

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Large-Scale Alliances

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One of my new subbers, Peter Wightman, had written me that he worked for "French's Mustard Co". I wrote him that I didn't much care for French's; it was too mild. He wrote back, "...I agree. To remedy this, we've come out with a new variety. Its just in test marketing now but is doing well and will go national next year...Hope you like it." And enclosed was a jar of "Bold 'n Spicy Deli mustard" Deli mustard is not really one of my favorite styles. I like the ultra hot mustards, the herbal mustards (such as tarragon), the sweet, cracked, mustards (the kind that comes in the grey crock from France and made with wine) and horseradish mustard (which I make myself from root that I grow). But this is rather tasty, and I think it will do reasonably well. And that, I promise you, is the last mention of mustard here.

I asked specifically for some negative reaction to the Interview and to the Quiz, and did manage to get some for the latter. John Michalski wrote, "the quiz had too much British and ancient stuff in it." Any British stuff will seem like a lot, since there is so little contact. As for the "ancient" stuff, remember, the quiz is not only for just entertainment, its also another format for presenting hobby history (as was the Beyerlein interview), different from the usual article reprint. Also, a newcomer commented that he really couldn't connect that well with it. But no specific negative comments appeared about the interview. Splendid. A Second one will appear next summer, probably in the 5th anniversary issue. The quiz will appear again later, perhaps Jan 1983, and won't be quite as long, and will be more current (actually, I used up most of my older stuff anyhow).

There are now two services available to tell you where there are game openings. The older one, run by Robert Sacks, I can no longer recommend. Sacks has taken to using his Known Games Openings list as a vehicle for personal attacks, something his predecessors (Kendter, Von Metzke, Buchanan) never did. In the Aug KGO he accused Walker of threatening John Daly, and said that Kathy Byrne was competing with Daly to place orphans. Denials followed from all parties. In the Sept KGO, he repeated his charge against Walker (without any substantiation), and even called Walker a liar for denying it. In Oct, he printed some nasty cracks about Don DelGrande, and raged again against Walker. He was also, in my opinion, much too hasty to delist one GM. At any rate, Rod is going back to the system used by Buchanan, Von Metzke, and for a while by Jones and will compile his own list for DW. He even has a form so that no information should be forgotten. To keep information from getting stale, you must notify him at least every other month. Also, the monthly list will be available from him for an SASE.

And speaking of DW, #28 is out, looking handsome with its graphics. As I have said before, DW is the "flagship" zine for the hobby, the only zine that makes a conscious effort to unite the entire hobby, and to appeal to the non-poster player as well (turn to page 11)

((I've assembled some materials for this issue, but I cannot for the life of me figure out a logical order in which to present it. I've therefore concluded that logical order is not desirable. First up is Len Lakofka in Hoosier Archives #84 8-5-72))

Four-Player Alliances

When 1901 openings are mentioned, a great deal of time is expended in discussing independent and 2-player actions for each country. Yet why dabble with 2-player alliances or even three? Why not go for the whole ball game at once --- ally with three other players until 1903 or so? In this way, you can wipe out three foes at a time and be in a position to move aggressively in the middle game.

The rules of thumb are as follows: (1) Do not place yourself in a position where you can be attacked by all three foes or all three allies, and (2) try to avoid situations in which, after 1903, you will have to meet one or more allies head on. Try to keep interior lines that secure what you have gained.

Thus, a FEGA alliance is a deadly contract for Germany and/or Austria. They are surrounded by foes and their "allies" will keep pushing right in their direction. But a FETR alliance has one safe border with an ally and room to expand without tripping over your friends too early in the alliance. Lines like EIAR are also very playable. All 4 allies can expand into neutral areas or enemy territories without tripping over other allies. The question to ask about such a large alliance is (1) what can I do if this border or that is secure? and (2) will I be in position to negotiate after the alliance breaks up? If you do not gain enuf in the alliance and/or your lines are extended too far out, the alliance is not good for you. Lets look at one of these: FGAR

France: F Bre-Eng A Par-Gas A Mar-Spa Germany: F Kie-Den, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Tyo
Austria: A Vie-Tri, A Bud-Ser F Tri-Alb Russia: F Sev-Bla, A War-Ukr A Mos-StP F St-Bot

Then in the Fall of 1901:

France: F Eng-Lon A Gas-Spa A Spa-Por Germany: F Den-Nth A Kie-Hol A Tyo-Pie
Austria: A Tri-Tyo F Alb-Gre S By A Ser Russia: F Sev-Bal A Ukr-Rum A StP-Nwy F Bot-Swe

Winter builds: France: F Bre, F Mar; Germany: F Kie, A Mun; Austria: F Tri, A Bud
Russia: A Mos, A War

Unless the other countries have acted to stem one country directly in SO1, they will be in extreme trouble in 1902 and the world will crash in on them. Notice if one of the 3 has moved strongly against one of the 4, a restructure of the 4-player alliance can even be negotiated! Thus, don't think small --- go for all the marbles at once instead of trying to move one alliance at a time!

Next is a similar item from Len Lakofka, taken from Impassable #65, 5-10-76:

COMPLEX ALLIANCES

Numerous articles have appeared on the "Opening" for various countries... Unfortunately mass alliances, that is, unions of 3, 4, or perhaps 5 countries have not been discussed in depth. Froming a proper lattice of alliances can allow for radical opening play that would be disastrous if the groundwork were not properly laid. Take the I-A alliance, for example, Normally these countries must get at least one build each to function --- a total of three ideally. Yet if A and I can gain Russian and probably German help they can make very bold 1901 moves. The diplomatic atmosphere must be one that is anti-French and anti-Turkish in the Opening. E and R must then be checked in the middle game so that the central powers can go into the End Game together.

The Opening is one designed to attack F and T early on. This is done via: A Vie-Bud, A Bud-Ser, F Tri-Alb; A Ven-Pie A Rom-Ven, F Nap-Tyr. This is fairly standard except for the move to Tyr. R should move F Sev-Bla, A War-Gal! A Mos-Ukr. Germany should be trying for Bur, whether he makes it or not, while going for Holland. Initially E must be in on the attack with a move to Eng. In FO1 Russia takes Rum with the A Gal; Aus plays A Ser-Gre, A Bud-Ser, F Alb-Ion; Italy gains nothing (moves are

F Tyr-Wes, A Pie-Mar, A Ven-Apu) and Austria gains one or perhaps two. However, the I/A pieces are in excellent position for a 1902 offensive. France will be beset from 3 sides as will Turkey. SO2 calls for F Ion CITA A Apu-Tun as the key move ((Thats socking it to Turkey??)). If two builds are given to Austria, one should be a fleet, if only one build, then build a fleet anyway. The real danger is from a Russian stab, but in an alliance he has more to gain in the long run than a stab at this point. The Aus F goes to Alb. If Gre has not fallen to Aus, it attacks Gre; otherwise FO2 calls for F Ion-Eas, F Alb-Ion as part of a 1903 "Lepanto".

If th entire board is playing an optimum game there is little or no danger that F/T will fall too fast and give R/E too big of a head start. What is cricial is that a war between R and E be started with G/A attacking R, and G/I attacking E. G will not gain too much beavse he is fighting both E and R.

Agressive E/R players will try to turn the advantage of the opening game into an advantage in the Middle game. If this happens then one of these two powers will likely have the best shot at a win. The alternative is what holds G/A/I together. If any of. these three fight E and/or R will surely gain most.

When you plan an alliance you must look deep into the endgame and form alliances and non-agression pacts in the Opening game that will get you to your endgame goal. Worrying about the Opening for your country alone will not yield a winning result.

Back we got to Hoosier Archives #122 , 9/24/73 for this gem by Eric Verheiden:

THE MUNICH GAMBIT

These are 2 basic flaws in an EGI alliance against F, flaws which if converted into significant delays by a reasonably competant French player (giving some cooperative eastern power enuf time to prepare and launch a western offensive) may be fatal for the attack as a whole:

(1) The German guessing game: If E and G launch a strong anti-F offensive in SO1 with typical orders: Germany: F Kie-Hol, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Ruh
 England: F Lon-Eng, F Edi-Nth, A Liv-Wal
 France: F Bre-Eng, A Par-Bur, A Mar SA Par-Bur

Germany is then faced with the problem of outguessing the French so as to leave Mun open for a build without losing it. If Germany guesses wrong, he is faced with at best a delay and at worst a termination of the attack.

(2) The Italian dilemma: Italy's choice in 1901 is whther to take Tun immediately or to forego it temporarily in hopes of moving to an earlier and thus presumably more effective attack against F. In the former case, Italy gets a second fleet but is unable to move into psotion for supported attack until at the earliest SO3. In the latter case, Italy must patiently wait until his repeated attack against Mar with a single support succeeds before he can build a second fleet or move any more units to the attack. The possibility of France abandoning his homeland for an attack on a relatively weak Italy is a threat here as well ((I doubt it. If anyone will take advange of Italy's weakness it is likely to be Asutria)). Both flaws can be neatly Disposed of with Munich Gamb^{it}
Spring 1901 England: F Edi-Nth F Lon-Eng, A Lpl-Wal
 France : A Par-Bur F Bre-Eng A Mar S A Par-Bur
 Italy : F Nap-Tyr, A Ven-Tyo, A Rom-Ven
 Germany: F Kie-Hol A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie

The intentions of E and G are rather obvious at this point; those of Italy considerably less so. If this uncertain ty can be exploited into support for an Italian move to Mun, so much the better. If not, the difference is not crucial.

Fall 1901 England: F Nth-Nwy, F Lon-Eng A Wal H
 France : A Bur-Bel, F Bre-Eng A Mar-Spa
 Germany: F Hol-Bel, A Kie-Den A Ruh S Ital A Tyo-Mun
 Italy : F Tyr-Lyo, A Tyo-Mun A Ven-Pie

Actually, it is assumed here that the French player is fairly astute and knows what he is up against. If he leaves Bre open for a build by moving to Mid, hits Mun himself,

or supports the Italians in, he gets clobbered even worse.

Winter 1901 E: Build F Lpl Germany: Build A Ber Italy: Build F Nap France: B Mar

Italy now has the second fleet ((and the forward position)) and France is fated to lose one home center in 1902 no matter what he does.

Spring 1902 (partial) England: F Lon-Eng, F Lpl-Iri
Germany: F Hol-Bel, A Ruh S Ital A Mun-Bur, A Ber-Mun
France : F Bre-Eng, A Bur-Bel(ret to Gas) A Spa S A Mar, A Mar H
Italy : A Pie-Mar, F Lyo S A Pie-Mar, A Mun-Bur, F Nap-Tyr

Fall 1902 (partial) England: F Lon-eng, F Lri-Mid
Germany: F Hol-Bel, A Ruh-Bur, A Mun S A Ruh-Bur
Italy : F Lyo & A Pie S A Bur-Mar, A Bur-Mar, F Lyo-Tun
France: F Bre-Mid, A Spa-Por, A Gas S A Mar, A Mar H (R Spa)

Either Italy picks up Mar outright, or ((if France has done A Spa S A Mar)) retreats to Par for the build ((the gain of Tun compensates for the loss of Mun)). If a German army were in Bur, this would not be the case due to the rule against self-dislodgement.

Some variations on the same theme are possible depending on the circumstances. For example, an anti-Russian variation would have EF Edi-Nwg, EF Lon-Nth EA Lpl-Yor GF Kie-Den, GA Ber-Kie GA Mun-Ruh in SO1, to be followed hopefully by AF Nth C A Yor-Bel, GF Den-Swe, plus IA Tyo-Mun in the fall. If all works (some judicious use of diplomacy might be well advised here in view of the seemingly neutral nature of the E-G moves) France picks up 2 builds, but so does England along with the advantages of EF Nth to support a move to the channel and a third army in Bel to support the Ital move to Bur in SO2. ((I can't see how G can be talked into this anti-R variation. He lands up with one build, minus one home center, probably at war with Russia, E with two builds hovering over him in Nth and Bel --- and he's going to go attack France ??? That's what I call living dangerously! Particualrly since France will have 2 builds coming to him. EI will be under an awful lot of temptation here to switch))

((Getting back to the original form, Ger A Ruh has an interesting decision in FO1. The support for Ital A Tyo-Mun might not be needed at all, in which case F Hol S A Ruh-Bel gives Germany a second build, which can be A Kie, to move to Ruh in SO2 if need be. If the reverse would give him F Bel, with Hol to be taken later, but the forward fleet could press Pic (and then Bre) that much sooner, and could give E extra support into Eng(in case France opted for F Bre-Eng in FO2). Indeed, if G thinks that F will go for Mun anyhow, he could rely on an unsuspecting Italy to block that move, do F Hol S A Ruh-Bel, take all three builds, and pass up that dislodgement in FO2. So there's lots of room for manoeuvre in this opening.))

.....
No, we're not done clobbering France yet. Next is Eric again, from HA #102, 12-9-72

Tactics of Offense and Defense

...This article will demonstrate good tactical play with an idealized alliance of E, G and I against F. To simplify matters, it will be assumed that the alliance has no outstanding enemies except for F, and that F cannot be outguessed. This effectively removes the element of chance ((or rather, eliminates the reliances by EGI on chance))

Spring 1901 England: F Edi-Nth, F Lon-Eng, A Lpl-Yor
Germany: F Kie-Hol, A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Mun
Italy : F Nap-Tyr, A Ven-Pie, A Rom-Tus
France : F Bre-Eng, A Par-Gas, A Mar-Pie
Fall 1901 England: F Lon-Eng, F Nth C A Yor-Bel , A Yor-Bel
Germany: F Hol H, A Mun-Bur, A Ruh S A Mun-Bur
Italy : F Tyr-Lyo, A Ven-Pie, A Tus S A Ven-Pie
France: F Bre-Eng, A Gas-Bur, A Mar-Spa
Winter 1901 England: B F Lpl, Germany: B A Mun; France: B A Mar; Italy: Zilch

The two key spaces in any anti-French campaign are Bur and Mid. The allied strategy for 1901 is to force its way into one or both by placing the German armies on

Bur and threatening to move into Mid via Eng should France permit it. The only way for France to hold both spaces would cost France both her builds and even then they would both fall in 1902. Italy, by moving for an immediate attack on Mar instead of taking Tun first, assures that either Mar will fall in O2 or 3 French units will be tied up defending it, allowing gains to be elsewhere ((by others...))

Spring 1902 England: F Lon-Eng, F Nth S F Lon-Eng, F Lpl-Iri, A Bel S Ger A Bur-Pic
 Germany: F Hol-Kie, A Bur-Pic, A Ruh S A Mun-Bur, A Mun-Bur

Italy : F Lyo S A Pie-Mar, A Pie-Mar, A Tus-Pie
 France : F Bre-Mid, A Gas-Bur, A Mar S A Gas-Bur, A Spa S A Mar

Fall 1902 England: A Bel-Bre, F Eng C A Bel-Bre, F Nth-Nwy, F Iri-Mid, A Bel-Bre
 France : F Mid-Por, A Gas & A Spa S A Mar, A Mar H

Italy : F Lyo S A Pie-Mar, A Pie-Mar, A Tus-Pie
 Germany: F Kie-Den, A Pic S EA Bel-Bre, A Mun S A Bur, A Bur S IA Pie-Mar

Winter 1902: England: B F Lpl, F Lon; Germany: B A Mun; Italy, France: No change.

That France can hold with 4 units after 2 years of full-scale attack by all 3 of her neighbors is a tribute to the inherent strength of the French defensive position. Nevertheless, by the end of O2, both Bur and Mid have been occupied. Further, Bre has fallen and Par and Mar can not be held. The struggle for position and the all-out attack are finally paying off. Note also how in some cases idle threats against SCs have been avoided in favor of positional moves which cannot be stopped, i.e. into Pic and Mid rather than Par and Bre. ((At this point, Eric does 1903, with Italy taking Mar and Spa, Germany taking Par by very straightforward attacks, but the details aren't that important because by 1903 the original assumptions are very severely strained by events. France is then down to F Por))

Italy can then support F Mid of England to Por in SO4, completing the destruction of France, and can take Tun in the fall for another build. Another strategy F might try is to abandon the homeland at some point in favor of an attack on Italy, which is abnormally weak in the early stages of the attack. However, with proper allied play, including an allout effort to give Italy a build or two and placement of the English fleets in the Med if necessary ((that sure will thrill Italy)), France will still not be able to survive much longer than above.

((OH? Len Lakofka didn't see it that way at all, countering in HA #103 with:))

The Attack On France: A Practical View

What I am presenting here is not a rebuttal to ((the above)) but rather what I consider to be a more practical means of carrying out France's demise. In short, I don't agree with any of Eric's plan. In Spring 1901 I would play:

Germany: A Mun-Bur, F Kie-Hol, A Ber-Kie

Italy : A Ven H, A Rom-Tus, F Nap-Tyr

England: F Lon-Nth, A Lpl-Yor, F Edi-Nwg

I would also tell France that Italy is attacking him --- I would say nothing about Germany and England. France can do anything he wants; I don't care. If he plays A Mar-Pie, then he's been foiled by his own plan. If he goes to Mid or Eng, it makes no real difference((It sure will to England!)). If he supports himself to Bur, he still gets poor results. If he attempts to Bur with only one unit, he gets a poor gain.

Now England will take Nwy and will be supported to Bel by F Hol. If F supports a piece to Bel he gets only one build. If France moves F Eng-Nth, it can be cut off and sent to destruction as G and E will build 2 each. Italy will take Pie in FO1 along with Tun. That gives us:

England --- F Bel, F Nwy, F Lpl, F Edi A Lon

Germany --- F Hol, A Mun, A Ber, A Kie, A Den

Italy --- F Rom, F Tun, A Pie, A Tus (or F Nap for F Rom)

France may now have 2 builds is he plays to Mid and properly guesses the Ital feint. But now, in SO2:

England: F Bel-Eng, H, or S F Edi-Nth, F Nwy-Nwg, F Lpl-Iri, A Lon-Wal (depending on who is in the channel), F Edi-Nth

Italy: F Tun-Wes, F Rom(Nap)-Tyr, A Pie-Mar, A Tus-Pie

Germany : A Mun S A Kie-Ruh, A Kie-Ruh, A Den-Kie, F Hol S Eng F Bel

In this plan, the allies get 4 or 5 builds to Eric's 2 in 1901. France can get none ((very unlikely)), one or two. The crush of France occurs in O2 or O3, and gives all the allies play in the east too, --- after all, T, Russia, and Austria will not just play dead. ((Obviously these two started with rather different premises))

((This might be a good point to look at a real game which began with a blitz that was actually more ferocious than either of these two plans. 1980B0, in Fall of Eagles, had Italy opening with F ~~Nap~~-Tyr, followed by convoy to Tun, plus A Ven-Pie-Mar, the latter with support from Germany (A Bur). England was stood out of Eng in SO1, entering in FO1, plus convoyed A Yor-Bel. France, after the standoff, took Mid, and slid his armies into Iberia for the build of A Par. But those 3 armies + F Mid faced a MAR-Bur-Bel army line, plus F in Tyn and Eng. SO2 saw the fall of Bre, and a supported standoff in Gas as France hunkered down. Then the alliance fell apart --- E grabbed Hol in the fall. While Italy took Spa in SO3, England cut his support and France retook in FO3 ---- and even Russia tried to help France. A strange end to a splendid blitz.))

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((And speaking of FOE, this item, presumably by the editor Richard Hucknall, came from #57, May 1981))

#### THE NORTHERN TIER ALLIANCE

Several years ago I used to play FTF Diplomacy with a few friends on a fairly frequent basis -- about 3 times a year. For most of these people it was the only occasion they played the game and none were involved in postal play. The effect was that they did not have a very good grasp of strategy and tactics. In fact the games were really just a good excuse for a 9 hour booze-up.

On one particular occasion I was playing England and put forward proposals for a strange triple alliance between E, F and G, and to my surprise it was accepted. The alliance did in fact hold throughout the game and I vaguely recall that the result was a multi-player draw. Because of the effect that this alliance had, and the inexperience of the other players, most subsequent games seemed to feature this alliance or a slight variation on it. I do not recommend it was a good alliance but it does not have excellent opportunities for certain countrys should they wish to break the alliance at a later stage.

|                    |          |                                                                                                      |
|--------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>Spring</u> 1901 | England; | F Edi-Nwg, F Lon-Nth, A Lpl-Edi                                                                      |
|                    | France : | F Bre-Mid, A Par-Gas, A Mar-Pie                                                                      |
|                    | Germany: | F Kie-Hol, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Tyo                                                                      |
| <u>Fall</u> 1901   | England: | F Nwg-Nwy, F Nth C A Edi-Den                                                                         |
|                    | France : | If A Mar-Pie succeeded F Mid-Por, A Gas-Spa, A Pie-Tus/Ven<br>Otherwise F Mid C A Gas-Por, A Mar-Spa |
|                    | Germany: | F Hol-Bel, A Kie-Hol, A Mun-Tyr or A Tyr-Vie/Tri or assist French                                    |

England then moves against Swe and StP and then tries to force armies down thru Russia, receiving help from G when available. He builds only a minimum of Fleets and never raises a fleet in London. France builds mainly fleets and moves against Italy. After 1901 there should be no fleet builds in Bre unless absolutely necessary. Germany builds totally armies and moves against Austria. All 3 give help to each other as and when possible.

Altho there is a high degree of trust needed, one ploy that can be used by G to re-empt an attack by England is to order F Bel-Nth for the remainder of the game. E should have a F Nth and this will be used just for ferrying armies into Scan for the push against R. So any move by F Nth is likely to prelude a stab on Germany. By ordering F Bel-Nth G will have a little reassurance should E ever decide to stab.

Of course, once the alliance becomes evident (usually after F O1), the R, A and I are likely to form their own defensive alliance. Consequently, any disunity that can be engendered during 1901 between these southern powers is to the advantage of England,

France, and Germany. Particular attention should be paid to Turkey as once the Northern Tier alliance becomes evident, T is in a strange position. He can either help the northern powers unwittingly by attacking Italy, Austria or Russia as they are forming against the northern alliance, or he can be passive to them and merely support them.

As I said earlier, I don't recommend this alliance, but merely put it forward as an example of a different alliance possibility. However, should it be suggested to me when playing England I would accept it gratefully and await the right moment to stab! France would be a good target but perhaps Germany would be that little bit more beneficial. As a long term strategy I believe it places both France and Germany in a position from which they cannot win, and open to a telling stab before the game has reached 1905/6. ((Those who saw the McKeJo Opening in DW #25 will recognize the English convoy to Den in FO1, but in general this opening is more aggressive than the McKeJo. The bit about the Ger F Bel-Nth while E convoys armies to Scandinavia is a standard precaution, but its value (to G) is rather limited. Until G is flush with armies from cleaning up Austria that he has some to spare, there is always the risk of the convoy to Holland, meaning that the Ger F is wasted. Note also that Germany's initial gains will come in Austria --- where she will have no Western ally. Even when F takes Ven, F will probably want to use that army against Rom, and the Italians may but it, reducing its use as a support for an attack on Tri. By contrast, E can usually mop up Swe/StP with just a touch of help from Germany, or none at all, especially with that Eng A Den. Further tilting the scales against G in this alliance is the fact that 1) E is permitted to build both armies and fleets and 2) Den, adjacent to Kie, belongs to England and 3) with the Ger F in Bel/Hol, Rus F Bal can be utter murder. In short, unless G is feeling very pressured, and accepts this as better-than-getting-blitzed, he had better be on VERY good terms with both F and T.))

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The following are the endgame statements for 76BW, taken from Claw and Fang #90

Dennis Goldston(G): This was undoubtedly my most memorable and exciting game. Merely look back to my FO2 position and you will understand the sheer panic I felt then. The mail had left me NMR, E had taken Swe from me, R had taken Ber and Mun, the Russian had units in Ber, Mun and Boh plus he got a build while I had to remove one, and last, but not least, I had no sure friend in the game at all. Then Austria switched sides and hope returned.

The game started well, but the first letter from Russia ((Lee Kendter, Sr)) was ominous. He didn't ask for Swe, or negotiate, or any thing friendly -- he demanded Swe. The Russian player was good, and no good player would write such a letter unless he had something in the hole to back him up ((and even then....)). I was certain it wasn't Austria, and thus the T-R alliance was a sure thing to me. I resolved to concede nothing to R and I wrote incessant letters of warning to the others. Italy seemed to be watching Austria and Austria wavered. But after FO2 he committed and then the tide turned.

There was still an uphill struggle. E had to be kept at bay while R was overcome and there were no units to spare, so constant letter writing, pleading, and warning (first about R-T and then A-I) had to suffice. Did the Diplomacy work? I can't be sure, but E hesitated just long enough and I recovered. That was a mistake Andy Cook inherited ((in S05 as E)), and he was too late to overcome it. F, too, was in the picture, but very enigmatic and seemingly unpredictable. My only goal was to keep him from attacking and again I wrote continually....Thanx to Dave Ditter for a perfect alliance. Thanx to Jim Kjol for a fine effort with lowly Italy. I enjoyed this game immensely and the 3-way draw was very just.

Dave Ditter (Austria) First let me say that Dennis Goldston proved to be an ally's dream. He always stays in touch and his Diplomacy alone really enabled him to be among the winners of the game. I'm sure both Italy and Germany agree that I was in the best position for a win, but I find this 3-way draw totally gratifying. Jim Kjol proved very trustworthy and helped me most (as did G) when I needed it versus the solid alliance of Diehl and Kendter (T and R) at the start of the game. Lee and I had quite

an argument on ethics concerning his alliance, but I feel I know him as a friend just the same. For me this was my most enjoyable game so far.

Jim Kjol(Italy) Immediately at the beginning of the game the Russian and Turkish players formed a coalition. G and A had already formed an alliance and I was faced with joining one of these two groups. My opening moves put me in a position to take either Mar or Tri...I had already decided not to join the R-T alliance because their only expansion would have to be west, and eventually I would have to be exterminated. With much convincing by A and G, I joined them. G would sweep west against England and France. A would push east against R and T. I would split my forces and aid on both campaigns. After early gains by me in F, I was soon stalemated. Meanwhile, G hit R from the north and weakened him enough for A to make gains in southern Russia. This combined with our attack on T soon eliminated R and left T standing alone. T held on despite our attempts and it was a stalemate for quite a while. I was soon able to get my fleets into the Atlantic and with G's in the Nth we asked for a draw. Our first was voted down but eventually we got it. I think that the 3-way alliance of the middle countries is one of the best to play because no one player has to fight on two fronts alone. In all it was fun...

((Those weren't the most satisfying end-game statements, but it was all I could find on this alliance. It was clear, however, how much the three of them enjoyed the alliance. The interior alliance (IAG) is the soundest triple, in terms of long-term expansion without getting in anyone's way. All other triples, at least to some degree, either find one party getting progressively squeezed out of expansion room (e.g. E in EFG) or lands up with essential asymmetry --- someone caught in the middle (e.g. R in ERT). This alliance makes the best possible use of Switzerland as a buffer, and is, at least for B and A, an alliance of desperation. Unlike alliances such as EFG or RAT, which are usually quite obvious by FO1 and impossible to hide by SO2, this one is harder to spot, because I-G and G-A are such "normal" and "unremarkable" alliances in the early going. Of course, there are drawbacks too --- there is only limited scope for military cooperation in 1901-3, but its strength is in long-run stability. I've been thinking of doing some research on this alliance, so I may compose a sizable article on this alliance some day.))

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#### A Look at the Unusual RAT Alliance

In sharp contrast to the EFG alliance, RAT is rarely seen, alas. This is because T's position is not really analogous to E's when aligned with the other two. E has early gains to be made in the form of Swe, StP and even mos, which can be done without seriously getting in G's way. By contrast, T has a much narrower route for expansion to Tun, a significant chance of finding an alert F already there, and Italy is not much for A and T to divide. One RAT game I was able to find was 1975DJ, and this game produced these endgame statements in 1901 and all that #72, 11-19-76:

Russia: "The Treaty of Budapest" signed before 1901 by 3 players 90% sure that the others would not break the treaty simply stated that the parties to the treaty would not attack the homeland spaces of the other 2. There was no agreement to a 3-way win, only an implied agreement to share the first 3 places insofar as the treaty was game-long. The Treaty was kept by all 3 parties at all times. Perhaps mutual trust, or perhaps the knowledge that a break of the treaty would have brought instant retribution from the other 2, whatever it was, it enabled us to agree to Turkish units wandering about Central Europe for most of the game.

So it was virtually certain that we three would divide the first 3 places between us. I fail to understand what is wrong with that ((Only that you're destroying the whole point of Diplomacy, which is a battle of wits (with a smattering of tactical skills thrown in) against 6 other players...))((That was Mick Bullock, the GM))

In practice, only the non-aggression pact of this treaty helped in this particular game. Because E submitted only SO1 orders((no stanbys were used)), A outwitted I very early in the game, helped by one miss, and I managed to outwit G, while F, when he bo-



~~there~~ to submit orders played like an idiot...The real battle was for first place. Aus lost this with one small slip --- failed to order a retreat for his only fleet, and without it could make no progress against F with all his armies funneled into the Cul-de-Sac that Italy becomes without fleets. T similarly gave up any chance of first with a similar slip, failing to order a disband, and thus having the GM disband his very valuable F Mid. So with those two slips and the lack of interest shown by the other players, it was not a madly exciting game, but I only make this point because I feel that the result of the first 3 places would have been the same in total no matter what the opposition, unless they had combined very early on.

A final word on missed orders. For me this is part of knowing whom to choose as an ally, and thus is all part of Diplomacy played thru the post.

Austria. A conditional ART alliance made for an unusual game. It enabled A to overrun I with little difficulty. Unfortunately after defeating Italy I forgot to order my Mid fleet to retreat, and its consequent sinking made further expansion thru the Med difficult, particularly as T, being closed in by her two allies was trying to conduct long-range warfare in every sea space between Istanbul and Gibraltar. Meanwhile, R was racing away having all of the fun while T and A were getting under one another's feet on land as well as sea. Several misunderstandings occurred between A and T. The first caused A to occupy Tun in contravention of the treaty and the second locked a Tur army in Tri. It reached a stage where A believed that T was to be staging a subtle double cross.

In consequence, 1907 saw the stabbing of T, who stood at 8 to A's 6 in FO6. By FO7 A had 9 to T's 6. One more season gave R the outright win and Aus managed to take second with 10, everyone else having been eliminated (or dropped out) by Russia who had put up an excellent show. Congratulations to David Barnes on his skillful manipulation of Russia. Commiserations to Davie Wheeler (T) who but for a couple of misunderstandings would have taken joint second place.

Turkey: Since it is written into the Karma League rules that allies shall be free to attack each other outside their own homelands after the reduction of the other powers, a decisive result is more likely than in games where there is no KL element ((Huh! It was virtually conceded in WOO))) It was an outright win: Look at the final disparity of the 3 KL powers: 18, 10, 5. The Russian capture of Bul and the Austrian capture of Ser were hostile acts of war against T and her allies, but they were not breaches of the karma rules or of the spirit of them.

In 1900 I proposed an alliance with R only to find that R had already formed an alliance with John Smart (A) then an unknown to me.. A triple alliance was proposed which I judged prudent to accept. Also, I had some good experience with Barnes (R) as an ally. This Triple Alliance is bad for T because, after the occupation of the Balkans her armies can only be used against her allies. I thought I had negotiated a route thru Aus to the lowlands, but A stood off my A Tri-Tyo, so that a temporary and unintended Turkish occupation of Tri followed. Turkey would have been eliminated, but for the Karma League. I still think 3 KL members will certainly beat the other 4 and that 2 KL members would probably beat the other 5. What fascinates me about Diplomacy is its similarity to real life.

GM: And that 7 KL would probably beat each other to the nut-house trying to avoid not attacking each other. You three are beyond me, you really are...The game was all but over when T penned this immortal press release in FO2! "The Govts of A, R, T hereby issue an ultimatum....that unless you concede victory to the alliance immediately, you will be eliminated before England((who was already in CD))!.." Such a concession will secure you at least equal 4th place..." "We already hold 18 centers between us..." Congratulations on your victory David; I regret that I see it as a rather hollow one... I hope we do not get many more like it, 'cos it will only hasten the day when this job becomes a job rather than a joy.((So long as a player complies with the HRs and is in no cross-game deals, any method of winning is self-justifying in a game one is supposed to try to win. If the Russian player could keep the other two in compliance with an alliance which was manifestly helping R the most, his win was deserved, not hollow.))

Last issue I took Jack Masters to task for plagerizing some stories, presenting them in Black Frog as his own. Shortly after the issue was delivered to the printers, BF #48 arrived with Jack's defense against what were bascally Brux's charges. In effect he denied the charge. They were "inspired", he says, and points to the fact that in BF #35 he "gave credit to the inspirational sources", 5 names including Thurber. He went on to say, "If the story is plagerized as Linsey claims, and it isn't, so what? The Turber copyright expired in 1947 --- 34 years ago." (Emphasis mine). To begin with, plagerism is a broader concept than copyright infringement. If I write a story for DD, and you print it with your name on it, thats plagerism regardless of whether I pay money for a copyright. I find Masters' dates almost impossible to beleive. A copyright normally runs to 28 years, which takes the story to 1954. And I find it hard to beleive that a professional writer like Thurber would forget to renew it (tho I suppose its possible) for another 28, taking us to 1986. As for whether its inspired or copied, Jack invites you to the Librery to check, and my readers can check that one out as well as I can, so you can see for yourself. Another story won't be so easy. "The Chimp that plays Diplomacy" was taken from the story, "The Descent of Man" written by T.C. Boyle, a person whose name definately does not appear on his list of credits. It first appeared in Paris Review, and a short time later appeared in a collection of SciFi, in 1978; Rod Walker has supplied me with a copy (he spotted it). I've compared them. To be specific, look in BF #42, the first page of the chimp story, third to the last line, "a chimpanzee" From there to the end of the paragraph on the next page, its copied, word for word. Nothing added, nothing deleted. The next paragraph is also copied, with one sentence partly rewritten. The next para has some condensation in the opening sentence, but then is straight copy. In the next paragraph, he changed "Wing-tips" to "Nikes", but that was the only change. And so it goes. This isn't inspiration, its just straight out and out copying. If Jack wants to be legal, it is without question copyright infringement --- I don't think Jack can construct a "fair use" defense. With regard to another story from Thurber, Jack says, "In this case, Linsey's allegation of an almost "word for word" copy is pretty close to the truth. But then, I didn't intend this to be my derivation of Thurber's story --- it was intended to be Gary Coughlan's." Huh? What? Look, Jack, you copied it, and the fact that it ws for BF #33, the fake EE, doesn't change that fact.

Well, as several have said, so what? Well, I'm embarressed. I sent two people copies of that Chimp story to persuade them what a superb writer Jack is. I voted his BF very high in the Leeder Poll on the quality of paragraphs that I thought were his. In my personal opinion, for whatever that's worth, if this story had come out earlier, BF would not have won the Leeder Poll. If Jack wants to adapt, or reprint for that matter, these stories, fine --- but tell the readers what's going on. But whats worst of all is that Jack seems to have a terrible time admitting that he made a mistake --- either that, or he doesn't think he did. His defense is selective and, as I point out, probably untrue. It is loaded up with cracks about Bruce which anyone who gets VOD is going to know are just plain untrue. Jack is trying to take advantage of Brux's controversial reputation to try to dump on the bearer of bad tidings. I still enjoy getting BF, just renewed my sub in fact, but I think Jack has some growing up to do.

On the Bates-is-Dead hoax, I've heard from Marion: "I have to admit that I am sympathetic with your view that the hoax letter reporting my death probably did not deserve to achieve status as a hobby-wide news item scandal. It was thankfully limited and I probably would have been happier if it had not gotten any wider. It amazes me that people with whom I have had virtually no contact have become so upset. Now, there are some people out there who were very upset and grieved at the news of my supposed death since they are friends of mine but these are not the ones who, by and large, have been raising the hue and cry. The ones kicking up the fuss in public must have been those who feel left out for not having received the letter. For the most part, those whom I think we both could agree are entitled to bitch, are not doing so. I would like to see the whole painful and unhappy episode put to rest. Those of us who were really hurt by it would have it so. I think I speak for all of us." ((Amen)).

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Marion continued: "I also must take exception to your characterization of PLAGUE TIMES as "a zine with a morbid sense of humor." The humor in PT is generally free-wheeling and occasionally off-the-wall but I do not think I am prone toward morbidity. Your remark shows a striking unfamiliarity with my zine. You have a perfect right to be ignorant about PT (most of the world is, after all) But I would appreciate it if you would be cognizant of your ignorance and careful not to make such remarks in print which could have a deleterious effect on my reputation as well as that of my zine based on unfounded assumptions." ((Gulp! Marion is absolutely right. My description was based on second hand information and I'm certainly NOT going to rely on that party again in the future. My apologies, and if you'll send me an issue or 2 I'll review it here.))

Last issue I mentioned that Bob Arnett had claimed that Bruce Linsey had created "Jane Proskin" for dishonest purposes ("This is the kind of stuff that Oaklyn/Tretick was accused of."), and that Bob had said that I was "involved" in this". I have now gotten a letter from Kathy Byrne, and her version is directly at odds with Bob's. She says, "Bruce told me about Jane Proskin, he said she was going to be a female who would write articles about males in the hobby, and that she could get away with saying a lot more than he could...She was just supposed to be someone writing sunny stuff. He did tell me that Bob Arnett knew about this also, and .... she would be on Bob's standby list, to make it look more authentic, altho Bob would not call her." Now, I ask you, if Bruce were going to pull a Tretick and get into a game with Jane, why on earth would he tell Kathy about it? As soon as the game began, Kathy (who was playing in Bob's zine at the time) would surely have blown the whistle on this dishonesty! What's more, Kathy had told Bob that she knew about Jane before Bob printed his charge. So if Bob knew that Bruce had told Kathy (thus making a Tretick impossible), why did he make the charge anyway? Also, Bob claims of course that Bruce never told him, but Kathy, as you see above, says that Bruce told her that Bob knew. If Bruce didn't tell Bob, it seems he was taking an awful risk in telling her that he had --- after all, she might mention in any conversation with Bob, and that would spill the beans. In short, in view of the fact that Bruce told Kathy at the start, and Bob was told by her that she knew, I think that Bob's charges against Bruce (and me) are irresponsible.

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(continued from page 1) There is plenty to read in this issue, and I am confident that once Rod gets things fully organized, the zine will become significantly better.

With Passchendaele #36 comes the news that P is NOT folding after all. This is certainly good news! The announcements in #35 of his folding and marriage were a "hoax", not his "intention". I must say that this story, and his comments as to how we were supposed to have figured out that this was a hoax, are rather unconvincing. After all, the gap between #34 and #35 was about 6 months, less than half of which can be attributed to the postal strike. So #35 was an extremely poor time to pull something like that. And Francois, who is usually full of reasons for why he does (or doesn't do) things, gave not one reason for the hoax.

Jack Masters says in BF #51, and at greater length in #52, that there was a "cover-up" in the "Back Hole affair", and that a special issue will be devoted to this in late Nov. Jack seems to be blissfully unaware of the fact that virtually nobody is interested in having these events rehashed all over again. Would that Jack remember what he wrote in BF #8, the first widely distributed issue: "Black Frog will, however, avoid controversial topics and personality conflicts."

Brutus Bulletin alas, is no more. This zine featured a higher level of editor-reader interaction than any other North American zine in the hobby's history, exceeding even that of Brobdingnag in its heyday. No other zine has been able to generate such a large stable of regular letter-writers, willing to put out 1, 2, 3 and even 4 page letters. Devotees of substantial lettercols, tho, should check out the 2nd anniversary of VOD. This has 17 pages of letters (and responses) from 18 or so contributors, including some who appear to send their letters only to VOD. The issue ran 46 pages, and covers just about everything (Bruce Linsey 24A Quarry Drive Albany, NY 12205, 20/\$11).

Larry Peery has decided to go ahead with his plans for the International Diplomacy Hall of Fame. This is an interesting project of an entirely positive nature. If you are a GM, publisher or editor and would like to vote on the initial nominees, contact him at P.O.Box 8416 San Diego CA 92102.

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If "52" or rather (52) or  
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