

DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Losing

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This issue has a rather gloomy topic: Losing. But its an integral part of the game of Diplomacy. A game with 7 players that usually comes down to one winner must perforce generate a lot of losers. A lot of people don't know how to deal with these types of situations, and in fact many leave the game, I suspect, because they can't deal with losing. Anyhow, I hope the issue gives you some ideas you'll find helpful.

Before I forget, I may have distributed a few defective copies of issue #2(it would have a page from #6 in it). If you have one, send it back and I'll give you a good one and a postage refund. Lets see. Farrago #4, containing the final discussion of the scoring system to be used at DipCon 1982, should be available for an SASE by the time you get this.

The GMing errors articles lastish engendered zilch response, but the TZC # 45 fetched quite a bit. Some of this was off the record, but the rest is in:

THE MAILBAG

John Caruso: "I read your editorial in DIPLOMACY DIGEST #54. You quoted me out of context. My entire editorial dealt with trouble makers, not any one person in particular. You misrepresented the whole editorial --- the way you chopped up my wording. I will continue to tell people to ignore the trouble makers. How about you Mark?"

((Your editorial was not about some abstract concept of troublemaking, but about real flesh and blood people. As you put it, "A small group of people ... They number about a dozen." As I have explained in a private letter to John, I have no doubt at all t that this group of people includes me. As for "ignore the troublemakers", John and I appear to have somewhat different notions of what troublemaking is. Plus, its just not my style to tell people to "ignore" vague catagories of people. The only time I've ever urged my readers to ignore someone was a single specific person (Oaklyn). As for your criticisms, nothing was quoted out of context, and nothing was misrepresented. As you give no details, I can't comment further. However, if any of my readers want to check for themselves, just drop me a line, and I'll send you a Xerox of the Whitestonia editorial))

"As for Fred Davis --- why is it that you wish to continue to publicize something which doesn't concern you directly, and which Fred and Kathy have resolved?"

((Well, now, I can't even print your letter without continuing to publicize this, can I?. And if everybody stuck to just things that concerned them "directly", this would be a much duller hobby. And as for Fred, Kathy has accepted his denial, and says that closes the subject of Fred's behaivior. I agree, and I think those people (e.g. Steve Arnawoodian) who have heard this denial and still criticize Fred,would do well do examine their own motives.))

"P.S. I think you should stick to the humor and forget the editorials." ((Huh?))

Peter Ashley: "In the latest Coat of Arms ((Woody was kind enough to print my letter of response, which covered many of the same topics as did the editorial)) your rather complete rebuttal seems to have taken the matter too seriously. There are a few publishers in our hobby who think it is fine to play a bit fast-and-lose with what they say about whom; Arnawoodian, Ozog, Brux, others. I've yet to see anything genuinely malicious from any of them, but the howls that come from the injured few are amazing. To be a hobby personality grants a bit of license to others in the hobby to poke fun at you...You may not like this license, and be incensed at the way you are dragged through the mud, but such libelously free press has a lot to do with our system in this country, and I can't see any decent way to draw the line. But when you respond, please don't sound so injured; maybe it was unintentional..."

((Maybe, maybe not. I'm not really into guessing people's motives or intentions; I just go on what they say. Sure, being a hobby personality makes me a target, and I'm not unique in that regard. My main objection is not their shots at me. I can survive them just as well as they can survive my shots at them. My main objection was the spirit of divisiveness which I felt coming thru very strongly in both editorials, that people can be categorized by e.g. how much they play. As Woody put it, "As far as I am concerned this is a hobby for people playing postal diplomacy. I really can't see why anyone who isn't playing has the right to mouth off..." (emphasis added).) Is that "malicious"? I very much doubt it. But that attitude, I think, is harmful to the hobby, because it's the wrong definition. This is a hobby for people who contribute, not just for those who play))

Ronald Brown: "Arnawoodian & Co should check their facts before they start spouting off Fred Davis, for example, does play postal games -- and they should know as they received a sample of SNAFU! ((Brown's zine)) some time ago. But, so what if he (& Walker & Baumeister) doesn't play? If we all played 25 plus games as the COA's editors would like us to, there'd be very few zines and no one would have time to design variants, look after orphan placement, assign Boardman and Miller numbers, keep stats, etc. I know there would be no SNAFU! if I were playing in 25 games. I can't imagine how anyone can write the number of letters involved for 25 games --- or maybe that's why my players are starting to complain about the decline in the letter-writing aspect of the game...Last summer I was acclaimed to the post of committeeman & editor of the Mensa Diplomacy SIG. Why? Because I am not playing in 25 games and so have the time to offer my services where they are needed."

((Apparently Woody is able to pull off this feat. Of course, he has a co-editor to help with COA, an arrangement that I've urged people in the past to consider. But historically, very few publishers have been able to play in huge numbers of games and publish a big zine at the same time (Conrad von Metzke was one). Even those who did couldn't keep it up for all that long. We'll see what the story is like in, say two years from now.))

Steve Langley: "Question to consider ... What is the big deal about Woody penning off about who is or is not important to the hobby? The reality of the situation is that everyone is as important as he/she is important. It doesn't matter what an opinion voiced happens to be ... No answer needed... ((A good note to close on))

The Zine Column #47

WHAT'S, UM, HAPPENING

There seems to be a veritable stampede of former publishers recently back into the hobby, in various roles. I mentioned Ed Kollmer in DD #53. I see that Jack Brawner (Flying Dutchman) and Roy Smith (Brew and Reefer) have just recently signed up for games. Mike Lind (Pen and Sword) has subbed here, and I've heard from Roger Oliver (The Diplomacy Journal) that he's considering a new hobby project. I guess once the hobby gets into your blood, it doesn't leave so fast. I'm glad to see these people back, tho of course if there are any past debts to repay.....

turn to near top of page 11

Starting things off will be this essay from the 1975 I.D.A. Diplomacy Handbook

REVENGE, WEAPON IN YOUR ARSENAL by Howard Mahler

The proper use of revenge, when applied as a well thought-out strategy rather than as some emotional outburst, can improve your success in Diplomacy. In postal play or FTF among a regular crowd, you bring one other important asset to the game besides your knowledge and ability: your reputation. Besides being aware of your superb diplomatic and tactical skills, your opponents probably have their individual ideas of how likely you are to stab, and, as important, how you are likely to react when attacked yourself.

Which naturally brings us to the key question of what to do when attacked. Arnold Proujansky and Gene Prosnitz, altho among the best players, represent to me 2 opposite extremes which you should try to avoid. Arnold is a self styled feudist; once you attack him in a game, he's your enemy for the rest of that one game. Of course, he's a mature human being, so it's nothing personal, but within the context of that one game, you are evil incarnate. On the other hand, Gene is always willing to listen if after you attack him you decide it would be a good idea to cease hostilities. Gene's a member, or better yet a high priest of the Balance of Power philosophy. He's always eager, all too eager, to heed the cry to unite to "stop the leader from winning!"

Both attitudes in their extreme forms have disadvantages which outweigh the possible advantages. Suppose you were deciding whether to attack a player, and knew he was an extreme follower of the Balance of Power philosophy. You would be more likely to attack him, since you'd be taking less of a risk. He would not necessarily be a permanent enemy (even if you plan to wipe him out, the best laid plans of mice and men oft go astray), and he would still always be on tap if you need him to help form a stop-the-leader alliance. It's precisely in this aspect that the feudist shines; people are very wary of attacking him. However, this inflexibility of the true extreme feudist means many opportunities for draws (or even wins) are thrown away. The true feudist says, "I don't care whether that fellow over there wins, you attacked me and thus are the enemy. I will never ally with you again in this game, even if it's to stop the devil himself."

More profitable than either of these extremes is a mixture, in which your attitude is based on how "treacherous" the attack was. Possible gains in this one game must be balanced against long-term gain from improving your reputation. First, let me explain the factors that I use, in my own mind, to determine how "treacherous" an attack has been. First and most important, what sort of agreements did we have? An attack by a long term ally, who you've been successfully working with, is the most treacherous. One by someone with whom you've made a neutrality pact is less so. If you had no agreement, then you shouldn't be surprised that he attacked you. Also, take into account whether this is his first attack on you this game. You should frown on repeated performances. A third factor is how much your attacker has to gain by his attack. If he has a lot to gain, then you can understand it; on the other hand a stupid stab should be regarded as an affront to your honor. Another factor is whether your attacker gave you even a hint of his coming attack; if he's warned you in advance, there's a factor in his favor. Also, consider what your intentions were toward him. If you planned to attack him soon, can you blame him for moving before you were ready? Finally, what was your attacker's attitude after the attack? Did he gloat or did he try to explain his move? ((You might also consider what other alternatives he had to stabbing you. If your centers were his only source of growth, he can hardly be blamed for not wanting to just sit still, in many circumstances. Indeed, such a stab may well be partly your fault for hemming him in, forcing his hand against you.))

As you may have noticed, if he doesn't want to be labeled treacherous, your opponent has to give away a certain edge to you. For example, declaring war on someone rarely works as well as a surprise attack ((This article could stand a little editing)) You are trying to make your opponents "respect" you precisely in order to gain these advantages. For example, your opponent might decide that it would be better in certain cases to announce his attack, so as not to lead you to label him the permanent enemy fit

only for revenge. Other times he'll think twice before trying to grab one quick center from you.

Once you've decided how treacherous your opponent has been, you can weigh your possible short term gains against your long term reputation. Various situations lead to different possibilities to choose from.

Many times you'll be faced with a massive ^{attack}, which you'll be unable to survive. Sometimes in spite of this there remains means to extract revenge, if you are imaginative. For example, in the first Hoosier Archives demo game, 1971BC, Gene Pronitz as E was attacked by his 3 neighbors. He decided, after being completely unable to change any of the 3's minds, to threaten to teach G and R a lesson by seeing that France got all of the English centers. When neither G nor R then changed their course, Gene went thru with the threat and succeeded in throwing the game to France. Perhaps Gene made one mistake: Edi Birsan as F was the one who'd instigated the grand alliance against Gene. ((So what? Once all are participating, what does it matter who instigated?)) On the other hand, the tactical situation was much better for holding off R and G (rather than F and one of the others), and R and G were more likely to be turned around by the threat ((The former point seems irrelevant --- if F will swallow him, what does it matter precisely how long R and G are held off? The latter point seems to be the strongest point to make. Target your strategy against the person its most likely to succeed against.)).

In any case, the general idea of "pulling a Prosnitz", i.e. picking one of multiple attackers for special treatment, is a very useful idea. The threat to pull a prosnitz may turn around one or more of your attackers. If not, when you go thru with your threat (after all, you have nothing to lose) you can hopefully manage to reward your more honorable opponents while getting revenge on your more treacherous ones. Sometimes this idea of picking out your more treacherous opponents for revenge will be impractical. In pulling a prosnitz, as in all the chemes I'll discuss, the possibilities are sometimes limited by the tactical situation.

Other times, rather than be the target of a massive attack, you'll be beset by a nibbler, who goes after one of your less well protected crumbs. Your attacker says he's now got what he wanted and will stop there. If you believe he's really done nibbling for now, you've got the choice of either accepting the fait accompli, or taking some punitive action. If you're involved elsewhere, the temptation will be great to let bygones be bygones, at least for now while remembering it for future reference. However, you then risk finding the nibbler coming back for seconds. Eventually you can find yourself nibbled down to so weak a position that not only are you doomed, but you can't even affect the game on your way out. On the other hand, if you turn around and take revenge on the nibbler, you can hurt him, but only by also hurting yourself. Whether to take revenge here is one of the toughest decisions you'll have. We all find it tough to completely abandon our hopes of doing well, or even surviving, just in order to ruin someone else's game, particularly over something that seems so easy to ignore.

An extreme case of repeated stabs was in a game in Warlord where A stabbed R bloodily at least 3 separate times (and perhaps more, since its unclear to an observer when they had a deal). By this I mean: R made a new agreement with A only to have A break it in short order. This Russian player gave a fabulous example of what not to do. He preferred to attack T and E who'd never attacked him, while allying with G and A who had. Far from thinking of revenge, he allowed Austria to walk into his centers. His stay in the game was appropriately ended when he kept an English unit out of Sil, thus giving A, who had stabbed him again that season, a lock on the last Russian center, Warsaw. ((This appears to be 1973HH, won as France by Howard Mahler)).

This Russian player could not bring himself to abandon hopes of doing well himself, no matter how unlikely they became. At some point he could have realized that his position had become so weak that he would be lucky to survive without being part of a draw. Thus, free of the restraints put on him by false hopes, he could have made

Austria pay for his stabs.

Up to now I've been discussing situations in which some firm alliances have formed. However, rough-and-tumble situations often occur ... in which the constant switching of temporary allies is like a game of musical chairs. You do not want to be caught as the odd man out when the music stops and some stability enters the alliance structure. On the other hand, you may find yourself being repeatedly stabbed by the same fellow. You must call on your full powers of judgement to balance off conflicting goals, whether to stay flexible and risk being nibbled to death, or to seek revenge and risk helping to form an alliance against you, when alliances firm up.

One last situation of interest is when an ally of yours stabs a mutual ally. Sometimes, you should realize that the 3 of you are going to have to part pretty soon anyway. Be grateful that you are now in the most flexible position of the three, and use that fact to your own best advantage.

Other times, this is not the case, as when you were all allied in order to stop some major power or alliance from winning. In this case, your attitude should be to take revenge against the breaker of the alliance unless you hear some very, very good arguments against it.

One fun way of having your cake and eating it, too, is to offer to puppet your units to the ally who was stabbed. Thus, if he wants to take revenge against his attacker you'll have kept good faith with him. On the other hand, you can explain to the attacker that it's none of your doing; you no longer exercise any control over your units since you had an agreement which forced you to puppet your units to your other ally who was stabbed. On the other hand, if your ally who was stabbed doesn't want to bother to control your units, you can then look out for your own interests with a clear conscience...

In any case, this ploy can really lead to some great fun if the personalities are right (even moreso if the stabbed ally's position has been eliminated thus making him a ghost coming back from the grave). Your side of the conversation could go as follows: "Don't come to me about that German unit in your Russian center Yes, I know I'm Germany, but go talk to England. He's now controlling the German unit... Well, you should have thought of that when you stabbed him. I had an agreement with him that I'd let him control my units if you stabbed him. Yes, I know you and I are allied, but as I said I've got to keep this agreement with England." ((E has presumably been eliminated at this point)). The discussion continues in the same vein until the Russian player starts climbing the walls.

The subject of puppeting is closely linked to that of revenge. Occasionally, you'll find yourself in a position which is very weak. A major power will offer you survival in exchange for doing exactly what he says. (He may also promise you a certain in-place finish or perhaps that a third party will be eliminated). Often, puppeting to a third party will be a fantastic way to get revenge on your attacker. In fact, you can take the initiative and make an offer to puppet to someone provided he agrees to help you wipe out your treacherous attacker.

Other times someone who has attacked you will ask you to puppet to him. Here, puppeting and revenge are mutually opposed alternatives. As always consider how treacherous your opponent's attack was. Puppeting too often and too eagerly in this type of situation can be the most damaging of all to your reputation. Reputation aside, great caution must be used, since often you'll be giving up control of your fate permanently and giving it to someone who has already attacked you once. Do not be overly afraid of death with honor. Before you grasp at this seeming chance for survival, carefully consider exactly what your puppeteer will have to gain by stabbing you, particularly in the more distant future. On the other hand, sometimes as a puppet you'll get a chance for revenge in the future, but this is rare. More commonly, you can sometimes participate in a draw. (Consider feeding information to the "enemy" in order to steer the game into a deadlocked situation.) Besides the damage to your

you'e out to have fun. But you may earn some sor_t of survival in the process. If you do totally crazy moves, there are times when they may thwart an overwhelming at-tack, which was prepared for a more stable defense. Not only does this prolong your life, but it shows your worth to the enemies of the player attacking you. But first you'd better check the alliance patterns. With Diplomacy being as intricate as it is, just about anything could have happened to put you in a dying position. I'm going to deal with two possibilities.

#1: You've been with the same general alliance the whole game and you're dying. In this case, you can do two things. One is to keep fighting your game-long opponents giving them as many problems as possible, and generally practicing the art of "getting under foot." This is the admirable, honorable and most fun thing to do. The second is to "sell your soul" to the enemy, stab your allies and become totally untrustable to anyone. Your old allies won't trust you because if you did what you did (stab your old allies when you knew you were dying) he should know that you'll do anything to survive. But doing this may prolong your life far beyond what it should be.

#2. You've been sort of switching back and forth between sides the whole game. In this case there's little hope for any survival, But that doesn't rule out "get-ting under foot."

I happen to be in a game now in which I am a dying Austria. I'm being crushed by a cloddish Russia who is only doing well becasue Germany is more cloddish and T is inexperienced. In that game I performed the most cherished of dying countries' objec-tives. I sold out to the enemy and got under his feet at the same time. I told him I was selling out, and since it would lift me from a definate 7th to a 4th or possible 3rd, he expected me to help him. So I exchanged information for temporary survival. And I gave wrong information which got my condition into a much better position..

COALITIONS: Long term coalitions are a rare thing in Diplomacy. A coalition is simply an alliance with no distrust. It is usually forced when a country or countries will run away with the game, if a coalition does not form. Sometimes a coalitions does not form, and the other side wins. But a coalition of equal, or slightly lesser strength and tactical position can always defeat an alliance. When the threat of the enemy is ^{clear} and it is obvious that he cannot be thrown back, merely stopped, then you sometimes get a full time coalition. This is the strongest of alliances, because it never splits. The enemy rarely expects this, and wastes his time and units trying to split it. And even if he does realize that it can't be split, there is little he can do. The reason that I talk of coalitions here is that when you have a bascially 2-sided alliance structure, and most of the countries on one side start dying, you have a good chance of a coalition. The dying countries, if the choose an honorable course, will do anythong for the larger country on their side. And this is the amin threat to the winning side.: Out of a mass of small countries, emerges one country which is the power.

This article was not written from the point of view of a survivalist, a player who thinks more of his game rank than the actual play of the game. But the rules make no provision for placing behind first. One wins or one loses. So if you're not going to win you can always "die gracefully."

((This was not a terribly well written article. But I wanted to run it, especially the first part, as contrast to the Mahler artilce. The first article presented for the loser some very calculated options. Gil's article, particularly the first part, empha-sized that the loser's play may be totally unpredictable and irrational ---- something to remember when you are trying to deal with a loser. You cannot be as sure when deal-ing with a loser as you are with a more equal ally)).

((Enough of theory. Lets have a look at some actual situations where players were down to extremely small positions. The first one is from Zepplin #63, Oct 1978. It is an account by Eugene Agan III of a tournament game at Origins IV (a very disorgan-ized tournament I might add) in which he played Austria))

....I managed to make a Balkan deal with Turkey, he getting Gre and Bul, me getting Ser and Rum. It didn't quite work out like that. Russia walked into Rum, with Turkish acquiescence no doubt. I was able to drive R out the next turn. The first year didn't turn out so bad. Two extra Supply Centers. It was down hill all the way after that....

R and T declaired open season on Austria in 1902. I was soon down to 3, 2, then one S.C., by the end of 1902. All was not lost as I managed to keep Vie. It seems that Italy didn't like the way the Turks were implementing their expansionistic policies. I proved to be an invaluable static commander (Italy also had a part in my dismemberment, tho a minor one.) Italy couldn't spare enough strength to take Vie what with his campaign against G with France and England, and his holding off the Ottomans.

It was an interesting situation... Turkey stabbed Russia (England was stomping Russia into caviar in the north) and was able to occupy the south. T was an obvious plotter...Vie turned out to be the axis the whole board was grinding rotating on. Both Italy and Turkey wanted me in Tri. It was interesting to see Italy move out for me and both T and I support my move in:

Italy: A Tri-Tyo Turkey: A Bud S Aus A Vie-Tri, A Gal-Vie 4US A Vie-H
Italy and Turkey: Aaargh! (not quite but they were a little ticked off).

There was no way I would give up Vie. (Turkey even suggested I go to Tri and pick up an extra SC. On eyeing that army in Gal I knew something was afoot) At Tri I would have been crushed in an instant. At least in Vie I could still have some importance as a stumbling block. What with E and F going at it in Mun and Sil (E stabbed F after R was effectively neutralized) and Italy and T at each other's throats just to the south, no one could take the time to finish me off! Beautiful situation! The game ended in 1909 ... I was in Vie...

((These circumstances may have been rather peculiar, but the type of situation is not. A country may be ground down to one unit, but the grindor have gotten involved in another campaign a bit earlier than he should have. Despite his need for another build, the grindor cannot quite manage the additional piece that it will take to finish you off --- so great is its need elsewhere.))

(((Next is a portion of Don Rittel's endgame statement for 1975ET, taken from Graustark #357, 1 Jan 1977. Don played Austria.)))

...There was the early emergence of a north-south alliance pattern, i.e. E-G-R on one hand and A-I-T on the other. With France being the odd poower out, had this alliance pattern held faithful the stalemate line would have been reached in 1904... This mutual kissing of sisters was avoided by an agreement between E and A to stab G and I respectively, in FO3. As Austria, I felt that the stab gave me greater winning possibilities than England, as England's new German enemy was the strongest numerically on the board. However, as Italy defended admirably, Germany chose to NMR thru 1904, giving England easy centers and an open path to victory. Thus, in 1905 and thereafter, the chief concern of A and T was to acheive a draw with England. This necessitated a steady but cautious elimination of neighboring powers without creating a backdoor vacuum for England to fill. Due to the board position, Russian-held Berlin was the key to English victory. E stabbed his game-long ally Russia in FO6 with a supported attack on Berlin. However, the Tsar anticipated such treachery and repulsed the attack, the effect of which was to deny the English Berlin (and forced victory), and to save it for future Austrian occupation (and forced draw). Thus, the ultimate outcome, win or draw, was not in the hands of teh major powers, but lay at the whim of a 2-unit ruler who knew his days were numbered regardless of which side he chose. There is a significant lesson of diplomacy to be learned in that situation; i.e. do not ignore the meek, for it is they who determine who shall inherit the earth((Don't put this off as a freak occurance; it is not. In my recent win of 1978H, the final outcome was determined to a large degree by the actions of a player who was being wiped out entirely))

((FROM Graustark #321, 12-7-74 comes this contribution from Allan B. Calhamer))

CONSOLATION PRIZE?

I've been thinking that players who are knocked out of games very early don't really get much in return for their game fee. I have wondered if the GM might offer a consolation prize for such players, probably a free entry, or a reduced price entry, into another game. Of course the issue is not the exact time in which he loses his last center, but the year in which he has normally lost his chances. Four possibilities suggested themselves to me: to be down to either 3 units or 2 units, after 1902 or 1903.

Looking at 43 games chosen arbitrarily from the period 1971-1973, I found the following total cases. There are of course 7 players times 43 games, or 301 possibilities just after 1903

just after 1903		just after 1902	
3 or fewer	2 or fewer	3 or fewer	2 or fewer
84	48	55	18
26%	16%	18%	6%

Thus, if you offered the consolation prize only if the player were down to 2 or fewer units just after 1902, you might expect to make good on this offer about 6% of the time. A free game under those circumstances would cost possibly 6% of the GM's revenues; whereas a half-price games for anyone down to 3 or fewer at the end of 1902 might be expected to cost half of 18% or 9% of revenues. You get the idea.

Of course the player would not receive the consolation prize unless he had made all his moves up to the point of control.

But you can't expect much consolation for playing Germany; it is one of the countries least often driven down to these levels quickly:

	1903		1902	
	3 or fewer	2 or fewer	3 or fewer	2 or fewer
A	18	14	12	9
E	16	6	13	0
F	6	5	4	1
G	9	3	3	2
I	9	2	6	0
R	12	7	4	1
T	14	11	13	5

((I would incline to reject this suggestion. To judge from the recent outcomes of 73BQ and 73BS, and the present situation in 73BC, Austria is badly underrated in the word of mouth system -- John Boardman))((There have been occasional gms who have established such discounts, but the idea has never really caught on.))

!!
 ((I rarely contribute original articles to theme issues, but I feel one coming on:))

Losing: Selecting a Goal by Mark L Berch

Losing, to me, is when you no longer have a reasonable shot at either a win or draw. At this point, it is necessary to select a new goal. This step is all too often overlooked. The result of this failure can be an aimless quality, as what's left of the position is just frittered away. Alternatively, the game may seem pointless, and that leads to NMRs ---- and worse.

The first step is to create a list of possible goals. I mean this literally ----- take a pen to paper and actually write them down. There are lots of choices here. You may simply want to last as long as possible, or longer than player X. Maybe you want to throw the game to player Y, or take down player Z with you. You may want to just retake your home centers. There are many choices. Once you've got your list, put it in order, ranking them 1, 2, 3, etc. This is important because it forces you to choose one over another, to decide which is most important.

Then take your top goal, and ask: Do I have a reasonable chance of accomplishing

it? If not, you really should think very hard about whether there is any point to spending your remaining moves in pursuit of an unattainable goal. It is all too easy to allow the fact that a goal is very desirable to blind you to the fact that the goal is not attainable. If its isn't go down the list till you find one that is. Fine, that's your goal. Now look at the one below it on the list, if there is one. Does this goal conflict in any significant way with your primary goal? If not, fine, but if it does, FORGET IT! This may well be the most common error that losers make. They pick two goals, either of which is achievable, but not both. So they land up accomplishing neither, which is a terrible waste. In effect, these players are still living in their pre-losing days ---- its hard to give up those attitudes. There you have the muscle to pursue conflicting goals. You may be pursuing both a win and a 2-way draw, or sticking with 2 different and somewhat conflicting alliance structures. You cannot afford that luxury now. Pick one goal (or a pair of completely non-conflicting goals) and stick to them, or it. And to give yourself a little more credibility you may want to publish your goal (in the form of press), or simply announcing it to the players around the table.

((From Hoosier Archives #86 26 Aug 1972 comes Doug Beyerelink's))

THE ART OF PUPPETRY

In the game of Diplomacy a puppet is a player who will carry out the desires and plans of another player in return for survival. As such, a puppet can be a useful tool to a major power in search of a win. Initially, the puppet can be gained when one or more players are in a position to eliminate the minor power's country. Once both the major power(s) and the minor powers realize this fact then the major power ((MP)) can make the offer of survival to the minor power in return for total help toward the win. The MP should only offer a puppetship to the minor power when (1) the minor power's units occupy positions which the MP must control, but will fall into enemy hands with the elimination of of the minor power, (2) the minor power controls a strategic corridor which the MP needs access thru ... or, (3) the minor power is an excellent player whose help will increase the MP's chances of victory ((e.g. tactical advice)).

Even tho the minor power may meet one or more of the above criteria and is in danger of elimination, the player may refuse to puppet. Some players will refuse to play the role of a puppet, but will instead go down fighting or will even banzai to a 3rd player. These factors must be considered when making an offer of puppetship to him.

Once a puppet is procured, then the MP must make the best use of the puppet's units while giving the puppet a feeling of security. To be of any use, the puppet must occupy part of the MP's front line. The puppet's orders must be coordinated with the MP's and this can best be done by the MP giving the puppet specific and exact orders for the puppet's units. This way, there is at all times complete coordination and cooperation of the two forces against the common enemy. In rare cases where the puppet is more experienced it may be wise for the MP to accept orders from the puppet...

A puppet must never be neglected, but should be kept busy fighting on the front line. With the enemy's units in front, and the MP's behind, the puppet is given no chance to change alliances or play an independent role. Because the puppet's units are on the front and in position to gain enemy SCs, the MP must be carefully watching for growth and the building of new units by the puppet. The easiest way to contain a puppet's growth is for the MP to take one of the puppet's behind-the-line SCs whenever the puppet gains a new center. This way, the puppet is maintained at a constant size and yet is, you hope, advancing against the enemy.

When the MP has a win within sight, it is important to reward the puppet with a second or third place finish if possible. This in turn may delay the victory by a year or so, but it is important that the puppet is completely compensated for its complete dedication to the cause. This is in effect far more than the guaranteed survival originally agreed upon, but it is a nice extra to deaden the pain of defeat. And who knows, maybe the next time the situation will be reversed.

In summary, a puppet is more than a helpful ally, but is an extension of the MP's empire. A puppet must be given security, a role to play, and a minimum guarantee of survival in return for total help. The one unifying factor which makes this all possible is Diplomacy. Diplomacy is the string which makes the puppet more than just a paper doll.

((One thing Doug didn't mention is the strategic retreat. In uncrowded areas, the MP dislodges a puppet's unit, and that following retreat season, the puppet can choose the best spot to land. This of course the MP can't do to his own units, something you as a losing player should point out to a prospective MP when trying to persuade him not to wipe you out.))

(continued from page 2)

The most novel excuse for not subbing was tendered recently by Doug Beyerlein, writing in Lone Star Diplomat #16: "I remember seeing the first issue of LSD when you first started pubbing a year ago. I decided not to subscribe at that time because the zine looked too good. I didn't think you would be able to maintain that high quality and would quickly lose interest in publishing. I was wrong." Boy, what a cynic! LSD is still as handsome as ever, and features the largest pages in the hobby, as he is the only one (other than Libertarian, now that I think of it) who uses reduction and full sized pages. The zine also features a good deal of hobby news, and always some reading matter (Mike Conner 1500-B Ashwood Rd Austin TX 78703. Subs 10/\$6.50)

Diplomacy World #29 arrived, just under 3 months after #28 --- the first that's happened in several years, such punctuality. Its expanded in size to 44 pages, and features a fine variety of reading matter. My favorite was Doug Beyerlein's appreciation of John McCallum, who was one of a handful of people in the mid 60's who converted postal Diplomacy from a curiosity into a hobby. An article like this reminds us that people are the ultimate resource in the hobby. Also included are the Demo game, a crossword puzzle, an article by me on Rulebook contradictions, variants, a letter column and much much more. If you like DD, the odds are very good that you will like DW, since they are both targeted to the reader, and both stick pretty much to the game and the hobby. Its truly the flagship zine of the hobby (Rod Walker 1273 Crest Drive Encinitas CA 92024, 4/\$6 in US, 4/\$8 in Canada).

Mike Mills is getting set to publish Zine Directory '82: ALL pubbers are urged to send in the info. Mike is also selling ad space, ranging from \$7.50 to as little as \$1.00. If interested, contact him (47 Mayer Drive Suffern NY 10901)....What may be a first for a Canadian zine, Ronald Brown has a gamestart with no Canadians in his SNAFU!....The Jan 1982 issue of Xenogogic has a truly fascinating article on the early history, 1967-1971, of Xenogogic and related publications. This is perhaps the quint-essential story of an overextended and overly ambitious publisher. He says that at one point, his pubbing empire was running one in 5 of all postal games in the hobby, and during this time frame was embroiled in a major feud, hosted DIPCON IV, and was involved in a variety of special projects. Its really a must for history-addicts, and there will be additional chapters covering later years of the zine. The issue also announced the names of the first inductees into the Diplomacy Hall of Fame: Edi Birsan, Walt Buchanan, John Koning, John McCallum, Don Miller, Hal Naus, and Conrad von Metzke. In yet another project, Larry is trying to compile a list of all California Diplomacy players, to help them get in touch with each other. I'm sending him a list of my CA subbers; if you all know of others send him a list (P.O. Box 8416 San Diego CA 92102. Zine is a quarterly at \$1 a copy)....Incidentally, I have prepared a similar tho less ambitious list of those in the Wash DC area. If you'd like a copy, send me a line.... The trend toward center-staple (I know, everyone else calls it "digest", but that was done in honor of DIPLOMACY DIGEST, so it would be immodest of me to use that label) continues, with Anduin, Irksome, and Snafu! joining the ranks. Its really been quite a dramatic change in the past 9 months or so. There's also been a decline in what was once the hobby standard: Ditto. There's now only a handful of U.S. Ditto zines left, tho oddly, the three oldest Canadian zines are ditto... Bruce Linsey has suddenly announced game openings, in both my variant "Succedaneum!" (with features players ordering the units of other countries, and being able to order their own as well if no one submits orders for their own country) and regular dippy. Bruce has the most thoro HRs in the hobby and enforces them strictly (VOICE OF DOOM 24A Quarry Dr Albany NY 12205, subs are 20/\$11 for a usually oversized zine, Game fee is \$3 plus \$3 deposit against an NMR)

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There was a small joke in this issue.
Did you find it?

If "(55)" appears on your address
label, you sub has just expired. Ergo
you will renew your sub, lest #56 not
be mailed to you.

In a previous DD, I used the phrase
"interregum period". John Kador, the
hobby fussbudget, has pointed out that
"interregum" is a noun, not an adjective
making the word "period" superflous.
Bitter tears of remorse flow down my
cheeks, as you can imagine.

Note Enclosures

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