



# BUSHWACKER

VOL. 18, No. 11

(Season's Greetings)

DECEMBER 1989

This is the 214th consecutive issue of BUSHWACKER, a Postal Diplomacy\* zine dedicated to the play and reporting of Variant games, hobby news, and whatever else I want to write about. The average zine lasts about four years. This one is nearly 18 years old. This indicates that I am either very stubborn or very dumb. (You pay your money and you take your choice). Anyway, this insanity is Edited by: Fred C. Davis, Jr., 3210-K Wheaton Way, Ellicott City, Md., 21043. Phone: (301) 461-1885. Phone calls accepted daily between 12 Noon and 9:30 p.m., Eastern Time. However, orders should be sent by mail, except in dire emergencies. There's no guarantee that anyone will be home to accept phone orders. Adjudication errors should be reported promptly by phone.

\*Diplomacy is a registered Trademark for a game invented by Allan B. Calhamer, and Copyright by The Avalon Hill Game Co. of Baltimore, Md. The zine is named for my comic strip character, "Bushwacker," whose picture adorns the masthead.

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GAME FEES: \$9.00 Flat Fee for newcomers, or \$8.00 for the rest of you. Similarly, the STANDBY FEE is \$5.00 for newcomers or \$4.00 for current readers. Players and Standbys do NOT have to maintain subs. For your money, you receive copies of the rules/maps for your game(s), plus BUSH, for the duration of your game, unless you drop out. Note that a Standby signs up for a specific game of his choice. Mensa Diplomacy SIG members receive an additional \$1.00 discount on these fees. OVERSEAS Fees higher.

SUBSCRIPTIONS for non-players are 12 issues for \$6.00. OVERSEAS SUBS re \$8.00 for 12 issues, by sea mail. SAMPLE copies are 50¢. We also TRADE with many other zines on an all-for-all basis. Traders may enter a game for a considerable discount, which can be arranged on an individual basis.

This issue contains reports on CHARACTER DIP (1987AF rg06 - formerly 1987AF rm49), ATLANTICA III (1988AR ea01) and ANCIENT EMPIRES III (1989IR ac10). There are also end-game statements for VACATION DIP III (1985R rm39), and a starting lineup for FIVE ITALIES.

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## THE EYES HAVE IT

After a great deal of backing and filling, and testing and testing, my eye doctor has finally scheduled me for removal of the cataract in my right eye for Thursday, Dec. 7th. This is about a year overdue, but when you have myopia like mine, there are extra problems. For example, they were worried about the possibility of a detached retina behind the cataract, so I was sent to be seen by The Great Doctor who works at Johns Hopkins. The only problem turned out to be that my appointment was on the same day that the Vice-President of Egypt returned to the clinic for a re-exam of his eye surgery performed at Hopkins. I was kept in the waiting room for 3 hours, along with the other peasants, until His Excellency could be taken care of. Isn't it interesting how all of these Potentates come to America when they get sick, for the best treatments money can buy?

Anyway, I have one final checkup to go through on Dec. 1st, and if I clear that hurdle,

the eye will be taken care of on the 7th. Cataracts are now removed with laser beams, not knives, more or less like a Buck Rogers "disintegrator." Then, a tiny 2 mm. slit is made to insert a "folded" implant in the eye. It then pops open like a space capsule, and that's it. Supposedly, I go into the hospital at 9 a.m., and will be on my way home by 2. However, I will not be able to read or write for a couple of days. Therefore, I'd appreciate it if no one would phone me from December 7th to the 10th, and please don't expect any immediate answers to any letters written that week. Thankyou.

We'll let you know how things came out next month.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### VARIANT BANK NEWS

A new subcategory, "rg, Special Powers/Characteristics," has been created by the new Custodian, Lee Kendter, Jr. This is to include all the games played on the Regular board where the units get to display special powers, either on a group or individual basis. This includes the "Vain Rats" and "Vacation Dip" series of designs, as well as "Character Dip" and a few others.

Since the Vacation Dip III game here has ended (1985R rm39), I won't change that game designator. The new NAVB or ARDA No. for Vacation Dip III will be "rg04". My latest Design, Vacation Dip IV, will be "rg10".

Character Dip will be "rg06" from now on. I'll show both that and the old no, rm49, this month, and switch over to "rg06" next month, if there's no objection from the MNC.

Bourse games not directly related to a Diplomacy game are being deleted from the Catalog. This will include such games as Bourse I, II and III, and "War Bonds." Such games may continue to be played, of course, but they won't receive their own Miller Nos. A new category, "us, Stock/Currency controls/influences" has been established to cover games where the bourse is a direct part of a game. Thus, ub07, Superbourse, will now be "us03" and rm37, Stock Diplomacy, is now "us04."

A copy of the NAVB 1989 Catalog may be had for \$5.00 from Lee, at 264 Spruce Ct., Bensalem, Pa. 19020. The Update sheet may be had for a SASE.

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#### CORRECTION IN MILLER NO. INTERNATIONAL BREAKDOWN

Due to some misunderstanding or breakdown in communications, it seems that the letters GA-GZ and some letters in the "H" block were being used by both the Australian and North American Custodians. Andrew England, the MNC for Australasian Variant games, has corrected this by removing all Postal games which began Down Under in 1987 or later from the "G" or "H" blocks, and giving them numbers starting with "X". In the future, all Australasian Variant games will use MN's in the "X, Y and Z" blocks, and the "GA-GZ" block will be used only for North American games. Thus, the record should show that North American games will use the letters "A-Z, AA-AZ," and from "GA" on through at least "JZ." This gives us at least 156 designators. I'm not sure what will happen if we go beyond a need for 156 designators for a single year. I wish the N. American MNC would advise me on this, as there has to be some provision for room for European Variant games, if Continental Europe gets its own MNC. How far beyond "JZ" do we want to go in reserving letters for American games?

In any case, Australasia now has at least 78 designators for its Variant games.

### RUNESTONE POLL "MEAN SCORES"

Don Del Grande once again has presented the modified mean scores for the 72 zines on the Main List of the 1989 Poll. Since this result shows BUSH as finishing 22nd instead of 31st, I like these results a lot better! (The top and bottom 10% of the votes are dropped in Don's calculations. Thus, both grudge and puff votes are eliminated.) There's no changes at the top, where FIAT BELLUM and PERELANDRA still finish 1-2, but there are considerable changes beyond that.

For example, the 3-4 zines on the official finish, CCC and BENZENE, drop to 6th and 7th slots, respectively, while DISEASE CITY (which does not run Diplomacy games, and would be ineligible for consideration under my standards), which finished 15th on the Poll is here elevated to 3rd place. The biggest upward jumps are ELECTRONIC PROTOCOL from 24th to 4th (+20) and DIPPY from 27th to 8th (+19). I think the biggest drop is PASSCHENDAELE from 6th to 17th (-11). The "mean" helps DIPLOMACY WORLD only slightly, with a raise from 36th to 31st place, while another of my favorites, EXCELSIOR, goes from 23rd to 19th. REBEL, strangely, stands at 14th place under both calculations.

There's very little change at the bottom under Del Grande's presentation. The same 7 zines remain at the bottom, with just a minor juggling of positions. KGO, KGO-ZD, VOLCANO CITY NEWS (folded) and KAISSA continue to bring up the rear.

You can get a copy of the complete list from Don at 142 Elisee Dr., Greenbrae, CA. 94904, for about 60¢. With this issue, #97, Don is changing the name of his zine from LIFE OF MONTY to A SHARP MIND & A STRAIGHT KNIFE. I guess we'll call it SHARP MIND for short. (Hey, we can't squeeze your new name into reports, Don!).

We were glad to hear that Don, who lives just north of San Francisco, came through the quake safely. He was on the road, about to cross the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, when the blow struck. Driver and car both doing well.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ORPHAN GAME CUSTODIAN INFORMATION

Vince Lutterbie, 1021 Stonehaven, Marshall, Mo. 65340, is the Orphan Game Custodian. He has recently sent a flyer to every GM and Publisher in North America, asking us to repeat this information for the benefit of players who may discover that their games are overdue, and they're not hearing from their GM. The Orphan Game Custodian tries to find a new home for games which have been abandoned by their original GM's.

This can include both Regular and Variant games, although it's more difficult to place Variants. There is no fee for this service, although contributions are gladly accepted. If you have a problem, send Vince the GM's name & address, name of the zine, and the date of the last issue. He'll also need the names & addresses of the other players.

Vince is also trying to end any feud with the rival service emanating out of the East Coast. He welcomes cooperation, not rivalry, within the Postal hobby. I will add my "Amen" to that. Vince's phone no. is: (816) 886-7354. You may wish to clip and save this information.

\* \* \* \* \*

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOTE ON naming the person or persons who have caused the most trouble or expressed the most negative attitudes in the hobby in the decade of the 80's? If so, you can obtain a ballot by writing to: Chris Carrier, 1215 "P" St., #12, Sacramento, CA. 95814. It's a blank ballot. You can write in any names you want, and allocate them any of 100 votes, from 1 to 100 for each person. Here's a great chance not to overlook anyone.

CHARACTER DIP - New 1987AF rg06 - (Formerly 1987AF rm49)

SPRING 1909

(See "Variant Bank News" for story on reclassification of several variants). (Pg. 2).

AUSTRIANS RACE EAST TO TRY TO BLOCK ENGLISH END RUN, TURN ITALY OVER TO FRENCH. BUT ENGLISH REACH BUDAPEST, AND RUSS "CON" THEM IN TURKEY. MUNICH BECOMES BOOM TOWN.

ENGLAND (Baty): 5A Norway-St. Pete. 3F Sev-Black Sea. 7A Moscow-Sev-Armenia (per card #4). 6A Galicia-Budapest. 3A Rumania (S) 6A Gal-Budapest. (Dbl. str.)  
(16) 8A Ukraine (S) 3A Rum. 1A Silesia-Galicia. 4A Warsaw (S) 1A Sil-Gal. 1F Denmark-Kiel. 4F Sweden-Norway. 9A Yorkshire-Belgium. 5F North Sea (C) 9A York-Belgium. 7F Clyde-NAO. 10A London-Yorks. 8F Edi-Clyde. 11A Liverpool-Edi.

FRANCE (Acheson): 3A Rome-Venice. 2F Apulia (S) 3A Rome-Venice. 4A Greece-Naples.  
(8) 3F Ionian (C) 4A Greece-Naples. 5A Spain-Marseilles. 6A Paris-Gascony-Spain (per card #4). 4F Tyrr. Sea-Western Med. 2A Heaven(H).

AUSTRIA (Suchard): 1A Con-Ankara /d/, Annihilated. 3F Adriatic-Albania. 2Amp Trieste-Serbia. 11A Budapest (S) 2Amp Tri-Serbia /d/, Annihilated. 3A Tyrol-Munich, but steps on Mine & is Annihilated! 12A Vienna-Tyrol. 10A Pert-Heaven. 2A Venice turns invisible and moves.  
(8)

RUSSIA (Bargender): 2F Bulgaria(ed)-Con. (Double-strength move per card #2).  
(1)

TURKEY (Cheek)(1): 1F Armenia-Ankara.

NOTE: Austria will play FALL 1909 three units short, because of the rule that a dislodged unit in Spring is annihilated, unless there are written orders for its Retreat.

NO PRESS. GM requests that everyone please use fresh ribbons in their machines, and no submit hand-written orders on tissue paper. My eyes are bad enough as is, without having to try to read nearly invisible writing.

DEADLINE for FALL 1909 orders is TUESDAY, January 2, 1990. That should avoid the Christmas rush. I'll give you a telephone deadline of Monday, January 1st, at 9:00 p.m., Eastern Time, but you'd better call early, as that's Bowl Game Day.

\* \* \* \* \*

PEOPLE'S DIPLOMACY ORGANIZATION VARIANT MAP

One of the items on the recently completed PDORA Auction (which raised money for many hobby functions without the requirement of having to sign Covenants to receive it), was the opportunity to have any space or country on the Diplomacy map named either for yourself or given some other name. Surprisingly, only 13 people submitted bids for this chance for immortality. Don Del Grande, who coordinated the bidding, has now produced copies of the revised map on high-quality linen paper suitable for framing. Austria, Italy and Russia are now "Overby, Buggyland and Cameronev," respectively. And Tyrolia ("Tre," remember?) is now "Keith Sherwood." Among the other changes, you will see that London is now "Rex." That was my bid. You see, "Rex" was my family's real surname prior to around 1905. It's a long story, which I won't go into here, but there are still members of the Rex family living in the Greater London area who are my relatives. So, what could be more logical than calling Greater London "Rex"?

I suppose copies of this map are available from Don Del Grande at 142 Elisee Dr., Greenbrae, CA. 94904, for a SASE. Any games of "People's Dip Org Diplomacy" are supposed to be played on this map. Hey, does this qualify for a Miller No? I hope that the map will be "re-opened" next year for more bidding. You, too, could then have a place of your own on the map. Hey, Don, I just noticed that while "Keith Sherwood" is supposed to be in Tyrol, you've put him into Trieste on the map, instead. Is this Bruce Linsey's doing?

\* \* \* \* \*

CANADIANS VISIT MOTHER COUNTRY. ITALIANS SET OUT TO RECTIFY THE REIGN IN SPAIN. BIG NAVAL BATTLE IN MAO. SKI TROOPS ENTER ALASKA/YUKON, WHILE GREAT WHITE FLEET BEGINS CRUISE 'ROUND THE WORLD. NEW GERMAN KAISER REORGANIZES HIS FORCES. FRANCE FADES.

The proposed Two-Way Draw between Canada and Italy did not pass. The exact votes are never disclosed in BUSH during the course of a game, but I don't think anyone would be surprised if I said it received very little support. Remember that from now on, if you submit orders but fail to vote, you'll be counted as voting "Yes," but anyone who NMR's will not be counted either way in the tabulation.

NOTE: George Kilmer has had to resign from this game due to the press of other activities. Robert Cheek, 14341 Franklin Ave., Tustin, CA. 92680, has taken over the position. George was away for most of October, and did not receive my information that his January 1871 orders had been lost until it was too late to make the deadline. If everyone would be as polite and conscientious as George Kilmer in dropping a position, we'd have no problems in the Postal hobby. He ends his letter, "Give my regrets to the rest of the players."

ENGLAND (Wilson): F Norwegian Sea-Norway. F Skag (S) F Nwg Sea-Norway. F Iceland (H).  
(4) F Hebrides Sea-MAO.

FRANCE (Galt?): NMR. A Brest (H). A Paris (H)/d/, Annihilated.  
(2)

GERMANY (Cheek): F Spain(sc)-Canary Is.,/d/, Annihilated. A Picardy-Paris. A Munich-Burgundy. A Switz (S) A Mun-Burg. F Kiel-Denmark. F Norway (S) F Sweden. F Sweden (S) F Norway. A Berlin-Kiel. F London-North Sea, /d/, May (R) to Wales or Yorkshire.  
(11) (9 units)

ITALY (Kendter): F Gulf of Lions-Spain(sc). A Morocco (S) F GofLions-Spain(sc).  
(10) F Western Med (S) F GofLions-Spain(sc). A Mauretania (S) A Morocco. F Tyrr. Sea-GofLions. F Gulf of Cadiz-MAO. F Portugal (S) F Gulf of Cadiz-MAO. A Gascony (S) GERMAN A Picardy-Paris. A Marseilles (S) A Gascony. A Piedmont (H).

CANADA (Acheson): A Ontario-Alaska/Yukon Box. F North Sea-Londen. F Eng Channel (S)  
(7) F North Sea-Londen. F MAO-Atlantis. A Halifax boards F Grand Banks; A/F Grand Banks-MAO. (When A/F moves are blocked, any further orders are not printed). F Bay of Biscay (S) A/F Grand Banks-MAO.

U.S.A. (R.Brown): F Canary Is. (S) CANADIAN A/F Grand Banks-MAO. F Azores (S) F Canary Is. F SAO (S) F Canary Is. F Bermuda-Bahamas. F Jax'ville (S) F Bermuda-Bahamas. F West Atlantic-Bermuda. A Georgia (S) F Jax'ville. A Magnolia-La. F Mexico-Panama/Pacific Box. A Minn-Alaska/Yukon Box. A Wis-Minn.  
(11)

C.S.A. (Palter): F Caribbean (MS) F Gulf of Mexico. F Bahamas (S) F GofMexico /d/,  
(3) may (R) to Cuba or Hisp.

# SUPPLY CENTER CHART, ATLANTICA III, MARCH 1871: GAINS, LOSSES

ENGLAND:	Edi, Liv, Iceland, Ireland	4 (-), No change
FRANCE:	Brest, <del>AZORES</del>	1 (-1), No change (1 annihil.)
GERMANY:	3 Home, Belg, Den, Hol, Norway, Paris, Sweden, <del>LONDON, SPAIN</del>	9 (-2), No change (was 1 short, 1 annihilated)
ITALY:	3 Home, Austria, Mars, Mauretania, Greece, Morocco, Pert, Tunis, SPAIN	11 (+1), Build 1
CANADA:	3 Home, Atlantis, Greenld, NFLd, P.E.I., LONDON	8 (+1), Build 1
U.S.A.:	5 Home, Charleston, Ky., La., Md., Minn. Richmond, AZORES, JACKSONVILLE	13 (+2), Build 2
C.S.A.:	Cuba, Hisp., <del>JAX'VILLE</del>	2 (-1), Remove 1

(more)

PRESS, ATLANTICA III:

CANADA to England: There's the promised breathing space! Let's get Germany while he's on the ropes.

WASHINGTON to Rome: Free passage through the Canary Islands will not be won by force. Make me an offer.

ITALY to Either German Leader: I can't believe neither of you guys wrote me. If one of you doesn't write soon, we may as well concede the game to the U.S.A.

CARIBBEAN SEA: Unfortunately only one blockade runner reached port last time. Will we do better this time? ((At least your orders arrived!))

ENGLAND: I agree with Italy's press of last month.

WE HAVE A NEW PROPOSAL for a USA-Italy 2-way Draw. So, let's see how that makes out next month. To the Party who sent in the other proposal: We will wait another round on your proposal, for several reasons, one of which is our ballot box custodians are exhausted from overwork.

I am NOT going to call for a replacement player for FRANCE, since that Power is down to one Center. I'm hoping that John Galt will resume playing. I know he had a lot of problems following the earthquake in his area. If not, France will go into Civil Disorder. Please let me hear from you, John.

WE HAVE A CHOICE here for our next set of orders. We have four Builds, one Removal, and two potential Retreats for MARCH 1871. It would not appear unreasonable to combine the MARCH and APRIL orders into one Deadline. The Builds are all too far away from the front to have any immediate effect. You may make certain orders contingent on what another country builds, if you wish. So...

DEADLINE for MARCH <sup>and votes</sup> and APRIL 1871 orders will be TUESDAY, January 2, 1990. If two players request a separation of seasons, it will be granted. If a Canadian Postal strike should cut off the Canadian and USA rulers, the GM will build as innocuously as possible for them in coastal spaces, and then hold up the game until further notice. In case of a strike, Doug Acheson and Ron Brown may designate substitute players for themselves, if they wish, for the duration. Telephone deadline will be Monday, January 1st, but you're advised to call a few days earlier if you must call. The circuits are always very busy on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. (Presit!).

\* \* \* \* \*

VACATION DIP III (1985R rm39)

END-GAME STATEMENTS

Bill Young (GERMANY) phoned me to say that his statement was on the way, but it did not arrive in the mail on Tuesday, Nov. 28th, the Deadline date. I'll include it in the next issue.

Paul Kenny (TURKEY) sent me a full-page typed statement. Since it's so large, I'm including it only with those copies going to the players, and maybe one or two others. On the reverse side you'll find the complete list of which Event Cards were dealt in every year from 1901 to 1918, and whether they were played. If anyone else wants to see this material, please send me a SASE and I'll be glad to send it to you.

I have three other End-game statements on hand, from Austria, France and Italy:  
(more)

AUSTRIA (Craig Reges): This was certainly the first time I ever played a country and never stepped foot in it! My thanks to the other players in the game. I'm sorry we didn't have a more definite conclusion.

FRANCE (Brad Wilson): Pretty simple. Gary Floyd (the first Italian player) screwed me early, and I hung on from there. Congrats to Paul Kenny - who deserved to win. Fred Chang, thanks for sending me a couple of things obviously meant for Bill Young. I was happy to pass them along to Paul. Nice game, Fred Davis. I largely concur in the rules adjustments ((made as we went along, and in Vacation Dip IV)).

ITALY (Alan Bergender): Sorry to see this game end. I saw some possibilities. Thanks for the standby slot.

Any more final remarks will be printed next month. Otherwise, that is it for Vacation Dip III. Thankyou, gentlemen, for sticking with this through thick and thin.

\* \* \* \* \*

(FIRST MOVE)

ANCIENT EMPIRES III - 1989IR ac10 (NEW GAME)

SPRING 264 B.C.

MANY POWERS HAVE SUCCESSFUL FIRST MOVES, BUT ANTIGONUS IS ANTAGONIZED BY NEIGHBORS. SELEUCUS MUTTERS AT BAD LUCK.

For the benefit of those of you using map tacks for your units, here is the color scheme I've decided to use in this game:

Antigonus - Yellow (like Turkey), Rome - Green (like Italy), Carthage - Black (Africa), New Carthage - Brown (used for Spain in my variants), Egypt - Dark Blue (for the Nile), Macedonia - Red (for Austria & Balkans), Seleucus - White (easternmost Power). Light Blue is not used, to avoid confusion.

ANTIGONUS (Pankesky): F Pontus-Armenia. A Antioch-Syria. A Mysia-Thrace.  
(3)

CARTHAGE (B.Wilson): F Icosium-Aeolian Sea. F Utica-Gulf of Syrtis. A Numidia-Icosium.  
(3)

EGYPT (Baty): A Sinai-Judea. A Alexandria-Sinai. F Thebes-Red Sea.  
(3)

MACEDONIA (Bergender): A Epirus-Moesia. F Athens-Aegean. A Chalcydice-Thrace.  
(3)

NEW CARTHAGE (Cheek): A Saguntum-Narbonensis. A Lusitania-Cades. F Carthage Nova-Ligurian Sea.  
(3)

ROME (Nash): F Neapoli-Tyrr Sea. A Aquileia-Illyria. A Rome-Genoa.  
(3)

SELEUCUS (Perlmutter): A Assyria-Syria. A Media-Armenia. A Parthia-Media.

PRESS:

CARTHAGE: We won't need elephants this time!

NEW CARTHAGE to Carthage: Out with the old and in with the new.

The GM appreciates that everyone either typed or neatly printed his orders, so I could read these strange names. Keep up the good work. Don't forget to sign your orders by hand, and please keep dark ribbons in your machines. And, except for postcards, we'd sure like to see 5" x 7" as the minimum size for your order sheets.

DEADLINE for FALL 264 will be TUESDAY, January 2, 1990. The Phone Deadline will be Monday, Jan. 1st, but, as I've said elsewhere, please don't let this go to the last minute.

FIVE ITALIES (ug12/05) (New 1990B ug12)

STARTING LINEUP

Note that Italy "A" is at the bottom of the map, and the letters then run around the board in a clockwise direction. So, Italy "E" is the next-door neighbor of Italy "A".

ITALY "A": Lee Kendter, Jr., 264 Spruce Ct., Bensalem, Pa. 19020

ITALY "B": Malcolm Smith, Statsrad Ihlensvei 66b, N. 2010, Strømmen, NORWAY  
(Played only Sp '01. Replaced by Andrew York in Winter 1901)

ITALY "C": Glenn Overby, II, P.O. Box 36983, Grosse Pointe, Mich. 48236

ITALY "D": Brad Wilson, Box 126, Wayne, Pa. 19087

ITALY "E": Edward Green, 126 (Rear) Whiting, Fullerton, CA. 92632

No. 1 Standby: Tom Nash, 5512 Pilgrim Rd., Baltimore, Md. 21214

No. 2 Standby: Andrew York, 2125 U.C. Blvd., #1407, Universal City, Texas 78148

Because of the Christmas mail rush, and because Malcolm lives in Norway, I'm giving you a double deadline, to approximately Jan. 31, 1990, for your first set of orders, which will be the traditional Spring 1901 starting date. However, I would like to have your VOTES on whether to place a Standing Army (Garrison) in Switzerland at the start of the game by January 2, 1989. (Optional "Rule 9"). To pass, there must be at least 3 "Yes" votes. Failure to vote will be counted as a "No" vote.

If anyone doesn't have the map and rules, speak now or forever hold your peace. I still need payments from Brad Wilson and Tom Nash. Tom, your Standby Fee is only \$3. I put the two Pennsylvanians as far apart as possible, but that isn't very far. And please note Malc Smith's address carefully. If you fail to put a "/" in the "e," you will be visited by two nasty trolls. "Statsrad" is "State Road" (or Highway), and I presume that "Ihlensvei" is a number in Norwegian. Right, Malc?

\* \* \* \* \*



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11/26/89



Paul D. Kenny  
75-A Maple Avenue  
Collingswood, New Jersey 08108  
November 7, 1989

End-Game Statement

Fall 1918

Orders for the GOLDEN units of the Ottoman Empire (TURKEY).

Press:

I've been waiting a long time to write this. This game of Vacation Diplomacy was my first real shot at postal diplomacy. My first game went one game year before the GM orphaned us. Russ Wallace was in that game and he recommended BUSHWACKER to me. So I wrote to Fred and stared in this party.

Started by writing to all my neighbors, never heard from the original Italian player, who Fred called Mr T. I was pushing for a three way alliance against Italy and Germany and France. Russ Wallace was England, and I considered him a future ally, but I didn't want him allied with Russia. Rice was for a three-way but wasn't very exact on how to do it. Cheek said a threeway was okay by him, but he'd rather have a RT alliance. I suspect he was playing Rice and me off against each other, as he keep warning me that Austria was about to attack Turkey. Not surprisingly, Austria and Turkey both mutually attacked each other in Fall 1902.

Russia jumped on Austria and was in a very good position to grab all the Balkan centers, and I felt I was getting the short end of the deal. Russia was allied to Paula Dodge's Germany, but since she is more mensa than Dip, she was losing interest, and said so in her letter. Cheek stabbed her. He felt he could because he had a new English alliance. England was trying to get Turkey and Austria to attack Russia. By now Austria and Turkey were going toe to toe. Rice promptly warned Cheek of what England was going to do. I told Wallace I thought it was a good idea. I was getting along with Cheek fine, but I felt safer if he was occupied with dealing with England. Somehow, my relationship between Brad Wilson and I wasn't going so rosy, as by this time we were sending hate mail to each other and I was studying how to make letterbombs. Gary Floyd was the new Italian and he felt the same way as I, and had asked me to keep Austria off his back while he went after France. Wallace wanted me to attack Russia with him, but I was getting along with Russia fine right now, and I didn't trust England, and was pretty busy with Austria. England hit Russia hard with German help. I figured this would at least keep Russia occupied while I occupy Austria. Germany's new leader, Young was getting Germany back in order. They allied, and it was an alliance that stuck. They probably saw Cheek as the worst threat.

Later in the game Floyd resigned, and Jeff Hoffman took over. He was the worst thing that could of happened to me in the south. He was trying to play off both sides against each other, but only got everyone on the both so upset with him that we all combined forces just to eliminate him. When he finally realised the English were after him, he misinterpetted what was going on and helped me out against the Germans at a time when I really needed a miracle: card 30.

I tried pulling a couple stunts. Things were turning into a stalemate, and the German-English alliance had control of more centers than the Russo-Turkish alliance. I was also only a mater of time before they overwhelmed us. So I tried to change the thinking to have the players think about ending the game. I put the first proposal to end the game. Not that I wanted the game to end, but to get Chang and Young to let down their guard. Then I started writing Young saying I was unhappy with Russia and I wanted to change the alliance structure. He said he would go along. I also sent a letter to Cheek saying that I was trying get England and Germany to split up and what I had written Young about. I finalised plans with Young about a secret stab on Russia and England, where we would go for a two-way victory. I didn't plan on going through with it. Next turn, Russia and France stabbed the tar out of me!!! Young had used it to shake Cheek's faith in our alliance. My brainstorm had backfired, I won't try it again.

I would have kept playing, but school is getting tough. I'm finding it getting harder to study and I want to concentrate on that before getting involve in any more dip.

*Paul Kenny*

Event Cards Played in Vacation Dip III (1985R rm39)

Players may wish to compare these with what their own records show. Did anybody tell a fib?

	AUSTRIA (Rice)	ENGLAND (Wallace) (Chang-07)	FRANCE (B.Wilson)	GERMANY (Dodge) (B. Young-03)	ITALY (Floyd) (Hoffman-04)	RUSSIA (Cheek)	TURKEY (Kenny)
1901 -	40.	35.	31.	30.	28.	1.	88.
1902 -	9. X	3.	100. X	93. X	92.	77. X	50. X
1903 -	47.	48.	23.	11. X	2.	14.	67. X
1904 -	87.	17. X	10.	4.	41. X	102.	73.
1905 -	12.	36.	57.	70.	74.	8.	5. X
1906 -	99. X	52.	20.	86.	94. X	49.	101.
1907 -	82.	69.	90. X	89.	46. X	29. X	79.
1908 -	85.	54. X	39A.	98.	42.	83.	80.
1909 -	78.	94.	45. X	51.	18. X	76.	27.
1910 -	21.	25. X	24. X	44. X	75. X	95.	62. X

The Deck was reshuffled, and the revised cards entered into the Deck, before the cards were dealt in W. 1910, for use in 1911. Some cards, such as \*39A,\* were renumbered, and many duplicate cards were added to the deck.

	(Reges-13)				(D.Wilson-14)		
1911 -	56.	61. X	15. X	12.	93. X	92. X	6.
1912 -	31.	44.	54. X	5.	90.	41.	96.
1913 -	53. X	74.	89.	8. X	93. X	73. X	72 (Nothing)
1914 -	49 (Kopp)	83.	10.	86. X	78.	85.	79.
					(Bargender-15)		
1915 -	57. X	48.	41. X	70.(1)	36.	31.	4. X
1916 -	34.	40.	45. X	1.	42.	30.	33.
1917 -	32. X	9.	76.	35.	99. X	39.	77. X
1918 -	52. X	80. X	64. X	91.	34.	58. X	1.

X = Card not played. (1) = Used incorrectly.

Cards were dealt for 1919, but that year was not played.

There are some interesting things to note here. Card #99, to open the Persian space, was dealt twice, in 1906 and 1917, but was never played. Yet, people kept trying to order units into Persia. Germany finally opened the space in 1918 by playing Card #91, which permits any Vacation space to be made passable. Sardinia never did get opened up. England, Germany & Russia used all but 5 of the cards they were dealt. France failed to use its cards 9 times, and Italy 8 times. This was partially due to the high number of NMR's by these Powers during the game. While Russia was unsuccessful, there seems to be a relationship between playing your cards and coming out on top. (Turkey played all but 6 cards).

A total of 126 Event Cards were dealt over the 18 years the game lasted. Since there were only 100 cards, several were used twice, and Card #1 was played 3 times. By my count, 23 cards were never dealt in this game. Cards #30 & 90, which were both played, have been removed from the deck as being too powerful. #38 is never used in a Postal game. I believe the revised deck of cards, as used from 1911-on, make for a better game than the original mix. Players may want to comment on this.

I did not notice until later that Italy had been dealt. Card #93 twice in a 3-year period. I did exercise the unwritten rule to not deal the same card to any one Power two years in a row. Perhaps this should be incorporated into the rules.

# Mondoj no. 23

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Mondoj #23: November 17, 1989...variant design is the focus this week.

## Designing Good Diplomacy Variants

Part One of an Irregular Series

In issue #13 of his zine Get Them Dots Now!, Lee Kendter Jr. has written a one-page article entitled "What Makes A Good Variant". He's touched on seven points of variant design, with commentary drawn from his experiences as a designer, player, GM, and NAVB custodian. I hope that his fellow subscribers pick up on his invitation to reply; certainly there isn't a lot in print on the what, why, and how of variants--and a lot of the 900+ catalogued games reflect this.

Lee's seven main points were:

1. Keep it simple.
2. Avoid chrome.
3. Use spring and fall turns.
4. Watch the scale of the game.
5. Keep the game reasonably balanced.
6. Avoid too many names with similar abbreviations.
7. Name the provinces.

I propose to add a few remarks on each of the above, together with a major point or two of my own. Part Two (there will be a Part Two) will explore other considerations in more depth.

**SIMPLICITY**--The KISS principle works wonders in Diplomacy as well as in life. (KISS = Keep It Simple, Stupid.) If players want to play a simulation wargame, the average amateur variant designer cannot compete. Don't try. Remember that the parent game's greatest virtue is "clean" mechanics; don't clutter them up too much.

Incidentally, I rarely break three pages in my rules sets, and most of my 32 designs will fit on one sheet of paper (map excepted).

**CHROME**--I'm not as averse to chrome as Lee is; chrome is part of the attraction of variant play. But too much chrome for the sake of it violates the principle of simplicity. A good guideline: Does the rule I am adding contribute directly to the theme of my game? The stronger your "Yes" answer is, the more desirable the rule also is (and the more complex it can be, within limits). Chrome which contributes little to the theme should be ruthlessly pared, especially if it complicates the rules.

Examples: Army/fleet rules should only be used where map size (or "wateriness") requires the mobility--they're too complex otherwise. A "frozen regions" rule rarely contributes to play. New unit types often need a lot of new rules; do they add enough to play to warrant the extra burden on the players and GM?

SPRING/FALL TURNS--Some players do have a problem with odd turn schedules. But the image-enhancement can't be denied in some cases (ie Abstraction, which simulates WWI more closely, and Downfall, where using Tolkien's calendar is almost necessary). Use the same chrome test I set above on this question; sometimes "monthly" moves are right, sometimes they really don't add much. If you must use non-standard time, spelling out the schedule in detail in the rules is important.

WATCH GAME SCALE--There's not a lot to add here; if you want to do a 10, 15, or 20 player game, it will be harder to get it played. Period.

BALANCE--Lee's comments are directed to surface balance; I assume that anyone interested in variant design would automatically seek a rough balance in their games. Several variants suffer from having one or two powers much larger or smaller than others (several Downfall versions, my own North America: 2020, the current Atlantica, for instance). Sometimes this problem solves itself...Russia needs a lot more units in a global game, because there's lots more of Russia...but too often it flaws the initial diplomacy and/or long-term potential of some players.

ABBREVIATIONS--A good point: the standard game has too many "Nor"s, plus duplicate "Gul"s, "Tyr"s, and "Liv"s. Don't contribute to this confusion where you can avoid it. (Actually, the most confusing pair I know is Youngstown's Sinkiang and Sikang, which are close together physically as well as name-wise.)

NAMING PLACES--Believe it or not, some designers don't bother. I myself could care less about moving A 89-74, or F 3 C A 42-12...a word to the wise is enough.

For the moment, I'll add three more points to consider--more to follow in later installments, of course:

A. Understand standard Diplomacy. Figure out why the Helgoland Bight is on the map; learn where and how to construct the standard stale-mate lines; study their impact on mid-game strategy; add or subtract dots and playtest the results. In short, try to see why things are as they are before you play with them. (Get a copy of the rules/map for 1958 Dip, if you can. Look at the changes A.B.C. made to polish the design.)

B. If you must have a new map, make it GREAT. Most of us aren't artists, much less cartographers. But sloppy just doesn't cut it if you want to get your game some respect. Find good atlases; trace; type your names if you don't print well (or even if you do?); use dashed, dotted, thick, and/or double lines to make your geography clear (crucial with a one-color map!); draw your symbols carefully, but use them sparingly.

C. Survey the "literature". Know what's been done both in and out of your proposed time/place. A lot of rules have been tested over time to cover many different things--there's probably 20 sets of air rules out there, and almost as many ideas for nukes and spellcasting. You don't need to re-invent the wheel! (You also may find something you didn't know about which you like better than your idea....) The NAVB Catalog is an invaluable guide to ideas; it's \$5 from Lee Kendter Jr, 264 Spruce Ct, Bensalem PA 19020. Most variants cost just 20-30¢ each. My greatest asset as a designer (aside from experience) is my "library" of almost 220 variant designs. It's amazing how many different things have been tried.

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OOPS! The deadline for Woolworth is, of course, December 11th (and not last Saturday!). Fortunately, this "typo"'s unlikely to confuse anyone.

#13,

The following article is a reprint from GET THEM DOTS NOW/ by Lee Kendter, Jr.,  
Custodian of the North American Variant Bank:

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD VARIANT

I am going to offer my opinion on what makes a good variant. I am willing to turn this into a monthly subject if everyone is interested.

1. Keep it simple. Try to keep the number of added rules to a minimum. Although a game with 20 pages of rules may be very accurate and detailed, it would be a pain to play. I don't like the idea of having to be a rules lawyer to play the game.
2. Avoid chrome. A page and 1/2 of rules on the Kiel Canal may be really nice, but would not get enough use to justify the amount of extra rules. Things like Frozen regions during winter, building and destroying the Panama Canal, and such, are chrome I have seen in variants that I feel add nothing to the game. A rule that looks like it could only come into play once or twice during the game is probably not needed. A once invoked rule would only be important, if it could significantly change the outcome.
3. Use spring and fall turns. Monthly, daily or other variations on the turn scheme tend to be confusing. Is March a build season, or is it April? This type of confusion really isn't needed. Be very careful if you need to do a non-standard turn scheme. I don't think changing it simply because it is better for the time period, is worth the confusion.
4. Watch the scale of the game. Although there are people who get into really large games like Colonia (134 centers) or Mercator (15+ people), a lot of people don't like games that large. If you make a game that large, expect to have a more limited audience.
5. Keep the game reasonably balanced. Would you want to play the eighth power on the board, if your only piece was A Holland? There are some games, in particular some fantasy variants, that have one power that is much weaker than the rest. A power that starts with significantly more units also is a problem. That country is often the one to be attacked early, because everyone thinks he is a major threat. Keep the powers close in their strength and potential to win.
6. Avoid too many names with similar abbreviations. The regular game already has the NOR confusion. Don't create more along that vein. Youngstown, for example, is very confusing around China with Sinkiang (Skg) and Sikang (Sik). Try to avoid Gulf of something, and Sea of something. By calling it Siam Gulf, not Gulf of Siam, you can create a better name.
7. Name the provinces. I have seen games that only give numbers or letters to spaces. Moving 1-A to 1-B is very boring, and also can be confusing.

## YOUR OPINIONS ARE WANTED.

Send your opinions to Lee at: 264 Spruce Ct., Bensalem, Pa. 19020.

I've sent him a note saying that my only disagreement is that sometimes an author is justified in using something other than Spring or Fall turns, to match a scenario. A World War I scenario, for example, runs better with monthly deadlines.

MAGNETIC DIPLOMACY BOARDS FOR SALE

Eric Bresius has designed and built some magnetic sets. These consist of a regular Conference map attached to a metal cookie sheet, with magnetic rubber armies & fleets in seven different colors. He has "cleared" this with Avalon Hill, so it is legal to sell them. Eric sent me a sample set to bring with me to DipCon. I found it a very useful device, whether you used one to keep your pieces in place for a Postal game, or for a travelling game, such as at a picnic or in a moving vehicle. (We were going to use it on the San Diego Trolley and take it to Tiajuana, but this didn't happen).

The price is \$8.00, plus \$2.00 for shipping within the U.S. The shipping costs may be higher to Canada. To order write to: Eric Bresius, 41 Hayward St., Milford, Mass. 01757. (Several people at DipCon were impressed, and ordered sets).

\* \* \* \* \*

I had another article, but it won't fit in here. (I'd forgotten to run the above article in the November BUSH; THEN I forget that I'd forgotten about it. This is sometimes called senility. So, I'm suddenly out of space. The pages of the Diplomacy press are full of serious subjects these days, especially on gun control and abortion. With apologies to Dean Swift, in his solution to the Irish overpopulation problem, I'll just say here that if the President and the Supreme Court have ruled that women exist solely for men's pleasure, and have no right to control their own bodies, then it logically follows that their right to vote must also be taken away. So, I would expect the President and the Right-to-Life movement to propose the repeal of the 19th Amendment. "Keep 'em pregnant in summer and barefoot in winter," right, George?

\* \* \* \* \*

Anyway, we do wish all of our readers a happy Holiday season, in whatever way, shape or form you celebrate it. Being sympathetic to the Druids, we always have a live Christmas tree in our home. After all, how can you expect an artificial tree to keep away the evil spirits? We have an electric star for our treetop that my parents bought when they were newlyweds back in 1928. Some of the bulbs are the originals. I venture to say that this may be the oldest electrical ornament in operating condition in any private home in Maryland. Do any of you have similar items for your trees?

We'll be sending cards to a few of you, and will include copies of our annual Christmas letter here for some others. Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night.

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