together. To France I wrote that I had no firm alliances (and what alliance in *DIPLOMACY* is "firm") as yet, and informed him of the impending attack on Austria. And to the Austrian player, Jim Ferguson, I wrote telling of the joint Anglo-German designs on France. So I lied to none of them, except by omission. Even if they communicated with each



other, the French and Austrians would hopefully merely believe that I was misleading the other.

My correspondence with the Russian and English players was quite a bit more involved as we worked out our plans. I had hoped that we could equitably divide Scandinavia—Sweden to Russia, Norway to England, and Denmark to Germany. Both Melinda and I wanted the area vacated; this would insure that none could stab another, and at the same time free for us three units that could be put to use elsewhere. Alas, my hopes for a *signed* treaty for this never saw culmination as Caleb drug his heels. As a result, I feared that the north could erupt in war and Germany would inevitably be immersed in it. This would split the "Northern Bloc" apart and leave us ripe for any other strong power. I also wanted a joint public announcement that if any one of the three were attacked by another power, the others would offer all support possible; but this hope for a united front also came to naught.

But that's getting ahead in my story. I wrote to England offering my views on the benefits of an Anglo-Russo-German alliance—my dreamed-of Northern Bloc. And I detailed my views on plans for the two of us to jointly first contain, and then assault France. To prove my sincerity, I passed along all the information and suppositions I'd gleaned in my dealings with the others thus far. Great minds surely do run in the same channels, for my letter crossed in the mail with Melinda's first to me proposing a game-long alliance and her plans for challenging France (being played by Bill Schiwautz; I've since learned he's one of the top-ranked players in southern California). Basically, she wanted to get an army ashore on the continent as soon as possible. Needless-to-say, I leapt at the chance to align myself with one of DIPdom's most accomplished players. What power on the mapboard could stand up to such an English-German combine—especially as I was willing to grant her almost anything to maintain it.

Several more letters passed between us, finalizing plans and exchanging views and news of the plots of our fellow players. Realizing that any landing of an English army in Belgium with the German support would signal our intentions to an accomplished player, we were especially eager to hear from others who might be in contact with France (he'd be more likely to voice any suspicions as to our intentions to non-neighbors). And, of course, anyone hatching plots against one of us would likely try to enlist the aid of the other. Melinda, for example, passed on news of her correspondence with the Italian (Herb Barents, another with an impressive amount of experience in the PBM *DIPLOMACY* fraternity), who was toying with the potential of an English-Italian war with France or Germany. And I passed to her news of the Russian.

My correspondence with Caleb was, from the beginning, marked by confusion and tinged with mistrust. However, he was certainly interested in a joint attack on Austria, noticeably so since I promised to support him into Vienna. In point of fact, his eagerness should have triggered some suspicion on my part; he was just too damn greedy. But I blithely believed I could direct his greed to serve my own purposes.

Over the course of a number of exchanges (six in fact), Russia and Germany hammered out plans for invading Austria. We decided to dispense with any attempt at concealment or misinformation about our plans regarding Austria. (In fact, after my initial two letters to him, I never had contact with Jim Ferguson again; my public apologies to him are offered for that mistake.)

Caleb had been in contact with the Turk as well, but urged that I not write him. To quote the Russian:

I am worried that destabilizing A-H will create an infield horde of Turks. I have contacted Mr. Diehl, with success in terms of friendly relations. I think if he knows that you are in this he may get too greedy. I will see to him personally.

I don't believe knowledge of our alliance will help, and might risk our plans as Jim has a big mouth.

I—trusting fool that I am—agreed. As later events would prove, this too was a mistake.

But the aftermath of all this highlights the most important rule of thumb I discovered to play postal *DIPLOMACY* I have to offer novices reading this article. *Stay in contact with everyone in the game, enemies and distant powers as well as allies, every season.* Keep the lines of communication open. Most experienced players will respond if you write to them, even if they realize you are lying through your teeth. From those responses, you may be able to divine what is happening around you. I've found, if this 1985HC game is any barometer, that if three other players tell you the same thing, it is likely true. And from that you can best make your plans and judge the results.

A fair amount of my scribbles to Caleb was devoted to trying to forge and maintain the Northern Bloc. My biggest hurdle appeared to be Russia's willingness to grab any opportunity at self-aggrandizement, mixed with a healthy dose of paranoia. In an early letter to him I laid out the dangers in our proposed triple alliance:

First, and only really, is if we fail to treat with each other honorably and openly. Worst case is for conflict to arise at the junctions of our empires—in Scandinavia, in Belgium/Holland, or in Prussia/Warsaw. Basically, what I'd suggest is that all friction be discussed and settled by majority. If one of us is feeling slighted, let's get it out and decide how to settle things fairly for the Northern Bloc. For instance, if we decide to, we can either demilitarize Scandinavia or freeze occupying forces, leaving each of us with one unit in the region as the rest push south . . .

But Caleb's views were substantially different, for he responded:

As for Scandinavia, the division is on the surface equitable, but let's be serious. I must divert an army to St. Petersburg to defend the Arctic crossing. Your armies will each be 20% deployed in the north where I must deploy 33%. Also, you each stand to grow 60% in Year '01 where I will grow by only 50%. I see these as legitimate problems. What can you offer me in terms of position or future gains? I suggest that Norway should eventually be a Russian possession. What other help can you give me!?!

To cut this short, Russia eventually agreed to a Northern Bloc. But I had to doubt his sincerity. (After all, if we had all pulled out of Scandinavia, what could have seized St. Petersburg without tipping him off first?) And he adamantly refused to sign any sort of formal pact, which I wanted for diplomatic leverage and to which Melinda was willing to agree. But I hoped by my actions to woo his wholehearted support and turn him from his dark side. So, with high hopes, I sent in my orders to Ken.

Spring

AT LONG LAST, EUROPE FINALLY ERUPTS INTO WAR . . .

AUSTRIA HAS EARLY DIPLOMATIC CHALLENGE . . .

Austria: A Bud to Ser; A Vie to Bud; F Tri to Alb
England: A Liv to Edi; F Edi to Nwg; F Lon to Nth
France: A Par to Bur; A Mar to Spa; F Bre to Mid
Germany: F Kie to Hol; A Ber to Kie; A Mun to Boh

Italy: A Ven to Trl; A Rom to Ven; F Nap to Ion
Russia: F St.P to Bot; F Sev to Bla; A Mos to Ukr;
A War to Gal

Turkey: A Con to Bul; F Ank to Con; A Smy support F Ank-Con

The spring moves had gone much as expected, with no serious clashes. My units were in the positions to carry out plans for helping the British and Russians and for grabbing Denmark for myself. The only fly in the ointment, and that a small one, was Italy's unheralded move in the Tyrol.

My correspondence with Melinda and Caleb this season was most cordial. While we didn't yet have the signed bit of paper I wanted, we did all seem

to be in accord. The content of our letters to each other were limited to finalizing details of support so that no unpleasant mistakes occurred. Too, the Italian move was the subject of their initial letters; both felt that it was unlikely that Herb Barents would attack Munich—and as Caleb pointed out, if he did it could be easily dealt with. However, I'd had a letter from the Austrian (which I didn't answer) informing that he had it on the best of authority that Italy was going to attack me. I felt like querying Herb on his plans myself, especially as he now knew of Russo-German plans regarding Austria.

So, off went the following letter:

Dear Herb:

Needless-to-say, I was most distressed to hear of your move into the Tyrol. Looks most peculiar you must admit. If you were going to join in the assault on Austria, you should have communicated that fact to me earlier so that we could have calculated a way to get your army into Vienna or Trieste without friction. As 'tis, you have effectively stymied my advance; my army in Bohemia must now support the move of the army from Kiel—meaning only one build for me and weakening any plans I have with regard to France or balancing the English growth in the region. Please advise as to your plans here, or am I to assume that you are a hostile power?

What makes the whole situation unlikely is that, in the event of a stand-off, you've virtually forced a German army to be in Munich. Worse, I fear developments with regard to Turkey in your region. With Russia, Austria, you and I tied up in such a knot, it leaves the Turk free to pick up most of the Balkans and advance any fleets out into the Med—surely a matter of concern to you three.

So, it seems that you've three options—an attack on Munich, a move on Vienna or Trieste, or else you are supporting the Austrian in his defense. If the first, it is likely to fail or be of short duration. An unsupported move into Vienna might succeed—depending on what everyone else is doing. (If I can have some assurance of your move, I am willing to support you therein—but Trieste would be better for you I'd think.) Too, it seems that the Russian has had the same idea as we—a move into Austria. Are you allied with the Russian; and if so who will get Vienna? It may well be that we three could cooperate and take him down in a hurry, then take on the Turk along a broad front. (A triple alliance might be of great use to us here; thoughts?) If you are supporting the Austrian, I am disappointed since it seems to provide you with no chance to grow and face either the English or Turkish advances in the mid-game.

So, in essence, your letters (latest dated 29 Jan) and your actions seem at variance with each other. You are certainly encouraging me to doubt your intentions in future dealings—a bad precedent if we are ever to cooperate against the French, Turk or Russian.

Finally, I note your concern with the plans of the English following the fall of France. To tell the truth, we haven't discussed it much, but—assuming our cooperative effort has worked well—I planned to encourage a joint attack on Russia to advance our borders in the north . . . But that's likely five years off.

I thought my letter rather well done. It tactfully (I felt) asked the tough questions I was concerned with, and it offered immediate cooperation. I wasn't ready for the reply that was fired back:

Thank you for the letters of the 13th. I must admit that it showed your real colors. Why are you so paranoid? Well maybe it is your coldness. Anyway you go on about what a terrible move I made to Tyr, never once did we discuss whether that would be off limits, on and on you go. Well what about your move to Boh that ticked me off, what do we need four people moving on Austria for? What are your plans for France, they half baked? Before you start casting stones lets look at where you come from, in this case it is a glass house.

Now with that out of the way, do you want that we should try and work together or should we go at each others throat? That is up to you. I'm very willing to work with you, but I will not tolerate another letter like the last one you sent me. I have no need to ally with an unfriendly, hard SOB when there are a lot friendlier people out there.

It was obvious from the grammar and typing that he was angry. What was much worse was that he apparently read a lot into it that I didn't intend. I wasn't questioning the wisdom of his move into the Tyrol (I've done the same as the Italian before, aimed at making Trieste mine). What I did want to do was cooperate to avoid any unpleasantness. But now he had irritated me with his insults. So I wrote back immediately. I first tried to defuse some his sensible arguments (such as they were) and detail some plans that we might undertake together. In essence, I explained why I had some concern about his move—especially since at this time I'd had no

communication with the French player. I then went into my hopes and plans in some detail, and made again a pitch for us to work together against Austria and/or France, to be later followed by operations against one of the remaining three. Finally, I took him to task for the tone of his letter . . .

Finally, I am somewhat disheartened by your response—heavens, talk about overreacting (Tsk, such language—"SOB" indeed—at least my "paranoia" was couched in polite terms). At the very least we can try to be civil about this misunderstanding. My letter, should you care to re-read it with less passion, was simply inquiring about your stance and expressing my distress. I insulted neither yourself nor your mother. If you can find a "friendlier" combatant who tolerates such, by all means ally with him—and let me know who it is so I may steer clear. I've spent some ten years, thus far, teaching my children to show manners, even when things are not going their way. I expect no less from the folk with whom I associate; if a ten-year-old can curb their tongue in public and be polite, anyone can. A game, no matter if face-to-face or by mail, is no place for gutter insults. And especially a game such as *DIPLOMACY*; express your displeasure of course, but not with insults on my lineage . . .

Herb's reply dashed any last flickering hopes I had in being able to work with him:

Well your letter did not get here until the move came, and it is plain to see what I thought of that letter. Your last one wasn't much better, something tells me that you and I would not be able to get along. I wish you the best, but this should be a fight to the finish, as I doubt very much if we would be able to trust each other after what we have done.

This exchange leads to my second rule for playing well—*Be careful with the tone of your letters.* You may whine or wheedle, threaten or cajol, but there is absolutely no need to be insulting in the game. A "sensible", mild approach to negotiating has always stood me in good stead in my face-to-

face games. One of the fascinating things about playing *DIPLOMACY* by mail is the broad spectrum of folk you will meet as players; a good diplomat learns to be insightful in judging personality. Carefully choosing my words to avoid treading too heavily on others' sometimes tender toes is my "sensible" manner. There is no good reason to purposely irritate or insult your opponent (this ranks up there with "bad losers" in my book of gaming gripes). I was not to exchange another word with the Italian for the course of the game—nor since for that matter. The fall-out from his response to my first letter would severely derail German plans against France, and would ultimately contribute to the demise of Italy in 1985HC. The first unfair, and the second only fitting I felt.

Fall

WAR CONTINUES UNABATED DESPITE ATTEMPTS TO SABOTAGE COMMUNICATIONS . . .

RUSSIA SEEMS TO BE LEADING BASED ON EARLY REPORTS . . .

- Austria: A Bud to Tri; A Ser support A Bud-Tri; F Alb to Ion
- England: A Edi to Bel; F Nth convoy A Edi-Bel; F Nwg to Nwy
- France: A Spa holds; F Mid to Por; A Bur support It. A Trl-Mun
- Germany: F Hol support Eng. A Edi; A Kie to Den; A Boh support Russ. A Gal
- Italy: A Trl to Mun; **A Ven to Tri**; F Ion to Tun
- Russia: F Bot to Swe; A Ukr to Rum; F Bla support A Ukr-Rum; A Gal to Vie

Turkey: A Smy to Arm; F Con to Bul (ec); A Bul to Gre

Winter

- Austria: no builds
- England: builds F Liverpool and F London
- France: builds F Brest and A Paris
- Germany: builds A Berlin
- Italy: builds F Naples and A Rome
- Russia: builds A Warsaw, A St. Petersburg and F Sevastopol
- Turkey: builds F Constantinople and F Ankara

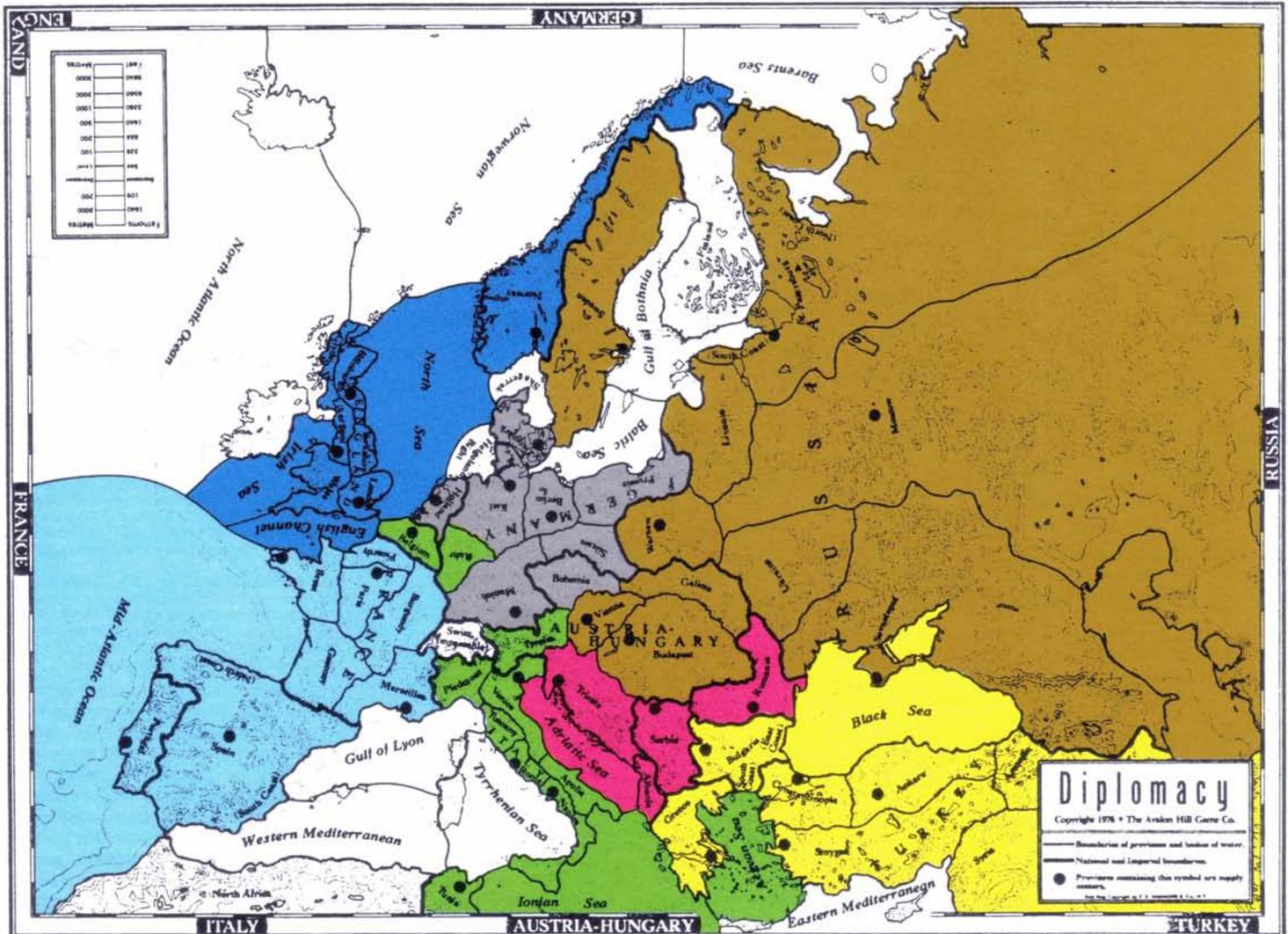
1902

So, now I knew which way the ill wind was blowing (from the south it seemed). Italy, with French connivence, had taken Munich behind my back. My beautiful Bavaria was being plundered by these ham-handed southerners. I took one last verbal shot at Herb in the "Press" (the writings by players for public consumption allowed by the GM with each game report); I hoped in some small way it might hurt his credibility among the others—the only use for "Press" that I've found. Ken dutifully passed it on:

Germany to Italy—Berlin, Spring 1902:

Unlike the Mediterranean, the North is a sparsely inhabited country. The fewer the people, the greater the honesty; and honesty is never wrong, for honesty knows how to look after its own. But in the warm south, there are too many people, none of them Northerners, so the temptation to dishonesty is always great and sometimes, as is so often true elsewhere, justified loudly. So one must be judicious when dealing with Southerners. The Kaiser is saddened that

Holdings at the end of Fall 1902



we were injudicious in placing trust in the Italian government, even though aware of this old adage. It will not happen again.

In keeping with my game plan, I vowed to regain Munich. The only support this Italian army had came from the French. Lo and behold, my prayers were answered, and after a deathly silence I finally heard from Bill Schiwautz.

In a short note, he informed me that his letters to me had been returned by the vaunted U.S. Postal Service (hence the reference in Ken's Fall 1901 "headlines" to sabotaged communications). And he voiced concern about the British army ashore in Belgium; a British fleet is less flexible, since it can't threaten Paris. He apologized for his support of the Italian. He offered to end it if I would not support England's positions. In a follow-up letter, he dangled the possibility of our working together—or at least a look at untangling ourselves.

I responded, in part:

So—can we possibly mend some fences? Possible but difficult. First, I note your suggestion that we begin this effort at rapprochement by withdrawing support from our respective "partners". I can certainly agree to that, having no great love for any expansion of England—at least not to the extent of being involved in a war for her benefit. And, of course, my prime goal at the moment is the permanent removal of the Italian raider—followed by a rapid return to my efforts in the East. So, in reciprocity, I'd like you to end support of his forces—at least north of Switzerland. If this course is agreeable to you, we can either announce it to all concerned publically in a joint statement or simply make it a private codicil.

I was rewarded with the French promise that he would no longer support the Italian. So all I had to do now was bump that army out, and cover Kiel so that he couldn't retreat there. Things were definitely looking up if Bill did as he said.

Melinda suggested that I cover Kiel by bouncing my Holland fleet and my Denmark army off each other. Caleb offered to keep any Italian units from entering Tyrolia to support his northern enclave. I politely thanked the Russian bear, and ignored the English oracle. I didn't trust the Russian, and I wanted to occupy Kiel if I was to get anything mounted against France. As things fell out, I should have listened to them both. This taught me that one should *consider carefully your allies' advice on tactical matters, and never play a turn with inflexible, preconceived plans.*

Spring

HOSTILITIES RESUME AFTER BRIEF
TIMEOUT . . .

ESCALATION RAMPANT AS WAR ENTERS
SECOND YEAR . . .

TREMENDOUS NAVAL STRUGGLE IN
BLACK SEA . . .

Austria: A Ser to Rum; **A Tri to Bud**; F Ion to Adr
England: A Bel holds; F Liv to Iri; F Lon to Eng;
F Nth supports F Lon-Eng; F Nwy holds

France: A Bur holds; A Spa to Gas; A Par to Pic;
F Bre supports A Par-Pic; F Por to Mid

Germany: A Den to Kie; F Hol support A Den-Kie;
A Boh to Mun; A Ber support A Boh-Mun

Italy: A Mun supports A Ven-Trl; A Rom to Ven;
A Ven to Trl; F Nap to Ion; F Tun support F
Nap-Ion

Russia: A St.P to Mos; **F Swe to Nwy**; A War to
Gal; A Vie support A Rum-Bud; A Rum to Bud;
F Bla to Arm; F Sev support F Bla-Arm

Turkey: A Gre support F Bul; F Bul support Aust.
A Ser-Rum; F Con to Bla; F Ank support F Con-
Bla; **A Arm to Sev**

Retreats: Italian A Mun to Ruh; Turkish A Arm to
Syr

So far, so good. The French army in Burgandy sat tight, and the Italian was out of Munich. Little was I to know the can of worms that this straight-forward play was to open, for the Russian was more than a bit irritated with me now.

To understand why, a word or two about the workings of postal *DIPLOMACY* is in order. When reports are received from the GM, a deadline for the next set of orders is announced therein. In addition to the orders for the next season, a listing of any retreats often must be sent (this in hopes of speeding play). Unless a player has requested a "Separation of Seasons", what this effectively means is that you may not know exactly where (unless they have only a single choice—or none) retreated enemy units may be.

In this case, the Italian displaced by me from Munich had a choice of two places to retreat to: the Ruhr or Silesia. Caleb had urged that I first block the Tyrol in the spring by ordering my army in Bohemia there (this would bounce any Italian move into that key province and leave me still in position to take Munich regardless of outcome), and then take Munich in the autumn. I made the mistake of replying I was thinking of just that; he took it as gospel that I would recapture Munich in the fall turn. (Be careful novices; never read anything into an ally's letter that isn't there.) This, in turn, meant that Herb's army in the north would not be threatening any centers before the end of the year.

But, for a number of reasons, I wanted to knock the Italian out of Munich quickly. Indeed, I myself was interested in where he might retreat to, as it would serve as some indication of his future plans. An Italian retreat to the Ruhr certainly showed that Italy and France were still cooperating (or, at least, that Herb believed they were). On the other hand, a retreat to Silesia would signal he was maneuvering against Russia, likely in cahoots with Turkey, with or without Austria as well. If Herb disbanded the unit ("retreat off the board"), I would figure he was trying to mend some bridges and I would reopen correspondence with him.

So, for both Russia and Germany, Italy's retreat from Munich was of some importance. One, or both of us, should have requested a "Separation of Seasons" (meaning we would have known where this unit was *before* sending in our orders). Which brings to the fore my next rule of thumb for novice players: *Never hesitate to make use of your GM.* He can answer your questions on specific rules, control the pace of the game (if you want a separation of seasons, or simply feel that his deadlines are too tight to allow you to negotiate effectively), disseminate information for you (address changes and such); I've even had them contact me by phone if my moves have not been received. I suspect, however, that many new players are unsure of their status, and avoid invoking such options so as to keep the GM's work load down or to avoid annoying the other players by delaying the game. Remember, the GM is there to maximize enjoyment of *your* game and most are very willing to accede to any reasonable request. He should never be intrusive, but should always be there if you need his help in playing your best game. Ken Hager, for me, epitomizes the best of GameMasters—answering all my stupid questions, and helping to guide me on my rusty way through the labyrinth of a postal game.

Turning back to Fall 1902, I was—since unsure where the Italian army had retreated (and his relations with France) and in keeping with my "strategy" to simply survive to the end—determined that Munich remain mine. So, since I may have had three potentially hostile units around (Tyrolia, Burgandy, and that displaced Italian army), Berlin and Kiel simply supported Munich. On Melinda's request, I also supported her unit in Belgium; I never suspected what the devious Frenchman had up his short sleeve.

Fall

ITALIANS VACATIONING ALONG

NORTH SEA . . .

SERBIA SURVIVES VICIOUS ONSLAUGHT . . .

Austria: **A Rum to Sev**; A Tri support Turk. A Gre-Ser; F Adr support A Tri

England: A Bel support Ger. Kie-Ruh; **F Eng to Mid**; F Iri support F Eng-Mid; **F Nth to Eng**; F Nwy holds

France: A Bur support It. A Ruh-Bel; A Gas support A Bur; A Pic support It. A Ruh-Bel; F Bre support F Mid-Eng; F Mid to Eng

Germany: A Mun holds; A Ber support A Mun; A Kie supports A Mun; F Hol supports Eng. F Bel

Italy: A Ruh to Bel; A Ven to Tri; A Trl support A Ven-Trl; F Tun to Ion; F Ion to Aeg

Russia: A Mos support F Arm-Sev; **F Swe to Nwy**; A Gal support F Sev to Rum; A Vie support It.

A Trl-Trl; **A Bud to Ser**; **F Sev to Rum**; **F Arm to Sev**

Turkey: **A Gre to Ser**; F Bul support F Bla; F Bla support Aust. A Rum-Sev; A Syr to Arm; F Ank support A Syr-Arm

Retreats: Disband English A Bel; disband Russian F Arm

Winter

Austria: no builds

England: no builds

France: no builds

Germany: no open centers, plays one short

Italy: no builds

Russia: builds A Warsaw

Turkey: no builds

1903

France was still, seemingly, allied with Italy. Italy was still being a pain in the proverbial rump. Worse, I felt partially responsible that Melinda had lost Belgium—and she the only player that had been consistently honest with me thus far. Russia was an enigma. In the south, Austria and Turkey had obviously forged an alliance to bedevil Russia or Italy or both, and I would applaud from a distance. I decided it was time to engineer some changes in my policies; obviously, some of the other players felt the same urge. So opened the most active period of correspondence for me in this game since the pre-game stage.

First to be heard from was Caleb. He wrote:

I have some interesting topics to discuss with you. They revolve mostly around Italy. Italy is helping me and I appreciate that help. You are protecting me in the West and I appreciate that. Unfortunately, you two are not exactly on friendly terms. So what do I do? First, I will help neither of you in another trans-Alpine attack. For now I need Italy strong and focused on helping me against the Turk. To this end I am going to support Tyrolia to Trieste again this turn. I hope you will not be moving to Tyrolia; this will cause large problems and yield few rewards for you. Consequently, I am asking you to leave Tyrolia be.

All well and good. I felt that these two freebooters were made for each other, and had had no intention of entering Tyrolia until the status of Belgium had been resolved anyway. If that earned "brownie points" for me from the Russian, all the better. But then came another missive, dated a couple of days later:

I have been reviewing things a bit after my last mailing. It occurred to me that now that Italy is in the Aegean, I can afford to screw him a little. You see, it seems the Turk may be more friendly to me in the future. If this happens fast, I would want to be in position to jump on Italy as he is extremely exposed right now (or will be soon). What am I saying to you? Well, if the Turk sounds the general retreat, so that my position in the East stabilizes, I would welcome a German army in Tyrolia this spring. I know I wrote you and asked you to be friendly with Italy, but that does not mean you can't deceive us and take Tyrolia! In the fall, you might cut Italian support for Trieste while I take it . . .

This was a fine mess. The vacillating Russian had by now totally confused me. First I checked the signatures and postmarks to make sure neither was a forgery (a wise precaution when dealing with such a *volte-face*). Coupled with his annoyance attacks on English-occupied Norway, I now felt I could no longer trust Caleb whatsoever. The ramifications

of what he was proposing were terrifying. In moving into Tyrolia, I would be opening another front while the French were still slaving at my western border. I would be abrogating some of my responsibility to the English. So far as I could project, Caleb would gain the lion's share of any spoils, with poor Germany getting perhaps the crumb of Venice for my troubles, an area I could hardly defend against any serious attack. And this move would surely be interpreted as meaning that Russia and I had a firm alliance, a misconception I was by no means eager to foster any longer.

So long as Caleb kept his Cossacks off my borders, I would make my way in the West. Together, Melinda and I could hold off the world. To the Russian, I proposed a "neutral zone", encompassing the Baltic Sea, Prussia, Silesia, Bohemia and Tyrolia; if neither of us occupied any of these provinces, we could hardly clash. Caleb, reluctantly, agreed. I turned my attentions to the French.

But one last exchange with Caleb this season would color all my future dealings with the Frenchman. Seems that Caleb had been writing quite a few letters, proposing various plots and subplots and wars to all sorts of folk; some players enjoy investigating every possibility of the current mapboard situation and weaving all sorts of schemes based upon those. This sort of player tends to make me nervous, as I feel that they are much to "flighty" to make trustworthy allies. But I can usually discount their verbal vaporings, and look on most of their musing as essentially harmless (since rarely does anything come of it). However, as with everything in *DIPLOMACY*, some calculating master

players can make political hay even out of this chaff. Caleb wrote:

Recently I received a copy of one of my letters that I sent France. It was sent to me by another player. Needless-to-say I was upset that my confidence was broken. Clearly I cannot depend on France to come to my aid if England attacks. I hope you, England and Italy get together and irradiate [sic] that xeroxing scum. I could then concentrate on my southern empire. I don't know if you got that letter in your mail, but I imagine you did. If not you can guess that it contained all sorts of thoughts on my allying with France and attacking you. You know that I like to bat ideas around a lot. You should also realize I would never trust someone who copies my letters . . . I must confess though I like to bullshit a lot, but that is part of diplomacy. Don't you agree?

Actually, I didn't. But I had indeed received a photocopy of the infamous Russian note from Bill detailing Caleb's hopes for a joint French-Russian attack on Germany. Reading over it, I recognized it for the fluff and disinformation that it was. But this affair did make me leery of dealing with either to any great extent. I was already disenchanted with the Russian; now I recognized that France would likely betray any confidence if he felt he could use the revelation to his advantage. In all my writings to Bill ever after, I wrote with the realization that the letters might be made public, and so avoided any potentially embarrassing comments or meanderings. This was something of a constraint, and meant that we could never cooperate fully. A real shame—for it closed off still another of my options.

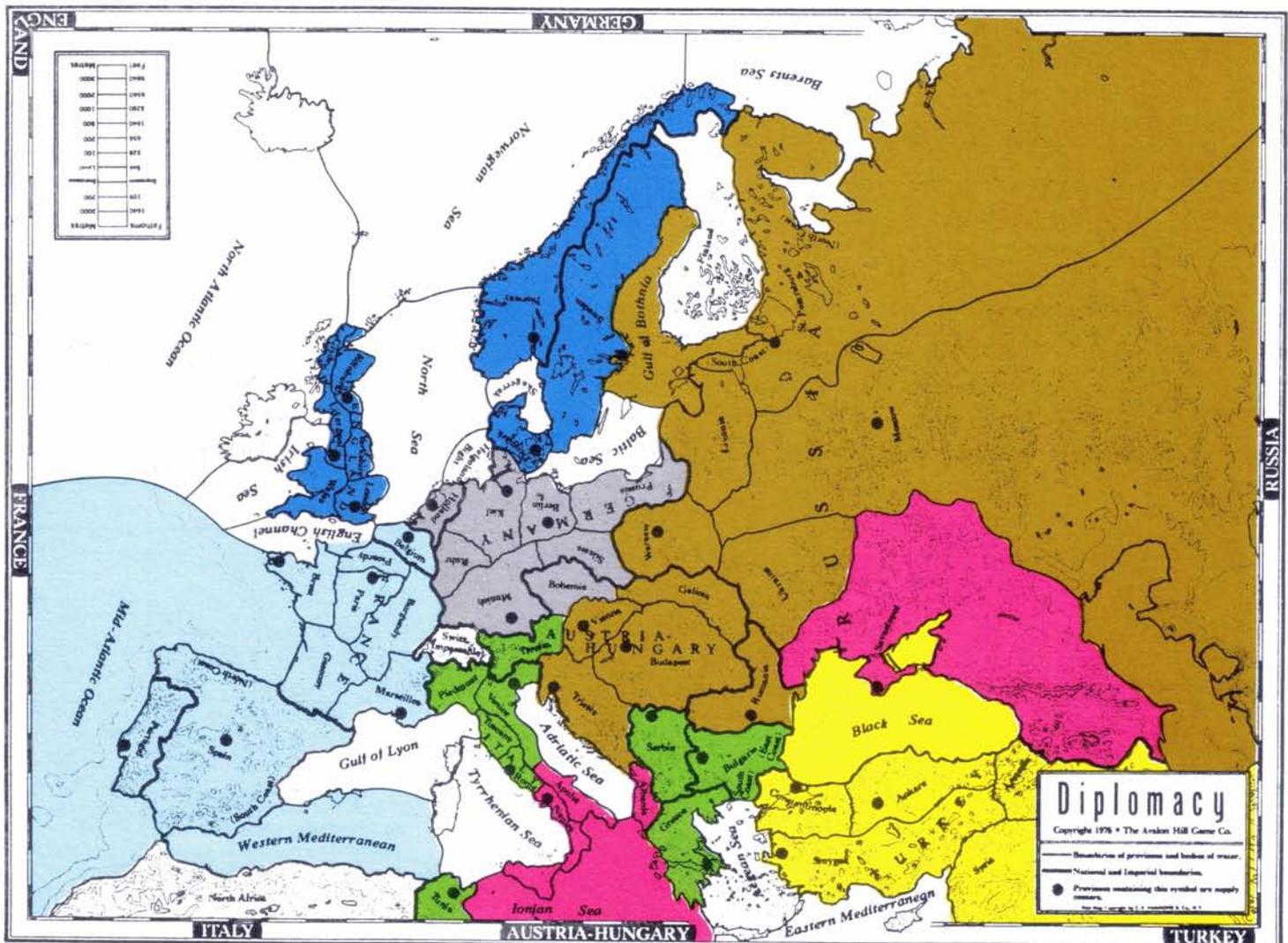
While not specifically disallowed by any rules of the game, official or house or other, photocopying your incoming correspondence and disseminating it is certainly looked upon by most veteran players

as something that is "just not done in polite circles." Once known to be a common practice of yours, you may find yourself ostracized from serious diplomacy by your opponents. In more than one by-mail game the players banded together to eliminate someone suspected of this moral transgression. While it is perfectly acceptable to "tell" others of what a third party may be saying or planning, there always exists that shred of doubt as to the truth of your claims and your ulterior motives for informing the victim; with a photocopy of a letter from the guilty party, there is no doubt as to your veracity. Now, it may seem unlikely to talk of ethics when discussing play of a game devoted to intrigue and falsehood, but there is an unwritten code of conduct. My suggestion to newcomers: avoid using this tactic, and if you do engage in photocopying don't get caught out (although this is almost impossible).

France had opened his correspondence with me with this photocopy revelation. By dispatching it to me, I suspected that Bill might be trying to open negotiations leading to an alliance of some sort; after all, he had just "proved" how friendly he was towards Germany. His accompanying letter stressed that he did not trust the Russian, and felt that so long as Germany and France battered away at each other, we were both "sitting ducks". I responded with polite thanks for the warning, and then made my pitch for a new alliance:

The biggest problem with our current situation is twofold—getting Melinda to pull back and attack Russia, and getting our forces into position to assault the Italian. My own forces will, as usual, be in the gap and under attack from both of them. But all of this can be done, and we'd best do

Holdings at the end of Fall 1903



it now so we can at least coordinate somewhat with the Austrian and Turk. However, before we can contemplate any of this, the Italian must be removed from between us and Melinda is going to want her center back so she is up to five. I've proposed a swap between Germany and England—Belgium for Denmark. It takes Melinda off your border, and gives her back a supply center, and puts her into a position to open an offensive in the north. If you'd care to look at the map, it shows a tentative two-year plan for a Franco-German-British alliance.

Offer, and counter-offer. I wanted England included in any alliance. I thought that a Western "triple" such as I had proposed had some immense advantages, especially as it appeared that Russia was on the verge of greatness. But Bill had his doubts as to the wisdom of including "perfidious Albion":

Of course it is hard for me to trust England with her fleets situated as they are. Is there some way to convince her to pull back? Is there some way I can convince you to move on Russia? Belgium is neutral for all practical purposes. While the Italians will want me to continue the offensive, you will note they didn't surround Munich; they will only offer enough help to ensure a long drawn-out conflict and will then come in if it appears one of us is getting the upper hand. I've proposed the same premise to England and I hope she will concur.

I left the task of convincing Melinda of the wisdom of all of this to Bill. In point of fact, I felt that once both England and Germany were back up to strength, we could launch an attack on Russia that would net us each further gains. And so, I could readily agree to any treaty with France that would see him drive south into the Mediterranean. I was cautiously optimistic that such an arrangement could be reached, given his overtures. As an act of good faith to cement this accord, I asked for his support into Belgium. Little was I to know that he coveted that center for himself, and had outmaneuvered me in negotiations with England.

My correspondence with Melinda was cordial. We wrote of personal matters, and our game plans were agreed to with a minimum of fuss. I made my pitch to her that, for her support in my capturing Belgium, I would allow her to seize Denmark. With her fleets in the North Sea and English Channel supporting mine from Holland, and if France held to his promise of non-support for the Italians, Belgium would fall to Germany. In the fall, Denmark would be hers. Even if France did support the Italian, my planned move into the Ruhr would mean that my conquest of Belgium was only delayed until the fall.

Melinda agreed to all of this, "I'll go for the switch of Den for Bel (that may give me some leverage vs. Russia)." She also wrote of French negotiations with her aimed at an alliance, and a disengagement of forces from the north French shore. However, she pointed out, "he won't commit to any offense against Italy. I think France's talk of wanting to hit Italy is a smokescreen." I still accepted Melinda's information and suggestions as sound. I replied that if Bill was merely looking to confuse or distract us, my taking Belgium would put us in an even better position to continue the war against him.

To sum up my thinking at this point, I saw clearly how Belgium could fall to Germany. At the same time, giving Denmark to England would mean that we both remained at five centers apiece. From our positions along the French borders, the Anglo-German combine could invade France. If we could crack Burgandy, the collapse of France, although slow and bitter, would begin. Alternatively, we could—using our strength as a bargaining point—make our peace with Bill and turn on Caleb. Together, with England threatening the northern holdings and I the central, we could not fail to make some gains against Russia, especially so as he was embroiled with the Turk and Austrian in the south. I felt that 1903 was the year that good things would begin to happen for England and Germany.

Spring

AUSTRIANS LAUNCH AMPHIBIOUS
INVASION OF ITALIAN HOMELAND . . .

VIOLENT BUT INCONCLUSIVE STRUGGLE
ALONG RUMANIAN BORDER . . .

IN APPARENT PEACE INITIATIVE.
GERMANY FAILS TO ESCALATE . . .

Austria: **A Rum to Sev**; A Tri to Apu; F Adr convoy
A Tri-Apu

England: F Eng to Nth; F Iri holds; F Nth to Den;
F Nwy support F Eng-Nth

France: A Bur to Bel; A Gas to Bur; A Pic support
A Bur-Bel; F Bre support F Mid; F Mid support
F Bre

Germany: A Kie to Ruh; A Mun support A Kie-
Ruh; A Ber support A Mun; **F Hol to Bel**

Italy: A Bel support A Bur-Ruh; A Ven support A
Tri-Tri; A Trl to Tri; F Ion to Gre; F Aeg support
F Ion-Gre

Russia: A War to Ukr; **F Swe to Nwy**; **A Mos to
Sev**; **F Sev to Rum**; A Gal support F Sev-Rum;
A Bud support F Sev-Rum; A Vie support It. A
Tri-Tri

Turkey: F Bla support Aust. A Rum-Sev; A Arm
support Aust. A Rum-Sev; **F Bul to Rum**; F Ank
to Con; A Gre to Ser

Retreats: Disband Italian A Bel

Bill's machinations now became clear; he had taken Belgium. And the English had not supported me into there with the fleets; if Melinda had, I would now hold Belgium. A missed opportunity to be sure, but one that I thought was brought about by unintentional confusion on Melinda's part. She had obviously been confused by my offer, and had moved to take Denmark too early (hence not supporting me as agreed). No great harm though—I could cut French support from Burgandy, and with English support from the North Sea I would take Belgium anyway. Melinda wrote to me agreeing, "No problem in supporting your Ruhr to Belgium." Indeed, this would work out even better, for France remained hostile and my army in Belgium would be much more useful than my fleet.

With my mind at rest on that score, I was ready to deal with France. Bill was still promoting a Franco-German alliance. He even offered to surrender Belgium! He wrote:

In exchange for Belgium, I am willing to agree to an alliance between us that would secure our borders and commit ourselves to combat any aggression from an outside source. I suggest that you submit your terms and duration and we compare to iron out any differences. I would like to move out an army as soon as possible in conjunction with you. I am sure we can catch Italy in a squeeze.

It sounded good to me, but I was going to take Belgium anyway. I sent him a lengthy list of terms I felt we could agree upon, just to keep the dialogue going. I still looked at France as the prime threat to my surviving the game. Russia was engaged in the south, and England allied to me. While others could certainly carve off a piece of Germany, without French cooperation any drive to eliminate my forces entirely could be stalemated. So I expected nothing to come of our treaty negotiations. And my seizure of Belgium would insure that we remained equal in strength.

Fall

AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA TRADE SUPPLY
CENTERS . . .

ENGLAND GROWING IN STRENGTH IN THE
NORTH . . .

TERRIBLE CARNAGE AROUND BLACK
SEA . . .

ENGLAND AND RUSSIA GEAR UP FOR
APPARENT BATTLE IN THE NORTH . . .

AUSTRIA RELINQUISHES BLACK SEA
RESORT . . .

Austria: A Apu to Nap; A Rum to Sev; F Adr to Ion
England: F Den to Swe, F Iri to Wal; F Nth to Den;
F Nwy support F Den-Swe

France: A Bel support A Bur; A Bur support A Bel;
A Pic support A Bel; F Bre to Mid; F Mid to Wes

Germany: **A Ruh to Bel**; F Hol support A Ruh-Bel;
A Mun to Bur; A Ber to Kie

Italy: A Ven support Russ. A Vie-Tri; A Tri to Ser;
F Gre support F Aeg-Bul; F Aeg to Bul (sc)

Russia: **F Swe to Nwy**; F Sev support A Ukr-Rum;
A Mos support F Sev; A Ukr to Rum; A Gal sup-
port A Ukr-Rum; A Vie to Tri; A Bud support
It. A Tri-Ser

Turkey: A Arm support Aust. A Rum-Sev; F Bla
support Aust. A Rum-Sev; **F Bul to Rum**; **F Con
to Bul (sc)**; **A Ser to Bud**

Retreats: Russian F Swe to Bot; disband Russian
F Sev

Winter

Austria: removes A Sevastopol

England: builds A London and F Edinburgh

France: builds F Brest

Germany: no builds

Italy: builds F Rome; unable to build second unit,
plays one short

Russia: builds F St. Petersburg (nc)

Turkey: no builds

1904

So my last true ally had turned against me, making her peace with the devil on my doorstep. Two chances to seize Belgium and finally put some pressure on France—only fading memories now. Oh Melinda, was I disappointed with you! But there's no point in dwelling on plots past; to swim with these sharks you have to keep moving.

Even among the ruins, I still felt that an alliance with the English was my best bet to survive this game. On the other hand, I needed another center or two to increase my strength and diplomatic clout. At this moment, England's position looked a tad vulnerable. Russia would obviously be seeking revenge for lost Sweden; France's build of a fleet in Brest boded all sorts of ill for Melinda. Her sole letter to me during this period certainly didn't bolster my faith in cooperation. She wrote a terse note explaining that England and France were firmly allied, and that I could either accept the *fait accompli* and join them in an alliance or—to coin a phrase—"die".

Letters between France and Germany this season were still "touchy". We each saw the other as a threat, and the first exchange was wasted on words of recrimination. But, ironically, we both had in mind the same goal—a non-aggression pact and general disengagement to pursue other wars. Bill didn't trust England's growth ("Melinda is cunning for she has netted two builds and convinced me to move my fleets . . .") and I wanted Denmark back ("Right now I would simply like to get Denmark and five . . ."). In the long run, England's moves and non-moves in the game proved the catalyst for the Franco-German *rapprochement*. Several more letters were exchanged with Bill and, lo, I had what I couldn't get from Russia or England—a signed treaty with another player.

Now I am not so naive as to expect a signed treaty in *DIPLOMACY* to have any real worth. But, in keeping with my great experiment, I had been keen to see if I could convince some kindred "honorable" soul to actually put his name to such a scrap of paper. Bill—to his credit—gained my esteem by doing so without hesitation. The Franco-German accord of 1904 only committed us to two years (four turns) of non-aggression. A feeble pact, but it hopefully provided a foundation for future cooperation. What Bill may have thought of this I cannot say, but I could at least make our agreement public should he violate it (a weak diplomatic ploy, but a lever nonetheless). To tempt him as much as possible, I decided to exploit our agreement fully, vacate the border, and operate against Melinda and Herb.

I am not advocating that novices demand such signed treaties before trusting other players. That's impossible. There is, if 1985HC is typical, a resistance among the hardened veterans to setting their name to such a formal document. But it doesn't hurt to ask. If enough folk did, and signatories would honor such agreements, it would herald a revolution in *DIPLOMACY*. Think of it: trust and cooperation based on a flimsy, though signed, bit of paper. (I can envision a game where all such *signed* treaties would be filed with the GM, who would enforce them for their duration and disallow any orders violating the letter of the treaty by the concerned parties. Now that would be a *grand* experiment—"honest" *DIPLOMACY*!)

Feeling free to look north and south, and being cognizant of Russia's basic greed and outlook, I turned to Caleb to promote my wars with England and Italy. Caleb beat me to the typewriter, with a letter urging that I immediately begin cooperating with him against England. He had retreated to the Gulf of Bothnia, and—so far as he was concerned—we should be able to regain at least one center this year. He promised:

I certainly will cut Swedish support for Denmark. I would recommend that if you ever want a build you keep up your attacks on Denmark and move either to the Helgoland Bight (recommended) or the North Sea (not recommended). From that position you will have two of your own units to take Denmark with, while I need only cut support from Sweden . . .

This sounded fine to me; I would have a build under my belt, a trustworthy Russian ally (after all, as yet Caleb hadn't done anything concrete for me), and a neutral border with France. I wrote back agree-

ing to all his plans.

However, Caleb was positively incensed by my plans against Italy—"I find it hard to believe you will be going ahead with an attack on Venice. In fact, I find it suspicious!" Russia, as I well realized, had his problems with the pesky Austrian and pugnacious Turk; he didn't want me threatening his southern ally. On the other hand, I suspected that he might want me to stay out of the area so he could "make hay". I could not believe that the greedy Russian would not be tempted by those Italian holdings in the Balkans (or, for that matter, that Herb would not attack the Russian positions in Austria—as I said above, this was a "marriage of villians"). And if France was going to use our non-aggression pact to best advantage, Bill would be moving on Italy soon; I just wanted my share.

Spring

GERMAN RAIDERS ENTER NORTH SEA . . .
 ITALY QUICKLY BECOMING POPULAR
 TOURIST RESORT . . .
 AUSTRIA NOW IN POSITION FOR
 MIRACULOUS COMEBACK . . .

- Austria: A Nap to Apu; F Ion support Fr. F Wes-Tyn
- England: A Lon to Yor; F Den support F Swe; F Edi to Nwg; **F Nwy to Bar**; F Swe support F Den; F Wal to Lon
- France: A Bel to Bur; A Bur to Mar; A Pic support A Bel-Bur; F Bre to Eng; F Mid to NAF; F Wes to Tyn
- Germany: F Hol to Nth; **A Kie to Den**; A Mun to Trl; A Ruh to Mun

- Italy: F Rom to Nap; A Ven support A Ser-Tri; A Ser to Tri; F Gre support F Bul-Aeg; F Bul to Aeg
- Russia: A Mos support A Rum-Sev; A Rum to Sev; A Gal to Rum; A Bud to Ser; **F Bot to Swe**; A Tri support A Bud-Ser; **F St.P to Bar**
- Turkey: **A Arm to Con**; F Bla convoy A Arm-Con; **F Con to Aeg**
- Retreats: Russian A Tri to Vie

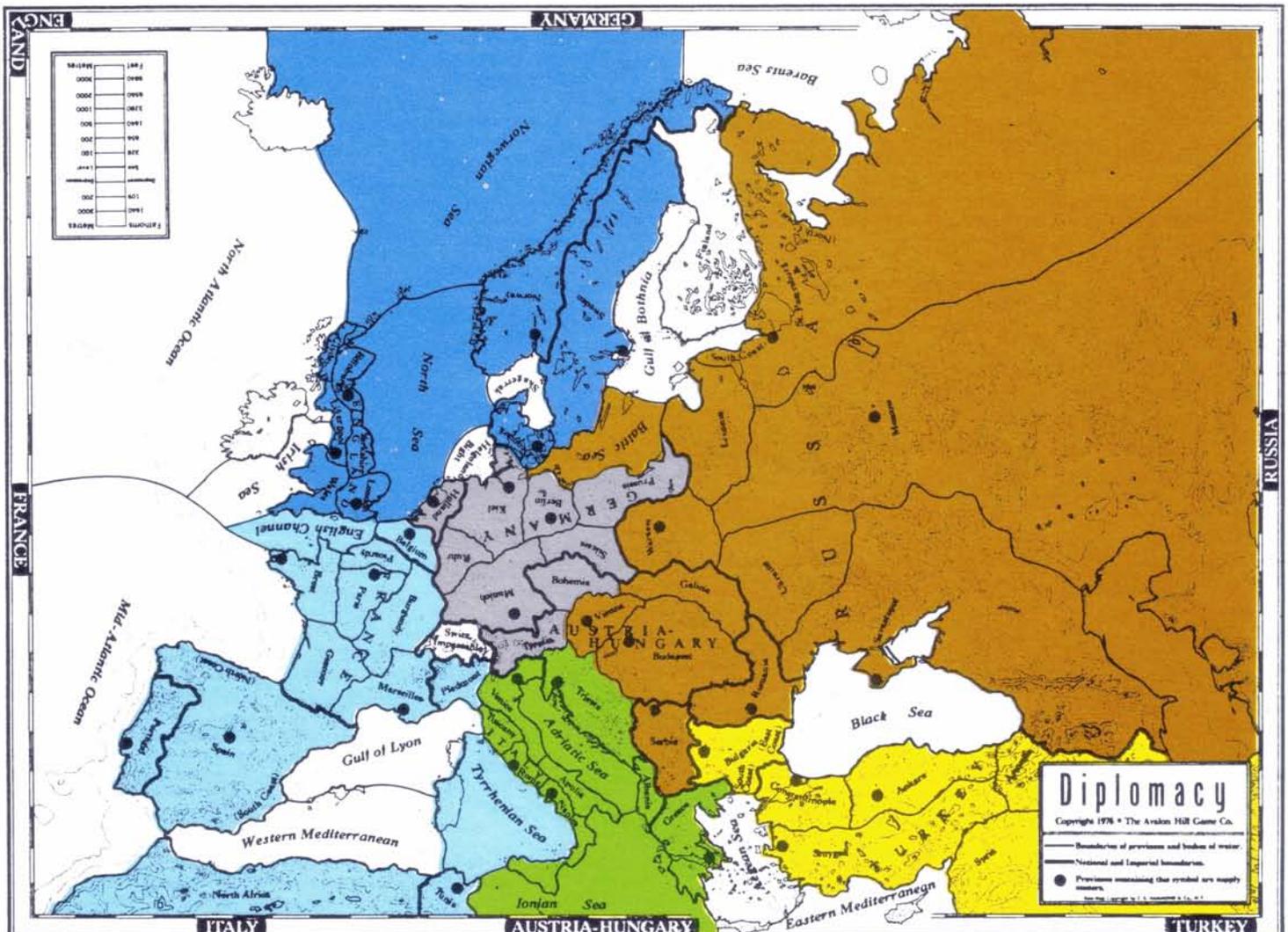
Things looked excellent. My gamble had succeeded and the German fleet rode the North Sea. Russia had attacked Sweden as we'd agreed, and every indication was that he would do so again—meaning I would take Denmark. France appeared to be disengaging from my border and moving into the Channel and the Tyrrhenian; it was only a question of who his first victim would be.

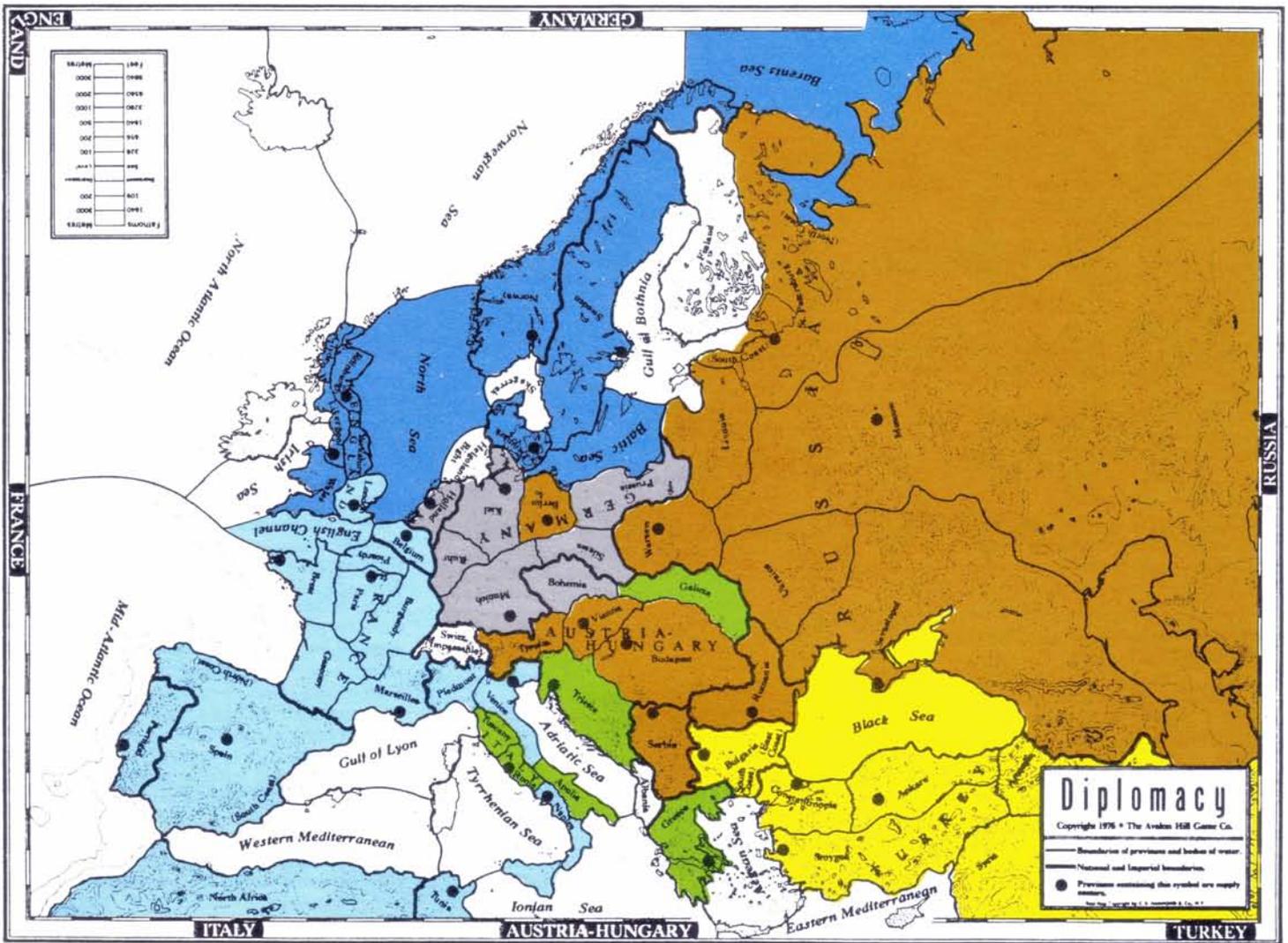
I was so busy congratulating myself on astute diplomacy and anticipating the havoc my new army in Munich could wreak that it never dawned on me to suppose the Russian would again stab me just when the future held such promise. Especially so as it left an England just as strong and just as hostile as ever on his northern borders—and mine.

Fall

INTENSE BUT INCONCLUSIVE ACTION
 ALONG ADRIATIC SHORES . . .
 AUSTRIA BECOMES FIRST CASUALTY OF
 WAR . . .
 IDLE FRENCH UNITS SUPRISINGLY
 BENEVOLENT . . .

Holdings at the end of Fall 1904





Holdings at the end of Fall 1905

Austria:
 England: A Yor to Edi; F Den support F Lon-Nth;
 F Lon to Nth; F Nwg support F Nwy; F Nwy sup-
 port F Lon-Nth; F Swe support F Den
 France: F Eng support A Pic-Bel; A Pic to Bel; A
 Mar to Pic; F Naf to Tun; A Bur hold; F Tyn hold
 Germany: A Mun to Ber; A Kie sup-
 port F Nth-Den;
 Italy: F Nap support F Aeg-Ion; F Aeg to Ion;
 F Gre support F Aeg-Ion
 Russia:
 A Sev hold; A Mos support A Sev; F Bot to Bal;
 Turkey: A Arm to Smy; F Bla to Bul (ec); F Con
 support F Bla-Bul
 Retreats: German F Nth to Hol

Winter

Austria: eliminated
 England: no builds
 France: builds F Brest
 Germany: no builds
 Italy: no builds
 Russia: builds A Warsaw
 Turkey: builds F Ankara

1905

To say I was irritated is an understatement. Regardless of events, I now promised myself vengeance on the crazed Czar. But first, forms had to be observed, as we each proceeded to lie mightily to the other. Our letters criss-crossed the country; many words shouted into the void:

From Russia: "Viewing our current situations, I think that interdependence for us will be your only chance for survival and my best option for now. Let's deal with what is, and not what happened last turn."

From Germany: "So, where does all this leave our alliance and agreements? In a shambles, it seems. You seem to be resisting any cooperation, and your orders are decidedly strange and seem directed to cause me as much grief as possible while England goes merrily along."

Russia: "South of the border I would like you to support my attack on Trieste from Vienna. I will return that favor with support for your Venetian attack next turn. I think that having you fill the vacuum of Herb's ebbing strength is far preferable to Bill annexing all of Italy."

Germany: "Too, since you seem to want the Italian to remain a power to buffer the French, I am retreating from Tyrolia to guard my interests."

Russia: "I think that a retreat to Yorkshire would be your best move, as Bill and I would then attack a weak Melinda rather than you." (Remember, unless a "Separation of Seasons" is requested, my retreat from the North Sea would go in at the same time as my orders.)

Germany: "I have no plans to attack your positions. I must watch the French too closely for any such adventuring."

Lies, all lies. But even in this darkness, I was able to pick up a gleam of truth here and there by inference. Russia was plainly worried about the English threat to his north; and he would gleefully jump on the Italian holdings as soon as France had gutted the homeland. Last, and most important for me, Russia and France had not arrived at any sort of agreement to divide England, Italy or Germany. So, my friends, after a long period I had at last learned to stay in contact even with my enemies, and learned to read between the lines.

My correspondence with Melinda was considerably shorter, but no less filled with fables. I wrote a rambling letter cataloging Caleb's sins of both

commission and omission. I concluded by offering a six-turn non-aggression pact. Melinda agreed (but note, without a signed treaty) and even promised, "I will hit the Baltic." The darkness lapped at the edges of Germany.

Only in the words of the Frenchman—my cordial "enemy"—did I place any credence. In a pair of lengthy, and insightful, letters we exchanged our views on the state of our affairs in this game (and the world in general—Bill's return to the classroom and my feline-ridden household). We agreed that Caleb would be building in Warsaw and maneuvering to attack Germany; the fleet in the Baltic presaged that treachery. He sympathized with my distrust of England, and fueled it with news of her planned strikes on German possessions. I passed along my hopes that his upcoming attacks on England and Italy would take some pressure off my borders, and my own plans for moving on Russia. We candidly discussed my role as a buffer for France to the east, and what I might gain from the arrangement ("second-place"). Lastly, in as elegantly worded a letter as I'd yet received, Bill Schiwautz informed me of his upcoming advance into the Ruhr to provide "defensive assistance in case of armed aggression" from an English-Russian combine. He went on to announce that I could, if I distrusted his motives, "bounce" this move; otherwise, a French army was there if I needed support. The measured tone and logic of his letter made palatable this French advance, one most players would regard as offering one's throat to the blade. Certainly, Bill's forthright and honest manner in this instance encouraged me to accept his pledges in the future.

Spring

FRENCH MARINES LAND IN ENGLISH

CAPITAL . . .

RUSSIA AND ITALY AT IT AGAIN

IN THE SOUTH . . .

ITALY AND RUSSIA PLAYING

'MUSICAL CHAIRS' IN AUSTRIA . . .

England: A Edi to Yor; **F Den to Kie**; F Nth support Fr. A Bel-Hol; F Nwg to Bar; F Nwy support F Nwg-Bar; F Swe holds

France: F Bre to Mid; F Eng convoy A Bel-Lon; A Bel-Lon; A Bur to Ruh; A Pie to Trl; F Tun to Tyn; F Tyn to Wes

Germany: **F Hol to Kie**; A Kie to Ber; A Ber to Pru; A Trl to Boh

Italy: F Nap to Ion; F Ion to Adr; A Ven support Fr. A Pie-Trl; A Tri to Bud; F Gre support F Nap-Ion

Russia: A War to Lvn; **F Bal to Swe**; **A Mos to St.P**; **A Sev to Arm**; A Vie to Tri; **A Rum to Bul**; A Ser support A Rum-Bul; **F St.P to Bar**

Turkey: F Con support F Bul; F Bul support Russ. A Rum; F Ank to Bla; **A Smy to Arm**

The battleflags were up. War had broken out between Russia and Germany, and the other players—despite their own varied problems—were quick to capitalize on this fact.

Melinda, being already in conflict with Russia, was first to be heard from. She offered to sign any treaty I drafted and to work with me in any offensive operation. She suggested that I move to Livonia so as to threaten three Russian centers. For her part, she would drive the Russian fleet out. She was abjectly contrite about her treachery regarding Belgium. As she was now at war with France as well, England was particularly anxious to end our conflict. I used that anxiety to obtain her signature to the following:

In this agreement, England and Germany are mutually bound by the following provisions:

1. A bond of trust and good faith exists between England and Germany in both their actions and correspondence.
2. This agreement is for a period of three years, commencing Fall 1905 and continuing through Fall 1908.
3. Germany recognizes Denmark, Norway, Sweden and England's home regions as English holdings and will take no action involving its own units or support for any third party which would violate these regions without specific prior agreement with England. This proviso is extended to any territory taken by England after Fall 1905 and includes any and all holdings taken by England from Russia.
4. England recognizes Holland and Germany's home regions as German holdings and will take no action involving its own units or support for any third party which would violate these regions without specific prior agreement with Germany. This proviso is extended to any territory taken by Germany after Fall 1905 and includes any and all holdings taken by Germany from Russia.
5. This agreement is solely between England and Germany, and will not be made public knowledge.

With this in hand, I was able to get France to sign a similar three-year pact (differing only in detail as to the protected territories). Bill had been concerned with the possibility of an English-Russian alliance. I could show him evidence to the contrary, and in response he promised to pull his army in the Ruhr back and use his Tyrolian position to attack the Italians. Our continuing correspondence could not have been friendlier.

From the southern powers came shouts of encouragement. Seems every neighbor wanted a piece of the Russian's hide. Caleb had effectively isolated himself. From the Czar himself, I received—and responded with—increasingly strident rhetoric. He gave me a lukewarm pledge to vacate the Baltic; I, in turn, promised to leave Prussia and Bohemia.

Fall

ITALIAN HOMELAND STORMED AS

ITALIAN ARMIES ARE OFF

MARAUDING . . .

RUSSIA ATTACKED ON ALL FRONTS . . .

GERMAN CAPITAL SEIZED BY RETREATING

RUSSIAN FLEET . . .

ONCE-PROUD ITALIAN NAVY NOW

IN RUINS . . .

England: **A Yor to Lon**; F Bar support F Nwy-St.P; F Den to Bal; F Nth support A Yor-Lon; F Nwy to St.P (nc); F Swe support F Den-Bal

France: F Mid to NAT; F Eng support A Lon; A Lon hold; A Ruh to Bel; A Trl to Ven; F Tyn to Nap; F Wes to Tun

Germany: F Hol support A Ber-Kie; A Ber to Kie; **A Boh to Vie**; **A Pru to War**

Italy: F Ion support F Gre; F Adr support A Ven-Tri; A Bud support A Ven-Tri; F Gre support Turk. F Bul; A Ven to Tri

Russia: **A Lvn to War**; **F Bal to Lvn**; A Mos support F St.P; A Sev support A Rum; **A Tri to Vie**; A Rum support A Ser-Bud; A Ser to Bud; F St.P hold

Turkey: F Con support F Bul; F Bul support F Bla; F Bla support A Smy-Arm; A Smy to Arm

Retreats: Italian A Bud to Gal; Russian A Tri to Trl and F Bal to Ber

Winter

England: removes F Sweden

France: builds F Brest, A Marseilles and A Paris

Germany: removes F Holland

Italy: removes F Ionian and F Adriatic

Russia: builds A Warsaw

Turkey: no builds

1906

With the Russian fleet shoved bodily out of the Baltic, I need to know where it had retreated before I could make any plans. Playing smart this time, I requested a "Separation of Seasons". Melinda did likewise. Ken Hager declared such, engendering a two-week delay in the game but allowing me to learn that Caleb had indeed retreated his fleet to Berlin.

This was no great discomfort. If the English merely held their position in the Baltic, I would destroy the Russian fleet there. As this removed any vestige of Russian naval power protecting St. Petersburg, she was tickled to comply with my request. Meanwhile, my removal of the German fleet curried her continued favor. I could no longer take any role in the Franco-English struggle around the islands and she need not guard against my interference there.

My destruction of the fleet in Holland likewise proved to Bill "my total sincerity in honoring our agreement." Despite the fact that this was the logical unit to disband if I was to recapture Berlin and conduct a war against Russia, he graciously accepted my explanation this action. After over a year spent playing this game by mail again, my rusty skills were sharpening; I had learned to try to turn every development to my advantage by putting the best face on any disaster and so gain politically from it. *You have to be optimistic to play this game well, and so gain from every set-back.*

Bill, devious diplomat that he is, immediately saw in my removal a way to profit from some disinformation himself. He wrote:

While I'd prefer not to take Holland, it appears that it would be in your best interest. In essence, I would move in the Spring out in the Fall, thereby safeguarding the center for you. Hopefully Melinda won't doublecross you and you will retake Berlin. I will move Par-Bur and Mar-Pied. This may be of some help in stopping the Russian if he tries to take Munich. Of course I will support you if you come under attack. You can tell Melinda that you fear Franco-Russian plans to divide you up and that I might take Holland and Munich. Anything that distracts her from the island and from attacking you will serve our purpose. Thoughts!

I faced a very tough decision. How far should I trust the French, given my avowed objectives of

staying in the game to the end, playing my neighbors off against each other, and playing as "honest" a game as possible. At the moment, the second was in full swing, with France at war with England, England with Russia, Russia with Italy. I had, by my own lights anyway, been fairly honest in my dealings—doing what I said I would in my letters, even when phrased to allow me a great deal of latitude in interpretation. But would binding myself that closely to France give me a chance to survive the game? The feeling that Bill would emerge victorious had already taken root (Russia was under attack by everybody, no other power was strong enough to challenge Bill, and France was gaining strength at the expense of England and Italy every season). If I were to trust him, would I survive? Could I, perhaps, even end the game as the second-strongest power with his help? If I took the road of appeasement (or, in the jargon of *DIPLOMACY*, become his "lackey"), would he attack me to win or be satisfied with overrunning England, Italy and the Balkans? Thus far Bill had been true to his words, but would that continue when the game was on the line?

There was also a lot of play left. I could not stand against France alone, and certainly I couldn't trust Russia or Italy to help me. Melinda had her own desperate problems defending against the French emperor. While Jim Diehl (Turkey) might arise some day to challenge France, especially if he could profit from an Italian or Russian collapse (thus allowing me the opportunity to play him off against Bill), it looked more likely that he would be wrapped up with Russia for some time—beyond the point where France would decide Germany was superfluous. I was coming to the realization that my future, rather than laying with England or Russia as I had felt at the beginning of the game, depended on France. My final "gut" decision was to cooperate fully with him in anything he cared to do so long as I could remain in the game. So I gave him the go-ahead to march into Holland and then about-face and march out.

Spring

RUSSIA'S NAVY FOLLOWS ITALY'S

INTO OBLIVION . . .

ENGLAND BLOCKADED BY FRENCH

FLEETS . . .

England: A Yor to Liv; F Bal support Ger. A Pru-Ber; F Bar to St.P (nc); **F Nth to Lon**; F Nwy support F Bar-St.P

France: F NAT to Cly; F Eng to Iri; A Lon hold; F Bre to Eng; A Bel to Hol; A Par to Bur; A Mar to Pie; **A Ven to Tri**; F Nap to Apu; F Tun to Ion

Germany: A Pru to Ber; A Kie support A Pru-Ber; A Boh to Sil

Italy: **A Gal to Bud**; F Gre to Alb; **A Tri to Ser**

Russia: F St.P hold; **A Mos to Sev**; A Lvn to Pru; A War to Gal; **F Ber to Kie**; A Trl to Mun; A Bud support A Rum-Ser; **A Rum to Ser**; **A Sev to Rum**

Turkey: A Arm to Sev; F Bla support A Arm-Sev; **F Bul to Rum**; F Con to Bul (ec)

Retreats: Russian A Sev to Ukr

I felt pretty good. The Russian fleet in Berlin had been scuttled, and Russia was under a great deal of pressure as both St. Petersburg and Sevastopol were occupied by hostile powers. France, true to his word, moved into Holland and I was waiting to see if he would move out as promised; I had two letters from him assuring me that he would. My only letter to Melinda requested support for a move from Silesia to Prussia to drive out the Russian there demonstrating against Berlin. Finally, and not the least important, I figured to drive out the Russian from Munich, a move the Bill promised to support. In the process, I wanted to clear a home center for a build (something you should do each fall turn if feasible; there is nothing worse than having the

opportunity to increase your on-board strength and not being able to exploit that advantage). However, I was spending a great deal of effort to maintain my homeland while others gained momentum.

Fall

WAR RESUMES AFTER EXTENDED TRUCE . . .

RUSSIA BESET ON ALL SIDES . . .

WAR CONTINUES AS PEACE NEGOTIATIONS FALL THROUGH . . .

NAVAL POWER SCORNED AS EUROPE BUILDS ARMIES . . .

England: A Liv hold; F Bal to Den; F St.P hold; F Nth to Edi; F Nwy to Nwg

France: F Cly support F Iri-Liv; F Iri to Liv; A Lon to Yor; A Hol to Bel; A Bur support Ger. A Kie-Mun; A Pie to Trl; A Ven to Rom; F Apu to Ion; F Ion to Alb; F Eng to Lon

Germany: A Sil to Pru; A Kie to Mun; A Ber support A Kie-Mun

Italy: A Gal to Vie; A Tri to Ven; F Alb to Gre

Russia: A Bud to Rum; A Mun to Ber; A Rum to Ser; A Ukr to Sev; A Mos support A Ukr to Sev;

A Pru support A Mun-Ber; A War to Sil

Turkey: A Sev to Rum; F Bla support A Sev-Rum;

F Bul support A Sev-Rum; F Con to Aeg

Retreats: English A Liv retreats to Wal; Russian A Mun retreats to Ruh

Winter

England: no builds

France: builds A Marseilles

Germany: builds A Kiel
Italy: no open center, plays one short
Russia: removes A Ruhr and A Moscow
Turkey: builds A Ankara

1907

My build of an army indicated to all that Germany would be a continental power solely. Now, having secured my base, it was time to concentrate on getting another build. There appeared to be two practical targets for my forces—Warsaw from the evil empire, or Vienna from the beleaguered Italian. Looking at the situation, and being privy to France's intentions, I decided that it would be easier for me to kick a shattered foe rather than one with some fight left. And I wanted to do it with a minimum of effort. I opened negotiations with the Russian, who was rather desperate to get an ally at this time, to gain his support for the attack:

So, if you care to rebuild some burnt bridges, you must make the first move. I will not attack you in the Spring. And, assuming that you are honest with me, I will pull back in the fall to guard against France. But, I want Prussia cleared, support into Vienna, and St. Petersburg attacked.

There was an ulterior motive to these demands. Obviously with Prussia vacated by the Russians, my centers were safer and I would be able to advance to threaten Warsaw next year. The seizure of Vienna strengthened my position without really antagonizing anyone of importance. And urging a Russian attack on St. Petersburg would direct attention away from Warsaw while simultaneously keeping Melinda and Caleb at odds. You see, I designs on Denmark

in the fall as well.

I informed France of all my plots and negotiations. I was playing the "good ally" role to the hilt, hoping to see him continue in his efforts to seize all of the British Isles and Italian holdings by doing my part to weaken both. In the process, I hoped to prove my worth to him and deflect him from casting an eye on my holdings. Twice now Bill had entered my territory (as defined in our non-aggression pact) and had withdrawn without doing me harm. This deadly dance of his had even given me some political leverage in my disinformation efforts with Melinda and Caleb. So I received the following with equanimity:

I know I've been rather loose with the terms if not the spirit of our alliance. I also realize how unnerving it must be, despite my assurances, to be put in an awkward position. But I am again crossing your borders.

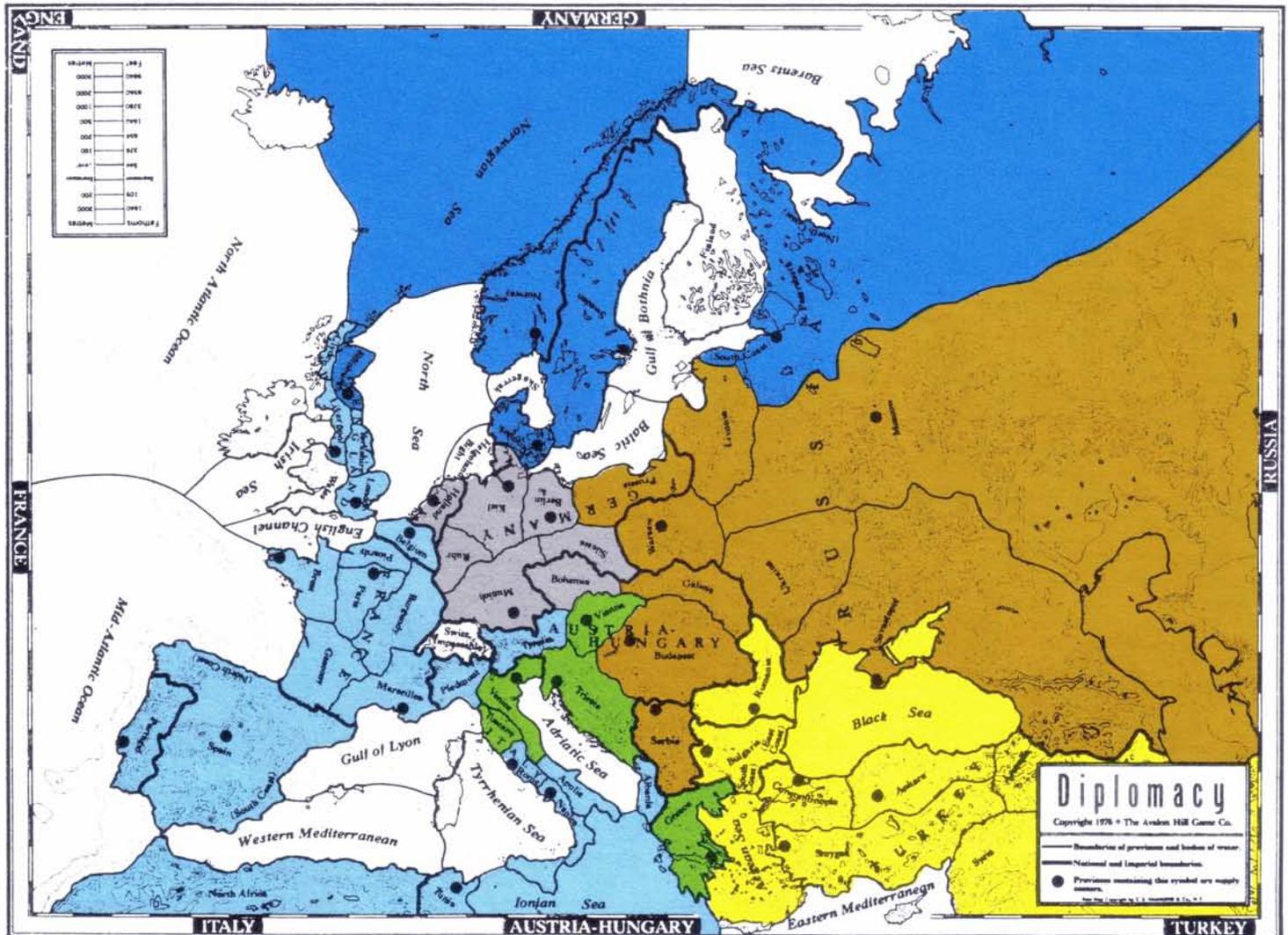
What better way to make it appear that I am going for an outright win. It will appear that you are the unfortunate victim of my brutal stab. Where before England, Russia and Italy would be reluctant to side with you, there is now an excellent chance through this deception that you will indeed take Denmark and Vienna.

In the fall I intend to remove my units. While others may say it is foolish to do so when I had the opportunity, I still intend to keep the alliance.

I also decided that the time had come to sound out the Turk on working together, against either Russia or France, or both. I was rather disappointed in Jim's response:

Turkey will lay siege to Fortress Sevastopol and demolish it in the Fall most probably. Beyond Sevastopol is beyond Turkey's scope. Go ahead and attack Warsaw and Moscow. I cannot extend my forces that far. Such action

Holdings at the end of Fall 1906



will not be seen as belligerent vs. Turkey. France is the ostensible winner in this situation and G & T can only hope for survival . . . It is little difference when France wins whether we each have 5 or 6 units.

Astute readers will have noticed the reference to "Peace Negotiations" in the headlines for the season past. In postal **DIPLOMACY**, any player (and on occasion the GM) may offer any legitimate game resolution—a concession to one active player or a draw involving two or more—for consideration by the remaining players in the hopes of shortening the game. Votes "yea" or "nay" are sent in along with the orders for the upcoming season. Unless such a resolution is unanimously agreed to, it fails and the struggle continues. Some GMs report only the result of the voting; others record the specific votes of each player. As you might imagine, such a proposal becomes a matter of negotiations, even a game unto itself. Make full use of such opportunities.

Spring
FRENCH TROOPS CONTINUE SWEEP
ACROSS EUROPE . . .

NEW PEACE INITIATIVE PROPOSED . . .
 England: **A Wal to Liv; F Den to Nth; F St.P hold; F Edi to Yor; F Nwg to Cly**
 France: **A Yor to Liv; F Liv to NAT; F Cly to Edi; F Lon to Nth; A Bel to Hol; A Bur to Mun; A Mar to Pie; A Trl support A Mar-Pie; A Rom to Ven; F Alb support F Ion-Gre; F Ion to Gre**
 Germany: **A Mun to Boh; A Sil support A Mun-Boh; A Ber support A Sil; A Kie support A Ber**

Holdings at the end of Fall 1907

Italy: **A Vie support A Ven-Tri; A Ven to Tri; F Gre to Alb**
 Russia: **A Pru to War; A War to Mos; A Sev to Rum; A Bud support A Sev-Rum; A Ser support It. F Gre-Bul**
 Turkey: **F Bla support A Ank-Arm; F Bul support A Rum; A Rum support F Bul; F Aeg support F Bul; A Ank to Arm**
 Retreats: **Disband Italian F Gre**

It appeared that Bill's play in again seizing my centers was working to his avowed purpose. I had letters from each of the others:

From Turkey: "Let's go all out for a grand finale assault on Russia. We must end this bloodletting. I'll massively assault Sevastopol. If German troops could enter Galicia and Prussia and strike at Warsaw, then Turkey from Sevastopol could support a German force into Moscow until the game ends. Why waste time in the West? Come East where you have a Protector."

From Russia: "Why not gamble? Attack Munich from Kiel and use Berlin and Silesia for support—a guaranteed victory. If Bill grabs Kiel, you get Holland; and if Melinda gets Kiel she has nowhere to build. This will leave Bohemia to move to Vienna with my support. Let's get rid of Herb!"

From England: "As to the game, I'm going to buzz around my home centers and see what mischief I can wreak. I doubt I'll do much damage but . . . I'm voting for the concession to France. He's played well and deserves it."

Everybody was still grinding their own respective axe (with the notable exception of Melinda), and I hoped to profit from that as Bill had predicted. Unfortunately, Bill's "Press" with the Spring 1907 results from Ken threw a dark shadow over all:

France to Europe: We of the French Republic feel compelled to end this brutal war which has ravaged the countries of this great continent. Hopefully you will all concur and recog-

nize France's altruistic endeavour in its benevolent occupation.

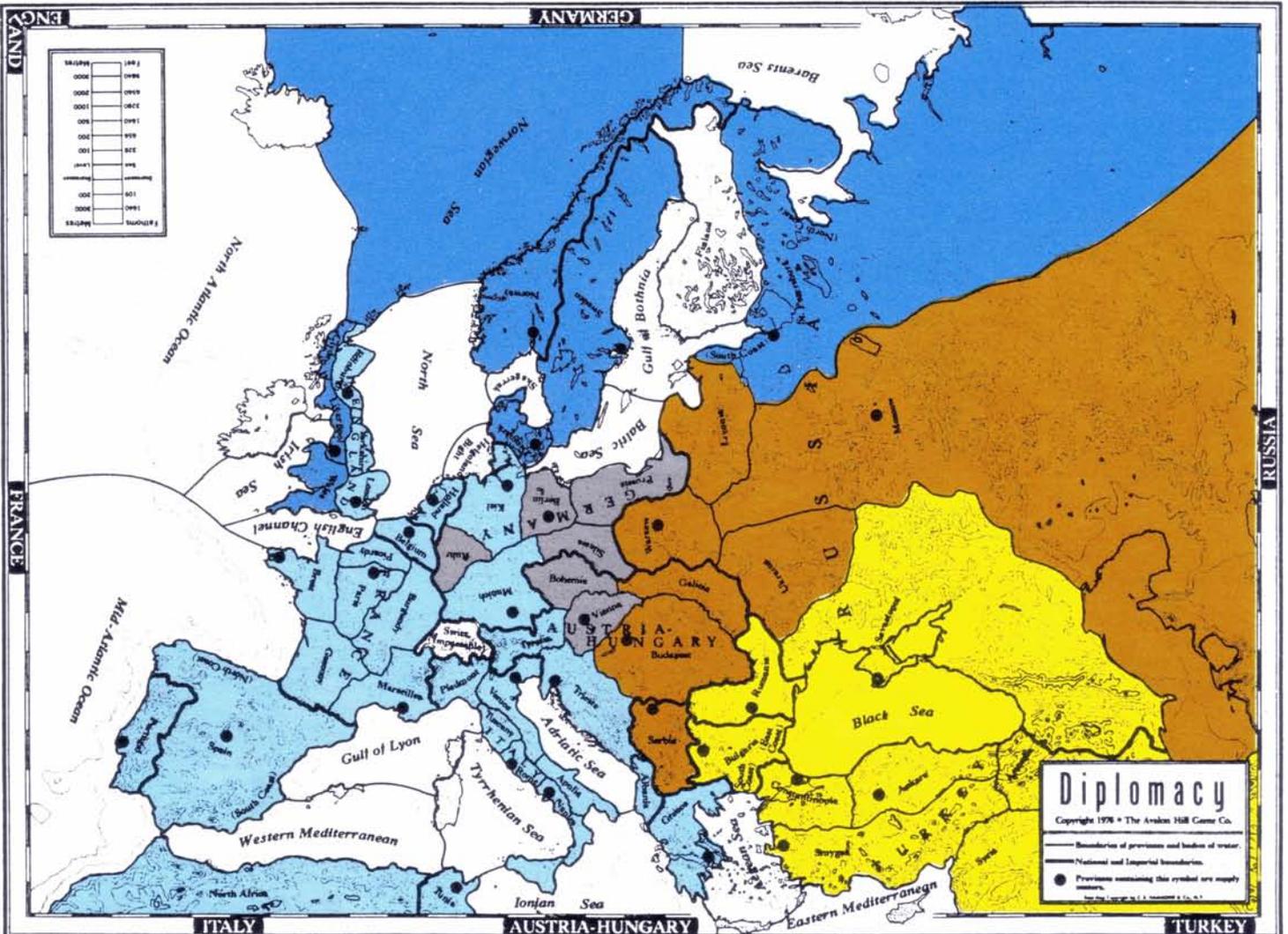
France to Germany: We wish to thank you for all your kind words over the years and the encouragement to make this dream a reality.

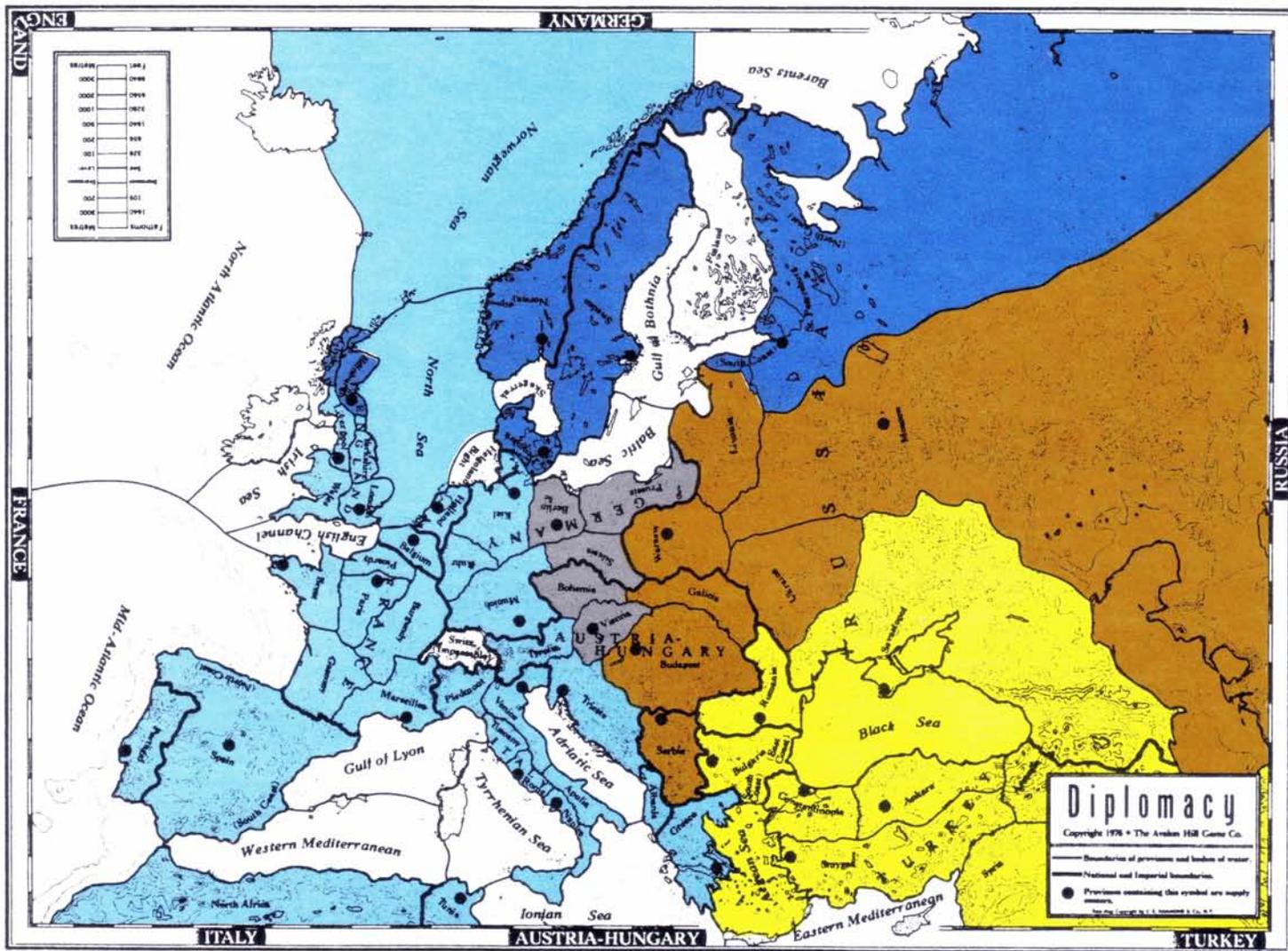
France to Russia: We are sorry that even under the best of circumstances you will miss the glory of French pacification for you have led many to ruin by your actions and false pride.

Despite Bill's continued assurances, I knew I'd been had. He'd never been very vocal or blatant in his public pronouncements before, and this looked ominous. I chose not to fight him, hoping against the odds that I was wrong and he would vacate my centers. I would remain true to our non-aggression pact (not due to expire for another game-year) even if he did not, and so claim the moral "high ground". Meanwhile I continued with my plans to jab at three centers, hoping to seize two and so remain a power in negotiations.

Fall
FRENCH UNITS SCORE UNPRECEDENTED GAINS . . .
ITALY CEASES TO EXIST AS A SOVEREIGN NATION . . .

England: **A Wal to Liv; F Den to Nth; F St.P hold; F Edi support F Nwg-Cly; F Nwg to Cly**
 France: **A Yor support F Cly-Edi; F NAT to Nwg; F Cly to Edi; F Lon to Nth; A Hol support A Mun-Kie; A Mun to Kie; A Pie to Ven; A Trl to Mun; A Ven to Tri; F Alb support A Ven-Tri; F Gre support F Alb**
 Germany: **A Kie to Den; A Boh to Vie; A Ber to Pru; A Sil to War**





Italy: **A Vie to Tri; A Tri to Ven**
 Russia: **A Sev to Rum; A Mos to War; A War to Gal; A Ser support A Bud; A Bud support Ger. A Boh-Vie**
 Turkey: **A Rum to Sev; F Bla support A Rum-Sev; A Arm support A Rum-Sev; F Bul to Rum; F Aeg to Bul (sc)**
 Retreats: German A Kie to Ber; Russian A Sev to Ukraine; disband English E Edi

Winter

England: no open center, plays one short
 France: builds F Brest, A Paris and A Marseilles; unable to build fourth, fifth and sixth units, plays three short
 Germany: removes A Vienna and A Silesia
 Italy: eliminated
 Russia: removes A Ukraine
 Turkey: builds A Constantinople

1908

It looked like the end was near. Melinda wrote apologizing for being such a "rotten ally". Caleb wrote making his goodbyes, lamenting the failure of the Northern Bloc alliance, and admitting that "perhaps my inopportune remarks fouled it up". I wrote back to both, thanking them for their play and apologizing to both for my jabs at Warsaw and Denmark in my futile effort to retain some semblance of strength. With that, my contact with these two came to a conclusion; it was now every man for himself.

I should note that in her last letter, Melinda wrote:

"If we ever get into a game again, I'd like to try another alliance." And that highlights to me the importance of being cordial throughout the game, despite all our machinations aimed at winning. If you remain in the by-mail *DIPLOMACY* fraternity for long, you will eventually be playing against some of these same fellows again. Having dealt with each other once, it is amazing how much that can affect your later relations in a different game. You know, to some extent, what to expect from that player and can use that knowledge to determine your own plans. (Indeed, I am happy to say that, as luck would have it, Melinda and I are both in another game together and are enjoying most friendly relations.) Too, after a couple of games, you'll also find—if you've taken the time to write about more than the mundane plots of *DIPLOMACY*—that friendships will arise with kindred souls; and that is perhaps the most enjoyable reward of all for the work playing by mail demands.

I, of course, simply *had* to chastise the Frenchman. He was playing to win, as anyone serious about the game would be; and I couldn't fault his attack on me from such a pragmatic standpoint. But that didn't mean that I would die without a whimper. Off went the following:

I am most appalled. Here I was thinking I could trust you. But now you've proved yourself no better than the others. I had hoped for more. Looks like the Turk is the only one that will not tell me a fib (and that's likely due to the fact that we've never been adjacent in this game). In any case, your perfidiousness is not going to look good in the press . . .

There was little for me to do, really. I would support Berlin from Prussia, for I figured the game

Holdings at the end of Fall 1908

would be over with the fall moves, Prussia would be removed then, and I would have survived to write about 1985HC. So, the battle flags went up over *Festung Berlin*.

Spring

RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT IN CIVIL DISORDER; TROOPS BOYCOTT . . .
FRANCE POISED FOR FINAL PUSH TO CONTROL EUROPE . . .

England: A Liv support F Cly-Edi, F St.P to Nwy; F Cly to Edi
 France: F Nwg support F Edi-Nth; F Edi to Nth; **A Yor to Liv; F Lon to Wal; F Bre to Eng; A Par to Bur; A Mar to Pie; A Hol support A Kie; A Mun support A Kie; A Ven to Tyl; A Tri holds; F Alb support A Tri; F Gre to Aeg; A Kie hold Germany; A Ber holds; A Pru support A Ber**
 Russia: A Mos holds; A Gal holds; A Ser holds; A Bud holds
 Turkey: **F Bul to Aeg; A Arm support A Sev; A Con to Bul; F Rum support A Con-Bul; F Bla support F Rum; A Sev support F Rum**

Caleb's "goodbye" letter now made some sense. It seemed that he was withdrawing from the game. When orders are not received from a player, the dreaded notation "NMR" (*No Moves Received*) follows his listing and all of his units simply "Hold". *This is to be avoided*. It is considered bad form by the other players, and serves to indicate that you have lost interest in the game - certainly not a situation to encourage your allies or discourage your

enemies. It often sparks a rush to pick up all your supply centers by friends and foes. Of course, there are the occasional legitimate reasons why a player might not deign to send in his orders to the GM; but every effort should be made to fulfill your obligation to your GM and your fellow players; even if in a losing situation. Why spoil the fun for everybody in a fit of pique? That's merely bad sportsmanship, displayed in postal *DIPLOMACY* for all to see. (But Caleb must have had a valid reason for his missed orders; with the next turn he returned to the game to save Vienna for me, and coincidentally keep the game going.)

Fall

CZAR'S RETURN SPARKS SPIRITED DEFENSE OF VIENNA . . .
 GERMANY HOLDS VIENNA WITHOUT FIRING A SHOT . . .
 ENGLISH NAVAL POWER PREVENTS FINAL FRENCH VICTORY . . .
 England: A Liv support F Edi; F Den support F Nwy-Nth; **F Nwy to Nth**; F Edi support F Nwy-Nth
 France: F Nwg support F Nth-Nwy; **F Nth to Nwy**; A Yor to Liv; F Wal support A Yor-Liv; F Eng to Bel; A Bur to Ruh; **A Hol to Kie**; **A Kie to Den**; A Mun support A Hol-Kie; A Trl support A Tri-Vie; A Pie to Ven; **A Tri to Vie**; **F Alb to Tri**; **F Gre to Bul (sc)**
 Germany: A Ber holds; A Pru support A Ber

Holdings at the end of Fall 1909

Russia: **A Mos to Sev**; **A Gal to Vie**; **A Ser to Tri**;
 A Bud support A Gal-Vie
 Turkey: F Bul to Aeg; A Arm support A Sev; A Con to Bul; F Rum support A Con-Bul; F Bla support F Rum; A Sev support F Rum
 Retreats: English A Liv to Cly

Winter

England: no open center, plays one short
 France: builds A Paris, F Marseilles and F Brest
 Germany: no builds
 Russia: no builds
 Turkey: no builds

1909

This was ridiculous, France had obviously won. I was unwilling to swallow a concession to him (voting against the one proposed in 1908), for I wanted to write about a clear-cut victory in this article. But that didn't mean that I wanted 1985HC to drag on forever. So, in my arrogance, I wrote Bill a proposition outlining how I thought he should seize the win by taking Denmark, Vienna, Budapest, and/or Norway. In return for my penetrating insights, I cravenly begged that he not attack Berlin. I also informed him that I would strike at Warsaw in the fall. So ended my correspondence, with a plea to the behemoth to let me pick a crumb or two from his plate.

France replied in the affirmative, likely with the conviction that I was no longer of any import in this game. (And, perhaps, with an eye toward future games in which we might meet.) I also had a letter from Ken Hager; I found some of his analysis quite

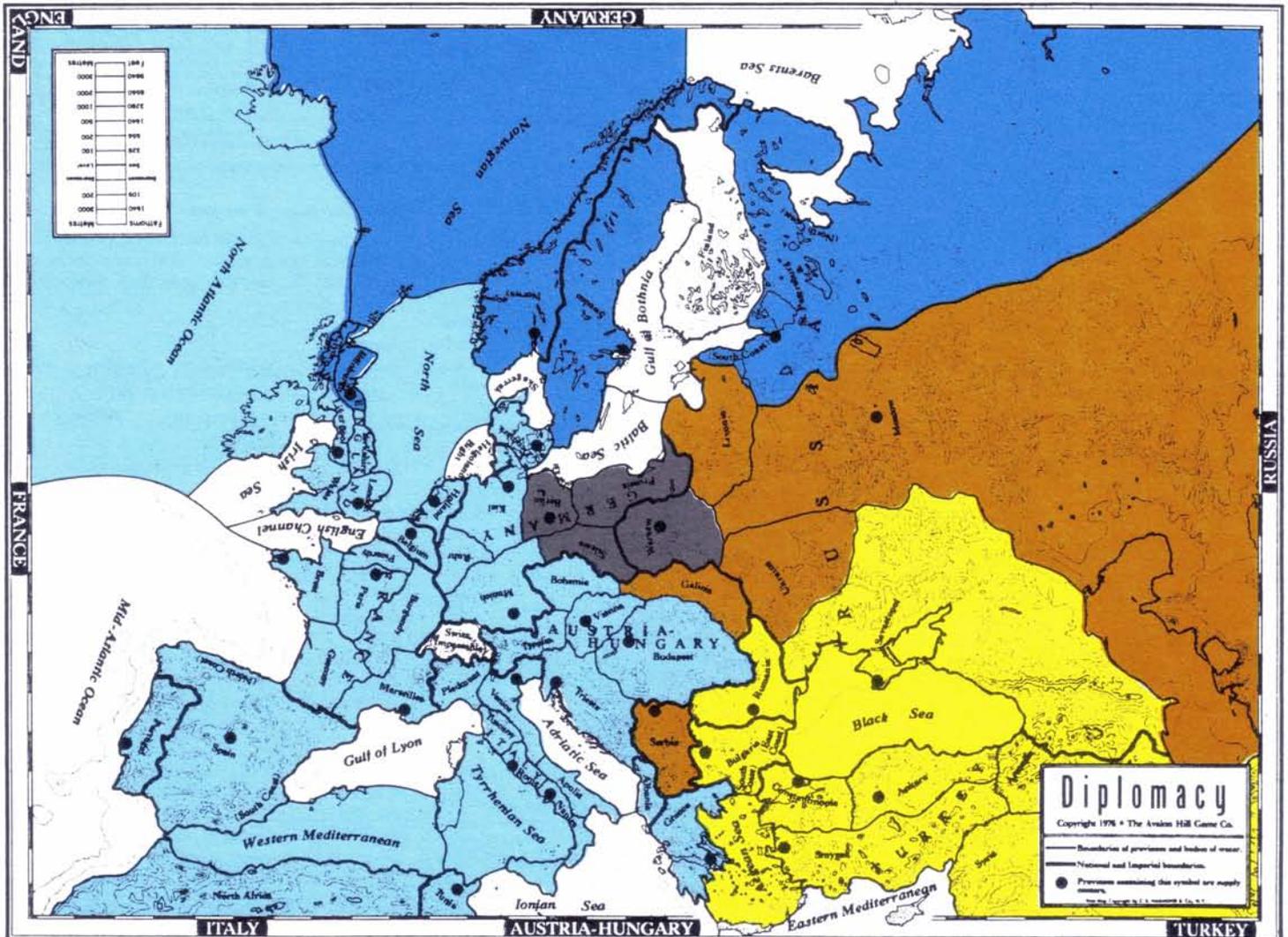
fascinating, especially as it related to end-game play:

To be perfectly honest, I expected France to stab you and actually would have been disappointed in him if he had not done so. You had served your purpose from his point of view and your centers were necessary for him to win. Your strategy of appeasing a powerful neighbor might have worked had Turkey done anything at all. The Turkish war with Russia assured France of the win, and a player of Bill's calibre could not pass up such a "freebie".

Spring

FRANCE TAKES TWO MORE CENTERS;
 APPEARS POISED FOR VICTORY . . .
 RUSSIA AGAIN STRUCK WITH CIVIL DISORDER . . .
 England: **A Cly to Liv**; **F Den to Kie**; **F Nwy to Nth**; **F Edi to Nwg**
 France: **F Nwg to Nwy**; **A Liv to Edi**; F Wal to Lon; F Nth to Den; A Hol support A Kie; A Kie support F Nth-Den; **F Bel to Nth**; A Ruh to Mun; A Mun to Boh; A Trl support A Tri-Vie; A Tri to Vie; F Alb support A Ven-Tri; A Ven to Tri; **F Gre to Ion**; F Mar to Lyo; A Par to Bur; F Bre to Mid
 Germany: A Ber holds; A Pru support A Ber
 Russia: A Mos holds; A Gal holds; A Ser holds; A Bud holds
 Turkey: **F Aeg to Ion**; F Bla to Con; A Sev holds; A Arm to Ank; F Rum to Bla
 Retreats: English F Den to Swe

One last strike at Russia, and the revealing of my true identity (remember that I was operating under a pseudonym), was all that remained for me to do. I thought these actions might add a last enjoyable twist to this most enjoyable game. I asked Ken to



THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GOD

By Ken Hager

1901

Austria opened in a fairly traditional manner, then found herself beset on all sides and immediately forced into a defensive posture. Moving the fleet to the Ionian Sea in the fall would seem to be a mistake since it offers no immediate offensive possibilities and also removes that unit from a position from which it could assist in the defense of Trieste. With no builds in 1901, one home center already lost and the fleet not in position to help, it would seem that Austria's position going into 1902 is dire at best.

England opened noncommittally, then grabbed Belgium and built two fleets in a decidedly anti-French manner. The miswritten German fleet order would suggest that England and Germany are allied against France at this point. The Russian army built in St. Petersburg in the winter is a serious problem since England cannot expect to successfully attack France while keeping several units in the north defending against a Russian attack.

France also opened in a relatively noncommittal way, and then hurt Germany by supporting the Italian army into Munich. That support would also seem to indicate that an English/German alliance exists and that France is aware of it and is actively seeking outside assistance. The Italian army helps France a great deal since it will probably tie up several German units that would otherwise be available for use against France.

Germany apparently attempted to support England into Belgium, which would seem to indicate that the two are working together. The move of the Italian into Munich costs Germany a build and should tie up several armies for the coming year. It would also seem as though Germany was working in cooperation with Russia based on the movement of the German fleet to Holland (rather than Denmark) and the movement of the army to the Balkans and support for Russia into Vienna. Germany's geographical position does not lend itself to getting involved on two fronts simultaneously and Germany would be better off concentrating its forces against a single objective.

Italy has chosen to open very aggressively, a decision which has had profound impacts on Austria and Germany. With a French ally on one side and a crippled Austria on the other, Italy can probably expect another year or two before anyone confronts her, especially if war breaks out between Russia and Turkey.

The Russian has committed himself to a major offensive in the south, which would seem to indicate that he feels secure with his relations with Germany and England, although putting an army in St. Petersburg may strain relations with the latter. The Balkan offensive is going well, but future successes will depend on how relations with Turkey proceed. If Russia is unable to avoid war through diplomatic means, she faces the loss of the Black Sea and a probable slowdown on the Balkan front.

Turkey received an unexpected boon when Austria graciously provided Greece to her. The additional build now puts Turkey in position to take control of the Black Sea and threaten Russia's southern border. The two Italian fleets are the main threat to Turkey at this time, and she should make an effort to reach some sort of agreement with Italy so as to neutralize them.

1902

Austria was able to remain even this year thanks to Turkish assistance; however, she lost a second home center and the third could fall at any time. Austria should last another year or two, but appears destined to once again be the first power to be eliminated.

The annihilation of the army in Belgium leaves England in a difficult position. She does not have sufficient strength to successfully attack France and is not receiving much help from her ally. On the positive side, she seems to have an agreement with Russia, and so is secure on that front while France does not have adequate naval strength to cause her much harm. England appears to have few offensive opportunities unless she terminates hostilities with France and looks elsewhere.

France is deeply indebted to the Italian army which has brought the English/German offensive to a standstill. Although she has no real offensive prospects, she is nevertheless in good defensive position and should be exercising diplomatic channels to try to persuade England to turn on Germany or Russia to move on Germany from the east.

Germany was successful in regaining Munich, but that success is tempered by the fact that she is unable to build for lack of an open home center. Germany must make a significant effort to reassure England that everything is going to work out lest the English abandon the alliance.

Movement of the Italian fleets east against Turkey and the attempted Russian support for the Italian attack on Trieste seem to indicate that a Russian/Italian alliance has been formed. Crippling Turkey should be high on Italy's list of priorities at this point.

Russia stands to suffer some short-term losses around the Black Sea, but in conjunction with Italy should be able to recoup them fairly soon. With the western powers stalemated as they are, the Russian/Italian alliance can be very successful—especially if they can reduce Turkey quickly.

With her three fleets contained within the Black Sea basin, Turkey is vulnerable to the attacking Italian fleets. She is in position to enjoy some short-term success in the Black Sea, but cannot expect to retain her gains for very long against the combined Russian/Italian alliance.

1903

Rather than vainly trying to hold an indefensible position, the Austrian chose to attempt a breakout. The result is a nice little surprise escape that will cause Italy some problems. Con-

sidering the fact that Italy was the prime architect of Austria's downfall, this move is probably very satisfying to Austria.

England has apparently tired of the fruitless war with France and has turned north, taking centers from both Germany and Russia. It seems likely that the primary target of this attack was Russia since it would appear that England will have very few units available for an offensive against Germany in the coming year.

France has shown his appreciation to the Italian army by annihilating it and sending fleets around to the Mediterranean. As England seems to have done in the north, France has bypassed Germany and chosen to confront Italy instead. Apparently, France and England perceive the Russian/Italian alliance to be the major threat and have taken actions to try to contain it early.

Germany isn't really in too bad shape at this point, despite having been thwarted in almost all of her efforts to date. Her homeland is intact and she is in no immediate danger despite the fact that France and England are allied. Her long-term outlook is not so rosy since she is caught between two alliances. She should probably offer her services to each side and see what sort of terms might be available from each—although it seems inevitable that sooner or later the other powers are going to converge on her.

By itself the Austrian breakout would not have been too bad; but coupled with the French moves south, it leaves the Italian in a difficult situation. Italy needs her fleets to counter the French fleets, but that leaves the newly-acquired Balkan centers vulnerable to Turkey. Italy's short-term future probably depends on the amount of help she receives from Russia during this crisis period.

Despite the loss of Sevastopol and Sweden, Russia is still in decent shape as long as his alliance with Italy remains strong. However, with two active fronts, Russia could be devastated if Germany joins the western alliance and drives toward Warsaw. Russia should negotiate with Germany and offer to assist the German in regaining Denmark in exchange for non-aggression.

Turkey was seriously hurt by the Russian/Italian alliance this year, but should receive a respite in 1904 as Russia and Italy concentrate on the attacking French and English forces. She still has a strong defensive position in the Russian/Italian rear and could still have a significant role to play.

1904

The loss of Naples would seem to have been a major blunder between Austria and France. The French fleet in the Tyrrhenian Sea was actually unordered and could have supported the Austrian fleet from the Ionian Sea into Naples while the Austrian army in Apulia either took Rome (which is what would have happened in this case) or else bounced, thereby annihilating the Italian fleet retreating from Naples. At the very least, Austria would still be alive with a fleet in Naples, while Italy was one fleet poorer.

England has gone from a stalemate with France to a stalemate with Russia, although the problem is compounded by her now hostile former ally. She would also appear to be rather vulnerable to betrayal by France at this point.

France, on the other hand, is in great shape at this point. Her English ally is off in the north stalemated against Russia, her new German ally is moving away from the border thereby freeing up French armies for duty elsewhere, and her own foray into the Mediterranean has taken Italy by surprise and eased that threat for the time being. The fleet in the English Channel in conjunction with another fleet being built in Brest suggests that the French are contemplating a move against her English ally.

Germany has apparently entered into an agreement with France and is using the opportunity to strike at England in hopes of regaining Denmark. However, it doesn't seem likely that Germany will experience much success unless she coordinates her efforts with Russia.

The French attack has forced Italy onto the defensive for the first time in the game, and it will be difficult trying to defend the homeland from France while retaining the centers in the Balkans. Again, the key to any continued Italian success is whether she can count on a friend to help her through this period.

Russia is in good shape from a defensive standpoint and is in no real danger on any front. Unfortunately, her units are so widely scattered that she has few offensive opportunities at this time. One possibility would be to negotiate an agreement with Turkey to end their war, and then turn on the wounded Italian. It would also be worthwhile to start a serious dialogue with France.

The French thrust at Italy came just at the right time to keep Turkey alive and in the game. Turkey should probably explore some sort of pact with Russia now and then start moving some fleets west. It would seem that her best hopes for growth will be found in the disintegrating Italian empire.

1905

The French attack on London should have come as no real surprise, but it nevertheless leaves England in a precarious position. Actively engaged on two fronts, England does not have sufficient strength to successfully defend each; nor does it appear that there is anyone to come to her rescue. England needs to stabilize one of the fronts using diplomatic means so she can concentrate her forces on the other.

It would be interesting to know just exactly what France offered to Italy that induced her to expose herself so trustingly. The French ruse obviously worked to perfection and the removal of the Italian fleets now leaves France as the dominant force in the Mediterranean. The attack against England has also begun on a successful note and France should be able to enjoy additional gains on that front in the coming years, especially if Russia remains active in Scandinavia.

France has already betrayed her Italian and English allies, and in order to amass 18 centers will have to do the same to Germany. Germany should abandon her campaign against Russia and start negotiating with her neighbors to determine what they might do to stem the growth of France. Otherwise, it's just a matter of time until France is ready to take the German centers.

The Italian's moves this year would seem to suggest that Russia betrayed her at the end of 1904 and that Italy was so bent on obtaining satisfaction that she was willing to accept almost any risk. With her homeland lost, it would appear that Italy's influence is on the wane and that it is only a matter of time before her remaining centers are gone.

Despite the fact that Russia is virtually on par with France center-wise, she is still in serious trouble. She is at war with every country that she borders and her antagonists are willing to concede losses to France for the satisfaction of striking a blow at Russia. She desperately needs to soothe some of these hard feelings and restore amicable relations. It is imperative that Russia end the war with Turkey so as to get the Turkish fleets moving west into the Mediterranean basin. They are virtually the only units available that can contain the French advance.

It's hard to tell exactly who the instigator is in the Russo-Turkish war, but it's obvious that continuing it is not in the best interests of either power. A Russian/Turkish alliance even at this late point may still be able to stop France.

1906

England's position improved significantly this year. The capture of St. Petersburg offset the loss of Liverpool and the subsequent Russian removals leaves England secure in Scandinavia for the time being. Supporting Germany back into Berlin was a positive gesture which could lead to a reestablishment of relations there—a situation which would probably allow England to contain the French advance in the north.

France is spread quite thin at this point and is vulnerable to concentrated attacks on several fronts simultaneously. It would probably be worthwhile to annihilate the English army in Wales since England would not be able to rebuild it any time soon. It appears that France's short-term future depends on whether the other powers are willing to coordinate their efforts against her.

Germany is in a strong defensive position after gaining another army and could be a significant factor if she opts to side with England against France. This would require a normalization of relations with Russia, but that should be possible to obtain.

Italy received a new lease on life when she was able to recover one of her home centers. She needs to appeal successfully to both Germany and Russia to convince them to join with her in opposing France. If she can accomplish that, then she could possibly become a factor in the game again.

Russia took a tremendous beating this year, but should make a major effort to try to turn the losses to her advantage. Her northern front is now secure and most of her adversaries have gotten the piece of her hide that they were seeking. She should use her weakened condition to appeal to them to bury their differences and unite against the now undisputed leader. If successful, Russia can slowly regain her strength while her former antagonists take their turns at France.

Turkey has been steadily regaining her strength since her low point, and is now ready to go on the offensive against France. Russia has been badly hurt and poses no serious immediate threat. This should allow the Turk to get a second fleet moving westward, which will significantly affect events in the Mediterranean.

1907

Without German help, England simply does not have sufficient strength to be able to hold back the French tide. All that is left for England is to put up the best fight possible and force France to work hard for any gains.

The French successes this year is a real testimony to his apparent diplomatic skill. Despite the fact that it is the strongest power in Europe, France has nevertheless been successful in coercing both Germany and Italy to move east against Russia while France slips into their home centers behind them. At this point, France has as many centers as the other European powers combined. Given a superior strategic position and the advantage of unity of command, it would appear that the game is France's.

Germany has chosen not to join forces against France this year, apparently content to adopt the role of lackey in exchange for continued non-aggression. Unfortunately for Germany, the time has come when France needs her centers if she is going to win. Germany's remaining challenge is to try to survive to witness the French victory.

Italy was in a similar situation to Germany and responded in a similar manner. However, it would seem that perhaps the motivation was slightly different in Italy's case. While Germany was apparently trying to accommodate her powerful neighbor in return for continued survival, there is a sensation that Italy was motivated by a still unsatisfied desire for revenge against Russia. Whatever the motivation, the Italian's decision was fatal.

Russia has few options at this point and is pretty much reduced to simply trying to defend what centers that he has remaining.

A Turkish movement westwards towards the Ionian could have caused France some problems; however, Turkey has apparently conceded the win to France and is exacting one final measure of revenge from Russia. Perhaps France has cultivated notions of a second-place finish for Turkey and so neutralized this potential adversary through diplomatic means. In any event, the moment of French vulnerability has passed and it's unlikely that Turkey could stem the French advance even if she decides to try.

1908-1909

The game is essentially over at the beginning of 1908, so I will not bother continuing the analysis any further. Diplomacy was no longer a factor, and it was simply an exercise in tactics until France secured the remaining center needed to win. From a purist's point of view, it is unfortunate that the surviving countries were unable to form an alliance in 1906 and hit France with a coordinated counterattack in 1907. There is every reason to believe that the game could have gone on for several more years with several countries having a chance to get back into the hunt for a win. But, as Ned Kelly stated so eloquently, "Such is life." And, such is *DIPLOMACY* by mail.

AND ACCORDING TO THE EMPEROR

I'd wish to point out some of the critical decisions which occurred for me during the game; a good deal of my correspondence was with Germany to secure a friendly but weak ally as a buffer with Russia. But much else was also occurring. The key points are highlighted below.

The German move to Bohemia indicated that my worst fears of a Russian-English-German alliance that would eventually crush France were well-founded. Several letters finally convinced Italy to attack Munich; an act the German never forgave and which I was to use later on.

Italy's naive alliance with Russia and poor moves against Turkey convinced me that I could appease Germany by getting him out of Belgium, and perhaps even form a Franco-German alliance. This would surely antagonize England, whoever got Belgium in the end. Therefore I had accomplished my initial goal of driving a wedge between the northern allies. At this time, I also pushed Russia to attack Italy so I could promote a Western triple alliance and get England to attack Russia.

I almost supported Austrian efforts in 1904, but England's move on Denmark doomed her chances for any formal alliance. I had more important tasks. I now realized that Italy was my pawn, and that Germany and Russia would be inflamed at the English stab.

By 1905, I had proposed that we work toward a two-way draw to the Russian; and I felt that I had secured a reasonable alliance with Germany. So I stabbed England and Italy in the back. Of course, I assured them repeatedly in countless letters that I had taken my spoils in the Russo-French deal and that the rest was to go to the Russian. If they would cooperate, I would not uphold my "bargain" with Russia and would go elsewhere for additional centers. I could not believe that my plan would succeed so completely and that Russia would crumple so quickly.

By 1906, Russia was in disarray, but Italy was restive and no longer willing to accept the four-center survival position I had promised. In 1907 I formalized my final plan to remove Italy, weaken England, and move on Turkey. With Germany, I planned to gradually undermine Russia. It would mean building Germany up to seven or eight units, but I felt we had a good alliance which would prevent a stab by either.

Then the most unexpected happened. All my correspondence with Turkey about attacking Russia and never giving up the fight, even if it meant losing the game, bore fruit. While Germany was encouraging me to form a Turkish alliance, the fact that it happened did him in. When Turkey did not support the Italian fleet in Greece, I no longer had to worry about my southern flank.

I did feel badly about my betrayal of Germany, but in the end I decided if the game was to be shortened and if I could expect a decisive victory, it had to be at German expense. A tight game, and one I enjoyed thoroughly.

Supply Center Chart

	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909
Austria	3	3	2	0	—	—	—	—	—
England	5	4	6	6	5	5	5	5	4
France	5	5	6	7	10	11	17	17	20
Germany	4	5	4	4	3	4	2	2	2
Italy	5	5	6	5	3	4	0	—	—
Russia	7	7	7	8	9	5	4	4	2
Turkey	5	5	3	4	4	5	6	6	6

please run the final press with the turn in which France could claim victory. He dutifully did so . . .

Germany to the Great Powers of Europe (victor and vanquished alike)—Berlin, Fall 1909:

Now that peace has come to the continent once again, the ruling house of Germany has decided to reveal that an usurper has been controlling its destiny since 1900. Yes, in a dramatic announcement from the steps of the Reichstag, the Kaiser revealed that he was none other than the scurrilous scribe, Rex Martin, who had maneuvered to take the reins of the Reich. Claiming that he was engaged in research only, and that he planned on an extensive expose in the American press of the diplomatic outrages of "this degenerate bunch of back-stabbers", he then informed his cheering subjects that he was emigrating back to the States because he feared for his life.

Fall

PEACE RETURNS TO EUROPE WITH FRENCH VICTORY . . .

England: **A Cly to Edi**; S Swe support F Nwg; F Nwg support F Edi-Nwg; F Edi to Nwg

France: F Nwg support F Bel-Nth; F Den support F Bel-Nth; **A Liv to Edi**; F Lon to Yor; F Bel to Nth; **A Mun to Sil**; A Hol to Ruh; A Kie support F Den; A Boh support A Vie; **A Trl to Tri**; A Tri to Bud; F Alb support F Gre; A Vie support A Tri-Bud; F Gre support Turkish A Bul-Ser; **A Bur to Mun**; F Lyo to Tyn; F Mid to Wes

Germany: A Ber holds; A Pru to War
 Russia: A Mos holds; **A Gal to Sil**; **A Ser to Tri**;
 A Bud support A Ser-Tri
 Turkey: A Sev to Rum; F Bla support A Sev-Rum;
 F Con to Smy; **A Bul to Gre**; F Aeg support A Bul-Gre; A Ank to Con
 Retreats: France F Nwg to NAT; disband Russian A Bud

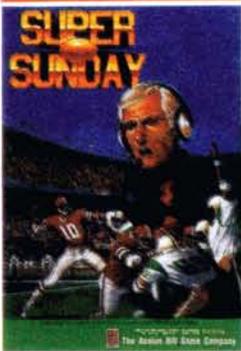
I had staggered from failed alliance to failed alliance throughout 1985HC, confused by the perfidiousness of my neighbors and pawn of the great powers. Now it was all over, and I found myself bereft. Playing the game by mail had been challenging, and it had been engaging, and it had been fun. What to do to fill the void? Luckily, there are dozens of such games being started each month. So I plunged right in again. But that is another story.

*It is all so clear on the maps, so clear in the mind,
 But the orders are slow, the men in the blocks
 are slow*

*To move; when they start they take too long on
 the way—*

*The General loses his stars and the block-men die
 In unstrategic defiance of Martial Law . . .*

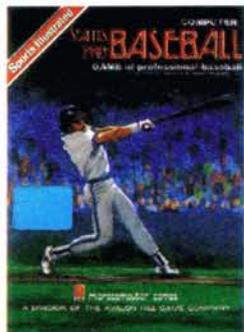
by Stephen Vincent Benet, *John Brown's Body*



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MASTERS OF THE GAME

A Historical Look at DIPLOMACY

By Eric Lawson

Having witnessed how the French player swept Europe, carefully isolating and confusing his opposition until he could claim victory in our pbm game of DIPLOMACY, I thought it might be of interest to learn how his historical counterparts accomplished the same task before the First World War. Mr. Lawson obliged nicely by providing the following insightful article.

It is only fitting that the greatest players of the diplomatic game from the age of secret alliances and international intrigue are little known today. Often, as in the game *DIPLOMACY*, their most ingenious strokes of strategy do not appear in the written orders handed down to the armies and fleets that implemented the policies of their nation. The substance of their negotiations may never be fully revealed and their paths are often obscured by the smokescreens they have laid. However, it is important to us today to investigate the activities of these diplomats in order to better understand the abominable holocaust which resulted from their handiwork. In cutting through the propaganda and popular theories, one may be surprised to find the names of Theophile Delcasse and Raymond Poincare to be the true masters of *DIPLOMACY*.

Placing responsibility for the origins of the First World War on any one nation cannot be done these days without exciting extensive controversy. It is now understood that the war's origins were extremely complex involving nationalism, industrial imperialism, militarism, social and political revolution, honor, diplomatic policies, the will of the masses, the actions of individuals, and the interactions of all these diverse elements. All could be found operating to some extent within each country at the outbreak of the war. Every country can be seen as having something to gain by a victorious war, whether it be strategic real estate, economic influence, national unification, or a Bismarckian settlement of internal unrest. Within each nation as well, there were factions actually hoping for war, for various reasons.

Nevertheless, specific individuals and nations have often been accused by historians of "starting" the war. Serbia was blamed for precipitating the crisis in 1914. Austria-Hungary had started a localized war, but then such conflicts were an accepted part of the diplomacy of the period. Russia's mobilization is said to have provoked the general war, but it is doubtful that the Tsar really intended to attack his cousin with the 1905 revolution still fresh in his memory. England's Lord Grey did not try to prevent the July crisis from proceeding toward war, and so draws blame from some quarters. The Kaiser's Germany took the first aggressive step by invading Belgium on 4 August 1914, but this may have been the result—rather than the cause—of her neighbor's actions.

FRANCE AND DELCASSE

That neighbor is, of course, France, with a population at that time charged with the revanchist idea of retaking the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. It will be seen that the diplomacy of France, under the guidance of Theophile Delcasse and Raymond Poincare, took the most singleminded approach towards preparing for a long war. The drama was so well staged that Germany could hardly deny the role left for her to play. When the July crisis, which grew from the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, came in 1914, the

dream of a French Alsace-Lorraine again became a reality. This dream had been brewing for several decades and had consumed the lives of a number of French leaders.

Since 1871, the French people had felt a pang in their collective hearts anytime the names were mentioned of the beloved lost provinces. Germany, under Bismarck, had sliced those provinces from her in the Franco-Prussian War, and the French had neither forgotten nor forgiven this. With her dismemberment, France was looked upon as an old nation, as a country declining from its past greatness in the face of the growing new nation-states, as a second-class power. The country responsible for France's diminishing brilliance was Germany and her rapidly growing industrial might.

By the 1880s, however, French statesmen, seeing France the weaker, sought a rapprochement with their vigorous neighbor Germany. Although many Frenchmen never fully accepted the Treaty of Frankfurt, and calls for *revanche* never fully ceased, Franco-German relations ran quite smoothly for some years; so smoothly, in fact, that in 1884 there were motions for a formal Franco-German alliance. It was at this time the English who, with their successful colonial programs, seemed to pose the greatest threat to French resurgence and a Franco-German alliance was seen as the best and most permanent method for keeping peace on the continent. Complications in China in 1885 set back this rapprochement, but after Bismarck's fall in 1890 the Kaiser again extended Germany's wish for friendly relations with France. This cordial relationship had worked well, with only a few conflicts of interest. France and Germany peacefully arranged their borders in West Africa and combined to check British imperialism, while in 1894 they cooperated with Russia in forcing Japan to give up Port Arthur.

It seemed these two nations were heading for an *entente* until, in 1898, Theophile Delcasse took over the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a journalist and a statesman, he had epitomized the feelings of *revanche*, the return of Alsace-Lorraine from the "Huns". He began an anti-German program which would make France implacable in taking her lost provinces back, and strong enough to do so. Like Bismarck, Delcasse had a goal to make his nation a great empire. But unlike Bismarck, he had the full support of his people in designing his foreign policies, instead of designing his foreign policies to gain the support of his people.

Almost immediately, this new personality occupying the French seat at the diplomacy table began to change French policy. From his own government and from Germany, Delcasse refused all demands for any rapprochement. He truly felt France's expansion must proceed with the alienation of Germany. German Foreign Secretary von Bulow complained about this confusing attitude to Russian Foreign Minister Mouravieff, who replied, "Delcasse . . . is a maniac, who subordinates everything to the idea of *Revanche*. He sees only Strasbourg, without thinking of the superior interests of Europe or the monarchical interests, which for you as for us should be the first consideration and which should unite our two countries." Mouravieff's statement also revealed the common interest that Germany and Russia had in autocratic government, whereas France was a republic and still suspected of supporting revolutionaries. Thus it was that Delcasse furiously attempted to stop the Tsar from visiting the Kaiser in Berlin in 1898, fearing they

might strengthen their autocratic relations with one another.

The "Dual Alliance" formed between France and Russia in 1894 had been partially due to Delcasse's lobbying, and now—as Foreign Minister—he worked even harder to strengthen it. The alliance had been created as a countermeasure to the "Triple Alliance" (which bound together Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy), and was intended to terminate when the Triple Alliance ended. However, Delcasse foresaw the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and the possibility of Germany gaining control of Dalmatian coast. To prevent this, he negotiated to extend the Dual Alliance indefinitely beyond the termination of the Triple Alliance.

On Delcasse's visit to St. Petersburg in 1899, he urged the Tsar to alter their alliance from a purely defensive pact to a broader document designed to maintain the balance of power on the continent. Delcasse offered Russia French support should Austria make any advances in the Balkans. He drew Russia closer into the French camp by next invoking Russia's other feared opponent—Britain. Should Britain attack Russia, Delcasse promised that France would threaten the British Isles by concentrating some 150,000 troops on the English Channel. Conversely, should Britain attack France, Russia was to threaten India by sending 300,000 men down the proposed Orenburg-Tashkent railway route. Thus, with the 1899 accords, the Franco-Russian alliance was solidified. A more emotional bond grew between France and Russia. Delcasse had made a positive impression on the Russian court, and anti-German sentiments were enhanced through his private conversations.

Along with his Russian policy, Delcasse sought an alliance with Great Britain. It was, after all, England which would be the key to France's success in the future. England was a great industrial and colonial power already, with a vast supply of human and material reserves in her empire. It would only be with the support of England's fleets and England's ability to draw on distant sources of supply that France could force her wishes onto Germany. It was force, in fact, that Delcasse had concluded was the only answer to the Alsace-Lorraine question. He had confirmed the conclusion in 1899 while conversing with Adolph Rey, a noted scholar from Lorraine. Rey pointed out that the provinces had become quite "Germanized" since 1870 and that the occupants did not want a war of liberation; they only desired that Germany and France remain friendly. After this conversation, Delcasse was more certain than ever that Germany would never relinquish her command of Alsace and Lorraine unless she was forced militarily to do so. It was therefore imperative that the friendship of England be won.

Rapprochement with England would not be simple, however. Delcasse had to move cautiously to avoid England's traditional hostility towards France, and he worked primarily through the ambassador to the Court, Paul Cambon. With clever manipulation, Delcasse averted confrontation in the Fashoda crisis. The Dreyfus affair as well caused antagonism between the French and English. Delcasse declined to have France mediate the Boer War settlement because it was such a touchy subject to the British populace. The Queen, the Prince of Wales, Lord Salisbury and Chamberlain were all pro-German and suspicious of French intentions. Moreover, Delcasse felt that it was France's relative weaknesses that the

English found most despicable. His task was clear; he must make France strong enough to gain the respect of the English while weakening the position of Germany, and he must promote anti-German sentiment abroad.

On the road to building France's prestige, Delcasse led France to mediate the settlement of the Spanish-American War, thus gaining friendly relations with both countries. He followed this by making commercial agreements with Spain and America, and spoke out favorably for the "Open Door" Policy in Europe. These economic agreements opened the agricultural supply centers of the Iberian Peninsula to France. Intent on ensuring the protection of these supply routes, France opened a dialogue with Spain and made several agreements regarding influence in Morocco. Delcasse saw that Italian sanction would also be necessary for any French expansion into North Africa, so in the winter of 1901 he secured an agreement with Italy trading French influence in Morocco for Italian influence in Tripoli. By negotiating for the control of North African holdings, Theophile Delcasse had effectively closed the back door. His next step was to concentrate on his flanks.

By the following summer, Delcasse had effected a major diplomatic coup. On 30 June, he signed a secret agreement with the Italian Foreign Minister Prinetti which insured that Italy would take no aggressive action against France should the latter become involved in a war with Germany. For Italy to sign this convention in 1902 was a flagrant violation of the terms of the Triple Alliance, which Italy had just renewed not two days before with Germany and Austria-Hungary. This undermining of that alliance is considered to be among Delcasse's greatest achievements, the fruits of which were not harvested until the coming of the First World War. With this agreement, the forces guarding France's southeast border were released to concentrate on the primary front and the threat to the sea routes to Marseilles was removed. France became established as a great Mediterranean power (which would certainly catch England's interest) and the position of Germany was weakened. The balance of power had been jarred, making war that much more probable.

Delcasse also used the French banks to direct his foreign policy along the path he intended. In 1901 he had France loan Russia 450 million gold francs, stipulating that this be used for the building of strategic railroads, one along the German border and another off the Orenburg-Tashkent line to directly threaten northern India (at this point, British policy-makers were considering an alliance with Germany, and he felt a show of Franco-Russian strength was in line). In 1904, the Serbian Prime Minister Pashitch asked for French financial assistance, and Delcasse viewed this as an opportunity to break Serbian economic dependence on Austria-Hungary. He made it understood that part of the 1906 loan be used to buy French armaments for the Serbian forces. Thus Delcasse broke the Austrian monopolization of Serbia, which precipitated the "Pig War" and a series of crises leading up to the assassination at Sarajevo.

Through such diplomatic ploys, Delcasse gained the attention of England and the bargaining leverage he needed. He started by suggesting that England and France divide Morocco and Siam into spheres of influence (France having earlier gained access to Mekong). English politicians did not find this too appealing, but Cambon's efforts to promote anti-German suspicions and create Anglo-French empathy were taking effect. After many speeches and negotiations, Delcasse played his last trump—England would be given a free hand in Egypt if France had a free hand in Morocco. The agreement was signed in April 1904 and the *Entente Cordiale* was born.

Although this was not an alliance, it still posed

a threat to German interests. Kaiser Wilhelm feared this developing relationship and determined to break up the Anglo-French entente. In 1905, using the pretext of the Moroccan crisis, the Kaiser hoped to upset the French annexation of Morocco and so expose France's weaknesses to British leaders. His personal visit to Tangier was welcomed by the Sultan in Fez, who needed European support in order to maintain Moroccan independence. Together they petitioned for an international conference to settle the issue of French activities in Morocco. Delcasse turned this around by portraying the Kaiser with his gunboat diplomacy as the troublemaker and so achieved a permanent division between Germany and England. The crisis intensified, threats of war followed, but Delcasse would not back down. For several reasons the German diplomats viewed Delcasse as their only real enemy and demanded that he resign. The French government of Prime Minister Rouvier also felt that Delcasse was provoking a war by intimidating Germany. In a cabinet meeting on 6 June 1905, Delcasse was asked for his resignation from office.

Although he had resigned in the midst of a crisis, Delcasse was acknowledged for the honors he had gained for France. He had strengthened France with allies, making Paris the diplomatic center of Europe, and shifting this prestige away from Berlin. In the process, he had secured France's growing Mediterranean empire; but more importantly, Delcasse had effected the encirclement of Germany with pro-French sympathizers. He had won for the French people a "moral Revanche".

Delcasse could not remain idle, however. He "felt an emotional need to be continually involved in some great enterprise which would raise France's standing in international affairs." He was obsessed that Germany was systematically plotting to destroy France and gain hegemony of Europe. This opinion coincided most closely with Sir Eyre Crowe's, but even Crowe in England could admit, "the great German design is in reality no more than the expression of a vague, confused, and unpractical statesmanship, not fully realizing its own drift."

With encirclement complete, Delcasse now sought to add bite to France's bark. He was increasingly involved with the military arrangements of the Entente, with war plans, and with British army maneuvers in northern France. He supported loans to Russia for armaments. The 1907 Anglo-Russian agreement and the 1909 Racconigi Agreement between Italy and Russia were settled with Delcasse's assistance. At Racconigi, Tsar Nikolai and King Vittorio-Emmanuele met while their foreign ministers signed the secret agreement, which was essentially aimed to prevent further advances by Austria into the Balkans following the Bosnian crisis. This drew Italy deeper into the Entente camp and further whittled away the security of Germany.

Delcasse felt the time was right to build a new fleet in Marseilles. After several explosions and other mishaps involving French ships, he headed the reconditioning and improvement of the French navy, finally becoming Minister of Marine in 1911. Since Germany had broken the ice in the dreadnought race, Delcasse could increase the number of French battleships without offending Britain by threatening her traditional hegemony of the seas. The militarization of the Triple Entente was escalated with the 1912 Naval Accords, which outlined the duties of the French, British and Russian fleets in the event of war with Germany.

With Theophile Delcasse back in the cabinet, friction with Germany picked up where it had left off. In March 1911, France sent an army to occupy Morocco where a convenient revolt had developed after the execution of two Moroccan soldiers who had deserted from their French unit. Again Germany would not allow France to wholly annex Morocco without receiving some sort of compensation, and the gunboat *Panther* was sent to Agadir on the

Atlantic coast of Morocco. Thus began the second Moroccan crisis in July 1911. This time the British strongly supported the French position because they did not want to see a German seaport so near the Straits of Gibraltar. In the final outcome, Germany was awarded part of the Congo for recognizing a French protectorate of Morocco, and Britain was satisfied with having Spain control that portion of Morocco immediately opposite Gibraltar.

FRANCE AND POINCARÉ

Coinciding with all this was a popular explosion of the *revanche* attitude. Public opinion had the French government as being too submissive in the second Moroccan crisis, and it was now the premier who was forced to resign. French agitation in Alsace-Lorraine corresponded with the popular frenzied militarism and nationalism. Raymond Poincaré became Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in 1912. A native of Lorraine, he was inclined to revive the dream of recovery of the lost provinces, of a successful war against Germany. Poincaré himself later said in the *Revue de l'Université de Paris* of October 1920, "In my years at school . . . I saw no other reason for my generation to live than the hope of recovering our lost provinces." There is no doubt that Poincaré took full advantage of this militant nationalism, for he became President of France in 1913. It was Raymond Poincaré who now commanded the horizon-blue pieces on the map of Europe.

Among Poincaré's priorities was the passage of the three-year service bill which increased the French regular army by one-third and provided for a standing army greater in size than that of Germany. He pressed for new loans to Russia for armaments and became intimately involved in the Balkan affairs. Poincaré's first presidential act was to remove the peacefully inclined ambassador to Russia and replace him with none other than Theophile Delcasse as *Ambassadeur en mission temporaire*. This was a strong indication to all that France was consolidating her final plans for war. A German newspaper wrote, "m. Delcasse is one of the most ardent partisans of Revanche . . . We shall have then a period of tension worse than that which we have had for forty-two years." Delcasse personally supervised the completion of strategic railroads and worked with Russian army officers to shorten mobilization time by two days. It seemed he was also there to probe the possibilities of developing a general war from the current Balkan crisis. The German "White Book" records the impressions of the Russian ambassador in London Benckendorff discussing such possibilities developing from the 1913 Balkan War, "if I recall briefly Mr. Cambon's conversations . . . and connect them with Mr. Poincaré's attitude, the impression, amounting almost to a conviction, forms itself in my mind that, among all the Powers, France is the only one which, I do not go so far as to say, desires war, but would, nevertheless, regard it without great regret. In any case, there has been nothing to show me that France is taking any active part in working for compromise. Now, a compromise means peace; beyond that compromise lies war."

With the Balkan Wars ended, Delcasse returned to Paris, being replaced by his friend Maurice Paleologue in January 1914 in St. Petersburg. Poincaré and his Prime Minister Viviani had made plans to visit Russia in July. Poincaré has been criticized for not postponing his trip as it fell during the July crisis which followed the assassination in Sarajevo; but perhaps this crisis made it even more essential for him to see the Tsar. It may even be possible that he had become aware of the assassination plot in advance through Serbian officials. In any case, it is highly suspicious that the entire

GAINING AN ALLY

Strategies for Postal DIPLOMACY

By Bruce Linsey

The author has been a force in the Postal DIPLOMACY fraternity for some years. The following piece, intended for novices is taken from his 'zine, "Voice of Doom". Mr. Linsey also distributes a 35-page introductory publication for the game. More information on either "Supernova" (the novice booklet) or "Voice of Doom" may be obtained by writing Mr. Linsey (73 Ashuelot Street, Apt. 3, Dalton, MA 01226).

In the game of DIPLOMACY, a player will often reach the mid-game years as part of an alliance which he initially believed was ideal, only to discover that the current state of affairs is not as favorable to him as he'd hoped. There are many reasons why this might occur. Perhaps his alliance is losing the war with few prospects of turning it around, or maybe a once-reliable ally is showing signs of disloyalty or loss of interest. Or the reason may be more subtle: the alliance is doing well now, but if it continues the other partner will inevitably emerge as unacceptably dominant in forces or in position. Whatever the reason, there will come times in your postal games when you will want to try to acquire a new ally. Once this time comes, you may find that your main obstacle is inertia on the part of the prospective new partner; why should he scrap an alliance that he may find enjoyable and profitable in order to team up with an unknown quantity—you? There are a few diplomatic techniques which may improve your chances of overcoming this natural reluctance, and if you find yourself in the position of searching for something better in a game you will need some understanding of them.

Before examining these strategies, I should point out that it is not my intention in this article to discuss "puppeting". There are techniques other than those described here which may be employed when you are trying to ally with a country much larger or much smaller than the one you are playing, but those are not within the scope of this essay. Rather, we are going to assume that yours is a viable power trying to persuade another viable power to join you in an alliance of approximate equals.

Build a Foundation

The first step in effecting a major shift of alliance structures to your benefit is actually a preliminary: you should already have established a history of open, friendly correspondence with your ally to be. Time and time again, it has been stated that you must keep writing to all players in the game, even your current enemies, and this is the most important reason for that. You don't know at any given point in the game just which player you will want to woo three or four game-years down the road. Therefore, it is a fundamentally sound policy to maintain diplomatic relations with every other country in the game. If you have done this, then when you make the decision to try to court a prospective ally, your negotiations can be worked very naturally into the enjoyable correspondence you already have going. If you instead abruptly start bombarding someone with proposals after a silence of several seasons duration, it will be quite difficult to avoid appearing totally self-serving regardless of how many warm fuzzies you inject into your letters.

If you doubt the importance of maintaining correspondence, think about any of the multi-player games you have played in or are playing now. At some point, you were probably at war with some

player who didn't bother to talk to you very often, if at all. Now suppose that out of the blue this guy suddenly wanted you to switch to his side. How likely were you to agree to this, assuming that there was no compelling reason for you to do so? Not very likely at all, right? On the other hand, if you're at all competent yourself, you've probably found yourself at war with some other good player with whom you did maintain a lively correspondence. It crosses your mind many times, doesn't it, that you might *enjoy* being on the same side with this fellow. If he has indicated his desire to do the same, why you might well have given it some strong consideration. Put yourself in the other guy's shoes then, and you'll realize the importance of regular conversation when the time comes to persuade him to join forces with you. Build yourself a foundation of fluidity and success later in the game by keeping open all avenues of negotiation at all times.

Sow the Seeds of Discontent

Reference has already been made to the necessity of overcoming the inertia of your prospective ally's satisfaction with his current state of affairs. Before coming out with a suggestion for an alternative alliance structure, then, you must first ensure that he perceives weaknesses in the one which presently exists for him. This step in the process of gaining an ally is perhaps the most difficult of all; you must be patient and subtle about what you are doing. Your task will be further compounded if there really *isn't* any good reason for him to worry about his current situation; you will have to invent reasons and make them sound as credible as possible. It may take several well-composed letters and more than one season to soften up your target to the point where he is receptive to your suggestions that all is not ideal for him as matters are progressing. You can hardly hide the fact that you are serving your own interests in doing this, so in general downplay this fact without actually denying it and stress *his* interests.

There are many different reasons why a player might in fact be dissatisfied with his situation, and not coincidentally some of these were summarized at the beginning of this article in discussing why you yourself might want to change matters. To reiterate, your ally-to-be might be made to realize (or believe) that his side is going to lose the war, or that his current ally is going to attain a dominant position, or is unpredictable or losing interest or whatever, or even that your alliance can retreat to a stalemate line if necessary. Emphasize whatever reasons are most credible. Rock his boat of complacency by troubling the waters. Plant just a few weeds in his rose garden of discontent, and soon he may be ready to seek more fertile ground.

Provide an Alternative

Once your prospective ally has realized that there are shortcomings to his current alliance, there is still the danger that he may view his situation as the best available option open to him despite its weaknesses. Your job now becomes that of a salesman; you must convince him that there is a preferable alternative to the course he is now pursuing. That more favorable course of action happens to be an alliance with you.

You should point out to your "friend" specifically how the dangers and pitfalls of his current alliance will be diminished or eliminated if he

chooses to switch to your side. Once again, your degree of inventiveness must depend upon the realities of the game situation. Many times, you have only to speak the truth to formulate a persuasive argument for the proposed shift in allegiance. Other times, there are reasons why the new alliance will not be to his advantage; these must be hidden, downplayed or ignored. You are the college graduate on a job interview, the eager gentleman courting a lovely lady. You are in the position of selling yourself and your prospects, and whatever you have to offer must be highlighted.

Don't be afraid to let your ally-to-be know just how this new partnership is to work. You can talk about the division of spoils, comparing it to what he might expect to gain from his current course of action. Naturally, you will arrange it so that the new alliance will (or will seem to) benefit him more than the old one. If there are catches, they can either be brought out into the open now or glossed over until a commitment has been made on the mapboard, depending on your assessment of the chances that these conditions might doom your proposal before its implementation. Sometimes it is better to hold off springing such minor unpleasant surprises as "I want Belgium back by 1907" until your friend has made *and acted upon* his decision to switch sides. Sometimes, he may find such an after-the-fact revelation so irritating that he will consider himself betrayed and will try to arrange another alliance shift, this one unfavorable to you no doubt. If there are these trifling drawbacks to your proposed realignment, then walk on eggs when it comes to revealing them in advance.

Although the new alliance must seem to be profitable to your friend—else why should he team up with you in the first place—you cannot go making unreasonable offers either. Only a rank novice, if anyone, will believe you if you offer him five of your supply centers to switch sides. Be realistic in your approach. If the other guy is about your equal in ability, then don't try to trick him with a ploy that you yourself would find transparent or suspicious because he will view it that way too. Provide an alternative which fits into the fine groove of better than what he has now, but not incredibly so.

Formulate a Plan

It's not always an easy matter to initiate an alliance in terms of the tactics being used. Somebody is going to have to trust someone with whom he has been at war. There will always be some degree of suspicion on one or both sides that the arrangement is all a gigantic fraud to get a decided positional advantage for the other guy. Indeed, it is rarely reasonable to suggest that your partner make all the first moves; such a plan is so obviously an invitation to disaster that he will reject it out of hand anyway. Simultaneous action is usually best, but it can be reneged upon as well. If the current war was initiated when one of you stabbed the other, the original victim may insist that the other back off first out of fairness; he's the one who first violated the trust, after all, so he should be the first to reestablish it. But after a game-year or two of fighting, this sort of reasoning just isn't likely to carry any weight with the original aggressor; the war is in full swing regardless of who started it.

Oftentimes you, as the proponent of reconciliation, will find yourself pressured into making the first move. Or in some cases, perhaps one power will have less to risk than the other by being the

first to disengage. If Germany and Russia are fighting and Russia controls the barren zone between the two countries' home centers, he may reasonably expect to have to make the first conciliatory move. The more trust that each party can inspire in the other, the better. But somehow you must accompany your suggestion for an alliance shift with a solid tactical means of accomplishing it, one which minimizes the risk to both parties. How many times have you seen, say, Austria and Germany stuck to each other's throats in the middle of the board—both wanting to disengage and turn to a more profitable front but neither able to do so for fear that the other will keep coming? The fabric of alliance is indeed very difficult to weave until all of those little tactical needles have been threaded.

Keep an Open Door

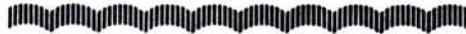
We have already made the point that this new alliance is to be between equals. Insofar as possible, it may as well be conceived in this same spirit of parity. When you finally propose your tactical plan, try not to sound too rigid. Make it clear that these are merely your suggestions, and ask your new ally for his ideas or counterproposals. Most players like to feel that their thoughts are valued, so there is a psychological advantage to soliciting input from the other guy; in addition, he may actually come up with some genuine improvements to your suggested tactics. So, if you're sincere about being his ally, start it off right and listen as well as you talk. Try to see the advantages to his proposals (without totally lowering your guard against the possibility that he might be taking advantage of the opportunity to set you up). If there are really any major bugs in his plans, by all means squash them—but do so in a tactful and diplomatic manner.

In addition, you should be prepared for a rejection of your proposed alliance at any step. Despite your best efforts, it will sometimes be impossible to overcome the inertia of complacency. Whether or not someone chooses to cross the threshold of alliance to you, your door should remain ajar. Maybe he just doesn't think the time is right; or perhaps he's still too suspicious of your motives. Unless you're on the ropes already, you should make him aware that you are receptive to cooperation at a later date if he'd prefer that. Rarely is it wise to treat someone as a game-long sworn enemy just because he won't ally now. If you sense any wavering in his stance, work quietly to insure that the advantages of an alliance with you become more and more apparent with time; hopefully, one day he'll contact you.

Conclusion

This has been a modest analysis of some of the means of gaining an ally in *DIPLOMACY*. Lest any misunderstanding arise from the sequential nature of this essay, I hasten to add that the enumerated strategies described here need not be regarded as strictly distinct from one another. In practice, they will almost invariably overlap. For instance, even during the stage where you are cultivating a player's dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs, you might be tentatively suggesting the alternative of an alliance with you and even throwing out a few preliminary tactical possibilities.

There will often arise the problem of how to prevent (or deal with) your current ally finding out about your double-dealing whenever you are trying to change partners. And after you have succeeded in gaining an ally, the next step is to keep him as long as you find the alliance profitable. However, these are concerns which go beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that this inertia you've been battling will now become momentum in your favor, which is why gaining an ally in mid-game is so much more difficult a task than keeping one.



Masters of the Game . . . Cont'd from Page 22

leadership of the French government chose to take a cruise to the Russian capital at the height of Europe's greatest crisis in decades.

From July 20 through July 23, Poincare met repeatedly with the Tsar. In these secret meetings, the Tsar was pressured to conform to Poincare's policy not only by the French president but by his own diplomats, Sazanov and Izvolsky. Poincare is said to have dominated these conversations, trying to instill the Tsar with courage and with the confidence that England and France stood firmly behind him. They had a final confidential meeting just before Poincare's departure which the Tsar said left a lasting impression.

Oddly enough, not a single document or even a single personal memoir survives from these four days of intense negotiation. Few of the participants would even record the tone, let alone the substance, of these meetings. In public, however, Poincare talked of peace but made it clear that he was hoping for war. In a conversation with the Austrian ambassador in St. Petersburg, he took a pugilistic attitude. When addressing a crowd, Poincare amplified its war enthusiasm. He claimed to believe that there could be mobilization without war, and perhaps even convinced the Tsar of this, when in fact Poincare knew that the Kaiser was receiving just the opposite advice. Of great significance is that France made no appeal to Austria for compromise, "and beyond compromise lies war".

It is evident that through years of shrewd diplomacy the masters of the game had effectively encircled Germany, undermined her alliances, gathered around France the military support needed to regain the lost provinces, opened up supply centers necessary to survive a long war, exacerbated each European crisis which had arisen by chance (if not by design), and finally precipitated a war which Germany could not win. It may have been the Russian mobilization, which the Tsar believed would be a show of strength which with to barter with the Kaiser, that was the key to Poincare's ploy of having Germany declare war in 1914 (just as France had been tricked by Bismarck into declaring war in 1870). In any case, the long awaited war of *revanche* had been realized.

CONCLUSION

When the Great War ended, Germany was utterly defeated. Austria-Hungary was fragmented, and Turkey had lost its empire. Of the Allies, Italy had suffered greatly and gained little, England had lost her naval supremacy and was left with dominions and mandates demanding independence for their sacrifices, and Russia had fallen into a most abhorrent episode of starvation and mass murder and civil war at the hands of the Bolsheviks. France itself had been bled white by the war, an entire generation crippled, but those two little provinces had been regained. The French statesmen had won their game.

There were many great players in the diplomacy game at the beginning of the 20th Century, and many had sought a wide war as the best way to achieve their aims. It is likely that such a war would have eventually erupted sometime in the early decades of this century regardless of the actions of the French diplomats, but this may have been too late for those who could remember when Alsace and Lorraine were French. The date that the First World War began was fixed by the activities of Theophile Delcasse and Raymond Poincare, driven by that single conviction that they held in their hearts. How would you have fared with these gentlemen seated across the table from you in the game of *DIPLOMACY*?



AREA TOP 50 LIST

Rank	Name	Times On List	Rating	Previous Rank
1.	K. Combs	58	2548YOW	1
2.	D. Burdick	57	2248GGO	2
3.	J. Beard	47	2188IIR	3
4.	J. Kreuz	52	2176HGP	5
5.	J. Noel	11	2168DDJ	4
6.	B. Sinigaglio	43	2152GJ	6
7.	D. Garbutt	56	2111HJO	7
8.	P. Siragusa	52	2110FHK	8
9.	E. Mineman	28	2072DFG	9
10.	S. Sutton	25	2054KHN	10
11.	P. Gartman	23	2030HHK	11
12.	P. Flory	34	1999EHK	12
13.	C. Corn	7	1999EEA	21
14.	P. Landry	32	1997HIN	13
15.	H. Newby	23	1989UJO	14
16.	M. Sincavage	47	1988EFK	15
17.	B. Remsburg	41	1987HIQ	16
18.	T. Oleson	67	1985YZZ	17
19.	G. Schnittker	5	1983DFJ	19
20.	R. Beyma	33	1979DDG	18
21.	F. Preissle	55	1967MNY	20
22.	F. Reese	38	1946IDJ	22
23.	W. Scott	55	1944MKV	23
24.	J. Spontak	2	1922CBD	25
25.	J. Eliason	6	1912EHL	27
26.	T. Deane	10	1908EBB	26
27.	B. Laboon	2	1892RFL	44
28.	M. Rogers	18	1880CEH	28
29.	E. O'Connor	17	1876FGM	29
30.	P. Halfman	8	1875GHP	24
31.	K. McCarthy	12	1872CFI	30
32.	B. Salvatore	25	1871GKO	31
33.	B. Schoose	23	1871GIM	32
34.	R. Shurdut	3	1860EGL	33
35.	N. Cromartie	43	1838GHO	34
36.	E. Miller	5	1832HKQ	38
37.	S. Johns	11	1831HFI	35
38.	G. Smith	12	1826FGM	36
39.	G. Gorrell	1	1824MFD	—
40.	J. Martin	16	1807DFI	39
41.	M. Frisk	12	1798CEI	40
42.	M. Miller	44	1795GHO	41
43.	L. Barlow	5	1786IKT	42
44.	F. Ornstein	41	1786GHM	43
45.	L. Carpenter	3	1781CEF	45
46.	K. Kinsel	3	1775GFI	46
47.	D. Kopp	3	1774GIN	47
48.	J. Lutz	3	1766HGP	48
49.	M. Mitchell	1	1758EHL	—
50.	D. Greenwood	3	1756GFK	49

MEET THE 50 . . .

Mr. Don Greenwood is very old, married and father of two, and is Vice President in charge of Research and Development for The Avalon Hill Game Company of Baltimore, MD.

Favorite Game: UP FRONT, THUNDER AT CASSINO
AREA Rated Games: ANZIO, STAL, AK
AREA W-L Record: 27-10-3
Gaming Time/Week: 50+ hours
Hobbies: Gaming
Pet Peeve: Wise-assed editors and computers
% Time PBM: 50%
Play Preference: Pbm or ftf (makes no difference so long as you have a good opponent)

Mr. Greenwood is, of course, the pre-eminent game developer in the hobby today (since he has outlived everybody else). He deposits a few words of wisdom upon us:

"Games were never better than today's. It is only the proliferation of titles and mediums that has thinned the ranks of competent players to the point where finding a good opponent for the game of your choice is so difficult. I keep hoping that people will tire of their computer toys and come back to real wargaming."

RE-THINKING THE CONQUEST OF EUROPE

First Turn Strategy for HITLER'S WAR

By Sam A. Mustafa

I confess. I was a *THIRD REICH* fanatic. Having started playing that "game of all games" eleven years ago, I cannot even begin to imagine the number of times that my panzers have rolled across Poland! I participated in the Avalon Hill playtesting of the latest edition and until last year I could not conceive of any game even coming close to my precious *3R* for pleasure and involvement. But then I finally satisfied my curiosity and skepticism and bought Avalon Hill's *HITLER'S WAR*. Indeed, part of my motive was mercenary; with the current prices of wargames, *HW* is relatively cheap.

What a bargain! I hate to admit it, but I haven't opened my *THIRD REICH* box since that day. I have forced *HITLER'S WAR* upon all my gaming buddies, and have sung its praises constantly ever since. And now, in the hallowed pages of *The GENERAL*, where so many fine *3R* articles have seen print, I shall attempt to convince my compatriots among the readership of this magazine who still haven't seen the light. *HITLER'S WAR* is a superb game in a deceptively petite package.

Before I launch into a discussion of strategy for *HITLER'S WAR* players, several words are in order to properly introduce this game to the unacquainted. Let me address a few of the more salient features of *HITLER'S WAR* that shine by comparison to *THIRD REICH*:

1) The *HITLER'S WAR* Rulebook is a modest 18 pages, and can be finished (and understood!) in a single afternoon. There are no confusing cross-references, and aside from some redundancy in the naval rules caused by the programmed-instruction method, meanings and methods are wonderfully clear and unambiguous.

2) The game allows for the progress of technology to profoundly affect play, uses a brilliant and innovative technology system that flows smoothly. Strategic warfare becomes an integral part of normal military operations—not a fancy add-on that demands its own complex rules and special counters. (Veteran *3R*-ers may recall that "Strategic Warfare" was an optional rule until this latest edition.)

3) Economics are both simple and accurate. Controlling (or destroying) the Ruhr now actually has an effect on the German war effort for instance. Nation's economies don't fall into the hands of the conquerors wholesale, however; they must be rebuilt. Sections of countries are worthwhile to conquer for their production value. Now there is actually a reason to attack the Ukraine or the Caucasus!

These are but a few of the winning features of *HITLER'S WAR* that make it stand apart from its older competitor. When faced with the starkly innovative *HITLER'S WAR*, players will be extremely surprised to find that the game is at once more capable of simulating World War II and, at the same time, providing a virtually unending selection of strategic options. No need for variant counters here.

To be fair, I must point out that there are a few features of *HITLER'S WAR* that may "turn off" hardened *THIRD REICH* veterans. Actually, I find many of these to be assets that allow for a more historically accurate and mechanically logical game. I present them nonetheless to illustrate this game for the uninitiated:

1) Players may miss seeing counters that represent exact units (such as the "1st SS Panzer Corps",

"3rd Shock Army" or "Western Desert Force"). Although armies can still face off against each other with a modicum of nostalgia (the Afrika Korps and the 8th Army still slug it out in the deserts of North Africa), the individual units within them are delineated by Strength Points of different types.

2) *HITLER'S WAR* is in some ways a bit *too* accurate. For example, there is almost no way a competent Allied player can lose the war at sea. Axis navies just don't have the ahistorical firepower that *THIRD REICH* granted them, with those bizarre "9-factor fleet" units. *THIRD REICH* boosted Axis naval strength in order to provide an interesting game. Unfortunately, it had no basis in historical fact. As in history, *HITLER'S WAR* gives the Axis player his only real chance of naval victory in his U-boat and raider forces. It is possible for the Axis to build a surface fleet, but the time and expense necessary could be much better allocated to other arenas of the strategic war—such as readying for "Operation Barbarossa".

Weighing all these positives and negatives of *HITLER'S WAR*, is it outstanding? I think so. And, examining how one might go about winning a game of *HW* may explain further.

THE PERFECT AXIS ATTACK

When you've set up your game of *HITLER'S WAR* (throughout this article, I will assume that players are using the Campaign Game II, with all Advanced and Optional Rules) and are sitting back planning your conquest of Europe, what can you expect to do about Churchill and his froggie friends? The Allies have a 50% advantage in production. And time passes very rapidly in this fast paced game; each turn that you don't hurt the Allies is a turn in which Germany herself is hurt. Alacrity is essential. Therefore you must remember the axiom, "Gaul est delendum!" And the sooner the better. Knocking France out of the war on the first turn is absolutely essential to Axis victory in this game.

Let us examine briefly what the French can do on that first turn if you avert your gaze and turn against Poland. The French fleet can be safely evacuated to Africa, where it will join the British if France falls. Indeed, the entire French army could be evacuated, so long as there are no Axis troops on French soil. Think how nasty it would be to find Britain with such a massive "Free French Army" to draw upon, with a French fleet to support it!

Further, during the Allied production phase, the French army can reinforce, either at the front or in a reserve in Paris (or both). The rules forbid French fortress building until Winter 1940, but the Allied player can still deploy up to seven new infantry factors, effectively doubling their ground strength. A French reserve army in Paris could absorb enough damage to force Germany to take two turns to conquer France instead of just one. When one also considers that the first turn will be squandered in the East, it becomes apparent that France might easily hold out until Winter 1940.

If you leave France alone on Turn 1, bear in mind that Italy enters the war during the *Axis Production Phase* of Turn 2. If France still functions, it can do some serious damage to Italy if you're not careful. All Italy needs is three hexes lost and it will throw in the towel. Any Allied player who knows that France is soon lost might attack an unguarded Italy just to devastate production areas, with the possibility of causing an early Italian surrender.

Most sacrilegious of all, turning to Poland first leaves a vulnerable back door that a bold Allied player might decide to exploit. By combining British and French armor, the Allies have a reasonable chance of being able to invade the Ruhr. The Allies would build a force of six infantry, four armor and two Tac air strength points. It could easily assault and destroy the German fortress in N9, and automatically advance into that hex. In the exploitation phase, the Allies would have a 50% chance of tak-

Figure 1: The German invasion of France. Option One against a Concentrated Allied Defense.





Figure 2: The German invasion of France. Option Two against a Scattered Allied Defense.

ing a second hex—probably the unguarded Ruhr; they even have a 33% chance of taking Berlin! Game over.

None of these admonitions are too fanciful. As an Allied player I have used each of these ploys to make life difficult for Adolf when he casually walked into Poland on Turn 1 (thinking he was playing *THIRD REICH*, no doubt, when the Axis has much more time). I might point out to those Fuhrers-to-be who want “Poland first” that Poland isn’t going anywhere. That country remains unaligned until conquered, precluding any Allied reinforcements. Her army can’t leave her borders. Third, and most important I should think, would you rather take Poland’s two production points or France’s seven from Churchill’s bank account?

Now I haven’t spent this much space justifying a strategy if it couldn’t be executed. The fact of the matter is that the Germans have an excellent chance of destroying France on the first turn. It will be done, of course, through the Low Countries and it will require re-deployment of the Wehrmacht.

France begins the game with the following army deployed in hex O8: five infantry, two mechanized and one Tac air. The Maginot Line is amply defended and will be bypassed. It is that French army we are after. The Germans begin with ten mechanized, eleven infantry and two Tac air SP. I’d suggest deploying them in the following fashion: Army Group Centre—three infantry, seven mechanized and two Tac air in P9; Army Group West—six infantry and three mechanized in O10; OKW H.Q.—two infantry in P10 (Berlin).

Now, reveal your intentions against the Low Countries, so that the Allied player can set their forces up. He gets two strength points, plus a one-factor fort in hex O9. He has only two logical ways to deploy these forces; if he doesn’t choose either of these placements, your job is much easier. First, he can place his two points in the same hex as the fort; this will give him three factors, with the ability to absorb four factor’s worth of damage (the fort absorbs an extra one). Or, he can place his two points in P8, trying to block your passage; this is the German’s preferred case. The first is the better choice actually, since it runs a better chance of ending German hopes of having both their armies in position to exploit. Although it seems that the latter set-up would do more to block the German thrust, once your true strategy is revealed, the Allied player will understand that it is far better to stop one army and ignore the other than to try to slow

two of them down. Now, let us look at the German operations against either Allied placement.

Assuming that the Low Country’s two infantry SP are placed in P8, you make the following attacks. First, Army Group West will assault O9. The fortress has a 16% chance of taking one factor from you; you, on the other hand, have a 100% chance of annihilating it completely. Army Group West will then try to advance into the hex and will have an 84% chance of doing so. Once there, it halts. Army Group Centre will attack hex P8, automatically destroying the two factors, advance into that hex and stop. Thus far you have a 92% chance of all your formations being in optimum position.

During the exploitation phase, Army Group West now assaults the French First Army. If the French decide to defensively assault now, all the better. If they hold their fire, they will be dramatically weakened for the knock-out punch. Next, of course, Army Group Centre will attack. The two Tac air will engage the French single one, probably with no losses (16% chance of a German loss and 33% chance of an Allied loss). The French cannot possibly inflict more than a three-SP loss on the Centre, all of which can be infantry. You, however, can feasibly inflict up to four losses on him. The French can only take seven SP losses; your two armies can potentially inflict eight (or, at a minimum, four).

Army Group Centre may now advance into hex O8. If the French have three factors left, you have only a 50% chance of a victory. It will be more likely that the French will have two, one or none. If the French retreat, they will lose an additional point due to German air superiority. All things considered, Army Group Centre will have as high as a 84% chance of taking Paris and no less than a 33% chance.

The odds are still not bad if the Allied player deploys everything in hex O9. Here there are two options. The first is to go ahead with the above strategy, knowing that Army Group West will have only a 50% chance of advancing into O9. There is an alternative that guarantees the exploitation attack, but lessens the chances of the panzers reaching Paris.

In this option, Army Group Centre assaults the fort and troops in O9. Even with lousy rolls, it can still automatically take the hex. From there, it advances into hex P8 and another automatic victory. Next, Army Group West occupies the now-friendly hex O9. Through this strategy, you have a 100% chance of being in position to attack the French First Army. Unfortunately, Army Group Centre’s gas

tanks are running low because of having made the detour through Luxembourg.

The assault against the French goes as planned, and the possibility exists (a good 50% chance) for completely wiping out the French Army in one fell swoop. Army Group Centre advances into hex O8 automatically, and then tries for Paris. The range is 1-7, +3 on the die roll; so the German player must roll 1-4, a 67% chance.

Either of these plans are obviously superior to invading Poland on the first turn, and they both afford an excellent opportunity for taking Paris in one masterful stroke. The French navy will be dismantled before the British have a chance to grab it; the Allied war effort will be down to 16 points; and the Germans will gain one morale point at the expense of the British. The most significant early-war thorn in the side of the Axis will be removed and the Wehrmacht will have the capacity to roam at will across Europe, with plenty of time to prepare for a tremendous strike on Russia if desired.

The first-turn fall of France will also have a profound effect on the morale of the Allied player. If true to form, he will tend to throw up his arms in despair and satisfy himself with trivial pursuits in North Africa while waiting impotently for America to arrive while the Germans storm most of the Continent, build a massive industrial base and gain a lead in the technological race.

THE ALLIED RIPOSTE

Now, allow me to take the place of Sir Winston. I have just watched a sudden and dramatic conquest of France by the dreaded Huns who gave me no time to react, send reinforcements or at least evacuate the bloody frogs. It would indeed be tempting to throw up my hands and become a spectator to the unfolding of the new German empire. Instead, there are a number of tricks that can be done to remind Adolf that England is not shaken and still has a sting.

Cardinal Rule #1 is to keep your cool! This may seem superfluous to say, but it is quite a serious failing among many gamers. If you give the German player the impression that what he just accomplished was no more than expected, and not at all extraordinary, then he will continue to exercise caution. If you have been paying attention to the illustrations, then you’ll notice that hex Q9 (northern Holland) was never touched by the ambitious Huns on their merry way to Paris. Thus, it is still an Allied hex, and it is an Allied hex only two away from Berlin. The temptation will be overwhelming to land the ready British Expeditionary Force in Holland and try to do some damage to the Reich, either by sacking the Ruhr or by trying for Berlin itself. Don’t do it! Let me give you some sound reasons why the Allied player on Turn 1 should simply accept the loss of Holland with good grace.

First, stripping Britain of all her defenses is asking for trouble. These troops are the only reserve you’ve got left. You will need them to defend the Suez Canal. Secondly, your chances of success are not good. From Q9, you assault P9 with six factors, automatically killing it off. You then have a 67% chance of taking the hex. From there, you can try to exploit either to Berlin or the Ruhr. The obvious choice is Berlin, but they have two SP there which can defensively assault with a 33% chance of hurting you. You have a 50% chance of destroying them (assuming that you weren’t hurt yet) and then a 50% chance of taking the hex if it is unoccupied. If it is occupied by even a single strength point, your chance is only 16% (you’d have to roll a “1”). So, the overall odds of taking Berlin are only 28% to 55%, depending on the luck of your Axis opponent. It’s a serious risk that I wouldn’t take if I’d just been hurt badly by the fall of France. Of course, if you’re depressed and feel that you’ll lose anyway, go ahead and try so you can concede and start a new

game. You have about a one-in-three chance of ending the war in the first turn.

"Alright," you say. "Going for Berlin is not worth the risk. I can still ransack the Ruhr and destroy six German production centers, right?" Well . . . perhaps. Given our German strategy, the Ruhr (O10) and P9 will be undefended, giving you a decent chance of taking both. However, there are some subtle things to take into consideration here, as well.

The first is that you will indubitably lose whatever forces you commit to this attack next turn, as the German cut off supplies. That will leave England with absolutely no army. Secondly, your chances for success are again not sure-fire. You have a 67% chance of taking P9, and a 50% chance of taking O10. Although this doesn't seem to bad on the surface, let us remember what you will assuredly be losing: two infantry, two mechanized, one Tac air and one Amphibious SP. This totals some 26 Allied production points worth of units. Even if you *do* ransack both hexes, you will only destroy six production centers, which will cost the Germans 18 points to re-build. Thus, even with optimal results, you will still lose a net of eight production points—and you are definitely not guaranteed optimal results. I think the casinos of Vegas offer better odds than that! The fallacy, then, of the "vulnerability" of the Ruhr is a trap no Allied player should fall into. Your precious British Home Army is deployed to much better use in North Africa (in hex D14), awaiting the entry of the Italians.

There does exist, of course, for one slim reason or another, a small chance that the Germans will pursue the "France first" strategy and fail to overwhelm that country. If that case should arise and there is any surviving French armor, it might indeed be put to far better use in a back-door invasion of Germany through Holland. The lack of British armor is the critical delimiter in the Allied plan. If it can be "beefed" up, even by one point, then the Allies have as good as a 67% chance of seizing Berlin.

Of course, if France is still alive after the Germany onslaught, it will be extremely tempting to reinforce that front at all costs. I would seriously advise against that on the simple basis that France will inevitably fall on the next turn anyway—taking any reinforcements down with her. As the Allied player, take full advantage of that one glorious turn where you have some twenty production points and reinforce England, not France. Evacuate France as best possible into areas that will assuredly fall to British control when the panzers sight the *Arc de Triumphe*. This will give the Allies plenty of breathing space and a sizable nucleus of force to challenge the Axis in hard-to-reach fronts like Gibraltar, Egypt and Scandinavia. Remember, our cardinal rule was not to lose your cool!

AND THEN WHAT?

Granted, the aim of this article was never to present an in-depth, step-by-step guide to winning *HITLER'S WAR*. My aim has been to show both players what I feel to be the most logical courses to take in that crucial first turn in order to allow them to pursue strategies of their own devising later in the game. Generally speaking, as the Axis player I never try to challenge Britain's naval supremacy. At the risk of sounding conventional, I believe that a rapid and decisive conquest of Russia offers the Germans the best chance for victory. If Russia falls before America enters, then there is little possibility of Germany ever being seriously hurt. The production base of the Axis would enable them to adequately defend the Reich and ultimately win the technological war as well.

This initial German strategy allows for the Germans to launch "Operation Barbarossa" as early as Summer 1940. It would probably be more

advisable, however, to allow yourself a good three turns of preparation and launch the attack in Spring of 1941. With this much time to "mop up" most of Europe, you will have been able to amass a tremendous mechanized force that should have no difficulty in defeating Stalin by the time Pearl Harbor hits the news.

The Allies, of course, must hang on until America—with its industrial base—enters the war. With a tenacious and imaginative defense, Russia may survive to put pressure on Germany's eastern frontiers. And the Western Allies should plan to return to the Continent in late 1943 or early 1944. At the same time, the Allies must heat up the technological race. At this point, with relatively even attrition, Germany can be bankrupted and defeated.

HITLER'S WAR offers gamers who prefer the strategic simulation (as I do) a myriad of options not afforded by *THIRD REICH*, without the complexity and time-consuming details of that older game. It is unfortunate that the elder game's prestige and proven longevity has prevented *HITLER'S WAR* from enjoying a place in the limelight. This article has been my attempt to address the innumerable advantages of the *HW* game system, as well as briefly highlight a winning strategy for each side. I have not attempted, I feel, to dress *HITLER'S WAR* in any coat that it does not deserve; Avalon Hill has a real winner here—and all for less than 20 dollars! But be warned: this is a game you won't put on the shelf.



SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING

Titles Listed: 117

Total Responses: 557

Rank:	Title	Pub	Rank Times			Freq. Ratio
			Last	On	List	
1.	Advanced SL	AH	1	11	7.0	
2.	1830	AH	12	2	4.1	
3.	Yanks	AH	3	2	3.8	
4.	Beyond Valor	AH	11	6	3.2	
5.	Hedgerow Hell	AH	—	1	2.5	
6.	Squad Leader	AH	10	40	2.5	
7.	Streets of Fire	AH	—	1	2.3	
8.	Russian Front	AH	9	2	2.2	
9.	Patton's Best	AH	19	2	2.0	
10.	Russian Campaign	AH	14	40	1.9	
11.	Third Reich	AH	8	40	1.7	
12.	Ambush	VG	—	1	1.6	
13.	Diplomacy	AH	5	12	1.5	
14.	Paratrooper	AH	6	6	1.5	
15.	Up Front	AH	2	22	1.5	
16.	Titan	AH	—	1	1.4	
17.	B-17	AH	4	8	1.3	
18.	WS&IM	AH	—	1	1.2	
19.	Firepower	AH	—	1	1.1	
20.	Empires in Arms	AH	15	3	1.0	

It was inevitable that *HEDGEROW HELL* and *STREETS OF FIRE* join their *ASL* cousins on the list of player preferences. The *ASL* system continues to dominate this rating column, indicating that we will continue to provide support and coverage in these pages. On the strength of such coverage (the recent issue Vol. 23, NO. 6), *1830* surges to the top—something of a unique honor for a "non-war game". Likewise, *FIREPOWER* returns to our listing after a lengthy absence; we're sure that the recent articles by Mr. Werbaneth on current conflict has something to do with that pleasant surprise. Of course, with these titles appearing, some favorites disappear (at least momentarily) from the ranks of top 20 "hit parade": *AIR FORCE*, *GUNS OF AUGUST*, *WAR & PEACE*, *BRITANNIA*, *FLIGHT LEADER*, *VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC*. But we're sure that they will be back.

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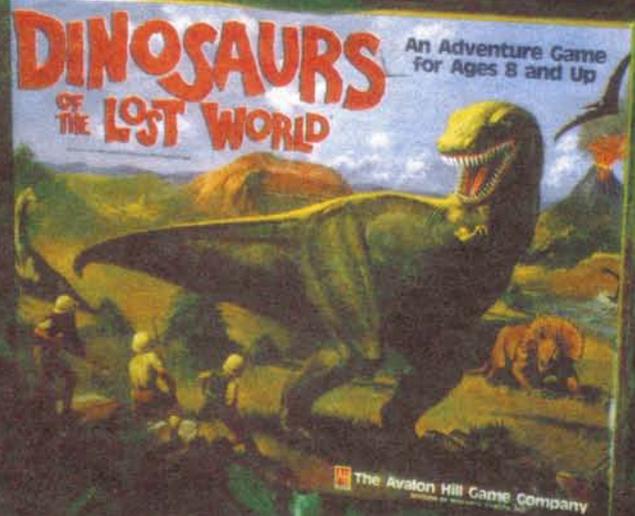
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PLAYING TIME: 90 minutes



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THE VIEW FROM DOWN UNDER

Player's Notes for EMPIRES IN ARMS

By Harry Rowland and Greg Pinder

EMPIRES IN ARMS took us about four years to design, test and publish; and it took a further two years for The Avalon Hill Game Company to develop into its present improved version. After all this time, it is refreshing to be given this chance to "re-learn" our game in its new form. In the process of doing so, we were reminded of many of the exciting moments we had in designing this game. We would like to share with you some of our thoughts and feelings about the design behind *EMPIRES IN ARMS*.

When you first read through the rules of *EMPIRES IN ARMS*, some of the concepts are unusual and may look complex. Relax; they're not. After playing the first few turns, the mechanics become very familiar—but you will still be far from mastering the various strategies needed to play this game successfully. This article is intended to help you get a handle on the winning strategy for *EMPIRES IN ARMS*.

Our gaming philosophy rests on the observation that there are three important ingredients in every successful historical game. *EMPIRES IN ARMS* was designed to incorporate each of these ingredients and therefore reflects that philosophy as applied to strategic Napoleonic warfare. These ingredients are playability, historicity and enjoyability.

The Game

A "playable" game is one in which the players compete against each other rather than against the system. This is achieved by using game systems that are understandable and sensible. The game rules should be comprehensive and clear and unambiguously expressed. The physical components should be functional, comprehensible and sufficient for playing needs. Unfortunately, our original edition of *EMPIRES IN ARMS* only satisfied two of these criteria. The game systems, we like to think, are understandable and sensible. The physical components were functional and comprehensible, but not always sufficient. For instance, there were too few garrison counters and no readily accessible sequence of play. Fortunately, these and a few other omissions have been remedied in the Avalon Hill version of the game. But our major failing was in the writing of the rules. Although they were generally clearly expressed, albeit not always unambiguously, they were by no means comprehensive. Again, the folk at Avalon Hill have corrected this deficiency.

A "historical" game is one in which the play of the game will achieve historically plausible results, although not necessarily the actual historical outcome. The systems by which this is achieved should provide a mapping of reality so that the means employed by the players will give a logical result.

A game is "enjoyable" when players not only have fun in playing, but also look forward to future games. This is achieved by including a lot of decision making in the play. The more decision making there is, the more difficult it is to play perfectly, and such a game will often end with all players reflecting on their mistakes and pondering how they will do better next time. This promotes game durability and keeps the game off the shelf and on the table. Another part of making a game enjoyable is the role-playing aspect. Very few people realize how much role-playing is involved in gaming. In every game, players expect to take the role of real-life commanders, and the sales success of any game can depend on how well this is

achieved. In *EMPIRES IN ARMS*, we incorporated this aspect by putting players in control of the strategic planning for a major Napoleonic power. Each of these major powers has different military, economic and geographic advantages and disadvantages so that they each acquire a subtle yet distinct personality. Players who are well suited to manage one country may be hopeless at playing another. For example, an aggressive "gung-ho" player would make a good emperor of France but might be totally unsuited to control Prussia or Spain.

Let's look at how these three objectives are satisfied in the major systems employed in *EMPIRES IN ARMS*. The four major systems in the game are the political, economic, supply and combat systems. Each is important to the success of the whole, but can be studied separately.

The Political System:

The political system was designed to constrain players to the political precepts of the Napoleonic period, but without strait-jacketing them with strict rules allowing only limited and specific actions. Players can declare war on whomever they choose, make and break alliances at will, and reach other understandings with other players. Political decisions therefore are left pretty much in the hands of the players. However, there is a cost.

Victory is determined in terms of political status of the major powers, and this is a function of the interaction of the players' political decisions. Thus, every political decision must be taken with the aim of ultimate victory. In many political games, alliances are made and broken willy-nilly; but in *EMPIRES IN ARMS*, alliances must be made with long-term goals in mind and therefore broken only when those goals are fulfilled or fundamentally altered.

The Economic System:

The economic system incorporates the major elements of the Napoleonic economic structure—trade, taxation and conscription. Trade is controlled largely by the British player, who may trade with any non-enemy major powers at his discretion. Of course, he must trade in order to gain money for himself because, unlike other major powers, the British treasury is largely funded by trade rather than by taxation. Other major powers can elect not to trade, but this has little effect on the British economy unless a continental blockade can be organized—something that requires political and military persuasion.

Taxation is simply an amount of money that is garnered from each province or minor country by the controlling major power every quarter [every three game turns, each turn representing one month]. The value assigned to each province was based upon the size of the population and weighted where the area was known to be especially wealthy or poor.

Conscription represents the number of troops that could be raised in an area and was also based upon population statistics. It was modified by the degree of control exercised by the controlling major power. For example, Poitou's value was lowered because it was in the center of the Vendee revolt.

The Supply System:

The supply system was designed to be as simple as possible. Nevertheless, it gives players the choice

between living off the land or relying on lines of supply, which was essentially the same choice faced by commanders of the day. Living off the land involves a risk of attrition but without a monetary cost. It is less risky to live that way in richer areas or where the army marches at a slower rate. Supply lines provide the opposite—no risk of losing troops but a high monetary cost. It also has the result of slowing an advance by tying armies to limited supply sources. Supply lines can be a liability: they are vulnerable to enemy interference.

The Combat System:

The combat system forms perhaps the most crucial aspect of the game. We wanted to provide a system that would require constant decision making by players. We achieved this by using a combat matrix. The decision as to which combat option to use will depend on the mix of forces, terrain, leadership and morale at any one battle. It will also depend on your estimation of your opponent's psychological makeup—is he a gambler or a percentage player? The combat system includes such factors as reinforcements, outflanking, withdrawals, cavalry pursuits, guard commitment and artillery bombardment. Each of these involves choices, but is neatly factored into a comprehensive whole. The combat choices tend to provide the greatest moments of tension in the game. The outcome of a battle can be apocalyptic; one bad choice can unhinge your entire game plan. Battles and wars have been won in a five-minute period.

Some choices, like Echelon or Probe, will probably lead to an inconclusive battle. Others, like Cordon or Assault or Outflank tend to leave you the victor or vanquished, so choose carefully. In one battle we recall (unhappily for Greg), the entire Austrian army descended on an advanced Turkish cavalry force (approximately 16000 men) with the remainder of the Turkish army 30 miles away and rapidly moving to reinforce. The Austrian player expected an easy victory, outnumbering the Turk by 9:1, and arrogantly chose an Escalated Assault. The Turkish player was in a quandary. He should, by rights, have chosen to withdraw, praying that his commander would extricate him from a difficult situation. If he failed, his force would be annihilated. Instead he chose to Defend and await the onslaught. In the morning combat, the dilatory Austrian destroyed the majority of the Turks but did not break their morale. Pechlivan Khan exhorted his men to support their beleaguered comrades and arrived to reinforce the Turkish force early in the afternoon. Now the tables were turned and the fresh troops smashed the Austrian resolve before evening. The evening's pursuit by the massed Turkish feudal cavalry turned Austrian retreat into rout. By the end of the week, 150,000 Austrian troops had shed their last blood for the hapless Hapsburgs. Turkish losses were a paltry 18000 casualties. Humbly, Austria sued for peace.

General Notes

The first decision you must make is what number of victory points to bid for control of the different nations. The folk at Avalon Hill substantially increased the victory points required to win, and therefore more careful thought must be given to what should be bid. France requires 360 points to win (without economic manipulation), which over 44 quarters demands an average of 8.18 points per quarter to win by the end of the game. Compare

this with Turkey, which only requires 285 points to win, or an average of 6.48 per quarter. Since the average number of victory points is seven each quarter, by staying at peace throughout the entire 11 years, it is possible for Turkey to win without even trying if left alone. Thus, even before bidding, it is obvious that the French player must attack to win, while the Turkish player need only react to events.

On the other side of the coin, due to the different troop morale levels of the differing countries, it is far easier for Britain and France to gain victory points than it is for Spain and Turkey. This is because France and Britain are much more likely to break their opponent's morale in a battle before their own breaks. For this reason, we recommend that you bid higher for France and Britain than for any other country, but not so high as to make your task impossible. Our recommended *maximum* bids are 30 points for France or Britain, 20 for Russia, 15 for Austria, and 10 for Prussia or Spain. Turkey is the last major power allocated. Therefore, players should not bid more than one point for it because the last player will get it regardless of his bid. Of course, you are free to bid any amount of points you wish; and if you particularly enjoy playing a country, by all means increase your bid to guarantee gaining control. Keep in mind, however, that even bidding 30 points for France means that she must garner 390 points—or an average of 8.86 per quarter, which requires spending virtually the entire game in the dominant zone, no mean feat.

After setting up the game and choosing the major powers, possibly the most important part of the game will ensue: the initial diplomacy. This is very important because the way players conduct their initial diplomacy often affects the entire course of the game. For example, if Spain and Turkey commence the game at war with each other over North Africa or Italy, this may give France a great opportunity to maul Prussia and/or Austria.

It is impossible for any country to win without the cooperation (or at least the neutrality) of some of the other major powers. Not even France, with her considerable advantages, can hope to take on all other players simultaneously. All players should bargain for advantage, but should also keep in mind that all good deals provide advantages for both parties involved. It is pointless to offer a deal to a potential partner if it is obvious to him that he is getting the short straw.

The player who wins is usually the player who makes a variety of deals with most (or even all) of the other players which, when taken individually, appear to favor them but when taken over time favor this player because it allows him to change allegiances to defeat former allies. As an example, Prussia could make a pact with Austria to defeat France, conceding all of Italy and southern Germany to Austria with Prussia claiming only northern Germany. After the defeat of France, Prussia approaches Turkey "seriously concerned" about the size of Austria. If Turkey helps Prussia defeat Austria, Turkey gets all of Italy while Prussia takes only southern Germany. This can continue until Prussia owns half of Europe. Of course, the only problem with this strategy is that the other players may well be attempting it on you!

An important aspect of diplomacy in *EMPIRES IN ARMS* is the "never-give-up" principle. Even when you are faced with four or more opponents, always try to exploit the natural differences between the allies. One good strategy is to discuss with potential defectors what will happen to the alliance after you have been defeated. If you can convince them that they are next, coupled with some territory you are willing to concede, they may well withdraw from the enemy coalition. If they do not, you can capitulate and watch your prediction come true. Next time, they may well listen to you.

This leads to another extremely important part of the game—the need to take the long view. This game is not won or lost by a single victory or a single defeat. The Campaign Game is played for 11 years, and players should keep this in mind. When things seem to be at their worst, it is well to remember that other players can see how poorly off you are and will leave you alone. Many players get dispirited after being forced to surrender and think that for them the game is over. This is just not so. Historically, Austria was humiliatingly defeated twice in this period and yet still ended up on the winning side. It is important to look beyond a single set-back and continue to fight for your long-term goals.

Our next topic is the waging of a military campaign. It is much more difficult to invade enemy territory than it is to defend your own. This is due not to the combat systems but because of supply constraints. Except in the extremely fertile territory of northern Germany and northern Italy, most campaigns will be waged using supply chains. This immediately slows an attacker as his supply chain can only be extended by two areas per turn. The defender can draw supply from any friendly city in his own country and thus is not similarly restricted in his movement. Use this to advantage by avoiding greatly superior forces, and attacking isolated enemy corps instead. In this way you can attrition opponents' forces while keeping your armies intact. Similarly, garrison all of your cities. Unbesieged cities block supply lines, so an aggressor will be obliged to peel off corps to besiege them, which will further weaken his main thrust and buy you more time. Use this time to advantage by attempting to persuade allies onto your side and in weakening the resolve of enemy powers.

The combat system itself works via a matrix of combat options. If you need to take a risk, it is usually better to choose either the Assault or Out-flank option when attacking; and choose the Out-flank or Cordon when you are defending. If you wish to just cause casualties, it may be better to take one of the other options. Be careful though, if your opponent can guess that you intend to take a high or a low risk stance, it makes his choice easier. If you are facing a vastly superior enemy and have a good leader (Napoleon, Wellington or Archduke Charles), you can always choose to withdraw and will often get away, maintaining your army's strength. After a few turns of this, your enemy may choose to Assault and you can then switch your choice to Defend and deal his force a mortal blow.

It is also important to maintain a large number of your specialist troops (artillery, guard and cavalry). Artillery gives you free shots at the enemy forces and thus is of good value. The Guard not only increases your morale but gives you the option of guard commitment which, by increasing your enemy's morale loss, will decrease an enemy pursuit or even force him to break. Cavalry is perhaps the most important part of your army because only they have the ability to pursue. Without cavalry, you may win battles but you will never inflict a decisive reverse on the enemy. Equally, without cavalry to cover your own retreat, you could lose the majority of your infantry if an enemy successfully pursues (money can be begged, borrowed or stolen, but manpower is limited).

Major Power Play

FRANCE:

France is the most powerful country in the game. She receives the second-largest income, the second-largest manpower pool, the best leaders, the most troops at the start of the game, the strongest corps, the second-best morale, the best guard, and access to a large number of neutrals. For all these reasons (and a natural historical ill-will), all the other nations are fearful of France and may well unite at the start to destroy her.

In playing France, you must play extremely cautiously at the start. If Russia, Prussia and Austria go to war with you, your forces will be outnumbered 2:1 and will probably be defeated. It is usually best not to go to war immediately but to await developments. However, if Russia deploys for an attack on Sweden, and Austria or Prussia foolishly scatter their forces, it may well be worth a quick declaration on one major power before the others can intervene. Try to remain on good terms with Spain and Turkey as they can provide an effective diversion for the other major powers. You will no doubt eventually be at war with most major powers, but do not be disheartened. To win, you have to keep on conquering—so you might as well look forward to it! Use your double move capability to move last in one turn and first in the next to hit isolated forces before they can react. In this way, you can destroy armies much larger than your own. Even if you lose, you are guaranteed to have fun.

GREAT BRITAIN:

At sea, Great Britain is what France is on land. Britain has a commanding, but far from overwhelming, naval superiority. If France, Spain and Russia attack Britain early in the game, she may be defeated. For this reason, England must try to wean Spain from France and keep Russia loyal. Attack enemy naval powers selectively. France is the best country to start with as France will need to keep large garrisons in home ports if she wishes to retain her fleet. By 1807 or 1808, Britain should have more ships than all the other major powers combined. From that time on she becomes almost invincible because it will be very difficult to force her to sue for peace. From then on, she can dictate the course of the game to some extent.

The other advantages Britain has are also of some significance; the second best land leader (Wellington), the most money and the best troop morale. Her only major deficiency is a lack of manpower. Use your money to "buy" minor countries and favors from other players. Turkey and Spain may be quite happy for you to take over some parts of North Africa in exchange for much needed foreign currency. Denmark, Sweden and Norway can also be Britain's, giving her more manpower to work with. After you have built a sizeable army, you can conduct fairly extensive land campaigns that may well see you edge out the other powers.

RUSSIA:

Russia's two major advantages are her large manpower resources and her strategic positioning at the edge of the map. Both Austria and Prussia usually beg for help and this should be used to obtain favors. Initially, Russia should concentrate on conquering Sweden. Unfortunately, you start with a small army and it is best if you can use the first couple of years to expand it. However, if Austria and Prussia get involved in a messy war with France, you may be required to intervene. If you do, you should demand some part of northern Germany in compensation.

Your relationship with Britain and Turkey is more complex. Britain can provide you with much needed money and the naval mobility to defeat France and secure Scandinavia. However, the Scandinavian countries are sometimes seen as British possessions. Both Britain and Russia would like these countries under their control without having to fight each other. To resolve this difficulty in your favor, you can always raise the spectre of aligning with France and Spain. Bluff and counter-bluff may well ensue with both sides not sure how far the other is willing to go. Do not go so far as to allow France a free hand in Europe however, as this is disastrous for both Britain and yourself. By 1808, you may well be involved in a war with France. If you have played your cards right, however, you will be stronger than France and might end up as the dominant power in Europe.

AUSTRIA:

Austria's main advantages are her large manpower base and the Archduke Charles (the third best leader). Your main disadvantage is that you are surrounded by four potential adversaries, more than any other power in the game. Therefore, you will need to be very good at diplomacy. The first major threat that you will face is an attack by France, and it is usually to your advantage to negotiate a common approach to this threat with Prussia. You should attempt to occupy much of northern Italy and southern Germany. Build your forces and be wary of all French moves. If you have a solid alliance with Russia and Prussia, you can try dictating to France what morsels she may conquer. If France appears to be turning into a major threat, you must combine to defeat her.

Once the French threat has been reduced, Austria can turn her attention to Prussia or Turkey. Attacking Prussia may well see your empire dramatically expand (including the major prize of Poland), while attacking Turkey can give you easy political points. In either case, it is doubtful if you will ever become the dominant power in Europe; but with good luck and good play, Austria may well earn enough points to steal the game.

PRUSSIA:

Prussia starts the game with a reasonably large army, but not much else (even Blucher doesn't turn up until 1806). As with Austria, diplomacy is your first line of defence. You are easy prey to an aggressive and ambitious France, and must secure either Austrian or Russian help (or, preferably both) in the event of an attack. Most of northern Germany can be yours if you have secured a strong alliance with Austria and Russia. However, even though you are weak, you need only a very few points to win. Therefore, you are always a threat to your stronger neighbors. A good idea is to economically manipulate in the early part of the game to gain manpower and money while losing political points. This will increase your strength while making you less of a threat. Then, later in the game, you can reverse this process and zoom past your startled opponents to win.

SPAIN:

Spain has three significant advantages. Firstly, she is adjacent to only one potential adversary—France, who cannot afford to attack her in the first few years of the game. Secondly, she has the second largest fleet on the map. Lastly, she possesses the guerrillas who will make life very uncomfortable for any would-be conqueror. Early on you should attack Portugal and take control of its fleet. North Africa and Italy should also be prime targets for conquest. Britain probably won't oppose this, as you have the trump card of threatening to move into the French camp. Like Prussia, you should keep a low victory point profile as you will otherwise be a target for the other major powers. Only France can launch an invasion of any serious size, so your main diplomatic mission is to keep France embroiled in central Europe. In our experience, due to her natural advantages, Spain has actually won more games than any other country.

TURKEY:

Turkey is often much maligned by players, but in our experience, it is actually one of the more enjoyable countries to play. It has the advantages of an enormous cavalry force, virtually unlimited feudal troops and an edge-of-the-board position. Initially, you should turn your attention to North Africa and Italy. You can gain much needed money and manpower from these two areas. A second plan is to approach Britain about common areas of interest. You could, for instance, support her invasions of North Africa if she gives you vast sums.

Exploit your feudal replacement capability by declaring war late in the year, thus allowing almost reckless use of your forces. Look for opportunities and pursue them ruthlessly (e.g., a declaration of war on a debilitated Austria). A further option is to declare war on Russia to gain control of the Crimea and Podolia for the further extra feudal corps they provide under the Optional Rules. This is especially effective when Russia is involved in central Europe as she may well cede the desired territories to you, the more so if you garnish the deal with an offer to help her against her foes. Turkey needs the smallest number of victory points of any major power to win, so you too can use the economic manipulation rules to spearhead your way to victory.

The Avalon Hill Edition

The folk of The Avalon Hill Game Company spent a lot of time playtesting and developing *EMPIRES IN ARMS*. The result is a game that, although retaining the fundamental structure of our game, is a substantial improvement over the original version.

The most important of the improvements has been the general tightening of the rules relating to politics. Although we designed a political structure for the game to constrain the more extreme players, there were some areas where the loopholes allowed even conservative players to exploit the rules in ways we had not intended. The Avalon Hill version has improved these rules in a number of ways.

Firstly, players can only cede minor countries to another major power in the economic inter-turn phase, and only at the rate of one country per inter-phase. Furthermore, home provinces may not be voluntarily ceded. Thus, the practice of ceding a swathe of territories to create a neutral (and therefore impassible) barrier between a player and a hostile neighbor has been eliminated.

Secondly, the alliance rules have been altered to strengthen the political structure. Players now must take into account when breaking an alliance that they cannot re-ally with that country for twelve months. This makes players more careful when deciding whether to enter into and when to break an alliance. Similarly, when a major power surrenders to some but not all major powers with which it is at war, those still at war can demand that the allies who have made peace must break their alliance and lose political status in consequence. Thus, a separate peace with an enemy power may well prove costly.

Thirdly, the practice of entering into a separate peace so as to divide and conquer an enemy alliance has been limited by the new rule that a major power may not sue for peace with some enemy powers separately from the others except where the particular enemy powers have forces in its home country.

Another alteration that we feel has added a whole new dimension to the game are the amendments to corps' sizes within each nationality. Whereas previously all French infantry corps had maximum strengths of 25 Infantry and three Cavalry factors, now only one does. The smallest French corps is now set at 12 Infantry and one Cavalry. Other countries have experienced similar changes which increase the size of some corps. The effect of this change is that the French now cannot field large armies (200,000+ troops) and still risk losing only a small number of political (and thus victory) points. Other changes of interest are the addition of a Tyrolian Revolt corps to the Austrian army, the addition of Guard infantry to the British and Spanish armies, and the addition of cavalry factors to some Russian corps. Perhaps the country with the most changes, however, is Turkey, who gains extra feudal corps when she captures Podolia, Transylvania or the Crimea. This gives Turkey an incentive to attack Russia and Austria, something less common in our version of the game.

A further beneficial change is the increase in the cost of raising and maintaining military forces. In the original version of the game, it was not uncommon for players to accumulate vast sums of money by the middle of the game. This will not happen in the Avalon Hill version. The cost of infantry, guard, artillery and ships have all increased, and there is a new cost for maintaining depots. Players now regularly run short of money and living off the land (with its consequent attrition) occurs much more often.

A few new victory condition options have been added the peace conditions—such as dissolving the Holy Roman Empire, garnishing British trade, and removing the losers' factors instead of corps. As far as actually winning the game goes, the victory point levels have been dramatically increased. While in the original game, some countries reached their level as early as 1812, now the game may very well continue until the last game turn of 1815. You also do not need to declare a victory when you first pass your mark. As manpower levels are now added to your score for determining the final winner or winners, a player may wish to wait until he can claim a solo win.

A plethora of new options have been added to the game. These include new political combinations which enable players to create the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, the Kingdom of Italy, the Kingdom of Westphalia, the Kingdom of Bavaria, the Confederation of the Rhine, and the Ottoman Empire. This gives players new goals and therefore increases the variability of the outcome—still within historical parameters, however.

Another option is the alternate dominant powers rule. In the original version, France and Britain had advantages that gave them dominant power status, on land and sea respectively. This dominance was bestowed on these countries regardless of their actual performance during the game. The new version of the game permits them to lose their dominant power status and/or for other countries to gain it, generally as a result of changing control of territory. Such a switch in status has effects on income, leader quality, province status and the ability to move at different times in the turn.

An interesting option is that no major power can lose more than three provinces throughout the course of the game. Thus, players who have invested a great deal of time in a game cannot be eliminated entirely at the whim of vindictive friends. Further interesting options include preventing players from going into civil disorder (replacing this with compulsory suits for peace), compulsory war between Britain and France, mandatory removal of Napoleon if France sues for peace with Britain, reduction in multiple fleet movement allowances, specific ship-building locations and proportional naval and army losses. There are many, many more options that could fill several articles by themselves, but suffice it to say that these options add much greater spice and flavor to the game.

We cannot end this article without mentioning one unfortunate omission in the Avalon Hill version of *EMPIRES IN ARMS*. This occurs on the Minor Countries Chart. In the original version, it was made clear that when a neutral minor country was attacked, it started with an army equal in size to the listed 1805 strengths. The Avalon Hill edition of the game specifies that you use the column relevant to the campaign game in play. Thus, if you were playing the 1805-1815 campaign game and a player declared war on a neutral Lombardy in 1813, it would have zero strength. However, if you were playing the 1812-1815 campaign game and the same declaration was made in 1813, Lombardy would have 13 infantry factors to defend itself. This is clearly illogical. We suggest that the 1805 column be used in all such cases. However, this raises a further problem. The new version of the game lists starting strengths only. In most cases, this is the

correct figure for minor countries that are later attacked. However, minor countries which begin as conquered have no starting strengths listed, and therefore if later attacked cannot defend themselves. We suggest that you use the following strengths if such countries become neutral and are subsequently attacked: Hanover 4(Inf)/2(Cav); Lombardy 4/1; Piedmont 8/1; Poland 6/1; and Venetia 4/1.

One last suggestion that we would like to make concerns the operational Possibilities Chart. Escalated Assault is chosen rarely by the attacker as it never gives an advantage to him (the best you can hope for is for both players' casualty levels to increase by one). This rule can optionally be altered by changing the chart to only allow the defender to successfully withdraw if he rolls less than the commander's strategic rating if the attacker has chosen Escalated Assault.

Overall, we are very happy with the Avalon Hill version of *EMPIRES IN ARMS*. It is apparent from the final result that the staff have put a great deal of time and effort into the development, testing and production of this game and we are confident that, for those of you who have played it already, it will convert what was an enjoyable game into a lifelong addiction. For those of you who have not yet played *EMPIRES IN ARMS*, we can only encourage you to try it—this is one you will not want to miss.



AH Philosophy . . . Cont'd from Page 2

and *Diplomacy World*, Origins and The Avalon Hill Game Company, and—until now—the "Charlies". Since the very first "Charles Roberts Award" was presented in 1975 to Charles Robert by then chairman of the awards, Dr. Clifford Sayre, these awards have served to call attention to the best in our hobby. Roberts himself then presented the first four awards at the first Origins convention. Later, the "H.G. Wells Awards" were added to recognize achievements in the hobby of miniature, gaming. Despite changes in format, category and method of determining winners, the awards have retained the respect of wargamers for twelve years. It is only appropriate that they be named for these two great men in hobby history.

Now, however, we see all those years of respect and recognition being tossed aside. In the future, where once a designer or company could brag that he won the "Charlie", now they will announce with a wince that they were given the "Origins Award". And most of us will respond with the phrase, "What's that?" Worse, will we now have to inquire when a designer does say he won a "Charlie" if it was awarded post-1988? But, many will argue, what's in a name; the award is still the same, isn't it? Sorry, not for me it isn't—not without the tradition, respect and recognition that name once carried. In pursuing this course, in insisting on pointless change, GAMA has abrogated all these years of hobby history and kicked another prop out from under our hobby. What a shame.

This is not to say that the structure of the awards, the manner of nomination and selection, cannot undergo revision. They have been restructured several times in the past. New categories have been added; outdated ones have been dropped. But why change the names? Why end the honor we accord to these men who played such a pivotal role in our hobby? And why allow some single company to drape themselves with that honor by now proclaiming their awards the "charlies"?

For my part, I'll stay at the mad Tea Party and perhaps even take note of some of those bits of paper blowing by in the whirlwind that are labeled "Origins Awards" or "Charles Roberts Awards" these days. But neither will be the "real" thing for me, only shadows of former glory.



CONTEST 139

Playing *DIPLOMACY* well demands more than just skillful lying and well-timed treachery. It also demands a fundamental grasp of tactics, weaving the way through the dance of blocks upon the map-board. Since we can't very well test the deviousness and perfidy quotient of our readers, Contest 139 focuses upon this aspect of the classic multi-player wargame.

The Fall 1904 turn of a *DIPLOMACY* game looms. You have the role of Italy, and despite various threats, have done well up to this point by gaining a center or two each year. Now you wish to maximize your gains for 1904. You have been approached by both Russia and Turkey offering you assistance. Assuming that each of those players would write their orders as you ask, which alliance should you accept? Or should you go it alone? Upon your decision hangs your victory.

For Contest 139, the contestant need only draft his orders with a view to attaining the maximum number of builds in the upcoming Winter season. But there is a catch—one set of orders must be drafted with the assumption that Turkey is your loyal ally (i.e., he will write any orders supporting your moves you may wish); the other set must assume that Russia is loyal. You need not worry about the pieces of any other power; they will not interfere with events in the East. Positions of all Italian, Russian and Turkish units are as follows:

Italy: Fleet in Aegean Sea

Fleet in Tyrrhenian Sea
Fleet in Ionian Sea
Army in Apulia
Army in Trieste
Army Vienna

(Owns centers Rome, Naples, Venice, Tunis, Vienna, and Trieste)

Russia: Army in Sweden

Army in Warsaw
Army in Budapest
Army in Rumania
Army in Moscow
Fleet in Baltic Sea
Fleet in Black Sea

(Owns centers Moscow, Warsaw, St. Petersburg, Sevastopol, Sweden, Budapest, and Rumania)

Turkey: Army in Armenia

Army in Constantinople
Army in Greece
Army in Serbia
Fleet in Ankara
Fleet in Bulgaria (East Coast)

(Owns centers Constantinople, Ankara, Smyrna, Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria)

Those able to guarantee the maximum number of builds for the Winter 1904 turn will be declared winners. Based on the evaluation of options, indicate the preferred enemy (Russia or Turkey) you will concentrate on, assuming a steady alliance with the other. As a tie-breaker, entrants must indicate their Winter builds (location and type of unit) in order to continue eastward expansion against the chosen enemy.

The answer to this contest must be entered on the official entry form (or a facsimile) found on the insert of this issue. Ten winning entries will receive merchandise credits from the Avalon Hill Game Company. To be valid, an entry must include a numerical rating for this issue as a whole and a listing of the three best articles in the judgement of the contestant. The solution to Contest #139 will appear in Vol. 24, No. 4 and the list of winners in Vol. 24, No. 5 of *THE GENERAL*.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

The *GENERAL* will list any gaming convention in this space free of charge on a space available basis provided that we are notified at least four months in advance of the convention date. Each listing must include the name, date, site, and contact address of the convention. Additional information of interest to our readership such as tournaments or events utilizing The Avalon Hill Game Company's games is solicited and will be printed if made available.

The Avalon Hill Game Company does not necessarily attend or endorse these gatherings, nor do we guarantee that events using The Avalon Hill Game Company's games will be held. Readers are urged to contact the listed sources for further information before making plans to attend.

FEBRUARY 12-14

PENN CON '88, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Contact: John Desmond, 922 South 49th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

Note: A number of tournaments, including ones for *KINGMAKER*, *DUNE*, *1830*, *DIPLOMACY* and *WS&IM*, are planned for this medium-sized convention.

FEBRUARY 12-15

ORCCON II, Los Angeles, California
Contact: Jeff Albanese, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90908. (213) 420-3675.

MARCH 4-6

JAXCON SOUTH 12, Jacksonville, Florida
Contact: Dave Elliot, Jaxcon South Dept. A, P.O. Box 4423, Jacksonville, FL 32201. (904) 772-9040.
Note: Tournaments include competition in *KINGMAKER*, *DIPLOMACY*, *CIVILIZATION* and *SQUAD LEADER*.

MARCH 11-13

TOTAL CONFUSION 2, Worcester, MA
Contact: Alan Chiras, Total Confusion, 151 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 10609.
Note: Tournaments include, among many others, *1830*, *RAIL BARON*, *TITAN*, *RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* and *VITP*.

APRIL 8-10

CAPCON XI, Columbus, Ohio
Contact: Jim Moody, OSUMGA/CAPCON, Box 21, The Ohio Union, 1739 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43210. (614) 299-5658.
Note: Tournaments number *RAIL BARON*, *DIPLOMACY*, *CIVILIZATION* and *SQUAD LEADER* among others.

APRIL 8-10

GAME FAIRE '88, Spokane, Washington
Contact: John Waite, W 201 Riverside, Spokane, WA 92201. (509) 624-0957.

MAY 27-30

GAMEX '88, Los Angeles, California
Contact: Jeff Albanese, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808. (213) 420-3675.

JUNE 3-5

MARYCON: Fredericksburg, Virginia
Contact: Dick Warner, Dept. of History, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.
Note: One of the premier *DIPLOMACY* conventions.

JUNE 10-12

MICHICON GAMEFEST '88, Southfield, MI
Contact: Barry Jensen, Metro Detroit Gamers, P.O. Box 656, Wyandotte, MI 48192. (313) 591-2300, ext. 325.

JUNE 25

SL RALLY '88, Conway, Arkansas
Contact: Terry Treadway, P.O. Box 265, Marshall, AR 72650. (501) 448-3066.
Note: Fourth annual national *SL-ASL* tournament.

JULY 1-4

DIPCON XXI, San Antonio, Texas
Contact: Pete Gaughan, 3121 East Park Row #165, Arlington, TX 76010.
Note: The American National *DIPLOMACY* Tournament.

BLITZS AND KRIEGS

Suggested Revisions for HITLER'S WAR

By Dean Koellhoffer

When I went looking for a strategic simulation of WWII, I faced the decision of choosing a long established favorite (*THIRD REICH*) or a new unknown (*HITLER'S WAR*). I chose the old "reliable" and spent the next week attempting to comprehend the forty pages of rules. Meanwhile, a friend had purchased *HITLER'S WAR* and loaned it to me. We read the first four pages of rules and began playing. By the end of the week we were through the fifteen-page book and playing with all optional rules.

Now, I won't go into the old argument of realism versus playability. All games must balance these two to create a simulation which will give players what they want most. The ultimate deciding factor in the quality of a game is how much pleasure we derive from its use.

HITLER'S WAR is a game which, if you give it a chance, will provide you with hours of pleasant competition. Its large scale disallows battlefield operations, but the elements are there. The game plays on a truly strategic level, and the entire campaign can be played to conclusion in about twelve hours, or roughly three evening sessions. This is about twice as long as Avalon Hill's rating says, but far less than it would take to play *THIRD REICH*. The rules are easy to learn and, since play is swift, you can experiment with various strategies without sacrificing your valuable playing time. It's terrible to discover, after investing a month, that you lost the war on the second turn.

Unfortunately, new games will invariably yield a crop of design flaws. *THIRD REICH* has been revised three times, and I believe *HITLER'S WAR* deserves at least one. I have been informed that there are no intentions at present to do so. Therefore, I shall endeavor here to discuss my findings as to why there should be a revision and present my suggestions to rectify the flaws I perceive.

GAME STRATEGIES:

In playing *HITLER'S WAR*, typically the German player and the Allied-Soviet player oppose each other. Rarely will you get a three-player game. As either side, I place a premium on "Research & Development" to advance those branches which are beneficial to my war effort, and delay those that assist my opponent. Germany should concentrate on infantry, mechanized, tac air, u-boats, and, because the bomber command can hurt you much worse than you can hurt the Allies, air defense. The Allies will want ASW, bombers, amphibious troops, and bomber escorts (which must be researched early to avoid heavy losses to air defense). Russia needs infantry, mech, tac air, and air defense, but never at the expense of advancing the German capabilities in these areas.

I believe game strategy is best applied to decreasing your opponent's production while increasing your own. As the Axis player I always begin by taking France on Turn 1. This immediately denies the Allies seven production points. Then take Spain and Gibraltar. By winter of '41 all of Europe should be in Axis hands, less Britain (though an unwary opponent may leave it vulnerable). Even Suez and Sweden could fall easily to amphibious assaults. A preliminary invasion of Russia to eliminate the +4 winter effect, followed by a full scale invasion in '42 should reduce Russia significantly. U-boats will slow down the Allies, and holding Gibraltar and Suez keeps Italy from being invaded swiftly and

closing the Mediterranean to you. A combined land and bomber offensive can knock out Russia by '44. And with the Med cut off, Turkey can be bombed out as well. Finally, concentrating on the Western production will eliminate any chance of invasion. Festung Europa will live!

I have not yet found an opponent who can defeat me as the German player. This means one of two things. Either I am a genius in playing the Germans, or the game is unbalanced. Though my ego might encourage me to believe the former, my super-ego tells me the latter is most likely true.

As the Allied-Soviet player I have found the only way to effectively slow the German player is to attack with Russia, being careful not to lose my mechanized forces. This results in a major victory for the German player since, if he doesn't invade, it will cost Russia over a hundred production points. And if he does, he can do so in such a way that Russia is very vulnerable to easy conquest.

The Allies can hold Suez by building a three or four point fort. ASW must be built first to stop the U-boats, then bombers to reduce Axis production. Thirdly, build amphibious forces to invade Italy and open a second front to take the Axis pressure off Russia and the Mediterranean fronts. Even with all of this, Russia will probably fall to a competent German player and the Suez will be blocked. I don't usually win against the Germans unless playing an inexperienced opponent.

Morale and A-bomb rules are a total waste. The game will typically deteriorate into the terror bombing exercise which Madrid, the "Blitz", and the Dresden raids all proved will not work. And the A-bomb is so devastating, as shown by history, its possession creates an immediate victor. Morale in the land war is also a wasted effort. If Germany attacks each country a turn before taking it simply to cost the Allies friendly hexes, he gives them a turn's worth of production points. The Allies, meanwhile, attack countries the Germans cannot supply, such as Morocco, Iraq and Iran. After invading Italy, they then capture an out-of-supply Libya and Algeria. The net result is such that, for Germany to reduce Allied morale even below "5" they must force Russia to surrender and keep Italy in the war. If the Axis player can do this he has won the game in any case, and morale effects just add icing to the cake.

Articles I have seen in *The GENERAL* proposing sweeping rule changes and strategies were truly shortsighted. In experimenting with increased U-boat strength and decreased production repair, Germany was easily able to conquer the world. The article on the economic methods of producing strategic war elements may work great in *Monopoly*, but is naive in expectation of an opponent's responses in violent conflict. Only the worst generals will dance to their adversary's tune so readily.

RULES REVISIONS:

Line of Communications: In addition to supply, units must be able to trace a line of communication back to their home country. Any army unable to trace such a route to its home country, but which can trace to a production point is in supply but out of communication. It must re-establish communications next turn or be reduced to a number of strength points equal to the number of supply points to which it can now trace. Strategic operations may not be conducted from a hex out of communication.

(This will negate the ability of units to operate freely far behind enemy lines.)

Exception: Forts and their occupants are not bound by communication restrictions, although a fort cannot be newly built if out of communication. Britain has communications with the Atlantic Coast so long as she has the larger fleet at sea. Italy has communications with Africa so long as she has a fleet in the Mediterranean. The Allies may also trace communication in the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal. An extended sea route to a non-production based army can be made across the Atlantic from the U.S. so long as the army being supported is not greater in size than the number of trans-Atlantic shipping points available.

With these rules, several unrealistic situations will be averted. Germany cannot drive a single army deep into Russia where it is cut off but still in supply and able to run about at will, as well as being able to launch massed bombers against Siberia. Nor can the Germans so easily land an amphibious force on the Sinai and cut the Suez Canal. Likewise, the Allies cannot readily pounce on Italy, nor invade Europe from across the Atlantic.

Research & Development: The following are changes to the R&D track—omit A-Bomb, Missiles, Capital Ship, Carrier, ASW and U-boat. Air Defense now costs 7-5-3-1; Bomber Escorts cost 8-6-4-2; Bombers cost 9-7-5-3.

I've explained above why Morale and A-Bomb rules should be omitted. Any good player will avoid buying missiles. Simple math shows that 10 missile points costing 20 production points would reduce a maximum of four enemy production points, which requires 12 more to rebuild. A sorry trade. Besides, missiles of the time were far too inaccurate to hit factories; they were a terror weapon which only served to distract the British. Turning to the naval aspects, the only countries during the war to lay down battleships and fleet carriers were the United States and Japan; all the others simply completed construction on pre-war projects. Britain did build a few escort carriers and destroyers to augment her anti-submarine campaign. U-boats became a critical threat by 1942, but the cost and research delays hold back production in the game so much that it takes until 1943 before you, as the Ally, can produce them *en masse*. And by then, the Axis can produce U-boats in such numbers as to stifle the Allies.

The same perceptions apply to research on Air Defense and Bomber Escorts. In holding back your opponent's research, if he should roll a "B" result for Escorts, he probably won't be able to afford them for the rest of the game. One simply cannot buy Escorts at five production points each if the Axis is buying Air Defense for two points. And Russia can hardly be expected to assist the Allies research efforts. They can't produce the forces they require to defend adequately against German invasion.

Strategic Limits: Bomber, Escort and Air Defense are limited to 10 strength points per counter; U-boats and ASW are limited to 14 points each. U-boats are deployed directly to the counter, as are ASW. U-boats cost two production points; ASW costs five until the United States enters the war, and then cost only three. Escorts and Air Defense strengths can now each the other; before Air Defense attacks any bombers, simultaneous combat with Escorts occurs. Likewise, up to one-fourth of the total U-boat strength (rounded down) can have simultaneous combat with ASW, and may then attack trans-

Atlantic shipping. Trans-Atlantic shipping itself cannot be increased.

These simple rules keep these items in the arsenal from extreme builds. Only so many ships and planes can be employed, regardless of how many can be built, by any nation due to limitations of manpower. I usually sent 100 U-boat points after the Allied shipping. The same with Air Defense—since I'd be holding the Allies back on Escort research, the German skies would be suicide for any bombers. The lowering of the cost for ASW with the entry of America simply reflects the U.S. construction of the "escort carriers" which were then deployed in increasing numbers. Trans-Atlantic shipping, which cannot be increased but can be attacked by enemy submarines, forces the Allied player to build amphibious units to ferry troops to Europe. This rule I included because, though troop convoys were so well-protected that they were poor targets for the U-boat skippers, not all necessary war material is reflected in terms of manpower. And that is why some forces can be destroyed while crossing. As it now stands, the Allied player can build lots of amphibious units and invade from the United States, bypassing the U-boat threat completely.

Amphibious Landings: Such landings on enemy hexes can only be made if they are adjacent to the hex from which the unit begins its attack. The Allies can make a trans-Atlantic assault with three factors onto any coast, but these are subject to coastal air attack. If an advance fails, the unit loses an additional amphibious strength point. In point of fact, historically none of the major amphibious invasions made were conducted outside of friendly air support range. The North African landings are the lone exception, and those were made against unprepared countries with small and disrupted forces.

Trans-Atlantic shipping will be six points per turn. Amphibious points may cross the Atlantic during the *Movement* Phase with an equal number of infantry/mechanized/tac, which may not be attacked by U-boats. These forces may be moved to a position from which they may launch an invasion. The three-factor maximum "Trans-Atlantic invasion" applies to invasions more than one hex from a friendly land hex (i.e., without friendly air support). Carriers could provide this support.

Miscellaneous Rules: A number of rules must be changed to balance the play if the above rules are enforced.

Off-map Boxes, except Siberia, may not be attacked. These locations are simply too distant to be attacked by conventional forces of the period.

Omit Morale and the limit on home defense armies in capitals. Home defense forces are placed when the player announces he is attacking that country, but before he moves his armies and announces his attacks. The reason for this removal of the limit of forces defending capitals is due to the ease with which Germany can conquer Sweden or Spain.

The Western Allied player may not attack neutral countries. This limitation is imposed due to the declaration by England and America that they were the "good guys" and wouldn't do such things. If that is to be the case, make them live up to this promise.

The Russian winter has no effect along the Black Sea coast or adjacent to Rumania. Historically, the Russian winter was not as severe in southwest Russia. This also keeps the Axis player from making an attack into hex L15 with four mechanized points which cannot advance with the +4 penalty, thereby negating the worst winter effect painlessly.

Entry and Surrender of Belligerents: The following are suggested changes and clarifications to the rules concerning the entry and fall of nations involved in the war:

Germany—Begins at war with Britain, France and Poland. Begin the game in the Combat Phase

of the Axis turn, with all ships at sea. Germany gets one ship strength point in Spring '41. Germany also receives three amphibious strength points free at the end of the first turn.

Britain—Begins at war with Germany. No Allied strength points may be moved to Egypt until Italy enters the war. Britain gets one ship strength point in Winter '41 and another in Summer '42.

France—Begins at war with Germany. No strength points may leave France if it has not yet fallen; this includes all ship points, which must continue to base in Marseilles. The Allies may *not* build strength points in France. Roll for each French ship strength point when France is conquered: on a die roll of "1", it joins Axis fleets; "2-3", joins British fleet; "4-6", scuttles and is removed from play. Add any ship strength points to the nearest fleet of the side they have joined.

Poland—Begins at war with Germany. Polish production is added to the Allied total.

Russia—Begins neutral. Russia may attack no other country until Winter '40, at which time it may attack any country that is not Axis-held or inclined. Russia goes to full war in Winter '41. Russia is not restricted to limited war or in research. If Russia does attack any neutral, it may not receive Lend Lease. When all three capitals are Axis controlled, Russia surrenders. All Soviet armies are immediately moved to Siberia while the Axis takes over the rest of the country. Russian partisans may only attack hexes in Russia, including those with armies and may in turn be attacked by the Axis. A successful partisan attack on an army reduces it by one strength point. If a capital should be so recaptured, then Russia may re-enter the war by attacking out of Siberia and will not surrender again.

Italy—Begins neutral. Italy becomes an Axis power at the end of the German turn in which France was first attacked. Italy will surrender if all Italian production centers are captured, or if the Allies hold North Africa, Gibraltar, Suez and Sicily. Ignore Optional Rules 2 and 3. The Italian army must be kept up to strength and may only be used in countries adjacent to Italian territory. While Italy is at war, the Axis player may build units in Italy.

United States—Begins neutral. The United States will give the Allies four production points per turn while neutral so long as Moscow has been attacked and France has fallen. When the U.S. enters the war, the Allies gain three capital ship and one carrier strength point. In return, the British must base three ships and one carrier point out of India until Spring '43.

Baltic States—Begin as part of Russia.

Denmark—Begins neutral. Becomes Axis at the beginning of Spring '40.

Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary—Begin neutral. At the beginning of Winter '40, they become Axis powers. When Rumania falls, the Rumanian army counter changes sides and must contain the three infantry and two mechanized strength points with which it began play.

Greece—Begins neutral. Becomes Allied at the beginning of Winter '40.

Yugoslavia—Begins neutral. Becomes Allied at the beginning of Spring '41 if any hex in Greece (except Crete) is still Allied. Otherwise, it becomes Axis.

Finland—Begins neutral. Becomes Axis at the beginning of the turn that Germany attacks Russia. The Finnish army contains seven infantry strength points which may not be moved outside of Finland.

French North Africa—Begins as part of France; becomes neutral if France falls. If any of the three countries are attacked, any that do not fall will join the opposing side in the game. The following capital cities are added to the game: F3 (Morocco), G6 (Algeria) and H9 (Tunisia). This is because of the current extreme difficulty in capturing these countries.

Norway—Begins neutral. Commencing in the Winter '40 turn, if the Axis player does not hold Norway, reduce the Axis production by 10% (rounded up) on every turn it is not held. Hex T10 is considered the capital.

Sweden—Begins neutral. If Germany captures all three Russian capitals, Sweden joins the Axis. If Germany attacks Sweden, reduce Axis production by 10% for each Swedish production point devastated.

Spain—Begins neutral. If the Axis captures a Russia capital, Spain joins the Axis.

Turkey—Begins neutral. If the Axis controls all countries bordering on the Mediterranean, Turkey joins the Axis.

Iran and Iraq—Begin neutral. At the beginning of Winter '41, both become Allied. If at any point, the Axis hold hexes D19, E20 and E21, three turns later the Allies and Soviets may no longer use exploitation movement.

Portugal—Begins neutral. If attacked by the Axis, or when Italy surrenders, Portugal cedes bases to the Allies in the Azores, doubling their ASW.

Looking over the above summary, a few words of explanation are in order. Changing the beginning of play to the German Combat Phase forces Germany to start the war in Poland. This keeps Germany from taking out France first, which severely limits Allied options. Germany then receives the three amphibious strength points so it can invade Norway and threaten Britain. These forces are far too expensive this early in the game, yet there was the possibility of just such action in 1940.

Forcing the Allies to hold back forces in Britain and France keeps the Allied player honest. Without such restrictions, the Allies will move troops immediately to Egypt to invade Libya before the Axis can even begin moving forces across the Mediterranean. Disallowing builds in France circumvents the Allied ploy of piling masses of troops in that country, which could delay its fall until Spring '41—a critical setback to the Axis. This also serves to keep the Allies from making any large invasion of Germany.

Restrictions on Russia attacking the Axis were absolutely necessary. In play, if the Axis player fails to take France on Turn 1, then Russia can attack and seize Poland. The Allies will then pile all available forces in France. Germany will be unable to take France on the second turn; the Russians plunge into Germany and perhaps march right through to knock Italy out of the war before it fairly gets started. By the time the Russians are beaten back, Germany has suffered critical losses in production points and will be unable to take France before American entry into the war. Russia may be eliminated, but so may Italy—with Germany soon to follow. Hence, Russian operations are limited as Russia attempts to honor the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact.

The Italian army restrictions in the game are uncompliant. The Axis cannot build in Italy, so if the Italian army is reduced there is no way to correct this during the Production Phase. In effect, these rules relegate the Italian army to a home defense force. The capture of three hexes finally eliminates this stagnant army. My changes in Italian surrender terms were necessary to keep the Allies from making one small invasion early in the war, causing a totally ahistorical capitulation.

The United States did have numerous ships and carriers, and built a phenomenal number during the war years. Though all first-line ships built went to the Pacific, many of the destroyers and escort carriers were committed to the Battle for the Atlantic. A few old battleships and the *Ranger* served in the Atlantic until VE Day. Some British ships at this time were sent to India to counter the Japanese threat until the United States could begin to bring its vast armadas to bear.

The remaining countries are dealt with historically. Russia occupied the Baltic States in autumn of 1939. A battalion of German troops hidden on a merchant ship in Copenhagen harbor captured Denmark's King without serious opposition. Rumania was occupied as a result of Russian seizure of Bessarabia. Yugoslavia became Axis dominated in March of 1941, but because British troops were in Greece a coup overturned the government, leading to its invasion by German troops. Greece and Finland were made belligerents through the ineptness of the Russians and Italians and would likely have stayed neutral if not attacked. (Stalin wanted breathing space for Leningrad, and in the process created a ready ally for Hitler; the Italian assault on Greece did the same for the British, and brought on the troubles in Yugoslavia.) There is no sound reason for attacking these two countries, so their inclusion in the game must be forced—there are no game mechanics to recreate political stupidity.

The Vichy North African holdings are far too difficult to capture in the current game, which is why I've included capitals for them. Historically, after the Allies took Morocco and Algeria, the Axis simply occupied Tunisia. The Norwegian capital has been added for the same reason; a penalty for not controlling Norway was imposed to give the German a *casus belli* for taking that fringe country (the same for Iran and Iraq); otherwise it would have no strategic value in this game of strategy. Portugal, which held off committing itself until it was obvious who was winning, gave the Allies the Azores bases eventually. The penalties for taking Sweden are largely hypothetical, I admit. Sweden was Germany's primary source for iron ore, and any aggressive action against this devoted neutral would probably see the destruction of those mines. The remaining nations were added simply as a political prize if the German player should be more successful than Hitler was.

CONCLUSION:

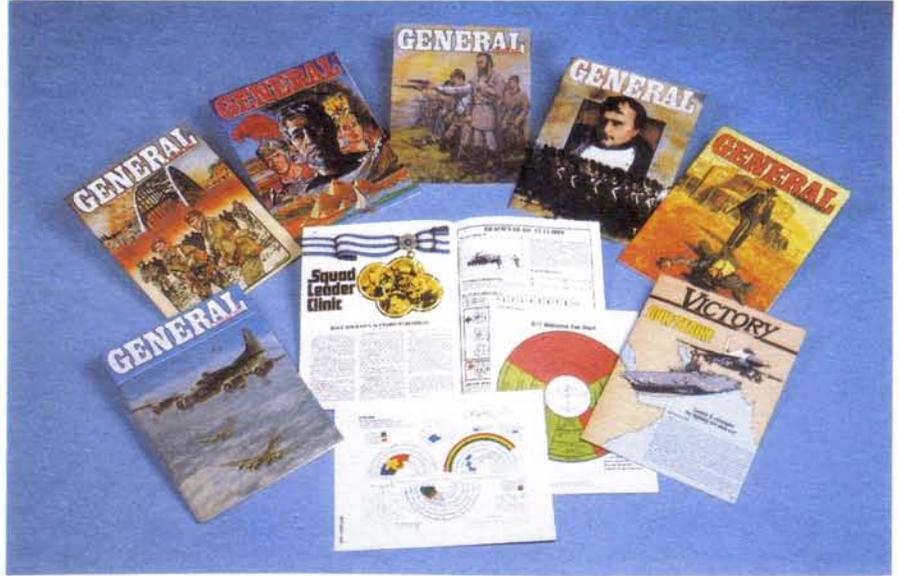
In presenting these rules, I have endeavored to make the game much more historically accurate for those players requiring a modicum of realism. The changes also, I feel, make the game far more balanced when incorporated completely. Play can now follow the course of history, and at the same time offer a challenging contest. Players will have the opportunity to alter some of the broad events, but their actions will be circumscribed by historical realities.

I don't expect all readers to agree with what I have altered, or even with my reasons for doing so. (When does everyone ever agree with everything in this hobby?) Much fluidity of play has been sacrificed to increase the historical realism. Many play options may help enhance the enjoyment of a game, but too much freedom is anathema to those of us who are interested in the history. And net result of my changes causes the Russian player to sit around and wait, while the opening game broadly follows history; not much fun for the third player (if one can be found) in a multi-player game. Still, it is my opinion that *HITLER'S WAR* is a clever game, in need of only some minor revisions to make it a great game. Otherwise, I fear, rulebook strategists will tear it apart and discard it, leaving us historical strategists "smoking".



BACK ISSUES

Only the following back issues of *The GENERAL* remain in stock; price is \$3.00 per issue (plus usual shipping and handling charges). Due to the low quantities of some back issues, if ordering please specify alternative selections. Below is a listing of each in-stock back issue by subject matter; game abbreviations are italicized and standard (a partial listing may be found on the "Opponent's Wanted" form on the insert of this issue). Type of article is indicated by the following abbreviations: H—Historical, DN—Designer's Notes, V—Variant, SR—Series Replay, S—Strategy, Q—Questions, P—PBM (postal), Sc—Scenarios, A—Analysis. The featured games for each issue is always the first one listed. Those printed in red indicate one-color reprints of previously out-of-stock issues.



- 14-3: *AIW*—H, DN, S, Q; *TRC*—S; *3R*—S; *STAL*—SR; *WAS*—V; *PB*—Sc
 14-5: *SL*—H, A, DN, Q; *WS&IM*—A; *TRC*—S; *MD*—S; *SST*—S; *3R*—S
 15-2: *PL*—V, Sc; *STAL*—V; *3R*—V; *DD*—DN; *RB*—S; *VITP*—S
 16-1: *AZ*—Sc, S, DN; *3R*—S; *NP*—S; *PB*—SR; *1776*—S; *DIP*—S
 16-2: *BIS*—A, Sc, H, DN, Q; *PB*—SR; *AK*—S; *1776*—S; *WS&IM*—S
 16-4: *MR*—A, V, DN, Q; *COI*—S; *3R*—S; *TRC*—SR
 16-6: *DUNE*—A; *DIP*—V; *OS*—V; *AZ*—DN, Sc, SR; *PB*—A, PBM
 17-1: *W&P*—A, DN, V, Q; *3R*—S; *COI*—S; *MD*—V; *COD*—A; *MR*—V; *LW*—S; *WAS*—SR
 17-3: *AK*—S; *3R*—S; *COD*—S, Q; *AF*—A, DN; *TRC*—V; *VITP*—V; *COI*—SR
 17-4: *FE*—S, P, DN, V; *MD*—V, Q; *COI*—SR; *VITP*—S; *1776*—Sc; *WO*—A; *SST*—V; *NAP*—S
 17-5: *CM*—S, V, Q; *RW*—V; *SL*—V; *STAL*—V; *PL*—S; *3R*—S, SR; *CAE*—V; *KM*—S; *MR*—S
 17-6: *STAL*—S; *WS&IM*—V, Sc; *WAS*—V; *3R*—SR; *SL*—S; *TLD*—Q; *CL*—S; *VITP*—S; *TRC*—S
 18-1: *FITW*—A, Q; *BIS*—S; *SL*—S; *DUNE*—V; *DIP*—S; *AK*—A; *PB*—SR; *AL*—S; *W&P*—S
 18-2: *AF*—A, Sc, Q; *AK*—V; *3R*—DN; *TB*—V; *SL*—S, Sc; *AIW*—V; *VITP*—S; *DIP*—S; *DD*—S
 18-3: *GOA*—S, DN, V, Q; *AOC*—V, Sc; *AK*—S; *VITP*—V; *SL*—S, Sc; *WS&IM*—SR, P; *DIP*—S
 18-4: *GL*—H, V, A, Q; *SL*—Sc, A; *LW*—V; *W&P*—SR; *AOC*—S, P; *FE*—V; *WAS*—S; *AK*—S
 18-5: *3R*—S, A, V, DN, Q; *SL*—S, A, Sc; *TRC*—V; *TB*—V; *RW*—V; *CL*—A; *DUNE*—V
 18-6: *FT*—A, Sc, V, DN; *VITP*—V, Q; *MD*—S, Q; *SOTN*—A, Q; *SUB*—Sc; *BL*—V
 19-1: *SOA*—A, V, DN, SR, Q; *TLD*—A, Q; *3R*—S, Q; *DWTK*—DN; *TB*—A
 19-2: *BB*—H, Sc, S, DN; *TLD*—A, Q; *SL*—V; *3R*—S; *SOA*—SR
 19-3: *GSL*—A, Sc, V, SR, Q; *DIP*—A; *RW*—Sc; *GE*—V; *1776*—Sc; *LRT*—V, Q; *SL*—A
 19-4: *CIV*—A, V, DN; *CM*—V; *DIP*—A; *GL*—V; *AL*—V; *TR*—Sc; *WO*—Sc; *SLA*; *3R*—S, Q
 19-5: *SON*—A, S, H, Q; *W&P*—S, Q; *DIP*—A; *WAT*—V; *WS&IM*—Sc; *SL*—A
 19-6: *VITP*—PBM, SR; *3R*—V, Q; *DIP*—A; *FT*—V; *BIS*—V; *NW*—A; *SL*—A, Sc; *SUB*—V, Sc
 20-1: *GI*—S, A, DN, V, Q; *VITP*—SR
 20-2: *TT*—A, DN, S, Q; *MR*—V; *LRH*—A; *SL*—Sc; *W&P*—V; *GOA*—S, Q; *DIP*—A; *PL*—V
 20-3: *FRED*—S, V, Sc, Q; *PB*—A; *1776*—Sc; *DWTK*—S, V, Q; *DIP*—A; *CON*—V, S
 20-4: *FITG*—S, A, Q; *SST*—PBM, V; *AW*—A; *DUNE*—PBM; *DIP*—A; *SL*—DN, A, Q; *BL*—S; *KM*—V
 20-5: *BR*—SR, S, H, Q; *LRT*—S; *DIP*—A; *GSL*—Sc; *GE*—A; *WS&IM*—Sc; *SON*—Q
 20-6: *B-17*—A, V, SR, Q; *AF*—V; *LW*—S; *DL*—S; *FE*—S; *DIP*—A; *MD*—S; *BR*—SR; *GOA*—Sc; *SL*—A; *PL*—Q
 21-1: *UF*—S, A, SR, DN, Q; *SOA*—S; *GI*—H, S; *TRC*—S; *DD*—S
 21-2: *NAB*—S, DN; *W&P*—S, A, Q; *NAP*—S, Q; *DIP*—A; *FR*—S; *FE*—S; *3R*—S; *BFI*—S; *1776*—S; *SL*—A
 21-3: *BB*—S, SR, Q; *3R*—S; *SL*—A, H; *SOTN*—V; *DIP*—A; *FRED*—S; *FE*—S, Q; *SST*—S; *TLD*—S; *PL*—Sc; *1776*—Q; *SOA*—Q
 21-4: *PGG*—S, SR; *PB*—A; *3R*—S; *TRC*—S, V, Q; *DIP*—A; *STAL*—V, S; *SL*—Sc; *PK*—Q
 21-5: *HW*—S, V, A; *MR*—S, Q; *OR*—A; *DIP*—A; *3R*—A; *RB*—S; *CON*—V; *CIV*—S; *SL*—A
 21-6: *FP*—H, V, SR; *AIW*—S, Sc; *BL*—V; *TAC*—V, Q; *SL*—A; *PK*—Q
 22-1: *PA*—A, S, Q; *TB*—A, V; *DWTK*—DN; *TR*—V; *GSL*—PBM; *DIP*—A; *AOC*—S; *WAS*—S, Q; *AK*—V; *CIV*—S; *3R*—S, Q
 22-2: *BANZ*—A, SR, Q; *FT*—A, S; *SUB*—Sc; *VITP*—S, Q; *AK*—Q
 22-3: *PB*—SR; *PL*—Sc, V, Q; *SOA*—S; *3R*—V; *DIP*—A; *CIV*—A; *UF*—Sc, Q; *AIW*—S; *GOA*—A, Q; *TLD*—A
 22-4: *RF*—A, V, S; *TRC*—V; *PK*—S, Q; *DIP*—A; *3R*—V; *SUB*—V; *PPG*—S
 22-5: *DD*—S, A, Q; *GSL*—Sc; *BR*—S; *DIP*—PBM, A; *SC*—V; *FITG*—A; *ASL*—Sc, Q
 22-6: *ASL*—A, Sc, DN, Q; *FP*—Sc; *FE*—S, Q; *WAS*—A; *DIP*—A; *SL*—S; *TLD*—S
 23-1: *FL*—A, V; *DL*—V; *B-17*—V, DN; *HW*—S, Q; *VITP*—V; *3R*—S; *TT*—V; *LW*—V; *SST*—V; *RW*—V
 23-2: *ASL*—A, S, Sc, Q; *BV*—SR; *UF*—S; *DIP*—A; *PL*—A
 23-3: *SUB*—V, Sc; *ASL*—S, Sc; *BV*—SR; *HW*—V; *BL*—V, Q; *BB*—A
 23-4: *EIA*—S, DN; *W&P*—V, S; *WS&IM*—Sc; *SC*—V; *NAP*—S; *YS*—S; *3R*—S, Q
 23-5: *KOTA*—DN, Sc, Q; *WAT*—V; *B-17*—V, Q; *3R*—S; *RW*—V; *ASL*—S, Sc; *VITP*—S
 23-6: *1830*—DN, S, V, Q; *FP*—Sc; *RB*—S; *DD*—PBM; *CIV*—S; *MR*—S
 24-1: *ASL*—V, S, Sc, Q; *SOF*—SR; *TRC*—S; *FP*—Sc; *RF*—S, DN; *PGG*—S
 24-2: *ASL*—A, S, Sc, Q; *SOF*—SR; *PL*—S; *3R*—S; *DD*—S; *FE*—S

Gentlemen:

I protest the "Revolution Against the Revolution" article that appeared in Vol. 23, No. 6 of the *GENERAL* (for those of you who had the good fortune to miss the thing, it was a *FIREPOWER* variant depicting the current Nicaraguan civil war between the Sandinistas and the contras). Facts are twisted and distorted, its author, James P. Werbaneth, comes on like something out of the Reagan crowd or the cold war (as if there's a difference). He portrays the contras as glorious freedom fighters, conveniently forgetting that their forces are composed of murderous ex-Samoza bullyboys, scum dog mercenaries, and drug smugglers, while the Nicaraguan Sandinistas, who are fighting for their lives, are presented as some diabolical communist menace. Werbaneth openly criticizes Nicaragua's clamping down on civil rights, yet remains strangely (though not surprisingly) silent about the fact that the country is fighting for its life, that Nicaragua is threatened with invasion from an aggressive superpower (us), and that Nicaragua hasn't done nothing that the United States itself hasn't done in times of war (look what happened to the Japanese-Americans during World War II). Well, whether Mr. Werbaneth likes it or not, Nicaragua is not going to dry up and blow away, she is communist, that is the way it is, that is the way it will always be. Nicaragua tried capitalism, it didn't work, and now she's trying communism. People like James P. Werbaneth should take note that the third, fourth, and fifth world nations are no longer afraid of the superpowers, and will not hesitate to fight for freedom, or against those that would enslave them in chains of oppression.

Kenneth W. Burke
West Hartford, Connecticut

I couldn't resist printing this letter, nor did I feel obligated to correct the grammar or spelling. (Obviously Mr. Burke wrote in "a fit of passion" and did not have time for such niceties.) The irony of this letter is that it arrived just the day after we had determined that Mr. Werbaneth had won the reader-voted "Editors' Choice Award" for our 23rd volume year for this article.

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

Mr. Waido's letter (Vol. 24, No. 1) struck a chord within me, since rules quality is also my biggest "pet peeve" in wargaming. I'd like to carry on the issue where he left off, with a slightly different emphasis. Mr. Waido's primary complaint was the changing and/or addition of rules that invalidate some of his favorite gaming tactics. My complaint, on the other hand, is more basic—the simple completeness and clarity of the rules to facilitate learning and proper game play.

Wargame quality has advanced considerably in the last ten years. In particular, the graphic design of games by major manufacturers, and those of AH in particular, have improved to such an extent that in many cases the weakest physical element in the game box is the rule book. The two criteria by which I would judge the rules quality or any game are "Completeness" (are all the rules in the book) and "Clarity" (are the rules easy to comprehend). Let me cite some specific examples.

PATTON'S BEST is a good game. Maybe even very good. However, the rulebook lacks both completeness and clarity. For example, where are the rules for APDS ammo for the Sherman Firefly? What is "deliberate immobilization"? Are German vehicles susceptible to track hits? Should smoke markers be moved along with the enemy units when my tank moves? Do I have to spot all targets every battle round, or just those that do not have spotted markers on them from the previous round? Can I "tidy up" my tank after combat by replacing broken equipment and restocking the ready rack? I think you will find that for each of the above questions, the rule book is either completely lacking or not explicit enough to provide answers without having players guess as to the designer's intent or come to their own conclusions based upon intuition. The final alternative, of course, is to write "nutmail" to get the answers.

Completeness is generally more important than clarity, but not much more. S. Craig Taylor's advanced rules for *FIREPOWER* and *FLIGHT LEADER* are two examples of rules that are very complete, but in my opinion only slightly clearer than mud to comprehend. In both instances it took me several readings of the advanced rules before I felt that I understood them well enough to try playing them, and I am not

Letters to the Editor . . .

a novice to wargaming. In fact, I have never learned to use the *FIREPOWER* vehicle rules, despite repeated attempts. At least with rules clarity, once the rules have finally been learned it becomes a non-issue. Lack of completeness, however, never goes away.

This is not a problem unique to Avalon Hill, of course. It is an industry-wide problem. More effort should be expended by all game companies to create better quality rules. The question is how to do it? I must confess that I am not very familiar with the design/development/playtesting process of new games, but I assume that virtually all the design and playtesting effort goes toward ironing out holes in the rules from a game design point of view. If this is correct, let me suggest a second playtest after all the game design is complete. For this second playtest the "final version" of the game should be given to a completely new set of playtesters whose task is to learn the game and provide feedback on rules completeness and clarity and correct last-minute errors in charts, tables, etc. Only after their feedback is received and corrections made should the game be released to the general public.

There is another alternative, less desirable from the gamer's point of view. Every game company I know includes a "feedback" card in each game. We are all familiar with the ubiquitous REG CARD, which promises to put us on a special mailing list to get advance notices of games, catalogues, and other marketing goodies. How about using those cards for more than just marketing and demographics? How about actually using those cards to register names and addresses of the people who bought a particular game, and then mail periodic rule errata/clarifications/additions to those people free of charge. You know, similar to the offer extended to purchasers of *ASL*. After all, you are correcting mistakes in your original products, right? Should your valued customers expect anything less?

Thanks for taking the time to hear me out. Let me close with a challenge to all game manufacturers. Break new ground. Advance the industry. Make quality rules writing a high priority. Eliminate most of that annoying "nutmail". Make rules errata and clarifications a thing of the past. In short, produce a better product the first time. Consumers will express their thanks in the best possible way, with their dollars.

Jeff Petraska
New Boston, Michigan

*Actually, I wonder how many consumers would be lost when we had to increase the price of every game by 50% or 100%. Unfortunately, instituting either of Mr. Petraska's suggestions would make the average game as expensive as *ASL*; he seems to ignore the time and money that these suggestions represent to a company that sells several hundred thousand games (spread over several hundred titles) each year. He is correct, the completeness and clarity of some rulebooks do leave something to be desired. But this is one of those situations where practicality clashes with idealism. It would be ideal to have "perfectly" complete and clear rulebooks, but not very practical to bankrupt oneself to obtain them.*

*There is another aspect to this question that is often overlooked in such letters. Each game designer or developer has his own style of presenting rules; the gap between, for instance, Craig Taylor's approach and Don Greenwood's would make a meaty thesis for some college grad. And what is clear and concise and complete to one player, may well be "mud" to another. (I have had letters from gamers praising Mr. Taylor's advanced rules for *FIREPOWER* as being "the best around, as well-written and simple to learn as can be found in any game.") Designing games is an art, with a nod to the "sciences" of history and mathematics. As with any art, it is fairly easy to know when something is "bad", but less so to declare something "good." I guess it is a matter of taste. If the desire to play the game, or the interest in its subject, is such that you are willing to put up with any perceived weaknesses in presentation, then it is a "good" game. If not, then you write to us.*

★★★★★

Dear Rex:

You requested of me that I provide an analysis of the game 1985HC from the standpoint of strategy and tactics, although this is not as easy as it might seem. Supposedly the objective of each of the seven players is identical—to amass a total of eighteen supply centers and so win the game. In actuality however, this is usually not the case. Quite often a player will be proceeding with some other objective in mind, examples being a second-place finish, a share of a tie, mere survival, or revenge on some particularly bothersome enemy. It is difficult to assess strategy and tactics without knowing exactly what the player in question was actually trying to accomplish.

My analysis of this game was derived from setting up the board prior to Spring 1901 and then playing the game through as per the resulting moves. I attempted to take the position of an impartial observer and evaluate each year based on what I might attempt to do if I were to assume a standby position as the particular country being addressed. The comments are based on the premise that each of the powers is attempting to attain the best possible outcome for himself. Obviously, my analysis is influenced by a number of factors and certainly represents only my personal opinion. It is not intended to be a critique of the players who participated in this game.

Hope all this helps.

Ken Hager
McLean, Virginia

★★★★★

Dear Mr. Martin:

I have been an avid *DIPLOMACY* player for several years. During the last few years, my professional cronies and I have enjoyed several games using by-mail rules, moving once per week. Everyone enjoys the game, but we would like to try some different variations.

On a recent business trip, two of our participants found the names of several people in a copy of the *GENERAL* who run true postal games. I thought that one of them might be able and willing to help us out. I was just about to put a slew of letters in the mail when I got the latest catalogue in the mail from Avalon Hill. I dug a phone number out of it and called to see if I could save myself some time and postage. When I asked about variants for the game, I was given your name as a source of information.

Could you recommend a source of some tried and true variant games? Have you ever played with variant rules? Any information you can give me will be greatly appreciated.

Ken Springsteen
Sheridan, Michigan

*The definitive source for information on variants is Fred Davis, Jr. (3210K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City, MD 21043). He maintains the "North American Variant Bank" and produces its catalogue (\$3.00) from which you may order a copy of any of the literally hundreds of variants for *DIPLOMACY*. Mr. Davis also moderates a number of by-mail variant games and reports the results in his "zine" "Bushwacker". You might care to try your hand at one of those; ask Mr. Davis for details when you contact him.*

★★★★★

Dear Sirs:

Avalon Hill has published some fine wargames over the years. Your recent issue of *EMPIRES IN ARMS* is no exception. Would you please consider developing an IBM computer version of this game? Given the capacity of IBM-compatible computers and your experience with games such as *COMPUTER DIPLOMACY*, "Computer EIA" would be the first of its type on the market and would surely be a tremendous success given the popularity of the Napoleonic period and the wonderful design base provided by the designers. Would you also consider a complex, tactical ancients game? Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in the development

or playtesting of "Computer *EMPIRES IN ARMS*".

David Riese
Metairie, Louisiana

*According to Bill Peschel (Project Manager for the Microcomputer Games Division), while there are no plans in the works for a computer version of *EMPIRES IN ARMS*, that doesn't mean that there won't be one in the future. Letters from customers command a fair amount of attention here, because a person who takes the trouble to write is one with an active interest in what we do. Bill reads each and files those with game suggestions in a separate place until he decides on the next cycle of games. Games which generate a goodly amount of mail receive the greater amount of attention. A peek into that file reveals a moderate amount of interest in *EIA*, *CIV* and the "Fleet" series from *Victory Games*, but nothing showing a specific direction to proceed in. The same goes for games on specific hardware such as the *ST* and the *Amiga*. He has received several letters bemoaning the lack of wargames on the *ST* and the *Macintosh*, and they are working to satisfy that demand.*

★★★★★

Dear Editor,

Avalon Hill is and has been for some time now, the leader in producing good, quality games. Although some good games come out of other companies, they still don't stack up to Avalon Hill quality. Many gamers experience that sharp feeling of disappointment and even a sense of revulsion as they open the box of a new non-AH game to find a non-colorful, thin paper map, drab and confusing counters, and a haphazard compilation of rules which have been typed on notebook paper (which are also long, redundant, confusing and cumbersome). It feels like you've just entered the "Twilight Zone". It's like coming home to Mom's apple pie when you break out the old *TRC* or *BB'81* after an experience with one of these "other folks" games.

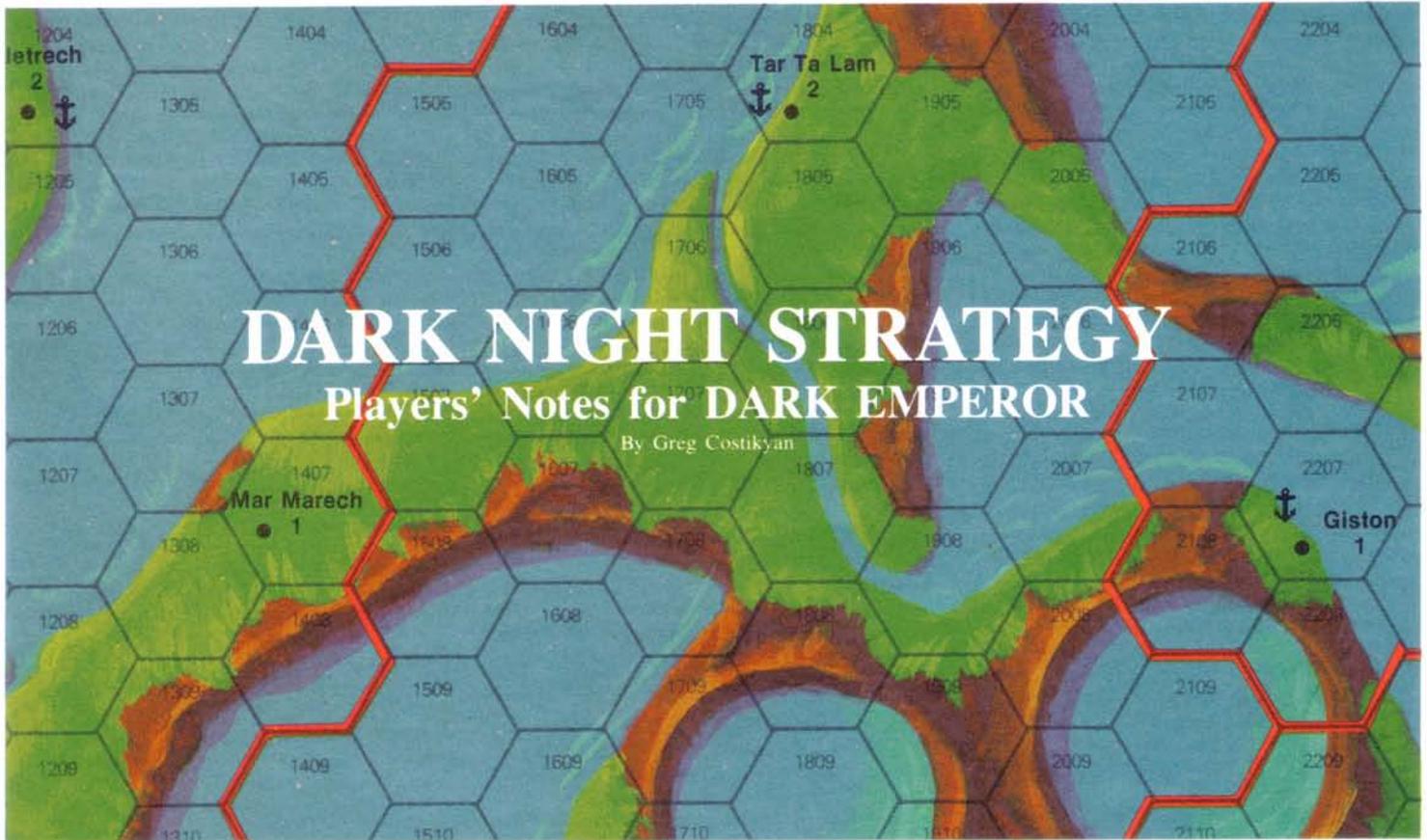
So, why would I buy a non-AH game if I'm so "repulsed" by these other companies, you say? For the same reason that many other desperate gamers out there do—to get a game on a subject that you don't have. What? Avalon Hill, the leading game producer is out done by some small, garage "company". How can this be? The key is diversity. This is where Avalon Hill has a serious lack. How many "different" games does AH sell on the WWII Eastern Front or North Africa? You fellows have more games on one specific topic than other companies have in their whole catalogue!

By doing this, you offer very good coverage to a few subjects' but what about the rest? Be honest; do we really need another version of *THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN* or another expansion kit for *ADVANCED SL*? Look at all the other possibilities. There are oceans full of material, just waiting for good games to be released about—modern to semi-future warfare, nuclear warfare, 17th and 18th century warfare, medieval kingdom building, the Crusades, the Prussian Empire, Middle East wars, Attila the Hun, etc. . . . (just to name a few). These topics alone would take years for Avalon Hill to cover completely.

I believe that not only would the wargaming culture be a lot more diverse, enriched, enhanced, but also that your (and "our") company would benefit greatly from such an expansion.

Veronica Stice
Bradford, Massachusetts

Ms. Stice, like Mr. Petraska above, seems to forget that this is a company and that financial realities (like the fact that games on some of these topics wouldn't bring enough profit to fire up the presses) must take precedence. Add to that the fact that very, very few good designs on such topics are submitted due to the same lack of interest and knowledge on the part of designers that afflict most of our population, and it is not hard to understand why Avalon Hill has but a handful of games on the subjects you'd like to see. After all, just as with gamers, most designers know a bit about 20th century conflict, the Civil War and the Napoleonic Wars but little about the wars of other periods (certainly not enough to design a challenging, innovative and accurate game). If we get an innovative game, regardless of the subject on which it is based, we will scrutinize it most closely for possible inclusion in our extensive line.



Although *DARK EMPEROR* is a fantasy game, it is firmly in the Avalon Hill wargaming tradition. A two-player military simulation which accurately depicts the details of a tremendous war, players need realize that this is a war which takes place in a fantasy land. The war is the "Second Necromantic War" of the world of Loslon. One player takes the part of Padrech dar Choim, the Great Necromancer, who invades this world with his vampire legions from the domain of the dead. The other player controls the human kingdoms which will oppose him—if they recognize the danger in time and can put aside their own differences to ally against the greater threat. The following is a brief introduction to strategy for each player. In the space available, it can, perforce, touch only on basic and broad concerns. But it should provide a starting point for newcomers to the world of *DARK EMPEROR*.

THE NECROMANCER

Initially, all of the human kingdoms are neutral; they only become active when invaded or when recruited through the diplomacy of involved kingdoms. By acting carefully, the Necromancer player may be able to conquer several of the human lands before the others can react. Since the Necromancer may place his initial forces in any hex on the mapboard, he can choose any kingdom as his first target for conquest. Choosing a target is the single most important strategic decision the Necromancer makes in the course of this game.

Whenever the Necromantic forces invade a kingdom, the player's first goal should be to kill all of its leaders. Only leaders can conduct diplomacy; if all a kingdom's leaders are killed at the start, other kingdoms will remain neutral. There are two ways to kill leaders: with the "Kill" spell or by destroying the human armies with which they are stacked. Either way, the leader still has a "saving throw"; if your opponent rolls less than or equal to his hero rating, the leader escapes. All things being equal,

the more leaders a country has, the greater the chance that one will survive the initial attack.

The Necromancer needs to conquer territory to feed his vampires. He can support one vampire unit for every five "tax points" he controls (each vampire requires a certain number of humans to provide blood, just as any population of predators rests on a larger population of prey. Vampire units are not lost if the tax base is too small, but the Necromancer cannot rebuild units he loses in combat until his tax base is large enough.

Once the Necromancer occupies all of a kingdom's cities, he controls it and its tax base. Any invasion should be designed to take a kingdom's cities rapidly. However, each city must be garrisoned. If the player uses his initial force of vampires as garrisons, he will rapidly run out of units. Whenever possible, the "Raise Undead" spell should be used to resurrect human units killed in combat. Undead units are weak in combat, but make ideal garrison forces. When deciding which country to invade, keep in mind the number of cities it possesses; the larger that number, the longer the conquest will take. Also, keep in mind its tax value; the larger the tax value, the more vampires it can support for your growing offensive.

The last major strategic consideration when deciding which country to invade concerns your primary foe. The Old High Empire—Zolahaureslor—automatically enters the game on the human side on Game Turn 10. The Necromancer must plan his moves so that his units are well-positioned to take on the might of the Empire by Turn 10. If they're located on the fringes of the mapboard at that time, he may be in trouble.

With all the above in mind, let's look at some of the possibilities for your first strike:

The Scythe: One very common strategy for the Necromancer is to conquer the "northern tier" countries one by one, beginning with the Scythe. Tal Pletor is a natural ally, and under Mezal's fearsome urgings will soon join the Necromancer. If

the Necromancer can take out the other four northern countries, he has probably won the game. On the other hand, the odds of getting as far as Kelaron Oiret by Turn 10, beginning with the Scythe, are pretty slim.

The Scythe has only one leader (Skydor), and three cities; its tax value of 28 is fairly high by the standards of the smaller nations. With his magical scythe, Skydor "saves" against a "Kill" spell on a roll of "1" or "2"; his chances of surviving the initial attack are low. However, once the Scythe is conquered, the Necromancer may have to spend one or two precious game-turns redeploying his forces to the east. The trip through Tal Pletor to Lammarech is a long one.

Lammarech: This country has the same tax value as the Scythe and only two cities to occupy. By starting with Lammarech and heading east, the Necromancer can probably conquer the northern tier (other than the Scythe) before the Empire enters. This, plus Tal Pletor and a bit of luck, may be enough to win the game. Lammarech's main drawback as a starting target is a strategic one: Tal Pletor is well positioned to invade Lammarech itself; it might be better to use the vampire legions elsewhere and let Tal Pletor do the work for you. Furthermore, Lammarech makes a good staging-ground for the inevitable invasion of the Empire. It might be strategically better to conquer it around Turn 8 or 9 so that your forces can spring from Lammarech straight into Zolahaureslor.

Loymarech: At initial glance, Loymarech might seem a disastrous target. It has three cities and a low tax value of only 16; its hero, Paisach, is saved on a die roll of "1-3". But, strategically, Loymarech has some possibilities. The Necromantic forces can take it out on turns 1 and 2, while allying with Tal Pletor. Then they invade Lammarech, again along with Tal Pletor, on Turn 3 and turn on Kelaron Oiret afterward. The advantage of this strategy is that Tal Pletor shoulders some of the hard work. The disadvantage is that the Necromancer does not con-

trol any substantial tax revenues until Turn 4 or later—and if his vampire legions suffer too great an attrition before then, he may have to spend several turns rebuilding their ranks.

Kelaron Oiret: The Kelaron republic has only three cities, and is therefore as easily conquered as any of the other northern tier states. Its tax value of 45 makes it a very tempting target. It has only one drawback: it has three leaders and the risk that at least one will survive is substantial. At least they all have low saving throws—Grip Nud and Zalara only get saved on a “1” and Padron Plety’y (with the “Torch”) on a “1-3”. Once conquered though, Kaleron Oiret is an ideal staging base for an “east to west” of the northern states, probably ending in Lammarech, and from there your war carries into the Empire itself. Kaleron Oiret is a fine target for the player who likes to gamble. The rewards are high and the country is strategically well-positioned; of course, the risk is commensurately high for Kaleron may prove the rallying point for opposition to your plans.

Stavror: Stavror is an equally-risky target, although for different reasons. It has only one leader, who is easily dispatched; its tax value of 75 makes it a very tempting target indeed. Its main drawback is that it has no fewer than seven cities. Any Necromancer needs a bit of luck to take out Stavror. Until he does so, every vampire unit lost to attrition or combat is a permanent loss. Lucky die rolls for combat and attrition and the optimum use of your leaders and forces are required. Recruited monsters and battlefield undead may also come in handy.

Stavror is the only country other than Zolahaureslor that has a fair chance of fighting the Necromancer to a stand-still by itself. On the other hand, if luck breaks that Necromancer’s way he can, in a few turns, conquer a tax base that he’d need three of the northern kingdoms to equal.

Ferlarie: Not an ideal target. Its tax value of 24 is lower than the Scythe’s or Lammarech’s. It has four cities. And, strategically, it has some drawbacks. It does, however, have only one leader, with a low saving roll at that. The fact that Ferlarie has four cities is partially counter-balanced by the fact that two of them, Kep and Parduin, can be readily attacked by Tal Pletor forces. On the other hand, the country is large and if the Necromancer is forced to fly vampires back and forth across it, he may suffer unacceptable attrition losses.

Strategically, Ferlarie’s position is awkward. Stavror is not a logical follow-up target because it’s too big to conquer after suffering attrition in the conquest of Ferlarie. The Scythe is a possibility; the danger here is that Turn 10 will come around in the process and the Necromancer will find himself holding Ferlarie, the Scythe and not much else when the Empire moves. To have any chance of winning, he’ll need to take Lammarech in addition.

Ahautsieron and Starkeep: Neither of these kingdoms makes much sense as a target. Ahautsieron’s tax value of 56 is tempting; but it has two leaders, four cities and is widely spread over difficult terrain. Further, its position is strategically awkward; neither Kaleron Oiret nor Stavror is likely to prove an easy follow-up conquest. On the other hand, Starkeep is easily conquered, but its tax value is too low to do you much good. Moreover, if the Keeper survives the initial attack, his Serenity magic will make it easy for your human opponent to recruit new kingdoms to his side. And there is no logical target after Starkeep is conquered—both Stavror and Ahautsieron are tough.

A few other hints for the Necromancer player are in order before looking at the opposition. Tal Pletor is useful early in the game; but the Necromancer receives no victory points for having it as an ally. Toward the end of play, it is a good idea to betray your ally. Since the Necromancer controls its forces,

he can set Tal Pletor up; simply force march his troops into oblivion, occupy its cities with troops loyal to you, and so forth. Fernan Conniver, the mercenary, can be extremely helpful in this operation; his troops can be used to garrison Tal Pletor’s cities.

If the Necromancer has any spare leaders on the first few turns, he should use them to investigate magic hex markers. If he finds the sword “He-Sups-On-Prana”, the additional magic strength it provides will be invaluable. A recruited monster or two can also be helpful. On the other hand, if an exploring leader encounters a monster in a neutral country, it is better to engage it in heroic combat and risk losing the leader than to recruit the monster and so activate the neutral.

Finally, always keep a stack of vampires somewhere in reserve. You need vampires to make more vampires; putting them all in the front lines will deplete your strength more than you can bear.

THE HUMAN

Initially, the Human player is in the same position as the Allies in the opening stages of World War II—all he can do is watch as the bad guys run amok. However, he should do his best to make each country’s conquest as difficult as possible for the Necromancer. And, if the Necromancer leaves any of his leaders vulnerable, a counter-attack may be worthwhile.

Remember that every game-turn is precious to the Necromancer. Zolahaureslor inevitably enter on Turn 10 and when it does the Necromancer must devote every effort to fighting the Empire off. He must grab as much real estate as he possibly can before then. If you fight hard enough, so that the Necromancer must spend three turns instead of two to conquer a kingdom, you’ve won a victory.

Sooner or later, a human hero will survive the Necromancer’s attack on his land. Immediately dispatch him to begin diplomacy with the neutral kingdoms. It is rarely worthwhile to leave a leader behind to fight the enemy; no kingdom alone can beat the Necromancer. You, as savior of humanity, must play for time and gather your strength. There are three logical targets for the diplomacy of surviving leaders: the Empire, Starkeep and Kaleron Oiret. Each will bring you advantages if it enters on your side.

The Empire, Zolahaureslor, is the most powerful kingdom on the board and the sooner it starts fighting the Necromancer, the better off you’ll be. On the other hand, it automatically enter on Turn 10, so you may be wiser to recruit a different country. Also, Zolahaureslor’s modest diplomacy modifier of “+2” means that you may fail to recruit it the first time you try; you might be better off with a surer bet.

Starkeep will enter the moment you try to recruit it. Its army is weak, but its leader is a Serenity mage, which means he is extremely effective at diplomacy. On the following turn, you can send the Keeper to recruit the Empire; he will almost certainly be effective.

Kelaron Oiret is a powerful nation in its own right and its diplomacy modifier of “+4” means it will enter the war more than 50% of the time. In addition, it has three leaders whom you can dispatch to recruit other countries on following turns. Recruiting Kelaron Oiret is a good way to get the anti-Necromancer alliance rolling.

Remember that there are two ways the Humans can win—by keeping the Necromancer’s victory point tally low, or by killing the Necromancer dar Choim himself. Dar Choim can only be killed by the fell weapons of power, the swords “Loslom” and “Famir”. In other words, the Necromancer must take part in a battle in which all his troops are killed, in which the enemy leader wields one of these swords, and then must fail his saving throw. Setting

up such a situation is not easy for the Human player. The sword “Loslom” is possessed by Paisach, King of Loymarech, at the beginning of the game. Loymarech is often conquered by the Necromancer before that kingdom can be recruited and the sword taken out of circulation. The sword “Famir” is a magic hex marker; it may be worth sending any spare leader to track it down. Unfortunately, the sword’s insistence on killing the monster Sssthoh may drag the wielder on a fruitless quest half-way across the board.

Dar Choim is usually located with one of the strongest enemy stacks. Marshalling a human army large enough to eliminate it may not be easy. If you have either sword, stay alert for opportunities; if Dar Choim leave himself vulnerable, launch an attack immediately. Don’t be afraid to expose an important city when attacking the Necromancer—a successful attack wins the game.

Even should dar Choim’s stack be eliminated, he may still make a saving throw. Luckily, his intrinsic hero rating of “2” is fairly low. If he is carrying a hero’s sword or “Loslom”, his saving throw will be higher. However, the sword usually favored by dar Choim is “He-Sups-On-Prana”, useful in death-rune magic but without a hero rating.

Few games end with the slaying of dar Choim. More usual, the humans win by fighting the Necromancer to a stand-still. The Human player must be alert to every method you can use to injure him. Remember that you can always rebuild units you lose. Frequently, the humans have more tax money than they know what to do with. It is sometimes easier to “redeploy” troops by losing them to attrition, then rebuilding them where they’re useful.

Don’t be afraid to overstack in preparation for an attack; stacking limits only apply after combat is over. You may need the extra combat strength for the attack, and you can always rebuild later.

When the Necromancer raises an eliminated unit as undead, it is permanently lost to you. Even if the undead unit is later eliminated, you will not be able to rebuild it. Therefore, whenever you lose units which the necromancer may raise, eliminate the weakest that you can.

Conversely, when you use a living sword or one of the great swords of power in combat against vampires, any three-strength vampire units eliminated are permanently lost. Use your Metal-rune mages to manufacture a bunch of living swords and use them whenever you have a chance. And use your Life-rune mages to cast “Banish Undead” spells, which have similar effects. Remember too that the Necromancer is your enemy, not Tal Pletor. When you face the choice between killing vampires and killing Tal Pletor’s troops, kill the vampires.

One of the great human advantages (at least once the alliance gets rolling) is a plethora of leaders. One of the Necromancer’s great drawbacks is that he commands only a few. Any time you have a chance of killing one of the Necromancer’s leaders, take it.

Look for magic hex markers. Many are useful. If you have spare leaders with high hero ratings, use them to look for magic hex markers; if they encounter one of the nastier monsters, they’ll have a good chance of killing it, increasing their hero rating. If you have a spare mage, stack him on a magic rune hex; the extra point of magic strength can’t hurt.

And don’t forget about mercenaries. They can come in handy.

It is hoped that this overview of *DARK EMPEROR* and a few hints to get you playing quickly and competently will encourage those of you who haven’t yet to try the game. You might just find it the perfect thing to while away those dark nights.



THE PACIFIC WAR

A Grand Strategy Perspective

By Mark Herman

This article defines the strategic objectives for both sides in the Strategic Scenario and describes how they should be generally implemented. Extensive designers notes for certain game systems are included in the text to enlighten the reader as to how the game re-creates the historical circumstances of the event. Included at the end are several appendixes.

Japanese Grand Strategy Objectives

The Japanese player is placed in the unenviable historical position of attacking a stronger adversary whose eventual production of forces will overwhelm his empire. The reasons why this occurred are outside the scope of this article but suffice to say they felt it was their only option. The Japanese player's only consolation is the poor Allied deployment and inferior "in theater forces" which opposed the initial Japanese operations at the outset of the war. Therefore the Japanese player must seize the initiative and hold onto it as long as possible while maintaining a viable force to face the end game.

The end game mechanic which gives the Japanese a chance at victory centers on preventing the Allies from destroying Japan through strategic bombing or invasion. In order for the Allies to win they must perform a strategic bombing mission each game turn from June 1944 until the end of the game, including the Doolittle raid, in order to start firebombing at its proper moment in history. If the Japanese can prevent this then only an invasion will win the game for the Allies. Admittedly, this is a pyrrhic victory but historically the Japanese did not have a chance once the issue of unconditional surrender was set in political stone.

Strategically, Japan is an island with scarce resources other than manpower. The Japanese strategic reserve of stockpiled war materials lasts until the June 1942 game turn. At this time all Resource hexes on the map must be controlled and repaired, or else the chances of maintaining the strategic initiative are diminished.

The strategic initiative in the game is maintained by consistently winning the operations bid and dictating the tempo of operations in the game. The operations must be effectively utilized when available since eventually the Allies, through superior production, will assume the mantle of the initiating player. The tempo of operations in the game has important grand strategy implications and is discussed in detail later.

At the beginning of the game the Allies are ripe for a fall. The Japanese player can disrupt Allied operations most effectively by interdicting key ports and their associated headquarters on the December 1941 turn. The longer the Allied command infrastructure is interdicted, the easier it will be for the Japanese to maintain supremacy in the game. The historical Japanese strategy of relying on a defensive perimeter, yielded to the Allies the only thing the Japanese had going for them: the initiative. In the game, to follow this recipe for disaster will lead to an identical game outcome. A superior strategy revolves around repeated raids and limited offensives against the inferior Allied forces with the objective of maintaining the interdiction of critical Allied lines of advance for as long as is feasible. This will curtail the activation of Allied forces along the best routes to Japan, making the more fragmented responses easier to parry over the course of the game.

The Japanese player must frequently threaten locations that the Allied player must defend with the aim of eliminating Allied naval forces. The summer of 1943 sees the beginning of an overwhelming tide of U.S. production output and the loss of naval supremacy. This tactic requires the Japanese to employ taskforces of four or more carriers, making possible the elimination of the enemy naval forces while keeping Japanese losses to a minimum.

The last major point is to maintain as large a merchant marine as possible. Unless the Allied player seriously misplays his submarine campaign objectives, the amount of merchant shipping tonnage eventually lost will mount alarmingly. A larger than historical commitment of scarce Japanese light forces to escort duty must be considered. Such a strategy will not dramatically reduce losses in most cases, but every little bit helps.

Allied Grand Strategy Objectives

Had an American Shakespeare written, "this is the winter of our discontent", in the late 1940's he could have been referring to December 1941. The Allied main objective in the beginning of the game is the continued control of the Hawaiian islands, Australia, India, and China. The game allows the Japanese to permanently close down China or India as theaters of operations. The costs for such offensives is potentially very high but the freedom that this gives the Japanese in redeployment of ground divisions can have a significant effect on later campaigns, especially ones involving the larger multi-hex islands (e.g., the Dutch East Indies).

China is the most vulnerable of the four locations. It is vital that the Allies maintain at least an emergency command link to the Chinese and keep them a viable offensive platform in case the Japanese attempt to conquer it. The ability to activate Chinese armies in response to Japanese offensives gives the front a fighting chance. Without the activation of any units, a Japanese offensive does not have to watch or maintain its command links, since they cannot be cut by immobile Chinese troops. If the Japanese make an all out effort, they may be able to prevail. The Allies in this case must make the attrition of ground formations a painful Japanese experience. Counter-offensives in other areas of the map are also critical to draw attention away from China or yield vital territory (e.g., the Marshall islands) as a "quid pro quo" for Japanese offensive myopia.

India, on the other hand, has strong British and Indian forces associated with an independent command link (SEAC headquarters). If the Allies can maintain an airfield in northern India or Burma, an emergency command link to the Chinese remains a possibility. If the Japanese can drive a wedge between the Chinese and the British, superior to the one accomplished during the war, the Chinese become exceedingly vulnerable. Anything short of an all out Japanese effort against India is unlikely to knock the British out of the war. As with China, if the Japanese player attempts the conquest of India the U.S. forces must launch a counterattack somewhere, which forces the Japanese to divert resources or risk losing a critical location.

Since Australia is only partially represented on the map and since it was really beyond the Japanese capabilities to have conquered it during the war, it cannot be forced to surrender. The Japanese them-

selves thought that they could only control the sparsely populated northern coast, which is what is represented on the map. Japanese occupation of the northern Australian ports would neutralize this area as a base for Allied offensive operations against Japan. Even a partial occupation anchors the Japanese southern flank and makes the Dutch East Indies, basically, invulnerable from the southeastern route of attack. New Guinea must be taken into account when contemplating Australia as an offensive base. Uncontested control of New Guinea for the Japanese is a powerful blocking position and air-power platform which the Allies will have to contend with before conducting offensive operations from the Australian continent.

The war ostensibly starts with the raid on Pearl Harbor although historically, as in the game, it is the invasion of Malaya that precedes the "day of infamy". If the Oahu port (Pearl Harbor) is interdicted, U.S. forces must temporarily deploy to Fiji, Samoa, or the Aleutians (Dutch Harbor), until repair of the facility brings CentPac back into the fray. It may be necessary to deploy SWPac to one of these locations, prior to its final movement to Australia, to repair the U.S. command link infrastructure. The only other possibility is to build a command link from Australia to the Hawaiian islands in order to accomplish the same feat.

The ultimate objective for the Allies is obviously the destruction of Japan, which means placing in operation by June 1944 a functioning strategic bomber base with which to win the war. Historically this was initially India and China and eventually the entire effort resided at Tinian. A minimum objective is the capture of a location and the completion of a large airfield prior to this deadline. The big offensive to win the war will eventually start, but if too much time has elapsed the only Allied option may be the costly invasion of Japan itself. The strategic initiative must be wrested from the Japanese grasp. Obviously the Japanese intention is to prevent this by clever play early in the game.

The Allied player is cast in the role of reactive player, more often than not, until late 1943. This requires the maintenance of positions that are contiguous to Japanese forces or in close proximity to Allied amphibious forces. By whittling away at the edges of the Japanese position losses will be taken which the Japanese player cannot totally replace. This type of attrition warfare will slowly, but surely, erode the Japanese strategic position while the Allies gain naval supremacy. From this point, on the road to Tokyo is open for business.

Part of this attrition strategy continues throughout the game as an anti-merchant shipping campaign which will reduce over time the availability of Japanese command points. By knocking out the Manila port on the first battle cycle of the game, the Japanese stand a good chance of preventing the activation of the Asian submarine force (29 submarines) which, if eliminated, buys him time. The Allied player should consider activating some portion of this force at the first opportunity (Reactive Player activation phase prior to the start of the first battle cycle) as insurance against its occurrence.

In its simplest terms, initial Allied grand strategy is "hold until relieved", followed by a phase of vicious counter punching with an equal opponent, all of which leads to an offensive campaign to the perimeter of Japan and concluding with its destruction.

Tempo of Operations: An Historical Perspective

In *Pacific War*, operations are conducted with a clock measuring elapsed time defined in a concept we loosely termed a day. Now when the operation begins the Contact phase uses an equivalent of one day for each 300 miles of naval movement representing a cruising speed of around 12.5 knots. When the forces close the time increments are switched into a shorter equivalent of from 3 to 4 hours with naval unit speeds now calculated at battle speed of around 30 knots.

Several points need to be made about this abstract way of handling time. Certain techniques seem on the surface to be inconsistencies but in fact they are intended design decisions.

The time system tries to accomplish many things within the design. Wars have many intangibles that Clausewitz termed "friction" which tangibly affected the tempo of operations. The *Pacific War* had a strategic tempo of operations which the Time calculation and Command Point systems attempt to re-create. An examination of the availability of command points is a good indication of what to expect in each phase of the war. This analysis will assume

that reasonable bidding techniques are used, without major effect from future operations pools except where noted. Only two operations per game turn are assumed except where noted. Also the analysis is historical; your individual games will obviously differ based on the strategic initiative, but the conditions that were important will be illustrated.

From 12/41 until 4/43 the Japanese historically had 160 command points per game turn available. The Allies have an average of 69 points per game turn from 12/41 through 4/42. This period is characterized by the initial Japanese expansion under the IAI plan. In this period of the war, the Japanese player should be the Operations player for both operations each month. Even if the Allied player launches an operation due to a successful future operation or winning the second operation in a month, there are so many ungarrisoned strategic locations that need to be occupied that being the reaction player will not severely affect the Japanese invasion timetable.

From 5/42 to 9/42 the Allies will have the ability to launch the first operation of a game turn approximately 5 percent of the time with an average command point total of 113 per turn. A future operation, though, stands a strong chance of accomplishing this

situation once, allowing the Allies to launch the Guadalcanal invasion. Subsequent to this invasion, from 10/42 until 10/43, the Allies have an average command point total of 129 per turn. During this period the Allied probability to launch the first operation of a month rises from approximately 20 percent to 40 percent. This period should see the Japanese start to lose the Strategic Initiative in the game while maintaining the ability to dictate the tempo of operations. The Allied player will find himself as the reaction player most of the time, so he should focus on operations of short duration and distance. Historically this period was characterized by actions in Burma, New Guinea, and the Solomons chain. All of which are characterized by their support from land based air power and their relative proximity to the enemy at the beginning of the operation.

From 11/43 to 5/44, the Allied player will average 190 points per turn and see his probability of being the operations player increase to better than 80 percent of the time. Whenever the Japanese player does get the initiative, major short range offensives must be available and launched to keep the slowed tempo of operations to a minimum. Again, important objectives in the Dutch East Indies and mainland Asia cannot be ignored by the Japanese at the expense of other positions. For the Allies, the easiest technique to control the game is to consistently win the operation bidding. In this manner the important long range operations that are needed for victory in the game can be conducted. This period characterizes the beginning of the long range amphibious invasions that the U.S. became so adept at starting with Tarawa. If the game allowed this period of operations to begin earlier by restricting severely the Japanese ability to dictate the tempo of operations then the war will usually end much sooner than historically. The intangibles that account for the historical state of affairs are as strategic as the Allied progress in Europe to the availability of spare parts and trained soldiers.

In the next-and-last phase of the war, the Allied player maintains his offensives toward Japan as the operations player almost 100 percent of the time. On the rare occasion that a Japanese future operation occurs, some direct confrontation will force the suspension of the endeavor while leaving the majority of the Allied assets available for a subsequent operation.

This chart is based on historical analysis of available command points during the actual war and is expressed in Command Points per month (CP's/Mo.).

Allies (Command Point Table Averages only, which does not account for Strategic Initiative)

12/41 to 4/42, 69 CP's/Mo.

5/42 to 9/42, 113 CP's/Mo.

10/42 to 10/43, 129 CP's/Mo.

11/43 to 5/44, 190 CP's/Mo.

6/44 to 7/45, 202 CP's/Mo.

Japanese (based on historical submarine and bomber campaign results)

12/41 to 4/43, 160 CP's/Mo.

5/43 to 11/43, 144 CP's/Mo.

12/43 to 2/44, 130 CP's/Mo.

3/44 to 6/44, 104 CP's/Mo.

7/44 to 9/44, 84 CP's/Mo.

10/44 to 11/44, 54 CP's/Mo.

12/44 to 1/45, 34 CP's/Mo.

2/45, 22 CP's

3/45, 31 CP's (small shipping increase due to conversions)

4/45, 16 CP's

5/45, 13 CP's

6/45 to 7/45, 10 CP's/Mo.

Tempo of Operations: Game Play Applications

For every strategy available in the design, I

Appendix 1—December 1941—Tora, Tora, Tora

The main article described the phases of the war in general terms since each game is often quite different. The opening Japanese moves in the game can be explored in more detail since the starting conditions are always the same. Certain subtleties in the game system can be seen in the December 1941 turn which have wider applicability over the duration of the Strategic Scenario.

Since the first operation is automatically surprise and allied air units may not search at a range greater than two hexes it is important that no search opportunities are made available prior to the Japanese forces achieving their starting positions. The first turn objectives are:

- (1) Interdiction of the port facilities and destruction of air units at Manila, Oahu, and Clark Airforce Base.
- (2) Landings on Luzon, Mindanao, Dutch Harbor, and Malaya with support from overland attacks.
- (3) Airborne drop on Palembang in conjunction with a landing on Borneo (north coast).
- (4) Landings on Guam, Wake, New Britain (Rabaul), and New Ireland (Kavieng).
- (5) Overland conquest of Hong Kong.

The initial turn should be conducted as two, fourteen day, operations. The Japanese have 160 command points versus the Allies 72 (the best possible result), so both operations bids should be easily won. Especially when the second bid will have the strategic initiative benefit. This is important since the time multiple of a fourteen day operation ($\times 1$) will allow the maximum activation of Japanese units.

Objectives (1) through (3) will be attempted during the first operation which is the larger of the two conducted by the South Headquarters in Saigon. Objectives (4) and (5) will be achieved during the second operation using smaller forces with the South Seas Headquarters at Truk, but these objectives are lightly held or unoccupied.

During the first operation no unit during the Contact Phase should have to travel more than 12 hexes (Dutch Harbor invasion force) before moving into the starting positions. This leaves 10 Days (game term) or 10 hexes of movement to accomplish all objectives, which is sufficient including a return trip where necessary.

At the conclusion of the Contact Phase taskforces will be two hexes from all invasion sites. In the first Battle Cycle the tactic is to move naval units first (two hexes) and then make amphibious landings with the ground units. None of the invasion hexes should contain enemy units (or fortifications) so the landings can take place immediately, as opposed to the following movement phase if enemy naval units were present.

During the first air mission phase Oahu and Manila, as well as other objectives, are subjected to air strikes while paratroopers are dropped onto Palembang with the transport aircraft recovering to the now captured airfield at Singkawang, Borneo.

The air strikes on Oahu and Manila should emphasize the ports interdiction to cut the HQ command links. This should severely restrict US force operations in the beginning of the game. The Oahu port will not be repairable until a command link is established from another location which could take up to several months, but more on this later.

The ground forces that attack Luzon should try as quickly as possible to capture Manila. Leave Corregidor until later. Whereas the objective on Mindanao is Davao only. The island proper can be subjugated later. Ground forces strategically transported to Davao will be used to assault Celebes and Borneo (South and East coasts) during the January and February 1942 game turns.

The Malayan peninsula is subjected to landings on its east coast with the intention of capturing Singapore and eliminating all Allied units on the peninsula. Overland attacks from French Indo-China will come through Siam, capture Bangkok, and block Allied retreat from Malaya and reinforcements from Burma. Subsequent operations during January and February 1942 will be directed through Burma toward India and China.

The Dutch Harbor operation entails the Ominato naval forces (CL and DD) transporting an infantry regiment to the unoccupied hex. It is this force that must move 12 hexes during the Contact Phase in order to be within 10 hexes of Dutch Harbor where the invasion forces will deactivate. This ground garrison will eventually be overwhelmed but it will help slow down the repair of the U.S. command link to Oahu.

An airborne drop is critical in preventing any demolition attempts on the Palembang. Sumatra resource hex. The invasion and capture of the Singkawang, Borneo airfield will allow the two engine air unit which transports the airborne brigade to land. The Borneo ground forces should then advance and capture Miri by overland assault.

The second operation objectives should all be lightly held. The strategic scenario does allow the Australian forces to deploy outside of the mainland which is ahistorical. This was done to give the beginning of the game some variety between playings. To play the historical set up do not allow any division size Australian formations to be deployed outside of Australia until the January 1942 game turn.

Regardless of which set up is used the second operation looks to capture Wake island, New Ireland (Kavieng), and New Britain (Rabaul). If New Ireland or New Britain are strongly held then just land forces on the island unopposed for a later build up and offensive.

The capture of Hong Kong requires the activation of the 38th division in China using the China HQ for activation during the first activation/deactivation phase of the second operation for six command points.

Guam is captured during the Strategic Transport Phase of January 1942. This is done by using the Barge rule and moving a small ground unit from Saipan/Tinian hex onto the unoccupied island.

Certain December 1941 objectives will not be totally controlled by the conclusion of the turn but mopping up operations should not extend much past the beginning of 1942.

The Allies during the Japanese offensive should attempt to minimize damage, upset the conquest timetable, and plan to put the U.S. command links on a firmer footing during the January game turn. Anticipate where the Japanese will attack in the second game turn and begin to move your scarce forces into the best possible contingency positions.

believe there are adequate counter-strategies to neutralize them. Some of them are not as obvious as others. The Allied strategy must not only focus on the long range amphibious invasion and carrier battle, but on air and ground attacks where enemy factors are in close proximity, allowing for offensive action even while being the reactive player. Certain tactics within the game system allow the players to have strategic control of the tempo of operations through the interaction of bidding and command point availability, with the future operations pool thrown in as a wild card. Tactics which attempt to slow the pace of operations may seem abstract, but they serve an important purpose if *Pacific War* is to be an accurate simulation of the conflict.

An unlimited amount of penalty time is allowed, restricted only by the availability of command points. One apparent abuse of this rule is the activation of a small quantity of units to run down the time available. When the reaction player is on the brink of accomplishing something significant, the operation player's response is to shut down the operation forcing the reaction player to quickly follow suit.

Just because the player is temporarily cast in the role of the reactive player does not mean that he must play passively, just effectively for minimum cost. A player may activate up to ten Command Points of units each Deactivation/Activation Phase of each Battle Cycle. Even ten points can activate a Corps size attack of five divisions, or the activation of a small amphibious taskforce to move ground forces forward to an unopposed landing of an enemy occupied land mass. Large force activation is not required in this environment since the paltry enemy force available will not hinder the counter offensive. If the Allied player does not react properly to these situations then it is true that a good deal of time will be expended for no gain. Good play seems to me the answer not additional rules.

In late 1942 through 1943, the Japanese player is able to dictate the tempo of operations by consistently winning the operations bid. Late in the war the situation will automatically reverse. The object

for the allied player is to keep Japanese operations short in duration. To stop an operation quickly, the reaction player needs to create a suitable threat while not tying up sizable assets. To accomplish this an objective needs to be identified which meets the criteria of the short range operation.

A short range operation is one where the reactive player's forces are within one or two battle cycles of movement (two to four hexes) from enemy forces. Operations fitting this description can be found on mainland Asia (Burma, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. This is the phase of the game mentioned earlier where the Japanese player is often the Operations player but wishes to slow the tempo of operations. Historically the 2/43 to 10/43 period of the war was characterized by operations in these regions.

The Japanese player is trying in this period to speed the clock so the Allied player will accomplish the least amount of offensive activity. This time should not be wasted annoying the Allies with the activation of small forces just to keep things going. In order to win the operations bid the Japanese player must bid reasonably high to assure success. Any command points bid and not initially spent are lost. The Japanese have a long term problem in that the majority of their ground forces are located on mainland Asia and his strategic transport capability is low; in order to redeploy for the long term defense of the empire, requires that amphibious units ferry among Japanese homebases and far flung conquests. The ability to improve the infrastructure of the Japanese position while keeping the Allied tempo of operations to a minimum is a critical tactic in the game. Failure to make good use of the time will lead to disaster once the Allies can consistently win the operations bids and dictate the tempo of operations.

The Allied counter-strategy to this tactic in the 1943 period is to horizontally escalate in another theater of operations where ground forces are in close contact or require very short transit times to reach their objective and the enemy forces are unactivated, restricting their maneuver. By focusing on these types of operations, a limited but

effective Allied reaction player offensive will have the Japanese player thinking twice about how long the operation should last. If the operation continues, then so does the reactive player's growing response somewhere else.

Through the ability to end an operation when desired the Japanese player may frustrate Allied medium and long range operations, severely curtailing the Allied players offensive potential when he is the reactive player. This simulates the extra planning and redeployment required for operations of this magnitude, which the side reacting does not have available. From this perspective the reactive player has in affect had his operation delayed which occurred in the real war. The reaction player moves in this case can be seen as a staging of forces or a recall.

It should be obvious that every coastal hex and island cannot be garrisoned. A hex which is unoccupied but near an important objective is the best candidate. These are most often found on large multi-hex islands such as in the Dutch East Indies (Sumatra and Borneo) and New Guinea. If for instance the Allies during a Japanese operation designed to expend calendar time, can land a couple of divisions onto Sumatra unopposed; during a subsequent reaction the Allied player can threaten and capture Palembang which the Japanese player cannot ignore. Palembang is a resource center with 45% of Japanese resource capacity.

Here even if the operation is cut short an amphibious landing behind enemy lines will have long term applications and for a very modest effort. If the taskforce can be accompanied by carriers or supported by land based air the operation player can be made to pay for running the clock without adequate activation of assets. If the operation player attempts to deal with the threat in a conventional way his subsequent activation attempts will be costly and difficult to coordinate. Remember in penalty time the operation player cannot initiate combat so none of the reaction player forces are at risk. Therefore any threat even a small one will give the operations player real incentive to shut things down. These were our experiences from playtesting. This allowed me to make penalty time unrestricted for the operations player since I had found within the game system an effective method to make it a poor strategy.

During the war an extensive air campaign was conducted in the Solomons against the Rabaul complex. Air operations are an extremely effective technique to master for the reaction player as it allows response within the first two battle cycles and during a penalty time situation. In the latter case carrier strikes cannot be opposed or countered, as the operation player cannot initiate combat, making this an effective technique of forcing the operations player to cease buying penalty time or pay the penalty in losses. Submarines can attack surface ships in any type of anchorage except ports. Nothing that I know of will make the other player stop an operation quicker than to prevent a surface action group from being decimated in this manner.

For those players who seem unable to cope with this situation I propose the original rule which was removed from the game prior to publication. This rule is to be considered official when its use is agreed upon prior to play.

Penalty Time Restriction

The operation player may only buy penalty time up to an amount equal to the original time bid for the operation. At the conclusion of the allowable penalty time the Penalty Time Deactivation Procedure (38-L-6) is immediately applied. Penalty time must still be purchased in the proscribed manner with the original use of the Penalty Deactivation Procedure still in force for situations where the operations player has insufficient command points available to purchase penalty time.

Appendix 2—Submarines

I have received a number of inquiries about the submarine system. Of all the systems in the game it is one of the most abstract. Some historical data must first be considered. The Japanese during the war lost 68 submarines to offensive naval action whereas the Germans lost 177 U-Boats to U.S. forces (the British dealt with the rest), of which 81 were destroyed by offensive air units and 48 due to surface ASW forces, the remainder were lost to other causes. Clearly the two submarine campaigns are of a different magnitude and operational flavor.

In the Pacific the encounters were either single destroyers or hunter-killer groups (the ASW Sweep Optional rule). The problem was the single destroyer kills. This type of action is below the focus and scale of the design but needed to be simulated simply within the game system. The rule which prohibits the saving of unused submarine replacement steps over the course of the game will account for these missing losses.

When a submarine attack does occur in the game it can often be of great violence and effectiveness which seems incorrect historically. Actually U.S. submarines were the second most effective weapon system against Japanese surface vessels behind aircraft. They accounted for 8 Japanese Carriers during the war. Japanese submarines on the other hand had notable successes against U.S. naval forces such as the WASP and the YORKTOWN but most U.S. capital ships attacked in this manner were damaged, which happened all too frequently. Since the players know where the submarines are located they can normally be avoided, except near an important objective. Torpedo Junction near Guadalcanal is an historical example of this phenomenon. To accommodate this the system makes submarine combat, potentially, very effective during its infrequent occurrences. In this manner the player is forced to deal with the submarine threat when near an objective while simulating a months worth of submarine and ASW activity in one or two attacks.

Now CVE's were very effective at eliminating U-Boats in the Atlantic. The Allies were dealing with a German submarine doctrine which made the cargo ships the primary target. Since the merchant ships were the targets the Allies moved them in escorted convoys. The majority of the ASW contacts were in the vicinity of the convoy where the CVE air units patrolled. In order to engage their targets the U-Boats were forced to penetrate the CVE air screen and consequently suffered heavy losses. The campaign was characterized by these Allied defensive tactics in the zones adjacent to their convoys.

In the Pacific, the Japanese submarine doctrine was based on a fleet engagement concept. The Japanese Submarines were to act as scouting forces and mobile skirmish lines to be placed athwart the enemy fleets route of advance. In support of this doctrine several specialized submarine types were designed. A scouting submarine squadron would have a Type "A" Command submarine with long range communications, Five Type "B" attack submarines, and one submarine with a float plane for reconnaissance purposes. In pursuit of this philosophy the Japanese did not actively seek to interdict the U.S. merchant pipeline, into the region, which eventually allowed the U.S. to discontinue convoys in favor of single ship sorties. The U.S. CVE's in the Pacific were used primarily as close air support platforms for amphibious invasions with the crews not particularly effective at ASW tactics. Japanese submarines were primarily destroyed by individual encounters or by offensive ASW sweeps which is operationally very different from the defensive convoy tactics employed in the Atlantic.

The Pacific War submarine system probably flies in the face of conventional wisdom until these characteristics are taken into account. The Allies main use for his submarine forces is the long term elimination of the Japanese merchant fleet. The Japanese historically deprived of an effective interdiction doctrine find their forces in the game used in a more spectacular but relatively ineffective anti-capital ship campaign. This usually results in damage to U.S. ships but few losses. By the way, at the beginning of the Strategic scenario the Japanese can set up submarine units with initially placed U.S. carrier taskforces. This is intentional to allow for the possibility of a U.S. CV (historically Saratoga) to be damaged by a Japanese torpedo at the beginning of the war (historically January 1942).

Appendix 3—Order of Battle Modifications for the Strategic Scenario (Optional)

The following Order of Battle changes and modifications were proposed by John Sisson of Canada. Some of these changes introduce the concept of withdrawal which I avoided in the original scenario on purpose. If you would like the additional complications here they are. For the new units indicated, again many of these were left out on purpose. The new units indicated are but a sampling of units that could have been added to the game but were incorporated through replacement steps and increasing the step values of various units. For those of you who have a favorite unit that was cut out here are some you can add. The three numbers following a new unit in parenthesis are its Troop Quality, Flak value, and step total respectively.

US OoB

Raising the Americal Division

The US "A" (Americal) Division isn't received as a reinforcement; instead, it is raised by stacking 2 or 3 US infantry regiments in a linked port, and replacing them with the "A" Division in the following Reinforcement Phase (Change the March 1942 Schedule). The division's initial step total is the sum of the steps of the regiments from which it is constituted. This raising occurs only once per game, and it does so at any time after the April 1942 Reinforcement Phase.

Additional US units

The following US Ground reinforcements are added:

Feb'43: 503 Airborne Regt. (7-0-2)

Note: This unit may not be landed amphibiously.

Jul'43: 13 Armored Regiment (7-0-5)

Note: This unit needs an AA to land amphibiously.

Arrival of US Special Forces (SF) units

The following SF reinforcement schedule replaces the reference to SF reinforcements in January 1942 on page 38.

Jul'42: 1 SF (1st Marine Raider Battalion)

Aug'42: 2 SF (2nd Marine Raider Battalion)

Jul'44: 3 SF (6th Ranger Battalion)



British OoB

The following OoB replaces all references to British force set ups on page 39 for the Strategic scenario.

Units designated for withdrawal are removed during a Reinforcement Phase. The return (if ever) one month later than indicated for each hit they have upon withdrawal. Returned units are brought in as reinforcements during the Reinforcement Phase.

Naval Forces Set Up

Singapore: BB1 Prince of Wales; BC 1 Repulse;

CL1 Mixed; DD1 Mixed

BB1, BC1 and DD1 are activated and in a Task Force

Colombo: BB6 Revenge; DD2 Mixed; SS1 (with 4 hits)

Bay of Bengal: CA4 Exeter: 10 hexes from Singapore in a Task Force.

British Naval Reinforcements (*=To be returned)

Jan'42: CVL1 Hermes; CV1 Indomitable; CA1 Kent; CL2 Mixed; DD3 Mixed; 4×SS

Feb'42: CV3 Formidable; BB3 Resolution; BB4 Ramilles BB5 Royal Sovereign; CA2 Norfolk; DD4 Mixed

Mar'42: BB2 Warspite; CL3 Mixed

Apr'42: Withdraw: 1×CV*; 1×BB*

Aug'42: Return: 1×CV; 1×BB

Nov'42: Withdraw: 1×CV*

Jan'43: AA1; Withdraw: 1×CV*; 1×BB (Fast)

Sep'43: Withdraw: 1×BB*; 2×BB; 1×CA*; 1×DD*

Dec'43: Withdraw: 1×AA*

Jan'44: CV4 Illustrious; BB7 Duke of York; CA3 London; CL4 Mixed; CL5 Mixed; DD5 Mixed; Return: 1×CA 1×DD

Mar'44: Return: 2×CV; 1×BB

Jul'44: CV5 Victorious

Aug'44: BB9 Howe

Oct'44: BB8 King George V

Dec'44: CV2 Indefatigable

Jan'45: Return: 1×AA

British Ground Forces

Use the initial set up from the scenario with the following changes for the Indian ground forces which set up with the SEAC Headquarters.

In any Indian City: 14I (5 hits); 17I (0 hits);

19I (7 hits); 23I (8 hits)

26I (8 hits); 3×Engineer Regts.

British Ground Force Reinforcements (*=new unit)

Jan'42: 18I Division

Feb'42: 7 Armored Brigade

Mar'42: 70 Division; 21 AR Brigade

Apr'42: 20I Division; 25II Armored Brigade* (5-0-2)

May'42: 5 Division (6 hits)

Jun'42: 2 Division

Jul'42: 25I Brigade

Aug'42: 25I Division

Sep'42: Withdraw: 5 Division; 7 Armored Brigade

Note: All hits on these units are immediately subtracted from the current or future British "Ground Replacement Pool".

Dec'42: 77 SF Brigade* (7-0-2)

Feb'43: 44I Division

Apr'43: 111 SF Brigade* (7-0-2)

254I Armored Brigade* (7-0-4)

Withdraw: 251I Armored Brigade

Aug'43: 7I Division

Sep'43: 81WA Division* (3-1-10)

Oct'43: 5I Division

Jan'44: 36 Division; 50I Airborne Brigade* (7-0-2)

255I Armored Brigade* (7-0-4);

3 SF Commando* (8-0-2); 3I AM Division* (6-1-2);

Note: The 3I AM Division is "Air Transportable. A (6-1-12) division must be removed to raise 3I AM Div.

Jun'44: 82WA Division* (3-1-10)

Jan'45: 44I Airborne Division* (7-0-9)

3I AM Division and 50I Airborne Brigade must be removed to raise 44I Airborne Division. Roll a die and subtract 3 from the result, which is the number of months before this unit is received as a SEAC reinforcement.

With either the Jan'44 or Jan'45 substitution the Allied player may opt to keep the original units rather than taking the new ones. It follows that the Jan'45 substitution is impossible if the Jan'44 substitution had not been done. Substitutions occur during the Reinforcement Phase and may be done at a later date than indicated on the schedule, but no more than one substitution may be done in the same Reinforcement Phase.



Variable ANZAC Ground OoB

Australian Land Units' Set Up

Off the mapedge in Australia: 5 Division (5 hits) and 2 of the following 4 divisions:

1 Division (7 hits); 2 Division (7 hits); 3 Division (7 hits); 4 Division (7 hits).

On the map, on the Australian Subcontinent: the remaining two divisions that were not placed off the mapedge.

Note: As long as the Australian subcontinent has not been invaded at least one half (round up) of all Australian Divisions (does not include smaller formations) cannot be brought onto the map on the Australian subcontinent. This restriction disappears if an invasion of Australia has occurred.

Divisions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 may not be used off of the Australian subcontinent until they have first been built up to full strength with replacement points at least once. When such a division has been built up, it may be used outside Australia. Units on and off the mapedge may be rotated.

New Zealand Ground OoB

The 3 NZ Division is not received as a reinforcement. It is raised by stacking all of the New Zealand units (1 NZ Battalion, 5 NZ Brigade, and 8 NZ Brigade) still in play in September 1943 together in the same linked port, and then replacing them with the 3 NZ Division during a Reinforcement Phase. The division's initial strength is the sum of the steps of the units from which it is constituted. The latter units are removed for the remainder of the game.



Appendix 4—The Canadian Options

Task Force Organization (10-L-6) Modification

- 1) All CV, CVL, CVE, CVS, AA, APD, and ST units are always in the core of the Task Force; never in the screen.
- 2) Where a screen is organized for a Task Force, it must contain all of the available DD and DE units that are allowed under the Task Force Organization rules.
- 3) When a surface action occurs, units in the screen of a Task Force are the first to be committed to naval combat. Only after all units in the screen have been committed to the surface action, may core units enter the combat.
- 4) CV units may only operate in Task Forces with units of a "Fast" classification if they are US or Japanese CV's. British CV units are not affected by Speed Classification requirements.

The Surface Naval Unit Speed Classifications are as follows:

Nationality	FAST	SLOW
Britain (incl. ANZAC and Dutch)	All CV units All CA units All CL units All DD units BB1, BB2, BB8, BB9, BC1	BB3, BB4, BB5, BB6 BB7, AA1
U.S.	All CV units All CVL units except CVL1 BB13, BB14, BB15, BB16, BB17, BB18, BB19, BB20, BB21, BB22, BC1, BC2 All CA units All CL units All DD units except DD1, DD2	All DE units BB1, BB2, BB3, BB4, BB5, BB6, BB7, BB8, BB9, BB10, BB11, BB12, BB23, BB24, BB25 All APD and AA units All CVE and ST units
Nationality Japan	FAST All CV units CVL2, CVL3, CVL6 CVL8, CVL9, CVS2, CVS3 BB7, BB8, BB9, BB10 All CA units All CL units except CL2, CL11 All DD units	SLOW All CVE units CVL1, CVL4, CVL5, CVL7, CVL10, CVL11 CVS1, CVS4, CVS5, CVS6 BB1, BB2, BB3, BB4, BB5 BB6, BB11, BB12 All APD and AA units All DE units

Phased In Improved and Augmented FLAK (anti-air) (27-L-1) Modification

The intent of the modifiers is to decrease the effectiveness of Allied Improved Flak until it has been deployed throughout the fleet whereas the Japanese Unimproved FLAK increases in effectiveness due to the significant deployment of additional conventional FLAK to Japanese naval units through periodic refits.

Improved FLAK is gradually phased in for the Allies while the Japanese have their Unimproved FLAK die rolls augmented. On the dates listed on the Flak die roll modifiers table the listed modifiers are added to Allied Improved FLAK die rolls and subtracted from Japanese Unimproved FLAK die rolls. If the unmodified Allied FLAK die roll is equal to or less than the Modified Flak strength the modified die roll cannot reduce the losses inflicted below one hit. Japanese modified die rolls cannot be reduced below zero.

Flak Die Roll Modifiers Table

Allies	Aug'42 to Oct'42: +3
	Nov'42 to Jan'43: +2
	Feb'43 to Apr'43: +1
	May'43 to end: +0
Japan	Jan'43 to Apr'43: -1
	May'43 to Sep'43: -2
	Oct'43 to Jan'44: -3
	Feb'44 to May'44: -4
	Jun'44 to end: -5

Ferrying via Carriers (28-R-3) Addition

Allied (only) 1E non-CV air units may be carried on some aircraft carriers (in addition to CV capable air units currently allowed), and may be launched on a one way transfer mission to a friendly airbase. This transfer is the only type of air mission that a 1E non-CV capable air unit may conduct from a carrier. To load a 1E non-CV capable air unit, the host aircraft carrier must spend one air mission or contact phase in a port that is in the same hex as the airbase with the 1E air unit to be carried. The launch capacity of the carrier may not be exceeded between CV and non-CV capable air units. The non-CV capable air unit must be launched as one piece at the same time. No ferrying air unit may receive replacement/reinforcement steps while it is being ferried by the CV.

The carrier units eligible for Ferry mission are:

- Britain: All CV and CVL units.
US: All CVE units, and CVL1 (Langley).

Variable Momentum Switch (37-L-2) Addition

In the original edition of the game, several Allied advantages manifest themselves on the February 1943 game turn and effect Merchant Shipping Attrition (44-L-0), Air Power Quality (50-R-0) and Improved Flak capability (27-L-2). This rule should be used in conjunction with the Phased In Improved and Augmented Flak Optional rule listed earlier.

The Air Power Quality and Escalated Merchant Shipping Attrition will be in effect on a date based on a die roll. When the die roll range is achieved for the indicated game turn then both changes attributed to the February 1943 game turn are in effect. This may happen earlier, later or when originally indicated.

Date	Die roll results
Oct'42	0
Nov'42	0, 1
Dec'42	0, 1, 2
Jan'43	0, 1, 2, 3
Feb'43	0, 1, 2, 3, 4
Mar'43	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Apr'43	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
May'43	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Jun'43	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Jul'43	Automatic

For example a 14 day operation can be extended no more than an additional 14 days, a 21 day operation an additional 21 days, and a 28 day operation an additional 28 days. In all cases though the operation player must still be capable of purchasing the penalty time it is not automatic.

Controlling the Tempo of a Single Operation

Historically the Allies were forced by real logistic constraints to keep moving their bases forward (Ulithi for example) in an interlocking network to support their offensive operations. In order to keep the logistic rules simple, accurate, and unobtrusive I designed a system that allowed the reaction player to determine the length of the Contact phase in Intercept and Ambush situations. If forces and bases are properly deployed operations will have sufficient time to arrive at their objectives whether the reaction player makes the contact phase short or long. In this context the rationale why so many small islands on the road to Tokyo had to be taken becomes clear.

Operations that are going beyond the capabilities of the logistic network require: Operational surprise or an enemy player who wants to fight or the use of penalty time for the homeward voyage. A long range operation that does not have sufficient command points available for purchasing a penalty time return trip to base is beyond the means of the players logistic structure and becomes a chancy affair which could have a delay placed on it. The game places this mechanism in the hands of the reactive player. He is expected to force a delay on the operation unless contingencies had been planned for through the buying of sufficient time for reaching the objective and surplus command points to find a safe haven for the fleet at the operations conclusion.

The reason why there is no restriction on the purchasing of penalty time except the availability of command points was to allow for long range operations and the extensive contingency planning they required for success. This, coupled with the rules for prevention of combat initiation in penalty times by the operations player, neatly allowed for homeward voyages. The reaction player exercising one or more limited counter offensives assured that the operations player would keep penalty time to a minimum or experience the consequences.

You can look at a failed long range operation attempt as the marshalling of resources and forces which historically preceded a far flung operation often necessitating a delay in the operations H-Hour. When long range operations do occur it is due to the operation player either stealing a march on the enemy or the enemy is luring you into a trap. This system allowed for the normal state of operations that usually did not have objectives in excess of 1000 miles from a friendly base while still allowing for the extreme type of event, such as a Pearl Harbor or a Midway.

Conclusion

This article has focused on the Strategic Scenario and its Grand Strategy. This was done by controlling the Tempo of Operations and the short, medium, and long term objectives that each side should pursue over the course of the game as the situation shifts and evolves through play. In later articles I will cover other aspects of *Pacific War*, good hunting.

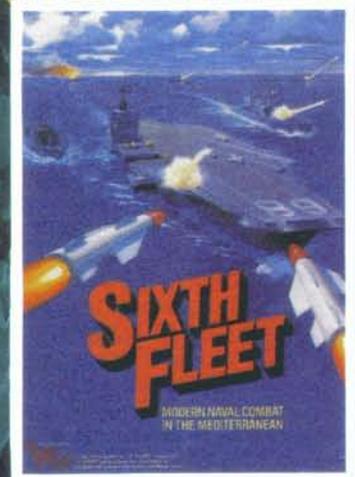


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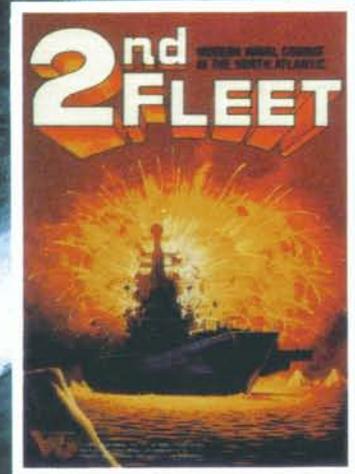
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Ftf SL-ASL and others. I live in the Dothan and Fort Rucker area. Matt Holt, Rt. 1, Box 162-A, Pansey, AL 36370, (205) 899-8615.

Hams—Want to try pbm by packet amateur radio? WAS, VITP many more. Honor system—new to gaming. Contact: Ab4AP, Bryan Turner, Route 4, Box 521, Athens, AL 35611.

21-year old college student looking for pbm players for ASL, 3R, FT, FITG, DIP and many many more. Terry Taylor, Box 278, 3550 Sharon Gagnoa Ln., Anchorage, AK 99508, (407) 786-4905.

ASL Club in East Valley is welcoming new members. Come join us for some good fun and competition. Pierce Ostrander, 5046 E. Decatur St., Mesa, AZ 85205, 985-4505.

Adult wargamers wanted for ASL, SL, BB, DIP, TRC, VITP and WAS. Considering start-up of wargame club. Chuck Krutsinger, 13874-C E. Lehigh Ave., Aurora, CO 80014, (303) 690-9719.

Looking for ftf or pbm opponents in ASL, DIP, WSIM, 3R, CIV, PGG, TRC, SST. Member of AREA. Thomas McCorry, P.O. Box 13058, Ft. Carson, CO 80913.

Opponent wanted for SL, FL, FP and FE. I also play Statis-Pro games. David Burger, 1828 Symphony, Anaheim, CA 92807, (714) 779-6560.

Highly rated, 2000, seeks axis opponents in 3R; pbm. Peter Garzman, 3155 Deep Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210, (213) 278-3907.

25-year old gamer is seeking ftf opponent for SL, MD and 3R. All inquiries welcome. Jim Frenn, 18300 Soledad Cyn Rd., #25, Canyon County, CA 91351, (805) 251-8078.

Mature quality player seeks occasional similar opponent—ASL, CIV, KM, SOA, UF, VITP(?), WSIM, ACQUIRE, etc. Ftf, will travel nearby. Chris Weiser, 15912 Koch, Apt. A, Mojave, CA 93501, (805) 824-4718.

Any ASL in the San Bernardino or Riverside area? Call Art Douglas 369-3020 or Robert Orf 883-4898. Also interested in pbm FL. Robert Orf, 1166 E. Alexander Ave., San Bernardino, CA 92404, 883-4898.

Seeking female opponents only, between the ages of 22 and 35. Enjoy playing SOA, TT, and many others. Willing to learn games which you enjoy. M. Alba, 3507 S.W. 92nd Ave., Miami, FL 33165.

27-year old seeks opponent for ftf ASL, TRC, 3R, and many others in the Naples, Fort Myers area. Any wargame clubs in this area? Dean Leferink, 4627 Bayside Dr., Apt. I-4, Naples, FL 33962, (813) 774-2453.

Experienced gamer looking for ftf opponents in Orlando area. Enjoy Napoleonic and WWII; boardgames and miniatures. Mark Bower, 853 Wolfe Brook Terrace, Winter Park, FL 32792, (352) 678-7024.

Adult gamer (Prov. 1200) wants to try pbm TRC. Ftf ASL, CW and just about any other AH, VG game. Stephen Harmon, 3442 Q North Druid Hills Road, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 634-4501.

Wanted ftf players. Both pbm and ftf. I will be the referee in either case. Also want to learn ASL and SL. James Merson, 94-498 Kuauihi St., Waipah, HI 96796, (808) 677-0087.

Lafayette Louisiana area looking for ftf opponents. Will play almost any game. Own SL, ASL, 3R, FP. Call or write; all letters answered. Keith Martin, 104 Meadow Lane, Lafayette, LA 70506, (318) 981-2995.

Wanted opponents for ftf or pbm 3R, W&P, MD, AK, PK and MD. Will travel to play a game in Louisiana. Ricci Moran, P.O. Box 1065, Ruston, LA 71273, (318) 251-9038.

Pbm W&P, SON, NAB, WSIM, others. Adult gamers only. All letters answered. Jon Freitag, 129 N. 10th St., Payette, ID 83661, (503) 642-3250.

ASL fanatics wanted in Western suburbs! Any newcomers in the area? If not, will settle for some ftf TRC. Jeff Cebula, 4025 Seelye Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515, (312) 964-5765.

35-year old, (unproven AREA rated 1200), beginning to average player, seeks "live" adult gamer for: SL, PB, PL, AIW, FR, STAL, DIP. Mr. Leslie Boston, 326 E. Adams, Apt. #1, Havana, IL 62644, (309) 543-2103.

Pbm SL thru GI, AF, DL, SUB, MD, PB, PL. Have applied for rating. Need pbm system. I am a 30-year old volunteer programmer. Michael Cuffe, 3845 Rue Voltaire, Apt. A, Indianapolis, IN 46220, (317) 253-4679.

OPponents WANTED

Desire ftf in Lafayette area and North-Central Indiana. Will play most historical wargames. Carl Schwamberger, 3824 S. Co. Rd. 25 E., Lafayette, IN 47905, (317) 474-6718.

Pbm rated games: VITP, WAS, WAT, STAL, MD, DD, DEV, 1776, BB81; all replies answered. 1100 rating. Phil Byers, 5014 Kirkshire, South Bend, IN 46614, (219) 291-2240.

Need ftf opponents for EIA, GL, WSIM, MR, SUB and others. Monte B. Gray, 2006 50th Place, Des Moines, IA 50310, (515) 255-4498.

SIEG HEIL! 2nd line ASL/DASL addict bucking for elite status. Need opponents for front line fighting. Ray Verbanic, 2200 W 43rd Ave., Kansas City, KS 66103, (913) 432-3454.

BAT-LOC FREE RF newsletter and Rules clearing house TRC analysis FREE latest RF, RAP, Free lifetime subscription. J. Williams, 2352 Le Havre Rd., Lexington, KY 40504, (606) 254-2168.

Wanted opponents for ftf or pbm 3R, W&P, MD, AK, PK, MD (will travel to play a game in Louisiana). Ricci Moran, P.O. Box 1065, Ruston, LA 71273, (318) 251-9038.

"Oh no not another solo." This gamer is tired of playing solitaire. I'm looking for ftf opponents. I play all games of AH and VG. Scott A. Ramsdell, Barley Road, RFD #1, Box 1125, E. Lebanon, ME 04027, (207) 339-8840.

AREA rated player (1482 verified) seeks pbm WAS. Two games, sides reversed. System based on VITP pbm system. All letters answered. Jim Silsby, Jr., P.O. Box 64, Ellsworth, ME 04605.

Any gamers in Madawaska/Edmundston area? Will ftf any game, but prefer FT, SC, COI and ASL. My traveling is limited though. Anthony Albert, RR2, Box 322, Madawaska, ME 04756, (207) 728-4311.

Having trouble finding mature, reliable opponents? Try AHKS! Over 600 members; a record of over 20 years of service to both pbm and ftf gamers. Bill Salvatore, AHKS Secretary, 19985 Wild Cherry Lane, Waters' Landing, MD 20874-1015.

Going to be in Oklahoma from Feb. through June. Wide interests. Especially looking for any clubs, among my favorites: FL, GSL, NP, SL, WSIM, Seth Owen, 6 Whelden Lane, Acusant, MA 02743, (617) 998-2784.

DIPLOMACY players on this planet with a computer and modem. I would like to organize some games. Eric Klien, 1 Sinai Circle B10, Chelmsford, MA 01824, (617) 663-5480.

Looking for ftf Squad Leaders for ASL and DASL in greater Springfield area. Would also like to play UF, BANZ and RF. Vic Provost, 54 Edson Ct., Chicopee, MA 01020, 593-5849.

Opponents wanted in Northampton/Amherst area. ASL, UF, AF, WSIM, VITP. Carefully researched modern weapon systems for ASL; Vietnam, Lebanon and hypothetical European conflicts. Interesting! Lincoln Hubley, 32 Russell St., Hadley, MA 01035, (413) 586-6046.

Seeking ftf groups for CIV, DIP, 1830 in western Massachusetts region. Also opponents for unrated ftf 3R, W&P, your choice (no SL). Leonard Kay, 21 Prospect St., Ware, MA 01082, (413) 967-5772.

Oppoents wanted for VITP, WAS-2, PL, PB, AIW, PBA only. Currently non-rated, will replay to all inquiries. Todd Schlachter, 348 West Hall, Marquette, MI 49855, (906) 227-3148.

AREA 1500 seeks opponents for PB. Pbm or ftf rated or non-rated. Steve Gizzi, 19305 Wall, Melvindale, MI 48122, (313) 389-2946.

Seeking opponents in the Bad Kruznach, Mainz, Frankfurt area. I'm in B.K. SL, GOA, W&P, NATO, TRC, PK, RF and others. ILT Steve Macartney, C Co 8th SIG BN, APO, NY 09111, 0671 35550.

Need pbm players, variants articles for MA, SA \$6.00 for ten issues/rel SSAE. Society of Machiavelli, 430 Ocean Parkway, Suite 3-0, Brooklyn, NY 11218, (718) 826-2709.

A.R.E.A. rated 1600+ seeks pbm SL, COI, COD, OR, GI opponents. Will consider ASL with good system. Prefer A.R.E.A. play, but will consider others. Ted Bleck, 5778 Dalton Dr., Farmington, NY 14425, (716) 398-3193.

Entry level gamer seeks any level opponent for pbm of BB, DD, AK, W.C. Kirby, 61 Hudson View Terrace, Highland Falls, NY 10996, (914) 446-8101.

EIA Campaign Game. Serious inquiries only please! Send top four country choices. Spain and Turkey have already been taken. Also FT campaign! Send side choice. Sean C. Turner, 943 Ivy Lane, Cary, NC 27511, (919) 481-4722.

Mature (37) newcomer to Charlotte seeks fun ftf and/or club. Primary interests Civil War/WWII. Consider myself experienced, average player. Gamers here? Jim Carr, 611 #5 Summey Ave., Charlotte, NC 28205, (704) 535-6838.

Hexagon Society meets every first and third Saturday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Call evenings for info: James McCormack (702) 794-3523, 1450 E. Harmon Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89119.

The Northern Tier ASL Club is presently looking for new members, primarily ftf. For more information contact: Dale Miles, 821 2nd Ave., N.E., Minot, ND 58701, (701) 852-1910.

Pbm TRC, BB, LW. Ftf BR, JUT, GE and FRED. James J. Scott, 5741 Kruegamont Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45239, (513) 823-1684.

ASL opponents rise from your foxholes to meet me in fair combat. Feign not bravery, prove it, on the field of honor! Rob Zeller, 2203 Cass, Toledo, OH 43614, (419) 381-1344.

SL veteran looking for ftf ASL in greater Portland-Vancouver area. BV, PARA, SOF, YANKS, HH, Steve Smith, 10300 SE Waverly Ct., #201, Milwaukie, OR 97222, (503) 659-8399.

Looking for a good ASL or SL player. Also play FR, PK, TRC. Mike Smith, 877 Shores, Salem, OR 97301, 363-0693.

Philadelphia area—mature wargamer-historian seeks friendly ftf competition in AF-DL, FL, BIS, WSIM, FRED, UF, VITP, PK, FT, 1830, etc. John Desmond, 922 S. 49th St., Philadelphia, PA 19143, (215) 729-1561.

Der Groszter Feldherr Aller Zeiten wishes to ftf anyone who dares in NAB, SON, W&P, HDB or any other game. Tom Semian, 219 # Kittingan St., Pittsburgh, PA 15215, 781-2147.

GLASL-Great Lakes Advanced Squad Leaders with "Action" monthly and our tournament: ASL Oktoberfest, now in its third year. Prepared for ASL Oktoberfest 88, Oct. 7, 8, 9! Bill Conner, P.O. Box 4114, Youngstown, OH 44515, (216) 799-3288.

Honest veteran player seeks pbm opponents for TRC, FE & GOA. Ftf Piedmont area same plus 1776, LUFF, BIS, SUB, NAP. Unbeaten in TRC, FE. Hurry! Eric Anderson, 493 Webber Rd., Spartanburg, SC 29302, (803) 578-3161.

Competent adult player desperately seeking opponents for ASL in the Clarksville area. Scenarios or DYD MACRD campaign games. Can travel. Ftf only. Let's do it! Martin Titchen, 27 Leonard Drive, Clarksville, TN 37042, (615) 647-9233.

Experienced adult will GM pbm FT, no fees. AREA 1500, also want opponents pbm (ftf Knoxville area) most AH strategic, operational WWII and Napoleonic games. Roger D. Hyman, 2713 Windemere Lane, Powell, TN 37849, 947-5577.

Experienced (30) gamer seeks friendly foes (pbm or ftf Knoxville area) for FT, EIA, RF, 3R, CIVIL WAR, VITP, WAS, W&P, FE, 1830, CIV. Roger D. Hyman, 2713 Windemere Lane, Powell, TN 37849, (615) 947-5577.

Would like to pbm Vol. 9, #2 General Variet to STAL. Rated or not. My AREA 1770. Dave Kopp, 5321 Stonemile Cir. Corpus Christi, TX 78413, (512) 991-6441.

AREA rated 1300+ (Prov) seeks rated opponents pbm for AZ, AOC, GE, or TRC. Will consider local adult ftf. Craig Ladner, 10019 Spotter House, Houston, TX 77064, (713) 890-1181.

Seeking pbm opponents for Kriegspiel. Open those old boxes and enjoy the game. Michael Bonden, 576 Northwood, Lewisville, TX 75067, (214) 436-8098.

Ftf I'm 34-years old. Favorites: ASL, WSIM; others considered of course. Victor L. Nelson, 5235 Pommeroy Drive., Fairfax, VA 22032, 323-1326.

Adult gamer new to Richmond seeks ftf players for ASL, UF, RF. Will travel. Fun only. Average player with good knowledge of ASL rules. John Loth, 2018 Park Ave., Richmond, VA 23220, (804) 355-5376.

Seattle area ASL, DASL players sought for serious but lively encounters. I am willing to act as ASL player "match-maker" or to start club. Art Brocha, 2336 11th Ave., East, Seattle, WA 98102, 324-3494.

"The Directory" is forming at Fort Lewis and Tacoma. Most AH and other wargames played. Call Gerry Germond at 581-3690 or Ed Mueller at 565-0306. Gerry Germond, 7104C 62d Ave., Ct. W, Tacoma, WA 98467, (206) 581, 3690.

Experienced 25-year old gamer, newly A.R.E.A. rated 1500, seeks ftf and pbm gamers for: BB, PB, TRC, SL and TT. Daniel J. Streep, 3301 Oak Knoll Dr., Apt. #7, Eau Claire, WI 54701, (715) 836-0097.

Seeking pbm opponents for FE, PB. Non-rated myself. Need pbm system for 3R, KM or CAE. Will answer all letters. Jerry Musil, 3477 N. 97th Place, Milwaukee, WI 53222, (414) 464-0002.

Pbm or ftf of GOA, 3R, and TRC. Also seeking for wargamers in PR. All letters answered. Rated 1500 in AREA. Juan Jose Nolla, P.O. Box 872, Arcenio, PR 00613, (809) 879-4906.

Pbm opponent for PB. I rate myself a beginner, looking for someone to teach me the ropes. Mark Franklin, Box 681, Revelstoke, BC, Canada V0E 2S0.

Wanted: ftf gamer for BL, SL-COD, FT, TRC, WSIM. I have many more. Will travel if nearby. Mark Figge, MPO 303, Box 164, CFB Trenton, Astra, Ontario, Canada K0K 1B0, (613) 394-2078.

Young and experienced gamer! Looking for opponents for TB, FP and WSIM! Kurt M. Chopy, 10340 Odlin Rd., Richmond, Vancouver, Canada, BC V6X 1E2, 273-7026.

Pbm opponents wanted for 3R, WSIM, SL, PB, TRC, LW. Need systems. Malcolm Glenn, 46 Yarmouth Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6G 1W9, (416) 588-7545.

Munich gamers wanted! ASL, FP, FT. Iain Elliott, Zittelstr. 1, 8000 Munich 40, BRD, (Tel.) 305134.

Pbm or ftf opponent wanted for FT, BIS, SUB, SL and many others. I have beginner to average ability. S. Morris, 10 Kandra Ave., Currumbin, Gold Coast, QLD 4223, Australia, (Tel.) 075/344693.

The "Opponents Wanted" advertisements on this page are intended as a service to the readership of this periodical. Please print or type the ad copy. If the ad is not legible, it will not be printed. Too, no ad dealing with products of other manufacturers will be printed and any mention of such will be excised. Ads are accepted for a single printing only. Should the reader desire that a specific ad enjoy a multiple printing, a separate number of copies equal to the number of times the ad is to be run must be submitted—although only one total payment need be included to cover the printings. Due to the pressure of various deadlines, often advertisements submitted weeks before an issue appears will not be printed in that issue. Please be patient; such will be printed in the immediately following issue. Please do not specify a particular issue for an ad to appear; such requests cannot be honored.

THE QUESTION BOX

TV WARS

3. Who gets the Best Network News tile when its owner is eliminated from the game due to losing all of his programming?

A. The first player to land on the Best Network News space gets the bonus; until then it remains out of play.

7. Suppose a player with no money draws a Bulletin ordering him to either pay a certain sum or lose a program. Is this considered a debt (enabling him to sell a program) or is he forced to lose a program?

A. It is a debt, enabling him to sell a program of his choice to satisfy that debt only (i.e., with no extra money remaining for him).

7. & 8. If the game ends by time limit, how much money is the Super Bowl tile worth? The Best Network News tile? The PreEmption tile?

A. The Super Bowl is worth \$10,000. The others are not considered programs and have no monetary value.

9.2 May the Best Network News, PreEmption, Super Bowl or Academy Award movies be stolen like other programming?

A. The Super Bowl and Academy Award movies can; the Best Network News and the PreEmption tile cannot.

9.8 What happens if the Super Bowl tile is up for bid after its use in a Rating War and all other players are incapable of bidding for it?

A. It is removed permanently from play.

9.8 What is the minimum starting bid for the Super Bowl after being used in a Ratings War, and who starts the bidding?

A. The minimum bid, as per the rules (4.), is \$1,000. The first eligible player to the left of the last owner starts the bidding.

9.8 & 9.91 Can the Super Bowl be preempted; and if so, does the player who played the Super Bowl lose it to the bidding process even though it wasn't broadcast?

A. Yes; yes.

KNIGHTS OF THE AIR

Q. The "Description of Play" on Page 4 indicates that two dice are tossed to determine spotting ranges; however, under "Spotting" on the same page and in the table on Page 24 the indication is for three dice. Which is correct?

A. Three dice.

Q. Under "Spotting" (Page 4) the rules state "an aircraft in the same hex is in area 1 if above you and

area 4 if below you." What if the planes are at the same altitude?

A. They've risked a collision; if they survive, they may not fire at one another.

Q. In applying 2c under "Spotting", altitude differences are divided by distance. What happens if the planes are in the same hex (i.e., division by zero)?

A. Divide by "1".

Q. In 2.d.2 under "Spotting", when halving the spotting distance to other (non-targeted) aircraft, do you drop the fraction?

A. Always drop the fraction.

Q. Is altitude considered when trying to decide which of two aircraft targeting an enemy plane is closest for pursuit purposes?

A. No.

Q. The "Description of Play" indicates that after everyone has moved, each player gets a final chance to shoot. May this shot be taken at an enemy plane that you did not spot during that turn?

A. Yes—see the "Final Fire Phase" on Page 11.

Q. If an aircraft's power rating results in a stall, what is its speed?

A. The lowest speed for that aircraft.

Q. If power rating is too high do you roll for (or execute) the "Crack-up" during flight preparation or when it is your turn to move?

A. During flight preparation.

Q. Can an observer-operated gun fire straight up in the same hex? If possible, do you use the F, S or R line for damage?

A. Yes, and use the F line.

Q. Can an observer-operated gun fire at an aircraft in its blind spot at equal altitude?

A. Yes.

Q. On a SE5a can the Lewis gun on the wing be fired simultaneously with the other machinegun? Can the Lewis gun be fired straight up?

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. What is the activity cost for a Turn maneuver?

A. There is no activity cost.

Q. Can you Jink in an S-turn?

A. No.

Q. Do energy exchange optional rules apply (if used) during zoom climbs or power dives?

A. No.

scenarios can be numbered the best to date for the system.

To sum up, those who responded found *STREETS OF FIRE* to be exciting to play, with accurate scenarios, graced by beautiful large-scale mapboards. Every *ASL* devotee owes it to themselves to take a look at this module, and to play a couple of the scenarios.

Overall Value: 1.84
Components: 1.54
Map: 1.37
Counters: (None)
Player's Aids: 2.32
Complexity: 8.21
Completeness of Rules: 1.89
Playability: 2.27
Excitement Level: 1.46
Play Balance: 2.33
Authenticity: 1.70
Game Length
Shortest: 2 hrs., 57 mins.
Longest: 7 hrs., 16 mins.
Year: 1986
Sample Base: 79

AH RBG RATING CHARTS

The following games are ranked by their reader-generated overall Value rating. Further aspects of reader response to our titles are indicated by the ratings in other categories. By breaking down a game's ratings into these individual categories, the gamer is able to discern for himself where the title's strengths and weaknesses lie in the qualities he values highly.

Title	Overall Value	Components	Complexity	Completeness of Rules	Playability	Authenticity	Length Shortest	Longest	Year	Sample Base
1. ASL	1.67	1.44	10	1.81	2.80	1.98	—	—	1985	133
2. SOF	1.84	1.54	10	1.89	2.27	1.70	17.71	43.64	1986	79
3. RF	2.00	2.78	5	4.15	2.56	2.36	15.54	89.64	1985	88
4. GI	2.02	1.93	10	3.01	3.38	1.88	12.84	35.33	1982	264
5. COI	2.06	1.95	9	3.29	3.13	1.99	11.61	29.27	1978	532
6. BV	2.09	1.95	10	—	2.82	1.86	13.14	39.20	1985	95
7. 3R	2.21	2.67	10	3.81	3.40	2.73	25.94	69.24	1981	273
8. COD	2.23	1.97	10	3.12	3.08	1.85	12.15	30.20	1980	224
9. TRC	2.29	2.53	4	2.52	2.12	3.11	17.44	37.74	1976	540
10. SL	2.31	2.09	8	3.48	2.87	2.45	10.17	27.90	1977	680
11. UF	2.42	2.26	4	2.57	1.31	2.84	4.84	13.05	1983	58
12. B-17	2.51	2.62	3	2.52	1.86	2.21	3.30	11.50	1983	87
13. WS&IM	2.53	3.04	6	2.93	2.67	2.39	7.01	34.90	1975	464
14. FP	2.57	3.10	4	3.12	2.91	2.87	5.42	16.81	1985	85
15. HW	2.59	3.27	4	3.68	2.13	4.25	8.27	21.73	1984	63
16. W&P	2.61	2.76	5	3.46	2.93	3.04	13.04	57.19	1980	374
17. BB'81	2.67	2.46	4	2.53	2.94	2.91	19.62	35.09	1981	277
18. TLD	2.68	1.95	8	3.72	3.54	2.04	24.44	170.68	1980	119
19. VITP	2.72	2.86	2	2.89	2.22	4.52	16.96	22.36	1977	420
20. CAE	2.85	3.01	4	2.32	2.89	2.52	25.14	32.57	1976	252
21. SON	2.92	3.03	10	3.72	4.09	1.92	29.50	81.78	1981	123
22. SOA	2.97	2.79	3	2.73	2.41	3.88	18.22	22.57	1981	232
23. FE	3.00	2.72	7	3.21	3.21	3.00	21.17	49.05	1980	345
24. FRED	3.00	3.41	4	2.93	2.58	2.75	12.25	24.67	1983	58
25. SUB	3.08	2.64	8	3.13	3.08	2.74	9.41	26.15	1978	281
26. CON	3.12	3.64	7	3.08	2.52	3.52	25.8	49.1	1983	73
27. MD	3.13	3.51	3	2.80	2.21	3.44	14.75	20.74	1964	395
28. AZ	3.17	2.72	7	3.18	3.86	2.68	18.63	63.40	1978	292
29. PL	3.19	2.94	7	3.31	3.13	3.50	9.49	25.80	1974	479
30. 1776	3.21	2.97	7	3.09	3.03	3.10	10.16	45.09	1974	373
31. FT	3.23	3.12	10	3.22	3.67	3.16	24.51	57.39	1981	196
32. PK	3.34	4.02	4	3.48	2.85	3.27	11.85	20.34	1983	59
33. PB	3.35	3.08	6	3.73	2.90	3.94	10.35	23.07	1970	448
34. BIS	3.45	2.96	6	3.43	3.25	3.06	12.41	26.35	1979	248
35. AAO	3.52	2.95	5	3.02	3.26	3.07	15.52	26.53	1978	239
36. FITW	3.53	3.14	4	3.17	2.94	3.72	16.14	30.01	1981	100
37. CL	3.54	3.35	5	3.15	3.33	3.79	12.53	25.53	1975	136
38. DL	3.61	4.02	7	3.85	3.22	3.29	6.66	19.94	1981	120
39. GOA	3.66	3.37	5	3.67	3.79	2.98	18.68	60.06	1981	297
40. WAS	3.71	3.67	1	2.48	2.37	5.98	9.09	12.71	1976	396
41. GE	3.72	3.12	6	4.64	4.41	2.84	13.25	57.13	1977	248
42. AF	3.74	4.16	7	3.98	3.34	3.35	5.61	16.02	1980	192
43. AIW	3.74	3.05	8	2.92	3.52	3.06	8.69	25.36	1977	308
44. LRT	3.75	3.60	4	3.53	3.39	2.96	13.04	17.00	1982	56
45. TR	3.80	3.76	3	3.33	3.60	3.70	9.51	25.79	1980	72
46. WAT	3.83	4.17	2	2.95	2.64	5.00	17.08	23.13	1962	296
47. NP	3.87	3.29	3	3.27	2.56	4.89	9.69	14.40	1978	159
48. AK	3.92	4.38	2	3.30	2.48	5.09	14.49	19.13	1964	492
49. AL	4.03	4.05	5	3.69	3.18	3.57	12.34	17.93	1974	217
50. TB	4.06	3.53	7	3.48	4.47	2.50	11.28	32.50	1975	304
51. RW	4.14	3.14	5	3.32	2.91	3.98	4.22	21.15	1973	311
52. JU	4.17	3.20	6	3.61	3.83	3.22	16.01	36.66	1974	193
53. PAA	4.17	4.24	5	3.79	3.99	3.70	15.51	25.24	1981	144
54. DD	4.22	4.07	2	3.04	2.88	4.64	17.54	26.25	1977	367
55. CH	4.39	3.80	4	3.35	3.52	4.67	14.76	24.96	1961	140
56. STAL	4.39	4.29	2	2.88	2.75	5.83	20.57	28.85	1963	320
57. LW	4.45	3.75	5	3.77	3.79	4.79	13.36	34.14	1971	372
58. FR	4.79	3.49	4	3.47	3.75	4.06	16.27	26.95	1972	244
59. BL	4.73	4.16	7	3.65	3.77	5.27	20.43	41.44	1965	336
60. TAC	5.62	5.25	1	2.79	3.23	6.34	11.70	19.29	1961	285

STREETS OF FIRE

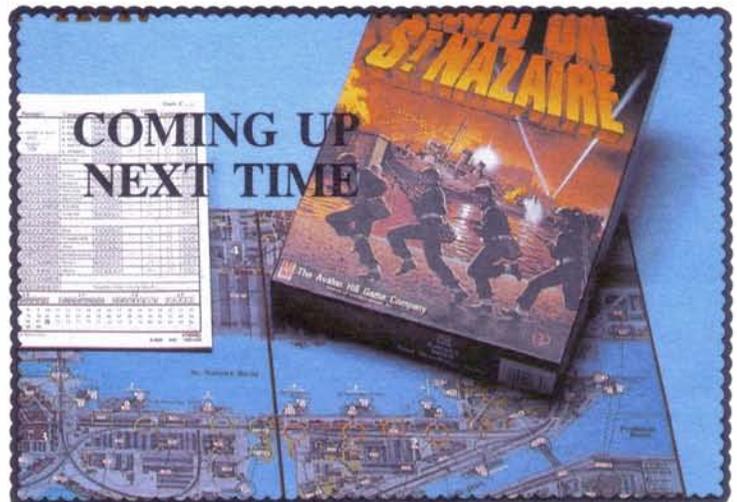
\$28.00

The Game of Tactical Warfare, 1941-45, for *ASL*.

The first *Deluxe ASL* module, *STREETS OF FIRE* was rated rather well by the collective readership. Indeed, its overall rating places it second on the RBG listing—just behind the *ASL* rulebook itself. The ratings in every category for *STREETS OF FIRE* are well above the average, a testimony to the care by all concerned in the design of this unique experiment, a board game that can be played with miniatures.

Not surprisingly, Mr. Kibler's highly detailed mapboards are the centerpiece of the game. And, not surprisingly, they received the best rating for "Map" (1.37) yet, beating out even the vaunted *FLIGHT LEADER*. Certainly, a great number of compliments had already been received, along with pleas to do more *ASL* mapboards in this scale (2.2" hexes).

Of equal importance as its appearance, the playability of a game determines its potential. The scenario designers were agreeably surprised by the high ratings for "Excitement Level" (1.46) and "Authenticity" (1.70), each the best in its category to date. Obviously, our attempt to re-create the minute-by-minute action and high drama of World War II fighting in the cities struck a responsive cord among the *ASL* aficionados. These challenging, well-researched



Our latest issue devoted to exploring the growing world of ASL (Vol. 24, No. 1) was a study in contrasts. The first half of the *STREETS OF FIRE* Series Replay dominated the polling of readers' evaluation of articles in this issue; on the other hand, for the first time an article received *no* votes. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, the issue showed a fine overall rating—3.05. The ratings for all the articles, based on a random sampling of 200 responses, are as follows:

SERIES REPLAY	414
GOING ALL OUT	291
THE PACT	148
SQUAD LEADER CLINIC	129
THE STEPPES	59
EAST WALL	54
AH PHILOSOPHY	42
DESIGN ANALYSIS	26
A SECOND STALINGRAD	21
ACROSS THE YEARS	16
BEYOND THE PALE	0

Mr. James Werbaneth's fine investigation of the Nicaraguan Contra War, using the medium of *FIRE-POWER*, not only stirred up some controversy but also obviously picqued the interest of the collective readership of *The GENERAL* this year past. He carries off the Editor's Choice Award, our annual reward for the best article of the volume year past (in this case, Vol. 23). As always, the quality of the competition was most impressive this year, with articles by some of the best players around gracing our pages. Mr. Werbaneth will receive a \$100 bonus award, plus a lifetime subscription to *The GENERAL*, from The Avalon Hill Game Company. The complete list of nominees and their percentage of the total votes cast by responding readers is as follows:

REVOLUTION AGAINST THE REVOLUTION	
by James Werbaneth	31.5%
FIRST IMPRESSIONS	
by Robert Medrow	22.4%
THE ALLIED SCHOOL OF STRATEGY	
by James Chung	14.2%
THE ROYAL NAVY TRIUMPHANT	
by James M. Lutz	11.3%
PILOTS, MAN YOUR PLANES	
by Robert Harmon	9.0%
BASIC FIGHTER MANEUVERS	
by Gary C. Morgan	6.8%
KAMPFGRUPPE PEIPER	
by Danny Parker	3.1%
LIKE A THUNDERBOLT	
by Craig F. Posey	1.7%

For those of you whose interest might have been aroused by this issue, or who might be looking for a PBM *DIPLOMACY* game to plunge right into, Mr. Ken Peel offers *Pontevedria*. This is a quarterly listing of amateur postal game offerings for *DIPLOMACY* and its variants, and other multi-player games that may be run by various GMs. Each entry on the list carries the name and address of the GM in whose 'zine openings for players are available, as well as costs and printing details. If you are looking for a postal game, or looking to discover just how broad this hobby can be, get hold of a copy of *Pontevedria*. You can obtain one for a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a request to Ken Peel (8708 First Avenue, #T-2, Silver Spring, MD 20910).

For some years (since 1980, in fact), the editors of the leading periodical devoted to games and puzzles—*Games*—presented their selection of the best 100 games annually. This year, recognizing the fast and frantic pace of our industry, they decided on a different approach. In the October/November issues, the editors concentrated on the best game

Infiltrator's Report

introduced within the past year. We were most pleased that of the seven wargames chosen for this honor, three are from The Avalon Hill Game Company: *PLATOON*, *BRITANNIA* and *KNIGHTS OF THE AIR*. As the editors point out, these wargames run from the introductory (*PLATOON* has a single page of rules for the basic scenario) to the complex (*KNIGHTS OF THE AIR*, on the other hand, is a detailed simulation of the problems faced by the pilots of WWI not only in fighting the enemy but in just flying their plane). The editors of *Games* found something for every taste in wargaming—something from The Avalon Hill Game Company.

Melinda Ann Holley, whose name you might recognize from the lead article of this issue, puts out a delightful 'zine for the postal *DIPLOMACY* hobby. Titled *Rebel*, it serves to report the results of the several pbm games she oversees (17 at last count). The 'zine also carries letters from players on various topics, responses to *DIP* questions, and news of the postal hobby. *Rebel* offers amusement and information, delivered with more flair than many others. And if you're looking for a postal game to get involved in, those with Ms. Holley as GM are among the best. Subscription fee for *Rebel* is only \$.50 an issue; to play in a game costs \$5.00. Further information can be obtained from Ms. Holley (P.O. Box 2793, Huntington, WV 25727).

Readers might be interested in the results of the survey on computer games we ran back in Vol. 22, No. 6 of *The GENERAL*. Along with the usual questions on make of computer owned and favorite computer games, several questions of adaptations of Avalon Hill boardgames to computer versions were included. Bill Peschel, Project Manager for our Microcomputer Games Division, gave us a look at the results. Of the approximately 160 responses received, some 30% of the readership own Commodore computers, 23% IBMs, 21% Apples, and 17% Ataris, with a small smattering of Macintoshes, Amigas and STs among you. When asked which boardgames they most like to see converted to computer play, *THIRD REICH* was mentioned most often (30%), followed closely by the original *SQUAD LEADER* (votes for *ASL*, which placed 7th on the listing, were counted separately. Many thanks to all who participated in the survey. Keep an eye on *The GENERAL* for the latest products from Microcomputer Games; maybe your favorite wargame will be among the new releases. Bill has asked that readers who own computers not let the lack of a formal survey stop them from writing (see the "Letters to the Editor" of this issue). While he may not be able to answer every letter that comes in concerning our computer games, he does pay attention to them. Comments and suggestions are always welcome, and can be addressed to the attention of Mr. Bill Peschel.

Contest 137 was a challenge to any dedicated *ASL*er, and over two hundred responded with solutions. Many were eliminated for violating rules of play, but a number of correct solutions remained—all exiting between three and eight points. We decided to recognize those who exited eight points as the winners. If some of the following names sound familiar, it should be pointed out that virtually every *ASL* expert reads *The GENERAL* and relishes such contests as this. The winners, each to receive merchandise credit voucher, are as follows: Darryl Burk, Ravenna, OH; Bill Conner, Youngstown, OH; Chris Gammon, Milpitas, CA; Russell Hall, Toledo, OH; Mark Nixon, Lyndhurst, OH; Robert Orf, San

Bernardino, CA; Gord Reid, Oshawa, ONT; and William Sisler, Cleveland, OH.

Contest 138 posed a tough problem for the Allied player: how to secure his beachhead in the face of strong German forces and bad weather. But veteran *FORTRESS EUROPA* players should have had no difficulty in seeing that an attack on Caen is the best way to secure the beachhead. Odds of 2-1 can be achieved against the German defenders.

Two SAC air units are available, even during storm turns, and one of them can be used for carpet bombing (the option is available since there is no carpet bombing on invasion turns). The +2 DRM will assure the elimination of the surrounded German units. The Orne bridges should *not* be attacked, since this would permit German units to occupy the east bank. Such occupation would create a strong defensive position. It would also prevent Caen from being used as a port for entering Allied reinforcements and withdrawing inverted units or airborne units. The mulberry could be in German ZOC at the end of the turn, limiting the number of entering units and preventing the withdrawal of weakened units. The other SAC unit can be used to bomb U-boat bases or V-1 sites or to attack the bridges at Paris to limit the German reinforcements' ability to move. Note that, while the naval units are near at hand, they cannot move or fire during a storm turn.

The correct entry should note the operations of the Allied SAC and list the following moves:

Unit	Start	1st Impulse	2nd Impulse
Am 51nf	J3	J4	J4
Am 351nf	J4	J4	J4
Am 12HQ	J4	J4	J4
Am 101Abn	K6	K4	K4
Br 31nf	J4	L5	L5*
Br 151nf	K4	M5	M6*
Br 431nf	J3	K4	K4
Br 511nf	K5	L5	L5*
Br 531nf	K5	M5	M6*
Br 79Arm	K4	M5	L4
Br 6Abn	L7	M7	M6
Br 1Cdo	K5	L5	L5 or M6

*These units can be interchanged, except that if two units are at half-strength they should not end the second impulse in the same hex.

The combat then is very simple: the British 3rd, 15th, 53rd, 79th, 6th Abn and 1st Cdo all attack the 3rd Luftwaffe and 275th Infantry at 2-1 odds with a +2 for carpet bombing.

The two strong American infantry divisions need to end the second impulse movement with the mulberry to secure it from German capture since no German attack can eliminate 12 combat factors and four steps. The weakened American airborne units and the British 43rd occupy K4 to prevent the German units in Cherbourg from flanking any Allied units from the rear. Even if these enemy units attack K4 and eliminate both Allied units, it would require both first and second impulse attacks to accomplish. Any German survivors would then lose one step and be eliminated since they will be out of supply, and Cherbourg will be open to Allied occupation. Caen is strongly garrisoned after the second Allied impulse. Any German attack across the Orne will be principally made with armored units; the defenders will be doubled and the attacking armor halved. (The units that could reach attacking positions would be the 1st SS, 2nd SS, 9th SS, 353rd Infantry and 2nd Panzer, the 2/6th LW and HQ B, plus any units using rail movement through Paris. If the Paris bridges have been attacked, these total only 25 combat factors compared to the 28 in Caen.) Finally, the 79th Armored is moved away from the front to prevent a higher odds attack against it and a soak-off against Caen itself.



A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET: THE GAME
\$24.95

A Nightmare ON ELM STREET THE GAME

*One, two, Freddy's coming for you.
Three, four, better lock your door.
Five, six, grab your crucifix.
Seven, eight, gonna stay up late.
Nine, ten, never sleep again!*

THIS GAME INCLUDES . . .

Illustrated Rules Booklet

Freddy himself demonstrates the simple rules, so in no time at all you can begin to enjoy running for your life.

Game Board

Two abutting 16" x 22" panels depict the nightmare maze across which you make your way from nightmare to safety.

Two Hundred Cards

By playing the right card, you can escape, clobber Freddy, or save a friend – or let Freddy loose!

Six Freddy Markers

You just never know what Freddy is going to do next because he seems to be everywhere at once!

Six Plastic Pawns

You and your five friends are just pawns in Freddy's game, unless you can escape and have the last laugh!

*Nightfall. You and your Elm Street friends are afraid to go to sleep again, because that madman with the dirty jersey and floppy hat and steely talons is just waiting for you to nod off. So you try to stay awake; you talk, you play loud music – you do anything to stay awake – but it's no use. Freddy wants to play, and he wants to play with you. He has the game all set up, and he's just waiting! Why fight it? Maybe if you all go together this time, some of you can escape once and for all. Just let yourself sink into those dreams where nothing is quite what it appears, where the faster you run the slower you go, where Freddy is everywhere – relax and play **A Nightmare on Elm Street: The Game.***

The object of **A Nightmare on Elm Street: The Game** is simple. You are asleep, adrift in the land where Freddy roams, and you have to wake up. You start with a pawn and 3 cards on the Nightmare side of the Gameboard, and by matching your cards with cards played previously, you try to move your pawn through a maze to the Awake side of the board. When you cannot move, Freddy will move; if you are crafty enough, you can use Freddy's moves to attack other players who are getting too far ahead of you. But be careful! One of the other players – known only to you – is your partner! If that player wins, you can win, too, even though your pawn is far behind.



VICTORY GAMES, INC.

43 West 33rd Street
New York, New York 10001
(212) 563-2630/2633
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Grand Strategy in the Age of Napoleon

INSTRUCTIONS:

Rate each category by placing a number ranging from 1 through 9 in the appropriate space to the right (1 equating "excellent"; 5, "average"; 9, "terrible"). EXCEPTION: Rate items 7a and 7b in terms of minutes necessary to play the game, in ten-minute increments. (Example: If you've found it takes two and a half hours to play the basic scenario of *FRANCE 1940*, enter "15" for category 7a.) For an explanation of the categories, refer to the AH Philosophy of Vol. 19, No. 4. Sub-categories are indicated by italics. Enter ratings only for those categories relevant to the game in question. Note that AH's ratings for **Complexity** and **Year of Publishing** have been provided; do not rate these categories.

- 1. Overall Value _____
- 2. Components _____
- 2a. Mapboard _____
- 2b. Counters _____
- 2c. Player's Aids _____
- 3. Complexity **10**
- 3a. Complexity _____
- 4. Completeness of Rules _____
- 5. Playability _____
- 5a. Excitement Level _____
- 5b. Play Balance _____
- 6. Authenticity _____
- 7. Game Length _____
- 7a. Basic/Shortest _____
- 7b. Advanced/Longest _____
- 8. Year of Publication **1986**

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This coupon is valid only for mail order purchases of complete games direct from The Avalon Hill Game Company. Each postage coupon entitles the sender to deduct up to \$1.00 from the postage charges of any order for a complete game provided the amount deducted does not exceed the total postage charge for that order. Coupons are not usable for parts, magazines, or point-to-point orders. Shipping charges are 10% of the dollar amount of your order, if sent to a USA address. Shipping costs to Canada and Mexico are 20% of the order; overseas orders must add 30%. Any past GENERAL postage coupon previously offering different values may be used as the equal of this coupon. Example: Customer A lives in the USA and orders a \$15 game. His postage charge is \$1.50 which he may pay by sending in 2 postage coupons and \$15, or 1 postage coupon and \$15.50. Customer B lives in Canada and orders the same game. He must pay \$15 in USA funds plus 3 postage coupons or \$15 plus \$1 for each postage coupon less than 3 which he sends. **\$1.00**

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN PLAYING?

Top ten lists are seemingly always in vogue these days. Whether the subject is books on the Best Seller List, television's Nielsen ratings, or even games, the public never seems to tire of seeing how their individual favorites stack up numerically against the competition. Our preoccupation with this national pastime is almost akin to rooting the home team on to victory every Sunday. So to further cater to your whims (and to satisfy our own curiosity) we unveil The *GENERAL*'s version of the gamer's TOP TEN.

We won't ask you to objectively rate any game. That sort of thing is already done in these pages and elsewhere. Instead, we ask that you merely list the three (or less) games which you've spent the most time with *since* you received your last issue of The *GENERAL*. With this we can generate a consensus list of what's being bought. The degree of correlation between the Best Selling Lists and the Most Played List should prove interesting.

Feel free to list any game regardless of manufacturer. There will be a built-in bias to the survey because you all play our games to some extent but it should be no more prevalent than similar projects undertaken by other magazines with a special interest-based circulation. The amount to which this bias affects the final outcome will be left to the individual's discretion.

The games I've spent the most time playing during the past two months are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Opponent Wanted

50¢

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3. Insert copy on lines provided (25 words maximum) and print name, address, and phone number on the appropriate lines.
4. Please PRINT. If your ad is illegible, it will not be printed.
5. So that as many ads as possible can be printed within our limited space, we request that you use official state and game abbreviations. Don't list your entire collection, list only those you are most interested in locating opponents for.

Advanced Square Leader—ASL, Afrika Korps—AK, Air Force—AF, Anzio—AZ, Arab-Israeli Wars—AIW, Banzai—BANZ, Beyond Valor—BV, Bismarck—BS, Blitzkrieg—BL, Britannia—BRIT, Battle Of The Bulge—BB, Bull Run—BR, Caesar Alesia—CAE, Circus Maximus—CM, Civilization—CIV, Dauntless—DL, D-Day—DD, Devil's Den—DEV, Diplomacy—DIP, Empires in Arms—EIA, Firepower—FP, Flat Top—FT, Flight Leader—FL, Fortress Europa—FE, Freedom in the Galaxy—FITG, Gettysburg—GE, Gladiator—GL, Guns Of August—GOA, Gunslinger—GSL, Hitler's War—HW, Kingmaker—KM, Knights of the Air—KOTA, The Longest Day—TLD, Luftwaffe—LW, Magic Realm—MR, Midway—MD, Napoleon—NP, Naval War—NW, PanzerArmee Afrika—PAA, Panzerblitz—PB, PanzerGruppe Guderian—PGG, Panzerkrieg—PK, Panzer Leader—PL, Paratrooper—PARA, Rail Baron—RB, Richthofen's War—RW, The Russian Campaign—TRC, Russian Front—RF, Streets of Fire—SOF, Squad Leader—SL, Stalingrad—STAL, Storm Over Arnhem—SOA, Submarine—SUB, Tactics II—TAC, Third Reich—3R, Titan—TT, Up Front—UF, Victory In The Pacific—VITP, War and Peace—W&P, War At Sea—WAS, Waterloo—WAT, Wooden Ships & Iron Men—WSIM.

NAME _____ PHONE _____
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CONTEST 139

Please indicate your Fall 1904 *DIPLOMACY* moves for each of the indicated units if allied with the indicated country. (Please record "Hold" if the unit will be undertaking no action.) Based on this evaluation, then indicate the country that you—if in Italy's position—would fight. Then indicate your builds for the Winter 1904 turn.

If allied with Russia:

- Army Apulia
- Army Trieste
- Army Vienna
- Fleet Aegean Sea
- Fleet Ionian Sea
- Fleet Tyrrhenian Sea

If allied with Turkey:

- Army Apulia
- Army Trieste
- Army Vienna
- Fleet Aegean Sea
- Fleet Ionian Sea
- Fleet Tyrrhenian Sea

Preferred Enemy:

- Russia
- Turkey

Winter 1904 Builds:

Issue as a whole . . . (Rate from 1 to 10, with 1 equating excellent, 10 equating terrible)
 Best 3 Articles

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

The GENERAL

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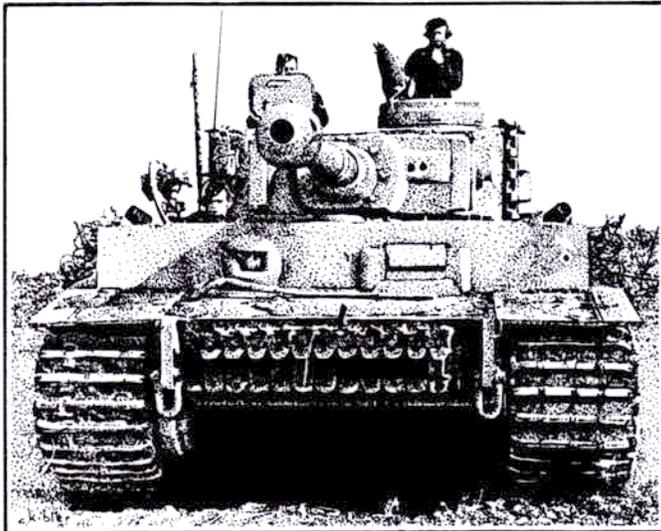

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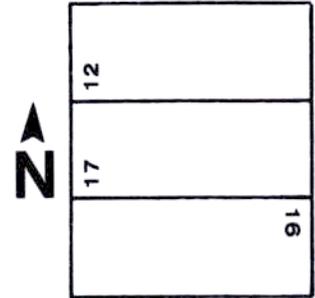


ASL SCENARIO G5



CISTERNA, ITALY, 30 January 1944: The big push to break out of the Anzio beachhead was on, and Darby's Rangers were to lead the way for the Americans. At 0100, the 1st and 3rd Ranger Battalions, with the 4th following, infiltrated the mobile defensive positions of the Hermann Goering Division near Cisterna. Behind them, the Allied big guns opened fire, heralding the offensive. Charging forward without their heavy equipment, the Rangers swept through a German camp, killing all. The town was only a few hundred yards ahead, but the Rangers were in open fields with dawn just breaking. And the Germans were now awake.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

- ♣ The Germans must score a minimum of 20 Casualty Points.
- ☆ The Germans must score a minimum of 30 Casualty Points.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: At game end, the German player must have scored at least twice as many Casualty Points as the American player and a minimum of 25.

TURN RECORD CHART

♣ GERMAN Sets Up & Moves First [152]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	END
☆ AMERICAN [238]										

Provisional Battalion, Fallschirm Panzer Division Hermann Goering, and elements of 26th Panzer Division [ELR: 3] set up on board 12: {SAN: 6}

1
4'-6-7
8

2
4-4-7
8

2-2-8
2

9-2
2

8-1
2

8-0
2

MGC
5-12
3

LMG
3-8
5

?
7 morale
20

12
88L 3/5/2
2

13
75L -1-12*
3

16
20L (20) CS 4 MA-AA
3

18
20L (4) MA-AA
2

28
T7 ZIPP
2

MTR M11
81* [2-60]
2

Elements of 1st Ranger Infantry Battalion [ELR: 4] set up on Board 17 on hexes numbered < 5: {SAN: 3}

E
6'-6-7
17

9-1
2

8-1
2

8-0
2

7-0
2

BAZ 44
8-4
6

4m MTR
3

SPECIAL RULES:

1. EC are Wet with no wind at start. All buildings are of stone construction. Ditches exist in all unpaved road hexes. A ditch is treated as a shellhole in all respects (B2.2-.4) except that Cavalry/horse-drawn vehicles entering a road across a non-road hexside must enter at the two MF rate even though they never receive the protective TEM of a ditch. Vehicles entering a road across a non-road hexside must pay shellhole MP costs.
2. Any Good Order American unit exited off the south edge of board 16 east of 12Q1 is *not* counted for Casualty Points (A26.2).
3. All StuG III are equipped with Schuerzen (D11.2). The Opel Blitz truck is an Ammo Vehicle (E10) for the SdKfz 10/4 vehicles.
4. The American mortars are subject to Ammunition Shortage (A.11). After all setup, but prior to play, the U.S. player must make a dr for every unit. A dr of 6 results in a broken and DM unit.

AFTERMATH: Rittmeister Edwin Wentz, in command of the replacement companies of the Hermann Goering Division headquartered in Cisterna, had been conferring with officers of the newly arriving 26th Panzer Division when reports of the Rangers reached him. Reacting quickly, the old reservist ordered flak wagons, SP guns, and tanks from the 26th to support and threw his convalescents and replacement troops into battle. The Rangers—caught in the open—were slaughtered. Expecting relief from the 4th Ranger Battalion momentarily, with confidence that the 3rd Infantry Division would soon be rolling into Cisterna, they fought on throughout the morning against mounting odds. But the 4th Battalion was pinned down in the German lines, and the offensive had stalled. The end came swiftly for the Rangers. Under attack from armor on all sides, their casualties were staggering and their ammo dwindling. Of the two battalions of Rangers which reached Cisterna (767 officers and men), six men came back.

FIRST ACTION

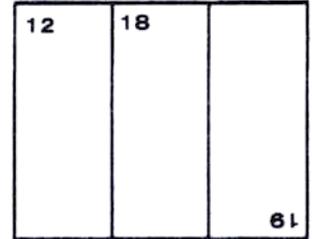


ASL SCENARIO G4



VIC-SUR-SEILLE, FRANCE, 8 November 1944: In the early morning hours of a gray day, the 761st Tank Battalion faced the enemy in combat for the first time. The whole Third Army was going over to the attack and the initial objective assigned to the untested Black Panthers was the capture of a small, unimportant village. In support of elements of the 104th Infantry Regiment, the 761st rolled through the cold sleet toward their goal. But when the preparatory artillery fire had eased, the enemy—far from surrendering as everyone had hoped—fired back.

BOARD CONFIGURATION:



BALANCE:

- ♣ The American must Control seven of the eight multi-hex/multi-level buildings on board 12.
- ☆ The American must Control five of the eight multi-hex/multi-level buildings on board 12.

VICTORY CONDITIONS: At game end, the American player must Control six of the eight multi-hex/multi-level buildings on Board 12 without losing more than two AFV.

TURN RECORD CHART

♣ GERMAN Sets Up First [148]	☆ 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	END
☆ AMERICAN Moves First [188]												

Elements of the 11th Panzer Division [ELR: 3] set up on Boards 12 and 18, with a maximum of ten MMC per board: {SAN: 5}

 4'-6-7	 2-2-8	 9-1	 8-1	 8-0	 7-0	 5 [3] 7-16	 5 [2] 5-12	 3-8	 11
14						2		4	24

 3 81* [2-60]	 5 OVR. OBA: +4 Other: +2	
3		

Elements of the 1st Battalion, 104th Infantry Regiment [ELR: 4] set up on Board 19: {SAN: 3}

 6'-6-7	 6'-6-6	 9-1	 8-1	 8-0	 7-0	 5 [3] 8-12	 5 [2] 4-10	 5 [3] 60 [3-45]	 211 8-4
4	12					2		2	3

Elements of Company A, 761st Tank Battalion enter Turn 1 on east edge of Board 19:

 15 76L 2/4/4
4

SPECIAL RULES:

1. Weather is Mud & Overcast with no wind at start. Rain is already falling (E3.51) at the beginning of the scenario.
2. Before the German player sets up, the US player secretly records any single board as the target of a pre-game Bombardment (C1.8). Mud (E3.62) provides a +1 TEM to Open Ground Bombardment attacks (C1.82).
3. The German automatically wins if the American loses all three AFV.

AFTERMATH: Despite the confusion, mud, and heavy fire from German forces, the attackers initially advanced at a steady, if unspectacular, pace. But, as the infantry came under fire, the tankers were halted by a crude booby-trapped roadblock. Sgt. Rivers left his tank to disarm and place a grapple on the barricade. Backing off, his Sherman pulled the roadblock apart. Reaching the crest of a small rise, the tankers commenced to shell the battered village. With this support the infantry rushed in, to become embroiled in close fighting. Afraid of hitting their own, the tankers did not intervene and merely watched as the bitter battle raged for an hour before the last German defenders were captured.