

BLOOD AND IRON #30

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I left the back issue list out of the last issue, so let's take care of that right here.

SUPERNOVA--science fiction and fantasy games, reviews, comments, complete games, news, game openings lists. (Format is issue #, page count, price (third class). 3(6)15¢/4(6)15¢/10(4)10¢/11(2)5¢/15(6)15¢/17(10)20¢/18-19(18)30¢/20(6)15¢/21(22)35¢/22(22)35¢. Sub 3/\$1 BLOOD AND IRON. 1(1)5¢/3(2)5¢/5(4)10¢/6(8)15¢/8(6)15¢/9-10(20)25¢/12(4)10¢/19(2)5¢/15,17,20-25,28-30(10-12)20¢/26&27(14)25¢.

Ragnarok. 7/\$1 after the postal hike. 2-5(1-2)4¢@.  
World War IV Diplomacy, Aberration IV, Xeno II(space game), Logical II, Interstellar III, OP HR for Diplomacy 15¢@.

### Logical Diplomacy II

Lewis Pulsipher

I designed this game after seeing Alan Ovens' Logical Diplomacy printed in Rename 15. I think Ovens concentrated too much on simplifying Diplomacy without retaining some of the better aspects. His game might be called "Cutthroat Diplomacy" because it is so easy to stab an ally. In LD II I have increased the distance between each player so that there can be more solid negotiation and less guesswork. There are an even number of players (6) in LD, an odd number in LD II, thereby facilitating a more fluid game as well as making a draw a little less likely. I have greatly increased the center:space ratio so that "stalemate-line" draws are impossible; only balance of power (or exhaustion) draws are possible. Players also begin with four rather than three units, allowing them more time to develop their diplomacy before they can be reduced to impotence. Perhaps most important, I have restored fleets and sea spaces; players must make the strategic sea-land decision which is a vital part of regular Diplomacy, but non-existent in Logical Diplomacy. Finally, LD II is like LD in that each player begins with an identical position; in LD II, however, each position is symmetrical with respect to a radius of the circle except in one respect, while the left and right sides of the LD positions vary considerably.

1. The 1971 Diplomacy rules are used except as follows.
2. Game begins with Winter 000 builds. Each player may build an army or fleet in each of his home centers. As an example, the home centers of ALPHA are 47, 57, 45, and 50.
3. The five centers at sea (110, 116, 122, 128, 134) may not be occupied by armies. Note that 96 is a land space.
4. There are 35 centers. A player wins when he has 19 units on the board.

I'll GM one game of LD II in Ragnarok: same terms as ID III (see last issue).

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### POTPOURRI

1. Today I heard, from Conrad von Metzke, that Dave Staples has been forced to discontinue publishing The Rigot etc.; his home and virtually all his possessions were destroyed by a fire. When something of this magnitude occurs, all thoughts of wargaming being

a way of life disappear. Conrad is taking care of Dave's games; anyone interested in GMing an orphan should contact him at PO Box 4, San Diego, Calif. 92112. Dave's current address is PO Box 651, West Fargo, N. D. 58078.

2. Third Millenia Inc., 465 Woodland Hills, Philadelphia, Miss. 39350 has come out with a multi-player space wargame, EMPIRE I, available for \$5. The description reads in part "EMPIRE I is unique among Science Fiction games. Its features allow each player to design his own ships and explore the unknown areas of the galaxy. Enough playing pieces are included to allow four players to fight their way across the star map. Designed on the grand strategy level, the game also includes the economic factors that are of primary importance on this level of fighting by introducing differing industrial capacities and production capabilities." Except for the four player aspect, this description could just as well be of Steve Langs' Stellar Warfare which was printed in Supernova 18/19, which may be played by any number, but for which no board or pieces are included. Since I've been trading with TM since SN 17 or before, I'm pretty sure they have StW, yet they come up with this false advertising. This seems typical of the smaller game companies. For some reason they assume that they can come up with simple ideas that are unique. Game Designers Workshop, to take another example, began advertising Triplanetary as having a unique movement system, when in fact I know of a number of games using nearly identical systems (it's worth nothing that GDW has changed its ad, now; will TM do the same?). Those of you who have EMPIRE I--how closely does it resemble Stellar Warfare?

3. Walt Buchanan, RR 3, Lebanon, Ind. is converting Hoosier Archives to a vehicle for his demonstration Diplomacy games, and beginning a new, offset, bi-monthly publication, Diplomacy World. A sub is 6/\$5. I hope to persuade Walt to publish the rules for a Dipvariant, either reprint or new, in each issue. It might help if you write him and ask him to do so--numbers may tell.

4. Partial list of recently released two-player games: Eagle Day, \$5 from Histo Games, 34 Sharon St., Brooklyn, NY 11211. Another Battle of Britain game, but quite different from Zocchi's effort, I understand. Napoleon by Gamma Two Games, \$10 from Wargames Unlimited, PO Box 433, Elmhurst, Ill 60126 (which also carries many other war-games). Presumably uses the same system as Quebec and 1812. Hue and Dien Bien Phu, both in the latest issue of Conflict magazine. Both appear to be interesting, different games. I believe Conflict is a better buy than S&T. A six issue sub is \$8.50 from Simulations Design Corporation, PO Box 19096, San Diego, CA 92119. #6 is available for \$3.50 or less. Finally, Panzerarmee Africa is S&T 40, which looks very good, and Kampfpanzer in #41, which is a tactical game. I don't have the latter because dear old SPI's policy of notification for renewal did not give me time to get mine in.

5. World War II arrived over vacation from SPI. It does not use simo-movement. I may be able to work out a WW I multi-player version, but not WW II. Otherwise, the game is very flawed. The guts are simplified right out of the war -- no economics, no air or sea allocations, and worst of all, SPI assumes that the war will go, in the game, just as it did in the actual event. They designed a historical puzzle, not a game, and it really shows.

6. SPI is thinking of producing a space wargame, Alpha Centauri Campaign--strategic, three-dimensional, fleets, armies, and colonies. Knowing S&T they'll probably manage to ruin even a space wargame, but it might help them decide to make the game if people write and ask specifically for SF games.

7. Someone asked which article in the Origins Trilogy in a recent General was mine. For some reason, AH didn't bother to say who wrote what. Although my name is listed first, I wrote the second article, which AH entitled "Italian Variants" (my title was just "Origins Variants").

8. After a long layoff the IDA variant committee is stuttering back into action. We've picked up some new members, conditional on Birsan's approval. It seems that he didn't bother to tell Dick Vedder or Rick Brooks about the committee, even though their interest in variants is well known. I happened to, however, so they may be on the committee after all. There's currently some question about who the chairman is. Mark Weidmark thinks he and Vedder are co-chairmen, and he's taken over with a vengeance. And so it goes...

9. Avalon Hill is looking for new custodians for its Operation Contact now that Spartan International has refused to continue taking care of it. One of the groups asked was MGA. More on that next issue.

10. Some lessons learned at the last two MGA cons: schedule about half as many tournaments as you think you'll be able to get in. Don't expect to be able to participate in more than one tournament on a given day. In any naval free-for-all, DON'T give points for preserving one's own force (ship(s)). If you do, each player will tend to hang back. If you don't, then each player will try to kill as much as he can before he goes down (points given for destruction). The game will be much shorter, and probably more fun (most people like bloody games). An interesting game of this sort might be 'CA' on a large hex board; players receive one American and one Japanese heavy each, and start at regular intervals around a circle. Give one point for each power or weapons hit a player inflicts, plus one additional for sinking a ship. Movement can be written simultaneously since each player has only two ships; ditto for fire. That ought to be a quick game...

11. Games Innovations, 1884 So Leyden St., Denver, Colo 80222 offers a package called Warplan 5/5 to miniaturists who want to set up campaign games. The basic edition is \$15, the expansion kit an additional \$5. For 50¢ you can get "How to Use Warplan 5/5" to give you some idea of what the thing is like. Basically you are provided with geomorphic maps (square grid) with separate descriptions of the terrain in each square, plus a lot of other stuff to help fight a complete campaign. There are two versions: horse & musket, and railroad-air-rapid fire.

12. Chic Hilliker, PO Box 1195, Bloomington, Ind 47401 is offering Middle Earth miniatures (metal) for sale through the mail. These can be used with Chainmail miniatures rules, which have a fantasy supplement. Some of the figures available are Elf-30¢, Wizard-30¢, 2 armored Dwarves-40¢, Rohan horse archer-65¢, etc. He can supply a complete list, as well as the Chainmail rules for \$2; and all prices are 20% off, but don't include postage, so the actual price would probably be a little less than in the above list.

13. Gamers Guide #40 has finally arrived after a six month wait. It is supposed to be bi-monthly. It's a good issue, however, and if the AGA (which is under the supervision of the SICL) can get to a regular schedule the 'zine could be very valuable. I am surprised that SICL has allowed it, but GG has become a zine about wargamers more than about wargames or history. There's a considerable amount of discussion, articles about clubs, plans for a listing for postal Diplomacy openings (just send them the info--their circulation is guaranteed 500, probably half freebees), etc. There are also reviews, Survey comments, and more. A new editor is taking over with next issue, and the future of GG depends on whether he can get back to the planned schedule. Meanwhile I don't suggest subscribing just yet. GG is \$3 per year (six issues) from PO Box 5076, Long Beach, CA 90805.

An interesting letter in this issue indicates that SICL did not pick up GG in order to preserve it. Two or three others were interested in taking it up, but apparently only SICL was willing to pay for it.

14. Hugo Award Winners: Pro Editor-Ben Bova (Analog). Pro Artist-Kelly Freas. Best Novel-The Gods Themselves by I. Asimov. Best Novella-"The Word for World is Forest" by Ursula K. Leguin. Best Novelette-Poul Anderson's "Goat Song". Best Short Story-tie-"Eurema's Dam" by R. A. Lafferty and "The Meeting" by Frederik Pohl and C. M. Kornbluth. Best Dramatic Presentation-Slaughterhouse Five.

15. ADS FROM THE READERS. Wanted: Interplanetary Communicator #2 and #3, and any copy of the SSS Newsletter, willing to pay any reasonable price. Peter Aronson, 82 Park Ave., Newton, MA 02158. Phantom Star Raiders, a new game of tactical space war. Game features invisible starships equipped with a variety of weaponry. Multi-player game with some diplomacy. Moderated by Tony Watson, 201 Minnesota, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107 for 15¢ a turn.

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#### Diplomacy House Rules of a Super Ego by Peter Aronson

- I. I am the Lord thy Game Master
- II. Thou shalt have no other Game Master before me
- III. Thou shalt not take the name Diplomacy in vain
- IV. Remember the Rule Book and keep it holy
- V. Honor thy allies and enemies
- VI. Thou shalt not disband
- VII. Thou shalt not make illegal moves
- VIII. Thou shalt not deceive thy Game Master
- IX. Thou shalt not refuse to pay the game fee
- X. Thou shalt not covet thy ally's supply centers

#### LETTERS

Peter Aronson "I have come to the conclusion that you maintain BI as a way to get free subscriptions, after all out of 60 subscribers, 19 are traders." ((You should see all the trades I turn down! That is part of the reason. As interest in variants increases, I think I could do a column in some other 'zine that would include much of the material I put in BI, but then, I wouldn't be able to talk about anything that came to mind...))

"O was trying to think what sort of game would guarantee to the

largest possible degree that the gamesmaster stay interested. One . . . idea I came up with was two GM's each playing the part of super-powers trying to manipulate a bunch of minor countries. Between the two gamesmasters they would have their own victory conditions that would not effect the players, who would have their own victory conditions. It would not be necessary for the GM's to have actual forces though they could."

Adam Stephanides " . . . also a couple of regular board variants:

Confusion Diplomacy: A player may build on any space on the board whether he controls it or not, including sea spaces. If two or more players attempt to build in the same space, neither build succeeds and they are each short the next year. A player may voluntarily disband one of his units in Fall to gain a build, but the replacement unit must be of the same type. A unit built in a supply center not owned by yourself does not count as occupation in a Fall turn.

Seventeen-player game: Powers are: 1 Por-Spa, 2 Mar-Par, 3 Bre-Bel, 4 Lon-Liv, 5 Edi-Nwy, 6 Nap-Tun, 7 Ven-Rom, 8 Hol-Den, 9 Kie-Mun, 10 Ber-Swe, 11 StP-War, 12 Mos-Sev, 13 Vie-Tri, 14 Bud-Rum, 15 Ser-Gre, 16 Bul-Con, 17 Ank-Smy. Winter 1900 builds are used."

((I suspect that the first game would be more than confusion-- it'd be stalemate. The second resembles Anarchy II very closely. There are 17 two-center countries, with centers randomly distributed. After a player has five centers (I believe) he chooses three for permanent home centers; up to that point he may build in any center he owns.))

#### 'Zine Reviews

El Conquistador began as a Diplomacy 'zine, but now it is taking up the obligations of the old IFW's International Wargamer. I hear that the next issue will be over 60 8½ X 5½ inch pages, photo-offset. The physical quality of EC is superior to that of any other Dipzine; despite the reduced type, the words are clearer than those in any mimeo 'zine. The publisher, Gordon Anderson, seems to be very interested in his 'zine, but as Rod Walker says, there's no such thing as an absolutely reliable GM-publisher. There are some regular games open, at \$5.00 a shot, plus a sub (\$4 per year). Since the GMing quality is no better than most other 'zines, I think this is a bit steep. There are no variant openings. EC is published monthly. Viking Systems, Suite #823, 24 North Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill 60602 I've heard that John Bobek is somehow supporting the notion that IFW still exists. I don't think Anderson will be conned into supporting any such foolishness. Such would bode ill for EC.

El Dorado #5 (sub 4/31) includes some variant news (mostly out of date) and a complete list of Miller Numbers assigned. Valuable for the true variant nut. Dick Vedder, 11940 Adorno Pl., San Diego, CA 92128.

Obsession, S. Z. R & B Pub. Co., PO Box 24872, Los Angeles 90024. Conrad says these guys are going to be around for a long time, but I wrote to them some time ago and haven't heard anything since their first issue, which was in November. They have many openings for games including one season variant Diplomacy, Interstellar Conquest, Galactic Conflict, and World Decision. Until I hear from them again I'll leave it at that.



This is very likely the last issue of BI until May. 65-70 pages in one month just about shoots my bolt. RK will continue during this period, of course. That reminds me, traders who want to play a game in RK are charged 50¢ extra, since I have to send the thing to them first class rather than third (or in bunches).

#### New Multi-player Games

Cold War 2007 isn't new, but I finally broke down and paid \$4.00 for it. It was a great rip-off. The physical quality (poor ditto) is considerably less than what you would find in the average Dipvariant. The rules are apparently play-test rules; I don't see how anyone could actually figure out how to play such a complex game from the relatively meager rules which are provided. I don't know who would want to try it, either. The basic premise is not so bad; six planets attempt to gain control of the resources present in a number of asteroid belts. These can be taken by force or purchased. There are revolutions and civil wars in the asteroid belts. Military action is expensive; apparently the aim is to use spies, assassins, etc. to gain allies within the opposing governments, and to use those units and allies to disrupt and finally take over enemy governments. But the final result needs a great deal of work. Available (if you happen to be crazy) from The American Designers Association, c/o Stephen Marsland, 12 S Chenango St., Greene, NY 13778.

Space Huk is \$1 or suitable trade (which means another game, Dipvariant, whatever might interest a neo) from Thomas Galloway, Prog. Tra. B-522, FCDSTCL DNECK, Va. Beach, VA 23461. This is about the ultimate in three-dimensional realistic movement; ship-to-ship battle, with fairly long rules (seven offset pages) which one can pick up rather quickly, I think. Tom says he's played the game often FTF. A GM is required, but the job is not onerous. Tom is going to GM one postal game for return postage per turn.

Phantom Star Raiders was printed in SN 22. This is another ship-to-ship game, much simpler than Space Huk and also requiring a GM. See the designer's ad earlier this for more info.

#### New Dipvariants

The British are going nuts about Dipvariants. Two 'zines open a section of virtually every variant the editor's know of; they don't get filled, generally, but nonetheless... There are many new variants being produced in Britain and Europe; a few are listed below, and I'm trying to get hold of many more. I understand that many of the games are of poor quality--the kind that the "designer" throws together without understanding what factors are involved. I don't see how a "non-expert" player can really design a good variant unless he has lots of play-testing, lots of luck, or a VERY creative mind.

Atomic Warfare I by Will Haven, is a real monster, a "radical" variant which retains only a few of the elements of the regular game. Nine players compete on a large world map. Units include fleets, double armies, research teams, ballistic missiles, ABM's, ICBM's, MIRV's, and monetary units, which are derived from supply centers. The rules are not completely clear, but good enough. This is the type of game that someone could really "get into", though not as wild as Hypereconomic Dippy. For this and the next variant send some money (American seems to be OK) to Will Haven, 30 Plungington

Road, Preston, Lancs PR1 7RB United Kingdom. I don't know how much it'll cost you--depends in part on whether you want air or surface mail.

Spider King by John Robertson concerns the efforts of the Kings of France and England, and various Dukes, to gain control of France beginning in 1180. As you might guess, it's primarily a land game. Twists include defensive armies and garrison armies; there are about 55 centers. Initial strengths are slightly unbalanced, which usually means that these stronger powers have better chances, although I don't know how this game would go.

Collapse of the Dual Empire concerns the destruction of Austro-Hungary at the end of WWI. There are a number of nationalities represented by players, and among the units of each nationality are communists and democrats (and sometimes imperials). A land game, with much of the emphasis on the difficulties created by mutually antagonistic units on each side (for example, when the number of communist armies of one player exceeds the number of democratic armies by three or more, or vice versa, the minority goes into civil disorder!). Seems interesting. Designed by Richard Wein, available (along with many other variants) from the UK Variant Bank, Colin Bennett, 29 Manor Rd., Gt. Crosby, Liverpool, UK.

Great Lakes by Jonathan Hall is available from 19160 Olympia, Northridge, Calif. 91324 for 10¢ (in Book of Stab #6). A conservative variant for eight players, each with three centers initially. The Great Lakes is one of the better natural areas for a Diplomacy board since there's plenty of water, with the land and water mixed together fairly well. An opening for this (and Anarchy IV in BoS for a sub (8/\$1) \$1 game deposit, and \$1 game fee. Make checks payable to Randolph Bart.

Barebones, Jeffersonian Diplomacy by Howard Mahler, is a super-Logical Dippy. Each player has an identical position, with only one unit. There are 8 home and 6 neutral centers. It was intended as a demonstration of how to balance a game, and not as something to actually be played. Appeared in Impassable #30, 20¢ from John Boyer, 117 Garland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013.

Westphalia VI--Europe, 1648, also by Mahler, was printed in Stench #25, and also perhaps by Dan Gallagher. Herb Barents, 157 State St., Zeeland, MI 49464, 20¢. Herb did a pretty bad job on the maps, unfortunately. Powers are Spain, France, England, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Austria, and Ottoman Empire. There are 39 centers; rules seem to be like regular, except that two powers with 19 each (one in other hands) may declare a joint victory (as opposed, I guess, to a draw). Herb has openings for this game, as well as Foundation and 1958 version of Diplomacy in Stench for a sub and \$2 game deposit (subs are cheap, but I don't have the exact figure here).

Antigoni Isles by Doug Hayward is a fairly conservative variant using a hypothetical board of three large islands in a circular pattern and a number of smaller ones. Aside from the board (which I find very interesting), the main twist is double-segmented seasons, with fleets moving in both segments and armies in one or the other. This is very much a tactical game, then. I haven't played this one, but I like the looks. Seven players, by the way, and less than 40 centers. This variant and the next two available from John Leeder,

Box 1606, Huntsville, Ontario Canada POA 1K0.

473BC by John Hulland is a very conservative variant for five players representing Rome, Carthage, Persia, Greece, and Egypt. There are only 28 centers, so the game ought to be short. The board extends from eastern Spain to Syria and from North Africa to south France and Romania.

Algonquin Park Diplomacy by John Leeder? This game is played on a tourist map of a park up near Huntsville. There are only fleets, which move along rivers, streams, and lakes. Unfortunately the use of a map of this sort inevitably results in a "dirty" board, offhand I don't see how seven players and a GM could all interpret the rules for dividing rivers, etc. into spaces in the same manner.

Variants of the Youngstown Variant, by Dick Vedder, were included in an issue of Rename. The rest of Africa is added to the board, with Transvaal as a power. There are some variations of this new board, such as eliminating India AND Transvaal, or eliminating most of Asia. I'm curious as to whether these games have been play-tested; it appears that Dick might have got a little carried away.

Coast Running by Eric Verheiden also appeared in Rename. Convoy rules are altered, and armies may "protect" fleets running along the coast of space(s) occupied by the armies, enabling the fleets to move more than one space in one turn. Uses regular board.

Schizo-Diplomacy by Mick Bullock is a variant of Black Hole designed to eliminate the constriction which makes original BH such a poor game. Basically, the constriction caused by the elimination of many provinces is balanced by the splitting of other, un-blackholed provinces. If you send Mick Bullock, 14 Nursery Ave., Halifax, Yorkshire HX3 5SZ a buck you can get this one, COTDE, and Balkan Wars.

Finally we have the McMahon Variant, which is Origins of WW II and not Diplomacy. This adds Italy and a number of areas. Printed in Anschluss 19, 15¢ from Joe Antosiak, 422 East Ave., Lagrange, Ill. 60525. Joe has openings for this, Youngstown Variant, Starlord, Strategy I, and others for \$4 (\$3 for non-Dippy).

I've hit most of the North American sources for variants. The MGA variant package is \$1.75 (\$1.50 MGA) from Paul Wood, 24613 Harmon Ct., St. Clair Shores, Mich 48080. Dick Vedder, 1451 N Warren, Tucson, AZ 85919 has copies of rules for his variants (Jihad, Diadochi (three or four versions), 1776. Burt Labelle, Forest Park #23, Biddeford, Maine, 04005 has rules for Hyborian Age II (16¢) and Youngstown Variant (32¢). John Boyer (address above) has rules for 1721 (two versions) and Scotice Scripti III for 25¢ each. Chic Hilliker (address somewhere above) has rules for Middle Earth II and IV and Third Age. And there are many variants in backish of BI.

Hey, Walt Buchanan has accepted my suggestion! So anyone who thinks his variant is worth printing in Diplomacy World should send it to me. The map will have to be on one 11 X 17 sheet (which will be reduced to about 7 X 12 when it's printed), and if you don't send it to me camera-ready (black ink, white paper), then I'll have to butcher it when I redo it. Regular board variants are also accepted, since Walt's allotting over three pages (single-space equivalent) for text, and there might be room left over. And then, Walt might be persuaded to give up more room...

Final note: SICL now has Balboa Game Co. in "receivership.