

The Cepheids is the name of the IDA Novice Committee's complimentary zine being mailed to all "new bloods" we hear of. It is to be published quarterly with novice information and reprinted articles of interest to the new play-by-mail Diplomacy player. It is published by Peoples' City Publications, Toronto, Canada.

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(Variants,
Variant openings)

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We hope that your initiation into postal Diplomacy will be as painless as possible and that the Novice Packet will be some some of some service. The key is to relax and enjoy.

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—also included, two pages of Diplomacy and Variant Diplomacy Openings, an update is enclosed.

Postal Diplomacy is not new, games have been conducted by mail since 1900. It is approximated that there are over 1500 postal players throughout the United States alone. While the core is in North America, postal games are conducted throughout the world.

Let's look at some definitions of useful terms:

The Gamesmaster: (or G.M.) He is the 3th party in the game. It is his responsibility to adjudicate and publish the results of each move with impartiality, reasonableness, and consistency. The important thing to remember is that the hobby consists primarily of amateur hobbyists who are GM'ing on their leisure time. As with most other things, it's a matter of finding a gamesmaster who strikes you as reliable, funny, or possesses what ever qualities you're looking for. Their publication may vary, some GM's simply printout the results with no commentary, others add bits of humour and articles of interest. Usually you can't go wrong by choosing an established gamesmaster or a game insured by the IDA (explanation later), which for a small fee, will ensure that if your GM and magazine should disappear, (yes, it does happen) your game will continue.

Subscriptions: Most publishers, even when there are no games being opened (started) by said publishers, solicit subscriptions at a prescribed rate (10 issues for \$2, for example, but it varies). Watching a game in progress can be instructive, and is frequently a reason for subbing.

Game fees: Since it is your interest to play postally, the entry fee will be of some interest. The fee is necessary for the publisher to help offset his costs of printing and mailing. Most publishers operate at a loss; in fact, I cannot think of a single publisher who breaks even.

Fees range from about \$2. to \$10., depending on the magazine. There are two methods of charging the fee to the player (basically):

- a) a flat fee, say \$5. for which you will enter a game and receive all issues required for completion of said game, and
- b) a newer method, wherein you pay \$2. or so to enter the game, and you maintain a subscription throughout the length of the game. This works out to a reasonable fee, but it does cover a publisher for a rise in costs, such as mailing, which looks to rise with each new postal contract.

Needless to say, (a) and (b) are mutually exclusive.

Deadlines: Games are basically run on 3 or 4 week deadlines. That is, orders are called for on a certain date and the next deadline is 3 or 4 weeks away, (depending on the G.M.) which allows about 2-3 weeks for communication (depending on the whims of the mails and how soon after the deadline, the issue is mailed.). The general sequence runs: Spring orders; Fall orders (with spring retreats); winter builds and removals (with fall retreats), repeated each year. Some "zines run only two seasons per year (spring; fall orders with prophetic builds) instead of the 3-season system aforementioned. It's a matter of personal choice as to which is the best system, with 2-seasons it's a faster game but the person playing might not prefer prophetic adjustments. (cont. page 3)

Press: (Propaganda): One large difference of postal (Play-By-Mail) Dippy as opposed to face-to-face play is the matter of press releases. They are generally submitted with orders, sometimes intended to sublement them (ie: referring to the moves) or as a seperate entity (a story). Most 'zines carry press releases. They vary from dull policy statements to short stories, humor, character assassination, and range from one-shot affairs to lengthy series, with a thread running through (an example of the latter being Brenton Ver Ploeg's Glomph, which was a mainstay of his writing). Occasionally press will overshadow a game, and in some cases is the reason for the game's following among non-players. Some people can write, others cannot (but consistently write, it's sad to say). Further explanation of propaganda is out of the scope of this material.

Magazine: Or zine' for short. This term encompasses any amateur publication dealing with Diplomacy. They range from carbon-copy affairs (usually move printouts with no press) to full fledged magazines (sometimes running 20 plus pages with games, press, articles, and occasional editorializing by the publisher). It is a matter of personal taste as to which is superior. You will probably pay less for straight game printouts, but not necessarily. Further distinctions are:

Gamezine: carries games (for the most part this is what has been referred to up till now)

Genzine: carries no games and deals with general articles on Diplomacy

Propagandazine: carries propaganda from one or more players in a specific game

House Rules: Well written though the Diplomacy rulebook is, it certainly is not all-inclusive and questions do arise over certain rulings. As a result some, though not all, publishers print house-rules. Besides stating policy as per deadlines, fees, and the like, they often include listings of rule adjudications on what may be considered dubious points. When entering a game, the G.M. will furnish you with a copy of the house-rules (if he has any, of course) which will clear most foul-ups before they occur. If you are also new to Diplomacy in general, these will provide some help.

A note ought to be made of the International Diplomacy Association (IDA) especially since this is, after all, sponsored by the group. It is basically an organization of players for the intent of improving the hobby by organizing and furnishing services such as this Novice Packet. For further information on IDA write: Walt Buchanan, R.R.#3, Lebanon, IN 46052 U.S.A.

It would be well to warn newcomers not to overload themselves. It would be a good idea to enter only one game to start, perhaps two. Play these for a few months, and then set a limit as to how many games you feel you can handle. You ought to be able to get a rough idea by this time. I would advise entering only a few building up slowly, and preventing any conceivable overload. Remember it takes two years basically, to finish a game of postal Diplomacy. If you start entering games too often, you might at sometime find yourself over committed. In addition, we offer another mild warning: GM's are people, and for them as for most of us, most of everything else we do is more important than Diplomacy. This will cause the occasional unavoidable delay, and occassional player difficulties. For most of us, this is a labour of love.

(cont. page 4)

When a player resigns or disappears from a game, a replacement is assigned. Most GM's maintain a list of "standbys", people willing to enter a game in progress if needed. Usually a GM will ask for standby orders after a player misses a move. Standby orders are a set of conditional orders submitted by the person named by the GM. These standby orders are used, conditional on the fact that the current player misses a second move. Usually, if the present player misses a second move and the standby orders are used, the standby player then takes over the position. In most cases the cost to standby is only the cost of a subscription to the magazine you are standingby in.

Being a standby is a reasonable way to join games and one can build up experience as well as a good rating by entering games as a standby. Several player ratings systems are maintained and most of them do not penalize players for a poor standby finish, especially if the original position was a poor one. These positions provide valuable playing experience (often in the middle and end game stages). Replacement policy varies among GM's, so check it out.

In addition to Dippy there is a whole different world of variants. These involve changes in the board and occasionally changes in the rules of Diplomacy. Variants range from expansion and changes of Dippy, to wholesale changes and new situations. (An example being the several variants based on Tolkien's Lord of the Rings series) (See Jim Lawson's and Lew Pulsipher's articles elsewhere in this issue)

I'd like to express my appreciation to Burt Lawelle as he helped furnish me with some ideas on this from his Andromeda Chronicle which was in turn partly derived from Rod Walker's Pontrevedria.

If you have any questions about play-by-mail Diplomacy, please write me or any of the members of the Novice Committee. (see page 1 for our addresses.)

The following articles originally appeared in Hoosier Archives, and are being reprinted with the kind permission of Walt Buchanan. Hoosier Archives has this past year been replaced by Walt's new publication, Diplomacy World, which serves to give a broad overview of the hobby by printing articles on the Diplomacy scene and on good play, presenting the Hoosier Archives Demonstration Game with expert analysis, listing ratings systems, publishing letters to the editor and listing game openings and zine news.

We hope that these articles will be of interest to the novice player. We recommend Diplomacy World as the one magazine you should receive to get an overview of the hobby as a whole. Subscriptions are \$3 per year (6 issues), Walt's address is: Walt Buchanan, R.R. #3, Lebanon, IN 46052 U.S.A.

Cepheids reprints for issue #1:

1. Beyerlein, Douglas. "The Bulgarian Gambit", Hoosier Archives #120.
2. Lipton, Robert B. "The Illyrian Opening", Hoosier Archives #127.
3. Walker, Rod. "Two Faced Honesty; or, only my Munition Maker Knows for Sure", Hoosier Archives #127.
4. Pulsipher, Lew. "Simple Diplomacy Variants", Hoosier Archives #105.

Turkey's defenses often make for a long battle against many a determined enemy. Doug Beyerlein, one of the hobby's strongest players explains how Turkey can be broken by cutting off its first build, Bulgaria.

THE BULGERIAN GAMBIT by Doug Beyerlein

Probably the least contested 1901 gain is Turkey's taking of Bulgaria. Army Constantinople to Bulgaria in Spring 1901, backed up by an additional army and a fleet, and Bulgaria is guaranteed Turkish in 1901. Or is it?

There is one set of orders, when used against an unsuspecting Turkish player, which will leave Turkey with only three centers at the end of 1901 and no future. This is the Bulgarian Gambit.

The required orders are simple; the diplomacy difficult. First the orders. For Spring 1901, Russia sends F Sevastopol to Rumania and Austria opens with the standard A Budapest to Serbia and F Trieste to Albania. Turkey is guided to a western attack with A Constantinople to Bulgaria and a followup into Constantinople with either A Smyrna or F Ankara. Then in the fall, Turkey is enticed to move A Bulgaria to either Greece or Rumania so that it cannot be supported in place. The opposition, Russia and Austria, strikes with F Rumania to Bulgaria (east coast), A Serbia Supports RUSSIAN F Rumania to Bulgaria, and F Albania to Greece. The Russian fleet takes Bulgaria, the Turkish army is annihilated or retreats to Constantinople and the Turkish player counts only to three.

Now the difficult part: the diplomatic set-up of Turkey. Russia must convince Turkey to go west while feigning a northern attack. Thus in Spring 1901 Russia will claim Rumania with F Sevastopol and at most will only send A Warsaw south to Ukraine. This is a definite gamble on Russia's part. Austria's diplomacy in the spring is relatively simple. Therefore, the burden and the gain lies with Russia. It is all or nothing.

Assuming that Spring 1901 went according to plan, we now come to the fall. Here Russia has an easy time diplomatically and Austria must pull a fast one on Turkey. Turkey with units in Bulgaria and Constantinople may be content to hold with support. Greece can be attacked, but if Austria supports F Albania into Greece from Serbia, the Turkish attack is worthless without Italian support (which is usually very unlikely). So, to get Turkey to move A Bulgaria and therefore guarantee Turkey's loss, Austria must make some encouraging noises in Turkey's direction. Austria should say to Turkey that A Serbia is supporting TURKISH A Bulgaria to Rumania whether or not Turkey makes the move. This leaves Turkey (or so the Turkish player thinks) with two options: (1) either stand off the Austrian fleet in Greece, or (2) take the unsolicited support and attack Rumania. Then when the Fall 1901 orders are published, the damage is done and Turkey is dead.

The only remaining problem is who gets Rumania after the Russian fleet moves out. Either Austria can take it in return for the possible stand off over Greece so as to have at least two builds or Russian A Ukraina can have it. This should be worked out well in advance. (cont: on page 6)

Finally, Russia builds F Sevastopol and Austria builds armies. And then it is only a matter of time before they own all of Turkey.

This subtle blitz has its risks, however. Russia, with only a maximum of two units in the south, can be hit hard by a combined Austro-Turkish attack. I have seen it go both ways and have just been fortunate to have been on the right side both times. In every case, diplomacy is the key and the gambit is doomed to failure without it. Used such, the Bulgerian Gambit is just one more way to kill Turkey.

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Although Robert Lipton is now becoming noted for his accent on the humorous side of Diplomacy recently; he has still written a number of excellent articles relating to the strategy of Diplomacy, the Illyrian Opening being one of them.

THE ILLYRIAN OPENING by Robert Bryan Lipton

Italy is usually limited in her choice of openings. Having a supply center border on one of Austria's, and having Turkey as a potential sea force in her rear, Italy is usually quickly stopped in her expansion.

One of the effective ways for an Italian player to counter this is to form an alliance with Russia. Usually this alliance grabs Austria first, then works on knocking out Turkey. A very difficult job.

One way of avoiding this problem is to hit Turkey immediately, in the Lepanto Opening. The drawback to this opening is that it puts Italian forces far away from the home supply centers for over two years, with only one unit to guard the homeland against a French or Austria attack.

However... Spring 1901: A Ven H, F Nap-Ion, A Rom-Apu

As soon as these moves are shown, everyone assumes that you're going to attack Turkey. Austria usually set up to attack Italy. I have been in several games where Italy made these moves and Turkey, not having made the only effective defensive move of F Ankara to Constantinople, immediately dropped out.

You have, however, informed Russia of your plans. While he continues to batter at the Black Sea, you convoy A Apu-Tun and build a fleet in Naples. By this time either Turkey has moved his fleets out to defend against you or he has dropped out due to a nervous breakdown.

In Spring 1902 you surprise everyone except yourself and Russia by moving F Ion-Adr, and having A Ven attack Trieste, in addition to the standard move of F Nap-Ion and A Tun H.

This gives you a lock on Albania in the fall, and next year, Trieste cannot be defended against Italian forces. If France attacks, your units are much more easily moved to defend Italy; Turkey has split her sea forces (at the very least), allowing Russia to get another fleet on the borders of the Black Sea. If Turkey moved to the Aegean in the Fall of 1901 and threatens you, this means that Russia controls the Black Sea. You can set up a defensive line against the fleets and attack Austria by land.

The principal strength of this gambit is not in its effectiveness, but in that it gives the Italian player more diplomatic mobility. Until the spring of the second year, no one can be really sure of whether you're going to attack Turkey or Austria. With only the Lepanto known, the object of Italian ambitions is known after the Spring 1901 moves. Now the guessing game is still on.

Of course, this may trigger an Austro-Turkish alliance, but that's your problem.

The best way, obviously to insure that your ally doesn't find out you're double-dealing him is to tell him. The plan, as you present it, is to pretend to be looking for a way out of your alliance. You treat with the enemy, gain his confidence, perhaps do one or two little things to "prove your loyalty", and then put him in a situation where he stakes all on a massive backstab, only to be stabbed himself.

What you tell the enemy is essentially what you've told your ally that you're telling him. You emphasize, of course, that you can't break loose right away, but need his help to prepare for it.

If you get the result you're looking for, you will have some control over what each of the other powers does--each will be helping you in an effort to gain an eventual advantage over the other. Each will feed you information which, on certain occasions, you will pass on to the other. Each will, ultimately, be putting himself in a position in which he can be seriously damaged through a decisive betrayal by you. The beauty of the situation is that you can betray whomever you wish, simultaneously screwing him and earning the undying gratitude of the other. If the stab is decisive enough, you might even go on to win the game.

Obviously, this kind of situation only arises in games which are very slow-moving, with large tactical stalemate situations on the board. Your two palsies need to trust you a great deal. This will, of course, be helped by a situation in which each is not likely to get anywhere unless he does trust you. The ultimate beauty of this is that you are essentially telling them both sides the truth because, at that moment, you don't know which of them you will betray. Of course, it takes a lot of negotiating to keep this going, so be prepared to write, and write, and write, and....

We hope that the next article will give the novice player some appreciation of the many variants that have been designed in the hobby. This popular article was written by Lew Pulsipher, a well-known figure in the hobby. His recent Pulsipher Poll, a survey of postal Diplomacy players should be published early in the year; it will be interesting to examine the results for an insight into intentions of the average postal Diplomacy player.

SIMPLE DIPLOMACY VARIANTS

by Lew Pulsipher

Most of the well-known Diplomacy variants include a new or redesigned board, though there may not be radical changes. There are also many, if not more, variants which retain the regular board and change only one or a few rules. These variants are excellent for face-to-face play (though a few require a GM) since they are easy to learn and do not require play on a small unfamiliar board. The following list includes most of the simple variants known to me, though there are many more. Some resulted from misinterpretation of the old rules (eg: the Key Rule), some were originally used in new-board variants (double armies), and some were designed specifically for use with the regular board and rules (armed neutrals). These rules may be used as individual variants, or a number may be used in a single game. Some may seem unclear; in this case, either interpretation may be used. I have not credited designers, even where known, in order to save space.

Winter 1900: Before Spring 1901, players build in their home centers, which are all empty.

(cont. on page 9)

Before we turn to our third article, a word should be said about the Lepanto Opening. The opening was first proposed by Edi Birsan in his article in Hoopoe Archives #43. The main thrust of the Lepanto Opening is an immediate Italian attack on Turkey by convoy. Italy opens in Spring 1901 with F Nap-Ion; A Rom-Apu; A Ven h;. The Fall 1901 moves are: F Ion C A Apu-Tun; A Apu-Tun; A Ven h; Italy builds a fleet in Naples in Winter 1901.

Italy secures the convoy route to Turkey in Spring 1902 with F Ion-Eas; F Nap-Ion; A Tun h; A Ven h;. In the fall Italy can now convoy army Tunis into Syria. Edi notes that it is important to catch Turkey unaware to make the opening successful, as it can easily be stopped if the Turks move F Ank-Con in Spring 1901, and follow with a build of F Smy in Winter 1901.

The Lepanto has proved very popular in recent years and perhaps is the result of Italy's recently improved performance in play-by-mail games. (R.T. Correll)

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Rod Walker is one of the hobby's old time publishers and among the most prolific writers of articles. This article is rather unique as it discusses the rarely examined domain of player to player relations.

TWO FACED HONESTY OR,
ONLY MY MUNITIONS MAKER KNOWS FOR SURE
by Rod Walker

In Diplomacy, honesty is frequently the best policy. Not always of course, but why quibble? There have been plenty of articles on how to lie effectively in this game. Certainly that is necessary. Honesty, or at least having a reputation for it, is even more important.

Diplomacy also affords us with the moral satisfaction of being able to tell the truth and lie at the same time. It is not always possible to accomplish this feat of verbal prestidigitation in a game, nor is it always desirable, but when you can do it, it's beautiful.

The circumstances under which it is possible involve two other powers--your ally and your ally's primary enemy. I have done this a couple of times in a game and each time those two were battling for the win and my best hope was for second. The problem was, had I backed the right horse? That is, would there actually be a win, or would my actions cause a stalemate to develop? Would a stalemate perhaps even be better from my point of view? None of these questions were clear in my mind, and obviously the game situation was equally unclear to the others--and consequently a pretty large premium was attached to my alliance.

The situation is thus one in which my ally is not certain he will win and his enemy is anxious to detach me from my alliance. The temptation is to begin negotiating with the enemy to see if a better deal can be obtained for switching sides (I need not say that, under appropriate circumstances, this situation can be parlayed into a win). It would be foolish not to take advantage of this opportunity. But what if your ally finds out what you're doing? Aye, there's the rub, that makes us hesitate. (cont. on page 8)

Anarchy: There are many variations. 34 people may play, each beginning with one center, or 17 each with two centers. 7 may play, each beginning with three home centers. Centers may be selected by chance or by the players. A two-player version, with each player taking three countries of three randomly selected centers each, is superior to any other two player version I know of. Europeans call some of these variants Chaos, which is actually something quite different (see below). Anarchy usually begins with Winter 1900.

Armed neutrals: A neutral center is occupied by an army in civil disorder. This army is effective for a certain number of game years and is then removed. Another variation is a civil disorder army which defends only certain borders of a neutral, such as an army in Belgium which defends only against armies attacking from Bur and Ruh.

Blitzkrieg or Disorganization: Players must write orders for a move-season (Spring or Fall) before adjudication of the previous season's orders. Thus, players write Fall 1901 orders and conditional builds before Spring 1901 moves are adjudicated. After this adjudication, Fall moves and builds may not be changed. Conditional retreats, or a special retreat rule, are necessary.

Hyperspace: After each move-season (or alternatively, each Winter) each player may form one hyperspace link between any two spaces on the board, and one separation of two linked or adjacent spaces. Units may move along the linkages, but may not move between two spaces that are separated. Linkages may be separated, and separations re-linked, of course. Fleets may occupy land spaces at the end of a link, but armies may not occupy sea spaces, eg: after Spring 1901, England might link Eng and Hol, and separate Ruh and Hol, in preparation for taking Hol in the fall.

Twin Boards: Two sets are used. Each player plays the same country on both boards. Units may move between a space on one board and the same space on the other board (ie: between Hun I and Hun II, or Bur II and Bur I etc.). Victory criterion is usually doubled. Builds and removals may be made on either board, so that a player might have five centers on each board, but 8 units on one and 2 on the other.

Supply: Each winter each unit must trace a contiguous line of spaces to the center supplying it, which have been captured by that unit's forces or which are designated friendly to that unit by the player who owns the space(s). Capture takes place in any season for supply purposes. This eliminates such anomalies as guerilla fleets far behind the lines and similar historical nonsense.

Changing of the Guard: A fleet and an army of the same country may exchange places as long as each move will otherwise succeed, eg: F Pie-Mar, A Mar-Pie. This would fail completely if some other unit is ordered to Pie or Mar.

Exchange: Like Changing of the Guard, except that units of any type and any nation may participate so long as both agree.

You Only Live Once: When a unit is annihilated (including retreat off the board), it may never be rebuilt. Thus, that country will be permanently one unit short.

Annihilation rules: (1) A unit is never permitted to retreat off the board when another retreat is possible. (2) When a unit is annihilated, it may not be rebuilt the following winter, leaving the country one unit short the next year unless it has lost a center.

Air Power: Each center is worth 4 supply points. Armies and fleets require 3 points, air units require 4 for support. An air unit may fly up to 4 spaces total in a movement season. It may support an attack on or defense in the space it is bombing. Any number may bomb a single space. An air unit may not capture a space. (cont. on page 10)

Submarines: These are like fleets except that a sub may move in a subspace under a normal sea space as well as on the surface. Many variations of this and the air power rule are possible.

Key Rule: A unit which is ordered to move gives up its right to the space it is moving from, even if the move fails. Thus, if A Vie-Gal fails, A Bud-Vie dislodged Vie even if it attacks without support.

Cutting of the cutting of support: A unit may not cut support if its space is attacked. There may also be cutting of the cutting etc.

Atomic weapons: Each player receives one bomb per year (or one each move-season). Bombs may be carried by other units. A bomb may be fired one space (perhaps more later in the game) and destroys everything in that space at the end of the move (including the supply center for a specified period). If there are many bombs, then a stalemate is likely unless range is increased later in the game.

Multiple units: Each country is allowed a double army or double fleet (or even triple units, etc.). The unit should be specified (perhaps secretly at the start of the game). A leader unit can be added which doubles any unit it is with; more than one leader can be used as well.

Border Prohibitions: Units of a particular country, or coming from a particular direction may not enter certain spaces for a specified period, eg: players might be prohibited from entering other player countries in 1901.

Builds: (1) Units may be built in any center in a player's hands, not just home centers; or in any province; or in any province in the home country. (2) A player may build in an open home center even if another player owns the center (guerilla build); of course, the player must first be entitled to a build.

Support: A unit may support in place another unit that is ordered to move. If the move fails, then the unit is still supported in its beginning space, eg: A Gal-War ((In postal diplomacy orders that fail are always underlined)) A Bud (S) A Gal (H); then a two unit attack on Galicia fails.

Basic defense: All centers have a permanent basic defense of one, which is added to any unit occupying the center but operates for the owning player even when no unit occupies it. This basic defense may instead be used only for home centers, or for certain centers or provinces specified by the player (fortresses built by the player, in other words). A nice variation is that the basic defense applies against All countries, even the owning country unless the center is actually occupied.

Costal Crawl: A fleet may move from a coast of a double-coasted province to another coastal space, while another fleet in that coastal space moves to the other coast of the double-coasted province, eg: F Spa(sc)-Por, F Por-Spa(na).

Spring raid: When a player occupies another player's center in the spring, the center becomes neutral and must be captured as any other neutral supply center.

Center ownership: (1) Centers may be captured in any season. (2) A player may loan a center to another for support of a unit, but may rescind the loan at any time, forcing the former recipient to find new supplies by the next winter for any unit which was supported by the loan. (3) Centers may be given outright. (4) The owner and occupier of a center may agree that the former will retain the center even though the latter occupies it.

Time: Game years may last three move-seasons instead of two.

Escalation: Units need never be removed for lack of centers. (cont. on page 11)

Convoys: (1) Fleets in coastal spaces may convoy. (2) All units may convoy (eg: A Bre, F Eng, and F Wal C A Par-Liv) (3) An army is annihilated if its convoy is disrupted by dislodgement of one of the fleets. (4) Any attack on a fleet disrupts a convoy. (5) Alternate convoy routes may be ordered in case one route is disrupted. (6) A fleet conveying an army of another country may annihilate it. (7) Fleets may carry armies by joining army fleets (a/f's).

Decoy units: A player may build in every open home center every winter. He may only have as many real units as supply centers. The rest are fake units which are destroyed when attacked and may not affect combat (though they may be ordered to support etc, as a decoy). Works best with a G.M.

Kriegspiel: Players know the location only of their own units and units in adjacent spaces or variations thereof. Requires a G.M.

Anonymous III: Players do not know which of the other players is playing which of the other countries. Requires a G.M.

Chaos: Each Player writes orders for the other six countries as well as his own. Chaos determines which set of orders will be used for a country. Works best with a G.M. so that players do not know who wrote the orders which are used.

Thanks again to Lewis Pulsipher for all his co-operation in providing variant diplomacy material for the novice. Lewis has written the following article and has contributed his Middle Earth VII Diplomacy variant which we are pleased to publish as part of the novice sine.

INTRODUCTION TO DIPLOMACY VARIANTS

By Lewis Pulsipher

Variants are games more or less based on standard (regular) Diplomacy which are played by over half of all postal players. One quarter of all postal Diplomacy type games begun in 1973 were variants. Some variants use a new or altered board and situation and retain almost all of the rules; others retain the board and change one or more of the rules; still others change board and rules extensively. Some closely resemble the standard game, while others bear little in common with it. There are even variants of variants. The games included in the rulebook for other than 7 players are variants with "altered board" (new starting positions and different (because fewer) player countries).

Some sines are devoted solely to variants, and a few players play only variants, but a mixture of standard and variant is more common.

Almost any subject you care to name has been used for at least one variant, though more are being produced each month. Among these are science fiction and fantasy (eg: Hyborian Age, Foundation), historical (1721, Diadochi, Napoleonic), extension of the standard board and scenario (Youngstown Variant, Abstraction), hypothetical (Lost Continents), and abstract (Anarchy, Black Hole). There are over 200 variants with new boards and hundreds using the standard board.

Why do people play variants? Some like new scenarios for press release purposes or simply for a change. Others like a greater challenge than the simple standard rules provide. Some become bored with standard Diplomacy after repeated plays. Many variants require different skills and a different type of thinking than is needed for standard Dippy, and many are more realistic. Some variants offer better play balance than those in the rulebook for numbers of players other than 7, and there are variants which can be played by more than 7 people. Finally, an inexperienced player has a better chance because experienced players cannot depend on memorized lines of play—all the players must analyze the new situation.

Variants are not often designed for general popularity. Usually they are aimed at a smaller group which is attracted by elements peculiar to that variant; most variants are played only a few times by mail, if at all.

(cont. on page 12)

Variants are usually available from individual publishers (who are often also designers) for 15-30¢ each. The best way to gain an idea of what typical variants are like is to order the DW variant package, \$1.75 from Paul Wood, 24613 Harmon Ct., St. Clair Shores, MI 48080. This includes an introduction to variants, rules and maps for a dozen variants, and a list of rules that can be used with the standard game, all printed photooffset.

The best current source for variant information is Diplomacy World, which carries a "Variant Information" column, as well as at least one new variant in each issue. DW#3 contains the latest comprehensive list of variants available in North America, and is 75¢ from Walt Buchanan, RR#3, Lebanon, IN 46052.

The following handle special variant projects:

Robert Sacks, 15F Tang Hall, 550 Memorial Dr., Cambridge, MA 02139 is the Variant Postal Diplomacy Designation ("Miller Number") Custodian. He assigns a unique identifying symbol to each postal game in the same manner as the "Boardman Number" custodian.

Dan Gallagher, 6425 King Louis Dr., Alexandria, VA 22312 is the Director of the North American Variant Bank. When the bank begins operation, early in 1975, most variants and variant information will be available from this one source.

Lewis Pulsipher, Box 1021 Grad Center, Duke University, Durham NC 27706 is the Diplomacy World Variants Editor. All newly published variants are reviewed-described in DW.

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The following is a typical example of a variant with a new board and only a few rule changes. Printing is usually ditto (as here) or mimeo (ink), and occasionally Photooffset. Many maps are printed on 8 1/2 by 11 paper, but some include as many as 6 sheets which must be fitted together. Most maps are printed on only one side of a sheet for greater clarity. RISK pieces or wargame counters can be used for units on the smaller maps. Other details vary; for example, names might be typed or abbreviations might be used on the map.

MIDDLE EARTH DIPLOMACY VII
by Lewis Pulsipher

1. All 1971 rules of Diplomacy apply, with the following exceptions:
2. A fleet in a coastal space may be converted to an army in spring or fall unless it is attacked in that season; it may not move or support in that season. The order is "F Lefnui convert to A Lefnui" or "F Lefnui ** A Lefnui"
3. An army in a coastal space may be converted to a fleet in spring or fall unless it is attacked in that season; it may not move or support in that season. The order is as given in rule 2.
4. There are 23 supply centers. A player wins when he has 13 units.
5. A supply center is captured by occupation in any season, not just in fall.
6. Players are Men of GONDOR, the Foul Folk of MORDOR, the Men and Hobbits of ARTHEDAIN, the Dwarves, Men, and Elves of RHOVANION, and the Foul Folk of ANGRAB. Each player begins with an army in each of his three home centers.
7. The game begins in Third Age 1901.

This game is not really meant to depict any situation in Middle Earth, but is closest to the situation in the 20th century of the Third Age.

This sheet is prepared as a supplement to THE CEPHEIDS, in order to provide an up-to-date listing of game openings that we hear of. The bulletin is prepared irregularly, updated when ever we hear of sufficient new openings to make the previous sheet dated. Included are current subscription rates, and game fees where applicable. Most publishers will send a sample copy of their zine for a stamp.

DIPLOMACY OPENINGS

John Boyer (117 Garland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013) has 7 openings in a new novice game he's starting. Players must not have finished or entered more than one postal game at time of entry. The price (I believe) is \$7, which includes a sub until your participation in the game is completed. Games to be carried in DIPLOMACY, sub rates 12/\$2.

John Leeder (A910 20A St., SW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 5A6) is opening up several new games. One of the games is for novices only, and one for people living in Western Canada. John's gamefee is \$1.50 for IDA members plus a requirement to subscribe. Subs are 1¢ per page plus post. Gamefee for non-IDA members is \$2. (plus a sub)

Dave Kadltsch (1147 Sierra Creek Way, San Jose, CA 95132 U.S.A.) has five openings for regular Diplomacy. Gamefees are \$1 deposit plus \$1.50 gamefee plus maintenance of a subscription for duration of your involvement. Sub rates 10/\$2.

David Truman (Rm#2, Guelph, Ontario, Canada, N1H 6H8) has openings in one regular game in DIPLOMACY for \$5. David is also running a prize game, prizes totalling \$50., for \$12 per position.

Randolph Smith (249 First Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1S 2G5) has openings in his 'zine FOL SI FIL. 3 wk deadlines, the price is \$5, which I believe includes a game long subscription. Randolph also needs standbys for the price of a sub 10/\$1.

David Head (Box 1231, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada, P1A 1B7) has openings in his zine AMALIS. The price is \$6, which includes a game-long subscription. (IDA members \$5.)

Claw & Fang, c/o Don Horton, 16 Jordan Ct, Sacramento, CA 95826 has plenty of openings available at \$2. plus a sub of 5/\$1. Countries selected by lot.

Steve Novek (Box A751, Fargo Quad, SUNY at Buffalo, Amherst Campus, Buffalo, NY 14261) needs standbys for his game AMALIS. To standby you need only sub. Subs are 10/\$2.

Flying Buffalo Inc. (P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252) has unlimited openings in Diplomacy at \$6.50 each. The games are not run in a "zine" but are run by carbon copy letter. Flying Buffalo also runs approx. 200 other multi-player games by mail, inquire.

DIPLOMACY PUBLICATIONS

DIPLOMACY WORLD (c/o Walt Buchanan, R.R.#3, Lebanon, IN 46052) is a non-game zine devoted to presenting articles on play, ratings systems and general information to the hobby's players. This professionally printed magazine also includes a demonstration game. Sub rate is \$3. per year. Walt will send you a sample if you'll send him a couple of stamps.

DIPLOMACY PUBLICATIONS (cont.)

THE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION'S 1974 HANDBOOK is now available. The handbook is a 75 page mimeographed production, including articles on good play, tactics, and general interest. Also included is Hookier Archives' Demonstration Game 1972-CR printed in its entirety with analysis by Doug Meyerlein. Available to IDA members for \$2., non-members for \$3. Write: John Boyer, 127 Garland Ave., Carlisle, PA 17013

Incidentally, if you are not a member of the International Diplomacy Association, you should consider joining. The IDA publishes a bi-monthly newsletter (approx 12 pages) to its members called DIPLOMACY REVIEW. Your dues contribute to such worthwhile projects as the IDA Novice Packet, Game Insurance, and establishment of a Variant Bank. Dues are \$2. per year. Write the Vice President, Walt Buchanan, R.R.#3, Lebanon, IN 46052

DIPLOMACY VARIANTS

QUO VADIS Has openings in Downfall of the Lord of the Rings and Excalibur for \$2. US, which is refundable upon normally leaving the game and a current sub at 10/\$2. Send your money to Dick Vedder, 1451 N. Warren, Tucson, AZ 85719. Also needs standbys for SHADIII and Madochi IV. Ditto.

CARNE Don Heuer (102 1/2 Jamaica Ave., Richmond Hill, NY 11418) has openings in games of Downfall, Excalibur, and War of the Roses, and Westphalia VIII. Gamafee \$5. US

TURNABOUT, Peter A. Berggren (Davistown Schoolhouse Rd., Orford, N.H. 03777) has openings in Girton Bomb Variant and a Colonial Variant. Game fee is \$2. US. Xerox. Ditto

SPECULUM Youngstown and Third Age openings are available for \$3. and \$2. respectively plus a sub at 10/\$2. Write: Dave Kadisak, 1447 Sierra Creek Way, San Jose, CA 95132

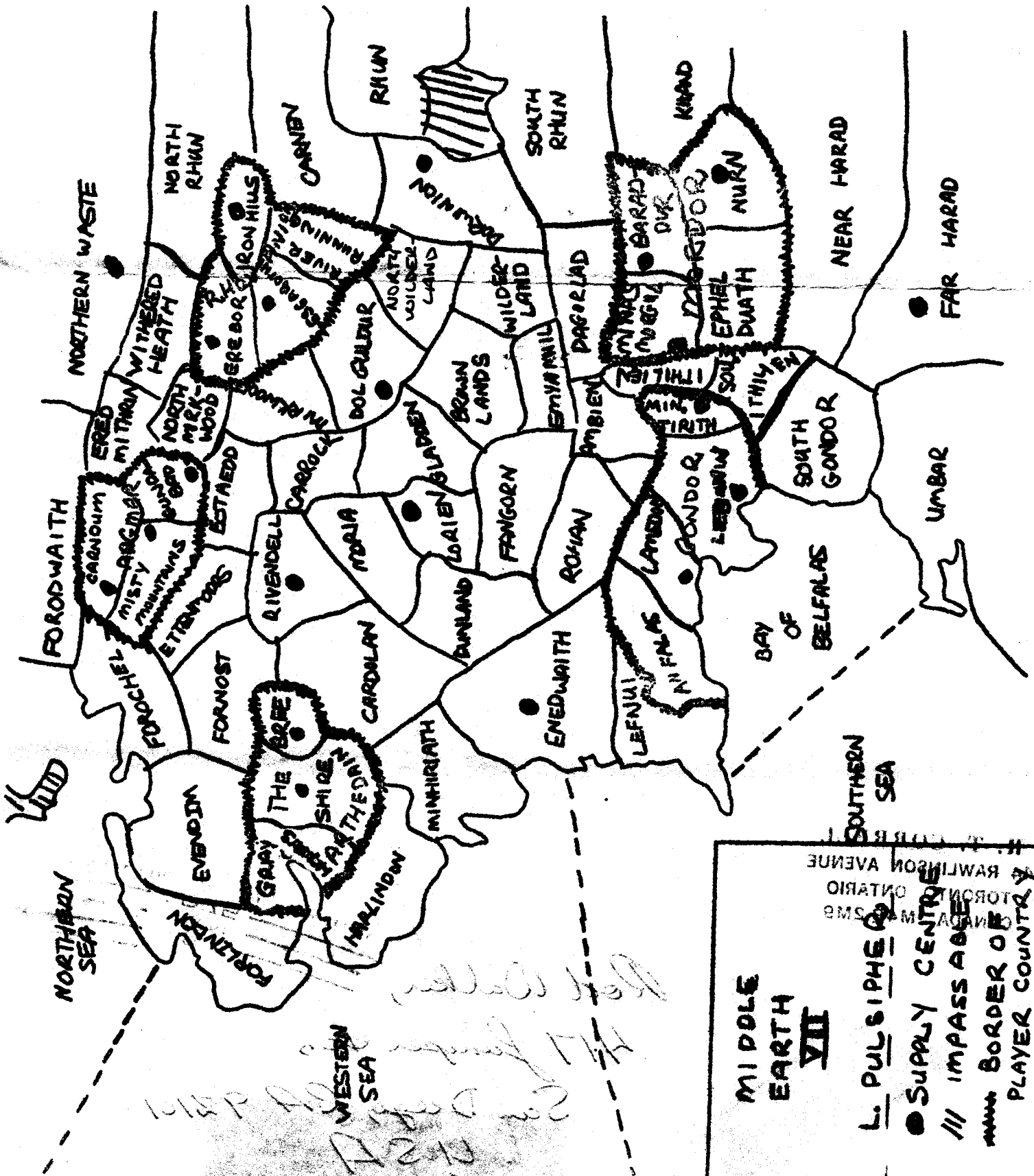
OBSESSION Larry Zehnder (PO Box 24872, Los Angeles, CA 90024) has openings in Switzerland and Speculation Diplomacy. Cost is 50¢ plus a sub at 12/\$2. Ditto

BRAINWAVE Don Efron (1823 Dacotah Dr., Windsor, Ontario, Canada. N9Y 1S4) wants \$3 and a sub at 12/\$2 for a place in a Youngstown game or a Hard Choice Diplomacy game. Ditto.

WARLORD, Dan Gallagher (6425 King Louis Dr., Alexandria, VA 22312) has free standby positions available in a game of Westphalia. Ditto

That's our list of openings, we hope you'll be able to find something to your liking.

THE DIPLOMACY REVIEW (a bi-monthly newsletter) is a non-game news devoted to providing articles on play, tactics, and general information to the hobbyist. This professional looking newsletter also includes a demonstration game. Write the Vice President, Walt Buchanan, R.R.#3, Lebanon, IN 46052



NORTHERN SEA

WESTERN SEA

SOUTHERN SEA

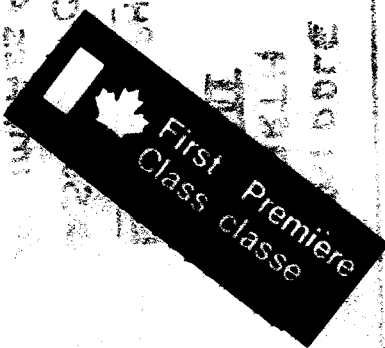
MIDDLE EARTH VII

- SUPPLY CENTRE
- /// IMPASSABLE BORDER OF PLAYER COUNTRY

MAP of Middle Earth VII
For the purpose of this game

RAWLINSOON AVENUE
 TORONTO ONTARIO
 CANADA M5S 2S6

R. T. CORRELL
44 RAWLINSON AVENUE
TORONTO, ONTARIO
CANADA M4E 2M9



Rod Walker,
417 Juniper St.,
San Diego, CA 92101

