

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

Issue #1
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Greetings, and welcome to the premiere issue of DIPLOMACY DIGEST. This 'zine is devoted to the presentation of articles about Diplomacy, mostly reprints from other zines. Original articles will also be used but will never become the mainstay of what appears here. I plan to have as wide a range of articles as possible. Thus, topics such as openings, strategy, tactics, humor, history of the hobby, face-to-face play, ethics and cheating, publishing, negotiations, variants, press, rules, unusual games, famous villifications and tirades, personalities, alliances, puzzles, ratings, statistics, tournaments and others can be included. In addition, on a very limited basis, articles on the general subject of diplomacy will also appear. I refer, for example, to material of the caliber that has appeared in Rebus Sic Stanibus.

The primary criterion of these and the more conventional Diplomacy articles will be: will these, in my opinion entertain and/or inform my readers? Within this framework, however, a preference will be given for articles which are either over three years old or have originally appeared in zines of low circulation. The purpose of these two criteria is to reduce the possibility of any given article having already been read by a significant proportion of my readers. In addition, this provides a wider audience for these articles.

In addition there will of course be the editor's column, which will normally be kept fairly short. The one in this issue will be an exception in its length, I hope.

That will do it. I want to emphasize what will not be in DIPLOMACY DIGEST, so that no one will be misled. There will be no games. There are plenty of 'zines available with game openings, and for those interested there is a listing in the most recent issue of Diplomacy World. There will also be no "News of the hobby" features, no columns of zine reviews (in the formal sense. If an article comes from an existing publisher, his name and address will be given at a minimum. The reprint would thus function somewhat like the traditional "plug", in that it says that this zine presents articles of this quality), letters columns, joke collections, ratings surveys and the like. There are plenty of other zines for these. Thus, DIPLOMACY DIGEST should be viewed as a specialized genzine, in the tradition of, say, Everything, Diplomacy Review, California Reports, etc.

To the best of my knowledge, there is no other zine devoted solely to DIPLOMACY DIGEST's goal. In this regard, I want to mention The Watergate (Clifford Mann II 823 Marcy Ave Apt 101 Oxon Hill Md. 20021). This excellent 'zine also come from the Washington D.C. area and is put out by a friend of mine. It has also reprinted

articles. However, DIPLOMACY DIGEST will differ from it in several significant ways. The Watergate is by its own description "dedicated to regular Diplomacy games". It also features maps, zine reviews, etc. DIPLOMACY DIGEST will have none of these. Further, The Watergate's reprint articles have been entirely on strategy and tactics, most from either Hoosier Archives or The Pouch. DIPLOMACY DIGEST will have a much wider focus of both subject matter and sources and will of course have more such articles because no games will appear.

DIPLOMACY DIGEST will have two formats. One is the miscellaneous collection of articles, such as this issue. The other will be "single subject" issues. I plan to run these in about equal numbers and then poll the readers to see which of these formats is preferred.

DIPLOMACY DIGEST is available by subscription for \$3.50/ten issues. This issue is available for a self-addressed-stamped-envelope. It will be produced by commercial Xerox (or the like) or photo-offset which of course puts limits on my pricing. All issues will be either eight or nine pages. It will appear approximately monthly. Without the tyranny of deadlines, I will be able to produce it a little more or less frequently as circumstances permit. Postage rates will probably rise in 1978. At that time I may resort to third class bundling to avoid a rise in the subscription cost.

Before plunking down your \$3.50, it is legitimate to inquire as to what resources are being used for such a project. I will be the editor and publisher and I do not anticipate getting additional help. Altho I am relatively new to the postal Diplomacy hobby, I began playing FTF in 1967. I am 32 years old, married, and, considering all the time I've spent planting fruit trees in my yard, I will be at my current address indefinitely. To do a project such as this naturally requires a large 'zine collection. I currently own well over 1000. This includes major holdings (25 or more) in 13 'zines and smaller holdings in dozens of others. And I do seek to expand. I am in the market for purchasing back copies of any 'zine that publishes at least occasional articles on Diplomacy. Those interested should write me, giving a description of what is available for sale and your asking price, including postage, calculated on the basis of parcel post or Greyhound package express or the like. I am especially interested in Canadian 'zines and material prior to 1972. I also have 'zines available for trade for those who do not like the idea of selling them.

And finally, for those who have been waiting with bated breath (ever wonder how this is done? A-worm in the mouth?), Diplomacy is a registered trademark for a game invented by Allen B. Calhamer and copyrighted by Avalon Hill Corp., 4517 Hartford Road Baltimore, Md. 21214.



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THE TEN DIPLOMANDMENTS

by Rudolph Tatay

I

Beware thy fellow player that answers not thy letter, for he shall surely fall upon thee as many cubits of bricks.

II

Cause not anger among the players in thy game, for they will conspire together against thee and thy seasons will not long endure.

III

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, if thou needs must stab, thrust hard and for the death, for if thou art hesitant and fearful thy enemy will surely turn upon thee in a great rage.

IV

Tarry not amongst those who make foolish moves, for they are surely not long for the game; lest thou be adjudged as a fool and eliminated.

V

Takest thou care thy games are ended for verily though thou hast given thy money, the finding of a substitute for a lost position is a great trial and tribulation, for which thy gamesmaster will remember thy name unto the end of time.

VI

Takest thou care thou distortest not the truth to thy gamesmaster, for this incurreth his wrath and bringeth his fury about thy head and shoulders.

VII

Spendest not all of thy time on the pursuit of Diplomacy, for if thou dost thy friends will surely buy beers for thy wife and girlfriend and console her in ways not pleasing to thee.

VIII

When thy friends and enemies have been established, be thou willing to change friend for enemy and enemy for friend for while this may be confusing it will ensure thy finish in the game.

IX

Feud not in the world of Diplomacy, for it is only a game and even if someone be a son of a bitch and a bastard he may someday aid thee to a victory. Of course, if thou gainest joy from a feud, forget thou the above.

X

Commit thou to memory all the words of the prophet Allan as written in the RULES FOR DIPLOMACY (copyright by Avalon-Hill) which giveth out with the straight dope and consol-eth thee when thou hast suffered a ream job by thy gamesmaster.

Some words from C. L. Sulzberger, as quoted in the New York Times:

"There are, in diplomacy, four cardinal rules. Rule one is always keep the initiative. Rule two is always exploit the inevitable. Rule three is always keep in with the outs. And Rule four is never stand between a dog and a lamppost."

This comes from Erethron #77 (17 June 1974) (Rod Walker 1273 Crest Dr. Encinitas CA 91014). It was written by the now deceased John Koning for sTab #1 (1965) and amended in some unspecified manner by Walker.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

I've been reading over the systems for rating Diplomacy players. All of them possess certain merits, of course, but all suffer from a common flaw: they are based on a too-literal construing of what constitutes success in Diplomacy. Each system assumes that, because the rule book defines the object of the game as "to gain control of Europe," accumulating more than half of the supply centers on the board is something meritorious. So much for western logic.

I, on the other hand, have studied the entire problem carefully, and after delving deeply into and observing from all angles the name of the game (which is, of course, "Diplomacy") I have come up with the rating system: a rating system which takes into account the intent of the game instead of its superficial characteristics. And my system, unlike those others, does not suffer from a superfluity of reasoning between its initial premises and its final conclusions. My system is devious. My system works just like Diplomacy itself! (My system is designed to make me look good!)

The name "Diplomacy" indicates that the prime virtues in this game are skill, tact, and cunning. Therefore, while the winner of the game holds the most supply centers, he may have achieved his victories through the use of brute force rather than diplomacy. (It would be difficult to find a game winner who had merely talked his way into the winning seat.) Nothing special in winning a game, then, so we award technical winners one point.

However, as a player in chess is faced with a hopeless situation resigns rather than prolong a game dull to both his opponent and himself, a Diplomacy player with little hope of accomplishing anything displays great tact or "diplomacy", in resigning an untenable position. We give such a gracious player 5 points.

Moreover, since expectation is so important in Diplomacy, a player who resigns while in a strong position obviously does so because he knows his good fortune cannot continue. For such remarkable foresight we award 10 points.

Most remarkable of all is the player who foresees the catastrophe before the game begins, and resigns to let another take on his bad fortune. To a player of such phenomenal skill we give 20 points and a gold star. (Points should also be given players who turn down invitations to join Diplomacy games, but that is beyond the scope of this present system. Soon, however....).

Finally, since confusing your opponents is a primary objective in Diplomacy, we also recognize skillful obfuscation by awarding 5 points for each move for which orders are not submitted. Perceptive readers will note that it is, by skipping a large number of moves, possible to exceed the large point total given for pre-play resignation (but no gold star is awarded in this case). This is only logical, since it takes more diplomatic skill to remain in a game and confuse everyone than to resign early and confuse only a few people momentarily. (This year the committee has decided there is no merit in confusing the gamesmaster, so we have discontinued the three points awarded for badly worded or illegible orders). Supply centers, having nothing to do with Diplomacy, get no points. Ditto staying power. Ditto maneuvering ~~###~~ luck. We are considering points for press releases, though.

Under this infallible system I, John Koning, am surpassed in Diplomatic Skill by only one player. And I hope to catch up to Conrad vonMetzke soon.

In the game preference lists for 1972 CV (Armadillo #11, 1972), all seven players placed Italy dead last. Five of the seven placed Austria last. The game was won by Austria, with Italy surviving.

----- BALANCE IN VARIANTS - WHY ?

WHEN I THINK BACK OVER ARTICLES I'VE READ BY LEW PULSIPHER AND OTHERS CONCERNING DESIGN OF VARIANTS, I AM OF THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY ALL SAY THAT BALANCE IS A VERY DESIRABLE THING TO HAVE. YET, WHEN I READ OVER THESE ARTICLES, I FIND THAT THEY SAY NO SUCH THING - RATHER, THEY SEEM TO MAKE THE ASSUMPTION THAT ONE SHOULD TRY FOR BALANCE, AND FURTHER SEEM TO ASSUME THAT THE READER KNOWS WHY. IN DIPLOMACY WORLD NO. 1, FOR EXAMPLE, LEW WRITES THAT "I'VE NOTICED THE GAME IS NOT WELL-BALANCED ((SPEAKING OF ME IV))..." AND HIS REASON #1 FOR DESIGNING ME V IS TO PRODUCE A MIDDLE EARTH SCENARIO OF THE BALANCED TYPE.

I SUPPOSE, BALANCE IS SOUGHT FOR BECAUSE FAIRNESS DICTATES THAT EACH PLAYER SHOULD HAVE AN EQUAL CHANCE OF WINNING. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M RIGHT TO DO SO, BUT I'LL MAKE THAT ASSUMPTION AND WE'LL SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

IN PRACTICE, THE VARIOUS PEOPLE IN A GAME DEFINITELY DO NOT HAVE AN EQUAL CHANCE OF WINNING; THE FACT THAT SOMEBODY OR OTHER WINS IS PROOF OF THAT. REGULAR DIPLOMACY IS A VERY WELL-BALANCED GAME, AS FAR AS EVIDENCE HAS SHOWN TO DATE; SEE FRANK'S ARTICLE ON CHOOSING A COUNTRY IN THIS ISSUE. BUT FROM THE MOMENT YOU FIRST SEND OUT A DIPLOMATIC MESSAGE, YOU HAVE DESTROYED THE BALANCE, EVEN IF ONLY SOMEWHAT. I GUESS WHAT I AM SAYING HERE IS THAT THE QUALITY OF THE VARIOUS PLAYERS AUTOMATICALLY DESTROYS THE BALANCE OF EVEN THE MOST CAREFULLY BALANCED GAME. THE CONVERSE OF THIS, OF COURSE, IS THAT IMBALANCE CAN BE SMOOTHED OUT BY THE SAME CONSIDERATION. IN A GAME SUCH AS THIRD AGE, THE GREAT POWER OF MORDOR CAN BE NEUTRALIZED BY A REALLY STRONG ALLIANCE, AND THIS IN ITSELF IS A MORE POIGNANT AND DYNAMIC BALANCE THAN CAN BE MANUFACTURED BY THE GAME DESIGNER.

IMBALANCED GAMES ARE A TEST OF ONE'S DIPLOMATIC ABILITY. IF YOU HAVE THE SHIRE IN THIRD AGE (ERIDOR, I GUESS IT IS), AND WIN, OR EVEN SURVIVE, YOU HAVE LIKELY SHOWN YOURSELF TO BE A HELL OF A DIPLOMAT. THE PRACTICE IN DIPLOMATIC SKILLS IS INVALUABLE.

IN SCANDINAVIA, DURING MEDIEVAL TIMES, A GAME CALLED TABLUT WAS POPULAR. IT CONSISTED OF TWO SIDES, ONE WITH NINE MEN, THE OTHER WITH SIXTEEN. THE GAME IS TERRIBLY IMBALANCED IN FAVOR OF THE NINE MEN. I MADE A SET OF THIS GAME AND ENJOYED HOURS OF PLAY AGAINST A CHILD, AGE EIGHT. I ALWAYS GAVE HER THE NINE MEN. I WOULD PLAY VERY HARD, OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO WIN, BUT INVARIABLY I WOULD LOSE. ANYONE WHO HAS PLAYED CHESS OR CHECKERS WITH A CHILD KNOWS HOW HARD IT IS TO LET THE CHILD WIN WITHOUT BEING TOO OBVIOUS ABOUT IT (CHILDREN ARE VERY PERCEPTIVE). WITH TABLUT, THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF PRETENDING; THE CHILD USUALLY HAD THE PLEASURE OF WINNING AND THE FEW TIMES I WON WERE REAL VICTORIES, THE ODDS BEING SO MUCH AGAINST IT.

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ACTUALLY THAT STORY HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH THE POINT. THE POINT IS, PLEASE DON'T GET THE IMPRESSION THAT I AM SEVERELY ANTI-BALANCE. THAT WOULD BE STUPID, FOR BALANCE IS OBVIOUSLY GOOD. REGULAR DIPLOMACY IS MY FIRST LOVE, AND WHEN I ENTER A GAME, I ENJOY THINKING THAT, IF ALL THINGS ARE EQUAL, I HAVE ONE CHANCE IN SEVEN OF WINNING, EVEN THOUGH NO SUCH THING IS TRUE IN PRACTICE, SO THAT THE ACTUAL ODDS ARE FOREVER CONCEALED FROM ME, UNTIL, WITH MY PLAY, I CREATE THEM, WHETHER IT BE A HUNDRED TO ONE OR ONE OUT OF INFINITY. BUT TO TAKE THE SHIRE IN THIRD AGE - TO FIND THE RING - TO RECONSTRUCT SYMBOLICALLY THAT EPIC JOURNEY FROM HOBBITON TO THE CRACKS OF DOOM - THAT IS A PLEASURE THAT IS WELL WORTH TEN TIMES THE IMBALANCE IN THE MOST UNBALANCED GAME.

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This next article is by Duncan K. Smith and first appeared in The Pouch, Vol I Issue 19 (July 16, 1973)

THE FRENCH OPENINGS

France, unlike most other countries in the game of Diplomacy has quite a few variants for its openings. It is probably the only country that can go to war with all three of its neighbors safely. All these different attacks though depend on the French opening. As a matter of fact the hardest task of France in 1901 is to stay neutral if it wishes to.

First off, going to war with Italy can be done in two basic ways. If you decide to go to war with Italy it doesn't really matter what you do with England, but you must be at least neutral (if not allied) with Germany in order to do it. If you have a good solid alliance your opening moves should be: A Par - Gas, A Mar - Spa, F Bre - MAO. In the fall your moves would be: A Gas - Spa, A Spa - Por, F MAO - Wes. This will allow you to convoy A ~~MAO~~^{SPA} to NAF and if you have a fleet in Marseille, its moving to the Gulf of Lyon should guarantee you Tunis in the Fall of 1902.....

((This is as much of the article as I want to print for now, because I have some comments to make. Duncan goes on to discuss the "big dangers" in this attack (i.e. A Mun - Bur and A Ven - Pie), outlines a second attack on Italy, and then goes on to discuss attacking Germany and attacking England -- MLB))

A REPLY TO "THE FRENCH OPENINGS" OF DUNCAN K. SMITH by Mark L. Berch

There are several fundamental errors in the above excerpt which need to be corrected in both the diplomacy and in the tactics outlined. First, the "it doesn't really matter what you do with England" is totally false. In this opening you are pulling very sharply away from England. By the Winter of 1901 you will have only one piece in all of Northern and central France (i.e. in Brest or Paris, depending on where you have chosen to take your second build). If England has nothing very compelling to do, all that empty space is going to look mighty inviting. If England has been non-committal, or you have generally ignored England, then you are taking a substantial risk in using this opening. Try, for example, to get Russia to go to St. P in the spring. If you get such a commitment (or even if you don't) be sure and let England know -- this will reduce the chances of F Lon - Eng. In short, it makes a great deal of difference what you do with England.

More serious are the flaws in the tactics. Far from being a guarantee, a rather large list of events have to go right for France for this attack to net

Tunis in 1902. First, A Spa must be available for a convoy, which may not be the case. After the Spring 01 moves, an alert Italy will realize that France's fleet is completely free to attack either Italy or England. A quick letter to Germany will elicit the fact that there is no Franco-German attack on England planned. A prudent Italy will then realize where the fleet is probably headed and will enter Pie in Fall 1901, a move which France cannot block. If A Spa is convoyed away, and F Mar is ordered to Lyo (where it will likely be needed to cut support from F Tyr), then no one is left to guard Mar. Italy will probably be able to free an army to enter Pie. An attack on Austria can easily be called off, and if Italy has begun a Lepanto (A Rom -Apu, F Nap-~~Ion~~), then the other army has no major responsibilities anyway.

Second, even if A Spa is available, the convoy may fail, as it is easily blocked by A/F Tun - Naf. Further, if Italy has convoyed to Tunis via F Ion, this move can be backed up with F Ion - Tun, so that regardless of whether France convoys to Tun or Naf, it will fail, leaving F Ion in place. Even without F Ion, Italy need only guess correctly. An interesting game to demonstrate all this is 1975Q (Graustark). France must have been reasonably pleased with the F 01 results. Iberia and Wes had been taken, Germany and England were off fighting Russia, and Italy had only an isolated fleet in Tunis. The only problem was the lack of an Italo-Austrian war, permitting Italy to take Pie in F 01. In the Spring, France's luck turned sour. He guessed wrong on the convoy, and elected to cover Mar with his new F Mar. As a result, he was unceremoniously kicked out of Wes in F 02 and actually lost Bre to Italy in 1903, with no interference from Germany and England.

Third, even if the convoy succeeds, there is still no "guarentee". If Italy has begun with a Lepanto, then France will need outside help to cut the support of F Ion. And even if there is only a fleet in Tunis, Italy can go F Nap-Ion in Sp 02, so there is again a support that France cannot cut. Of course, this courts the loss of Tyr Sea, but Italy may be willing to accept this to forstall the loss of Tunis in 1902.

Lastly, do not ignore the possibility that even if Italy has failed to open with a Lepanto, he may get eastern help! If Turkey is firmly allied with Russia, W 01 may find Turkey with F Aeg. Turkey will likely be very alarmed at this rapid French incursion into the Mediterranean. After all, if he is to expand after he has taken his share of the Balkans, the French will be in the way. Further, the west can set up a stalemate line of Tun-Wes-Lyo, which is hard to break. This would bottle him up, forcing him to attack Russia if he wishes to expand beyond 8 centers or so. So Sp 02 may find him in the Ion, possibly even invited in by Italy, prepared to support F Tun in F 02. The purpose of this is to persuade France that the attack is completely blocked and that he should withdraw (so that Turkey can himself do Italy in, perhaps with a Sp 03 convoy to Apulia).

I am not contending that moving into Wes is a foolish opening. It is essential, for example, if you believe that Italy will do the "Western Lepanto" (Fall 1901; F Tyr C A Tus - Tun) as you will need F Wes to support F Mar - Lyo against the opposition of F Tyr. And if you feel that you must have Tun in 1902, this is a way to do it.

In summary, the novice should not be misled into thinking that he has any guarentee of taking Tun in 1902. To talk of a "guarentee" is to grossly underestimate Italy's capacity to defend itself. France has a reasonable shot at Tunis, that's all. Smith's article also perpetuates the myth of the One-on-one attack early in the game. These usually do not fare that well. For this attack to do well, France must incite an Italian-Austrian war. Such a war will reduce the chances of Italy entering Pie in Fall 1901, reduce the chances of a convoy to Tunis and in general distract Italy from throwing every piece into the defense against the French.

Ever wonder how a really big time 'zine is put out? Graustark (John L. Brennan, 234 E. 19th St., Brooklyn NY 11226) has been going for over 14 years, the longest run of any Diplomacy 'zine, and is considered a model of punctuality. There is always plenty of press and non-Diplomacy material. This comes from his "The Ministry of Miscellany" column from #277, Nov 4, 1972

I suppose a few questions may have arisen as to how GRAUSTARK is made up and published; why two different type faces appear; how space gets apportioned among moves, press releases, letters, and miscellany; when it actually goes into the mail.

The first stencils to be cut for each issue are the letters and/or miscellany columns, unless I have the great good fortune to receive an article or a book review. These items are not dependent on receipt of letters from players, and so can be prepared in advance. If it looks as if space is going to be a problem, I run these off on my office typewriter, a Royal standard manual about 20 years old. Otherwise, or if the work week is too crowded, GRAUSTARK stencils are cut on my personal typewriter, a Sears portable manual two years old, whose type is pica rather than this elite face.

Press releases usually get into the issue at which they are aimed, unless I have decided to run a particularly long letter column that issue. In this case they are postponed, which is why you get things like 5 pages of press releases for 197LEC in GRAUSTARK #276. At present a stock of letters is building up, which means that #278 may also carry a long letter column. Defenders of Pierre Eliot Trudeau and Vatican II have arisen to contest remarks in previous miscellany columns, and they will be heard.

But usually, as with this stencil, "The Ministry of Miscellany" gets cut first - sometimes, indeed, before the previous issue goes to press. (There's have been times when as many as three issues were in preparation and partially printed, all at the same time.) This makes it possible to include all kinds of squibs from the considerable range of publications which I read.

Usually at least 8 pages of a GRAUSTARK are already printed two days before the move deadline. This leaves the first 4 pages for the games. If for any game all the moves come in in advance, I cut and print the stencils for one of these pages and hope that no last-minute changes come in. (This has happened only once recently; see GRAUSTARK #272, p. 5 for details.) With any luck, I do not have to prepare and print more than 3 stencils on the actual deadline date.

Although the press run of GRAUSTARK is now 175, and I usually bring out 100 issues of FREEDONIA on the same day, the Saturday's work has been considerably relieved of late. Partly this is due to the fact that Saturday's mail now arrives at about 12 or 1 o'clock, instead of at 3 as it did a few months ago. Mainly, however, this is due to the help furnished by three local Diplomacy and science-fiction fans: Ira Dunowitz, Mike Honig, and Gary Tesser, who drop in on Saturday afternoon and help collate and staple the 'zines. Often when Gary leaves for his job at the Post Office he takes with him a sizable bundle of GRAUSTARKs.

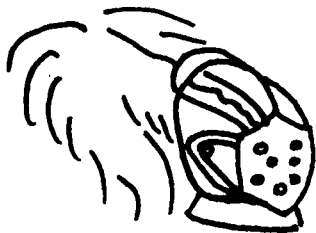
By 6 PM on the deadline date, GRAUSTARK and FREEDONIA are usually in the mail - either with Gary, or in a corner mailbox down the block. (Sometimes, if printing is delayed, the copies mailed to non-players go out on Sunday.) I am informed that players generally receive their copies by the following Tuesday or Wednesday. Players who live west or south of Pennsylvania and Virginia, or in Canada, get their copies by air mail. Non-players who get both GRAUSTARK and FREEDONIA used to receive them by 3rd-class mail, but as I remarked in the last issue this is highly problematical until the 3rd-class mail situation straightens out.

((He then goes on to predict a possible delay in #278. How many publishers do you know who explain their delays in advance? ---mlb))

The following publications are regularly culled for miscellany material (and also clipped for various friends to whom I have promised clippings on topics in their lines of interest): New York Times, New York Post, New York Column, Village Voice, Guardian, Liberated Guardian, Los Angeles Free Press, Los Angeles Staff, London Tribune, New Statesman, New York Daily World, Spectator, and various ACLU publications. From time to time an interesting item might also be copied out of National Lampoon, National Review, Triumph, the magazine sections of the London Times and London Observer, or anything else that may come to my attention.

This is from Saint George and the Dragon Vol II #1 (12 Dec 1976) (Robert Sergeant, 3242 Lupine Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46224). This is an excellent zine to play in: reproduction flawless, adjudication errors are unknown, and the 'zine usually prompt.

SAINT GEORGE SPEAKS



The Stab - Act of a Moral Degenerate ?

There is a group among Postal Diplomacy players whose voices are raised in moral outrage whenever a stab is perpetrated against them. An alliance to them is a near-sacred thing and is not to be violated. In point of fact, the stab was clearly intended to be a part of this game. Provision is made in the rules for the stab. A successful player must determine for himself when a stab is likely and get the knife in first.

I do not always stab. 1975GZ has ended in a three way draw, including myself. I did not stab either of my allies to reduce the draw to a two-way (nor did they stab me). The game record is in Dippy for those who wish to check up on me. However, there are times when I am going to stab, and I think they are when most players are likely to stab, so a little discussion might prove beneficial.

I will stab when my alliance has been made with a player who is inept in tactics and refuses to strictly follow my suggestions. Any alliance in this game can be a good one, even Russia-England. But you are usually faced with at least one other alliance. The success of your alliance over theirs depends on the mutual trust and your tactics. If I can't depend on my ally to make the best set of moves, or at least a good set, I am going to be looking for a new ally. So when you are planning your moves, be sure to cover all the possibilities. Remember, your opponents are not always going to make the set of moves that is best for you. If your moves court disaster, they're probably not your best ones.

I will stab if I distrust my ally. If my ally consistently forgets a support move **WHETHER IT TURNS OUT TO BE NEEDED OR NOT**, or "forgets" the arrangement we had to divide up centers, I must conclude he hasn't my best interests at heart. In a recent game my ally "forgot" to support me into Belgium. Fortunately I had an arrangement with France to take it anyway, but I could have been bounced, and for all he knew, I would be. Then, he forgot to support a unit in place that was giving him support to a center. I needed the unit on the following move to get a center myself, and the unit could have been annihilated. I concluded he wasn't looking out for my interests, so he got the knife.

I will stab if I have a clear advantage. In another recent game, I had 13 centers, my ally had 7. I was to turn over one of my centers to him and allow him to get another, making the score 12 to 9. He would be building, and my entire home was open. I told him I would do so. He believed me. Would you ?

I will stab if I am Austria and you are Turkey.

On the other hand, I will not stab to reduce a three-way draw to a two-way draw.

I will not stab a trustworthy ally to change a clear two-way draw to a win. At least I hope I won't; the subject hasn't come up yet. (Note to Don Rittel--that is a joke.)

I will not stab for a one center gain.

These are the general rules I use. I am getting a terrible reputation for stabbing in a zine which shall remain nameless, although I understand you have all received a copy of Diman. I can justify every stab I have made on the above basis, except one, which I heartily regret. To find out which--sub or play in Diman.

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