

DIPLOMACY  
HANDBOOK  
1973

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## PREFACE

With this preface, I will attempt to round off the handbook with regard to its content. The late production problems in connection with keeping the original deadline of producing the handbook by the DipCon has forced us to restrict the contents of this handbook. I will therefore note in passing what has been left out and to give my ideas on those subjects.

Subjects such as press release writing, ratings and publishing have all been left out because articles on these topics were not available. It will be hoped that next year's handbook will cover these topics in full. For the record, I believe that ratings has been a controversial subject of late, and it would have been best, anyway, to not present it in this year's handbook until the "dust has settled" on that controversy. The current conflict in ratings concerns itself with the goals of the players--whether they play only for first place or they will take second place easily without personal compunctions. Thus, to rate a game requires some sort of system of placing relative values on final finishes. Since no one yet knows how the players feel about first and second relatively, ratings will remain in the dark. Perhaps a rating system will be developed that will completely bypass this problem. In any case, we feel it would be best to wait another year before including this now controversial topic.

Press release writing is an art in itself and is, for the most part, simply knowing how to write in good English. Besides having the talent to write, press releases can sometimes be important as a weapon of propaganda. But again, we don't have the articles on hand to cover this area.

Last, a lot of information could be given on publishing Diplomacy gamezines. I, as an amateur publisher myself, can write an article on publishing from the standpoint of using the mimeograph process of duplication. However, this would be pointless if we did not have a comparison report for the ditto duplication process. Since we do not have an article on hand for ditto publishing, we feel it would be a waste of time and money to write and include one on publishing with a mimeograph. In fact, we feel that another book could be made on publishing as a topic. We will attempt to bring this up in the IDA for consideration as our next "book." A lot can be explained about publishing one's own gamezine, and I feel that this would be a worthwhile effort in another publication.

In conclusion, we have also left out information regarding the IDA and the list of IDA publishers. We have felt that this handbook should remain a public project and have therefore refrained from using the handbook for blatant advertisement. All we will present is the following information for joining the IDA, if you so desire:

To join the IDA: Send \$2.00 to International Diplomacy Association, (check preferred) in care of Walter Buchanan, R.R. #3, Lebanon, IN 46052.

The hard evidence of this handbook's publication and of all the other many successful activities undertaken by the IDA will be its best advertisement. The fact that we have gone ahead and did something about improving the hobby with our various public projects indicates that we are worthwhile belonging to. With that, I can not argue. In closing, I wish to extend my deepest gratitude to Walter Buchanan, Edi Birsan, Douglas Beyerlein, Lenard Lakofka, and many more people who have contributed their help, effort and time to this handbook. Without them, this handbook would not have been published.

IDA Publications

## INTRODUCTION

The Diplomacy Handbook 1973 is the first attempt at producing a more or less complete "book" covering the many aspects of postal Diplomacy play. This first attempt was sponsored and financed by the International Diplomacy Association. It was, therefore, a public project undertaken by the I.D.A. for the hobby and its players. With the completion of the handbook, the I.D.A. has fulfilled its promise and obligation to produce a "book" for a better understanding of the game and its postal aspects.

With this handbook, we may have started small, but we have begun to build a firm foundation of public education. This handbook is mainly a collection of previously printed Diplomacy articles, but a few original articles have also been prepared for this handbook. Already, we have learned from producing this 1973 handbook. We will be looking forward to producing the 1974 handbook. From this experience, we shall improve and expand the coverage and educational value of the IDA handbooks.

In one of the articles contained within, Walter Buchanan spoke of his "dream book." He had the foresight to begin his now reknown Hoosier Archives, a vast and virtually complete collection of Diplomacy publications. We, the publishers and editors of this handbook, are indebted to Mr. Buchanan's Hoosier Archives. One will note that many of the articles that were reprints have come from Mr. Buchanan's Hoosier Archives. We only hope that this year's handbook will at least begin to fulfill his dream of having books for the Diplomacy hobby.

One will also note the dominance of the handbook by a few authors. The authors of openings, strategical and tactical, and of diplomatic subjects were all well known players and/or publishers. Additionally, they are all excellent writers and have been able to put into concise and plain language the basic techniques of better play and of other related topics. From their extensive experience, we have their precise "lessons" in their articles presented within this handbook. Names such as Douglas Beyerlein, Edi Birsan, Lenard Lakofka, Robert Lamb, Brenton Ver Ploeg, and many others ring out as exceptional writers. It is, therefore, no accident that this handbook has been dominated by them. It is, also, not a sign of any shortcomings of this handbook, but rather a sign of outstanding scholarship. We can say no more than that we were extremely fortunate to have these people's articles and their participation in the publication of this book.

Having the responsibility of putting together this first handbook, I have had the chance to be the first to read "it through" as what it is: a Diplomacy player's handbook. I feel strongly that this handbook will help your game as much as it already has helped mine. One can read articles in the diverse magazines of the hobby, but they do not get the total picture as one can get by sitting down and reading through this handbook. If for nothing else, this handbook will at least serve to organize your knowledge of the game so that you can play the game more efficiently and to consequently enjoy it more fully.

Diplomacy Handbook 1973 is a good start and is only the first step in publishing book type collections of the best reprints and the best original articles. I am looking forward to next year's edition, and who know? Maybe with other books, Mr. Buchanan's "dream" will come true!

John Boyer, Editor

THE LEPANTO OPENING  
by Edi Birsan

By most means of statistical analysis, Italy is the weakest power on the Diplomacy board. This could be attributed to several factors: poor players, a weak position between Austria and France, or the inability of effective trust development between the Austrians and the Italians due to the unusual situation of adjacent home supply centers. More often than not, the Italians are unable to overcome the Turkish position quickly and fall prey to a combination of Turkish resistance and back stabbing by a western power.

A possible reversal of the Turkish domination of the southeast is an alliance between Austria and Italy which uses an unusual opening by the Italians to quickly secure the fall of the Turks. The principal problem in attacking Turkey is that players find its corner position very difficult to crack. Italian initiative combined with Austrian pressure can remove the Turks for the corner advantage by the emplacement of an Army deep behind the Turkish position in Syria! While it may be an unusual position for an Italian army, it is the most effective manner to turn the Turkish flank and to threaten the Turkish mainland. The trick then becomes to get there before the Turks block you.

The Spring 1901 moves for Italy should not reveal an open bias toward Austria and should indicate instead a kind of calm wait-and-see attitude. Thus, the Spring should see the Italians moving Fleet Naples to the Ionian Sea, Army Rome to Apulia and Army Venice holding. This position gives the Italians a secure position in case of Austrian or French threats. Note that the Italians can support themselves in Venice from Apulia if a threat does materialize. Hopefully, the French will be involved in the West and the Austrians will be moving to Albania with their fleet and occupying Serbia.

Then in Fall of 1901, the Italians make the initial set-up for the drive to the East. This is done by convoying the army in Apulia to Tunis. This leaves the Austrian-Italian alliance with two fleets that can threaten the Aegean as well as the flexibility provided by the army in Tunis which can be convoyed back to Italy or to Albania if plans go wrong. The Italian army in Venice holds and is thus able to provide some security in the North. Note that should the Russians and the Turks combine, the Austrians will be in desperate need of an extra army to fend off Russian attacks.

After a winter build of a fleet in Naples, the traditional build of Italy in the first winter, the Italians order the following for the Spring: Fleet Ionian to the Eastern Med., Fleet Naples to the Ionian, Army Tunis and Army Venice hold. This secures the convoy route, for in the Fall, the Italians are clear to convoy Army Tunis straight to Syria. The fall of the Turks is now a certainty. The positional advantage of moving to the Eastern Med. is enhanced by the existence of the Austrian fleet in Greece. When the Italians make their move to the Eastern Med., the Austrians should also attempt to force the Aegean, more to keep the Turks out than to gain it for themselves. In the Spring of 1903, the Austrian-Italian alliance will have three fleets that can come to bear on the Aegean as well as an army that can threaten Smyrna. For those who wish to fantasize, visions of the Italians moving on Sevastopol can be conjured up by the movement of the Eastern army to Armenia. Or, in the event the Austrians are to be stabbed, the army could be used to very effectively turn any Austrian position in Constantinople.

While this opening is very effective in crushing the Turks caught unaware, it is futile to attempt it if the Turks **move** their fleet to Constantinople in the Spring of 1901, for they will surely move it to the Aegean in the Fall and build a fleet in Smyrna in the Winter with Spring orders bringing it to the Eastern Med. Here we see the flexibility of the opening moves, as the army in Apulia could be used for other things, as such a Turkish opening usually means that the Austrians are in for a lot of trouble from the Russians, but then that is another battle and another article.

THE BELGIAN SECTOR  
by Lenard Lakofka

In the play of live or play-by-mail Diplomacy, certain patterns of play repeat themselves over and over. The two most common patterns to be seen involve the initial alliance structure of countries in the Belgian and Balkan "sectors" of the Diplomacy map. A "sector" is an area of the map where intense fighting among players usually occurs. I would like to make a detailed analysis of the six sectors and their inter-relations in a series of three articles.

The Belgian Sector (all the provinces adjacent to Belgium) is one of the two classic areas where conflict begins early. The reason for this is many-faceted. Briefly, each country possesses a normal sphere of influence. This is an area that he can develop into without running into too much military or diplomatic pressure. This is the area that he expects to gain his first build(s) from without being contested. In the Belgian Sector, the countries of England, France and Germany have the following spheres of influence. England: North Sea (Nth), Norwegian Sea (Nwg), North Atlantic Ocean (Nao), and Norway (Nwy) where no major contention will occur. The Irish Sea is a border-line case. The English Channel, Skagerrak, Helgoland and Barents are all areas where immediate contention will occur. France: Iberia and surrounding waters. The Western Mediterranean is a sore bone of contention with Italy and of course the Channel with England. Note Belgium is again in line with normal French development. Germany: Denmark, Holland, and that's about all she can move to without making someone uneasy. Helgoland looks like a threat on England, Baltic like a potential attack on Sweden or Russia herself, and then there's Belgium... Note that France and Germany have an additional problem in that they can not move freely in their own countries without causing a little friction. Germany gets upset over pieces in Burgundy, Italy gets distraught over fleets in Marseilles, and Russia has cat fits over pieces in Prussia or Silesia.

Thus, the province of Belgium is right in the center of things. England wants it so as to gain two quick builds, hopefully without having to fight for it. France or Germany may be willing to cede it to her for her cooperation later. Any other province in the area will very likely mean total war with some other power. Germany wants Belgium so as to secure the lowlands. This makes her less easily attacked by England from the sea and gives her an important wedge to use versus Burgundy in case war with France ever begins. France wants Belgium because it presses directly on Burgundy. She may give it to an ally to take by fleet capture (since a fleet can't move or lend support inland) so as to keep peace, but it is always a reluctant gift. Note that Burgundy is the hinge pin to land attack of France. It impinges on the two key areas of France and will cause great defensive problems if it falls to a hostile power. Imagine what would happen if an enemy piece does move to Burgundy. The French player must defend Paris, Marseilles and Gascony. Were Gascony to fall his problems are compounded ten-fold--it impinges on Paris, Brest, Spain, and Marseilles! But I digress.

Thus, we see that each country desires to own Belgium. Not only for the build it will supply, but also for the tactical-diplomatic position it gives its possessor. There is, of course, another very important reason why the Belgian sector ignites, other than possession of Belgium itself. To not have a fight here, i.e., a three-player alliance, will produce many problems.

France would have to attack Italy, Germany would have to take on Austria or Russia, or attack Italy--the hard way, and England could only attack Russia

in the north. As soon as such attacks would be made, the balance of power would be thrown into chaos! Cooperation between even two of the powers is greatly impeded by the fact that they soon find themselves tripping all over each other. Each of the powers must, more or less single handed, attack another of the great powers.

Therefore, we find that the most equitable solution is for two of these powers to ally versus the third. This is why I say these countries are involved in two classic patterns in Diplomacy. (The other being the inevitable fight among Russia, Austria, and Turkey in the Balkan Sector.)

Now let us analyze the three possible alliances. The best alliance is probably the German-English one. The reasons for this are: independent building capability--England builds almost all fleets while Germany builds almost all armies, (Thus, neither is in a position to "stab" the other), great mobility--areas of cooperation are present not only against France but also against Russia, greater development possibility--they can cooperate directly by giving supports for each other's attacks, as opposed to having to attack an enemy from two sides, and lastly, each country can ally with another player without interfering with his primary alliance with the other. England and Italy can ally vs France as can England and Turkey vs Russia, while Germany can ally with Austria vs Russia, or with Italy or Turkey vs Austria and neither gets in the other's way. Let me make a note here. The alliance is good in that a "stab" can not be driven home because Germany can't penetrate the seas easily, but England can't penetrate inland easily. Thus, if they stab, they can only make minor progress. However, the fact that they must telegraph their punch, England building armies, and Germany building fleets, plus the fact that they can't really make deep independent inroads into that enemy makes a stab difficult.

For France and Germany to ally, the problem is one of builds. One or the other or both must build more fleets than normal. Thus, if he gets stabbed, his defenses have been greatly compromised. His development; his mobility and his cooperation capability are all as good as the English-German alliance. Now, by assigning values to alliance characteristics we find that the French-German alliance is better. Yet, this estimate reflects a perfect alliance in which "stabs" will not occur.

For England and France to ally would seem to be viable an alliance as the English-German. However, the situation is different. England and France can cooperate effectively only versus Germany. Other factors are good but builds are slightly inhibited.

Now let us add the final facet in this analysis, namely the other powers. If we see that one of these three alliances will form more often than not, what would you do if you were the odd man in the sector? Cry? Well...your best approach is obviously other alliances. To throw up your hands in despair is the mark of the very poor Diplomacy player.

As England you can call on either Italy or Russia to form mutual aggression treaties vs France and Germany respectively. As Germany, seek mutual aggression treaties with Italy and Russia. As France, you should consider crying! France will be hard-pressed to call on Russia vs Germany, and Russia does not want to fight both Germany and England in Scandinavia because she will lose. Italy can't really help you because you would have to allow Italian fleets into the MAO (Mid-Atlantic Ocean) or somehow Austria has to be persuaded to allow Italy to move to Tyrolia. Austria will not be too fond of that possibility. As for Austrian aid, the problem is that Austria would have to turn away from the Balkan sector and she would have to move into Tyrolia herself. Italy would not be fond of that. Yet France can get help because the other powers would be fools to allow Germany and England to gobble up France and then come after them.



THE CHERBOURG FAKE  
by Robert Lamb

Many countries have their own special openings, so why shouldn't England have her own? I propose the Cherbourg Fake, which is designed to give England an immediate advantage over Germany. The Fake can be achieved by a straight backstab or for you more timid souls, by subtlety. Germany is probably England's worst enemy and is difficult to eliminate. Germany is sitting in the middle of a pool of riches and almost always should come up with two builds in Fall 1901, plus an aggressive standing. The Cherbourg Fake will limit Germany to one build and throw her on the defensive in Spring 1902.

The main ingredient of the Fake is a mock attack on France. France is England's accomplice in this deception and is a vital part of the plot. In the initial correspondence, England offers Germany a fighting alliance against France, or England can just answer indecisively to any German queries and beg off from any early committment. The following moves therefore show in Spring 1901:

England: London to Channel, Liverpool to Wales, Edinburgh to North

France: Brest to Mid-Atlantic, Paris to Burgundy, Marseilles S Paris to Bur

Russia: St. Pete to Bot, Mos to Ukr

Germany: Kiel to Denmark, Berlin to Kiel, Munich to Ruhr

Russia could throw the whole plan askew if she moves Moscow north, thereby threatening Norway. England can assure Russia of its intention of taking Norway before the spring moves are released and hope to fake out Russia into moving south. England should also strive to create ill-feeling between Russia and Turkey and keep Russian forces away from the north. As for the rest of the board, they see an English stab against France. Appropriate press releases by England and Germany will do nothing to make them think anything different. England now offers to support Germany into Belgium while he moves to Norway. Germany will undoubtedly accept and then has to move Kiel to cover Munich against French Army Burgundy. Also, if the Italians have moved into Tyrolia, Germany is forced to guard Munich. (More letter writing by the English.) Fall 1901 moves comes and the trap is sprung!

England: Wales to Belgium, Channel C Wales to Belgium, North to Holland

France: Burgundy S Wales to Belgium, Mid-Atlantic to Portugal, Marseilles to Spain

Germany: Ruhr to Belgium, Kiel to Munich, Denmark to Sweden

Russia: Bothnia to Sweden

France and England both build two, Germany only one. Germany's west coast is occupied and English fleets will soon threaten Denmark and Kiel. If Russia has moved south, England can move into Norway in Fall 1902. Germany has been crippled and is on the defensive while England and France have good strategical positions and numerical strength. The Cherbourg Fake has struck!

## FRENCH OPENING VARIATIONS

by Edi Birsan

France is probably the most difficult country to play strategically on the Diplomacy board. Unlike Austrian or Italian players who are highly dependent on the sanity of their neighbors, the French players can usually secure at least one build despite the Banzai charges of all three of his neighbors. Unfortunately, one possible unique opening is not aired for possible consideration.

By moving to both Gascony and Burgundy with armies and moving a fleet to the Mid-Atlantic, the French may appear to have a most peculiar opening. The opening restricts the French from playing the fleet to Spain (sc) and runs the risk of not getting into Burgundy since the move would not be supported. It also has the handicap of forcing the fleet into Portugal where it is limited in its use.

Yet, for all its limits, the opening does have several key advantages. By moving to Gascony and the Mid-Atlantic, the French player will have two units with which to deal with any English stab into the Channel. The move into Gascony also allows the French to guard Marseilles and permits a wild move such as Fleet Mid-Atlantic convoying Army Gascony to Portugal. The move to Burgundy without support may run the gauntlet of German invasion, but such things are so rare that 90% of the time the army will march into Burgundy unopposed. Even if the Germans do stand off in the Burgundy move, Burgundy can be entered in the fall again while it still hasn't fallen to the Germans.

If all moves succeed, no player is attacked and no commitment is made to fight anyone. In the fall, moves can be made into Belgium and both the Iberian or the Wild Card convoy can be tried. The conditions under which such a convoy should be tried are rare indeed. It should be taken only when the Germans are perceived as very strong allies and Belgium is assured to fall to the French. The convoy can then be made to Portugal giving the French two builds and a strong position with his fleet starting in the Mid-Atlantic for the Spring 1902 moves. Because of the Mid-Atlantic start, the French can try for a quick campaign against England by moving F Brest to the Channel and F Mid to the Irish Sea, assuming that a fleet in Brest was built. Or a shift can be made into the Western Med or the English Channel, depending on the Diplomatic situation. In the Fall of 1902, Spain will be occupied by the army from Portugal assuring the French of a build in the Winter of 1902. Such a build has the advantage of time, in that either an army or a fleet can be built depending on the situation.

For those who are very trusting of the Germans and wish to live dangerously, the French can try moving both armies south into Spain and Gascony with the idea of freeing the fleet completely for movement into the Western Med or into northern waters. In conjunction with the idea of the Germans accepting a Gambit, either French opening can provide a nice seasoning of play for the players who wish to experiment with wild openings.

TURKISH OPENINGS  
by Len Lakofka

Turkey is one of the easiest countries to play initially. Let us examine why. Turkey's defensive position is one of the strongest on the board. Only England, safe behind the hard-to-crack North Sea, can begin to claim such a rich chance to withstand repeated attacks and to hold out for a number of years. This defensive advantage comes from the fact that only 6 spaces impinge directly upon the Turkish homeland, and one of them (Syr) can only be reached through one of the remaining 5 (Arm or Eas). The other countries have a number of other such spaces which attack the homeland, and each has a number of non-supply centers within the supply center complex that composes the country. The second contributor is that Bul is a unique center. Fleets attacking one coast cannot move to help pieces in the other coastal area, and an army in Bul cannot aid moves into the bodies of water off each coast. Thus, any piece in Bul is at a disadvantage of one type or another, in that it is not as functionally usable as pieces in other spaces, such as Tyo or Nth, WITH reference to attacks upon Turkey!

Turkish occupation of Bul in the offensive is just the opposite! A Turkish ARMY in Bul is a very powerful attack piece! Turkish moves largely center about Bul and thus this digression upon its properties and Turkey's key corner position were necessary to a discussion of the opening for Turkey. We may also note that Turkey's second major defensive advantage is that a fleet in Arm, Syr, or Eas can attack only one supply center, and having captured the supply center it is adjacent to, it can have no effect upon one of the other Turkish centers. Therefore, fleet attacks of Turkey, while necessary, have poor results unless armies are convoyed into the country or its adjacent spaces. (Note the Lepanto Opening's emphasis upon an army convoy to break Turkey from the rear.)

The basic Turkish openings are highly dependent upon the diplomatic atmosphere. Turkey's logical alliance is with Russia. This alliance is one of the most powerful because it allows for the four main alliance advantages to their utmost. These are (1) ability to cooperate along adjacent borders (versus Austria and later Germany and/or Italy), (2) ability to build with only one or no restrictions (Turkey is usually asked to refrain from building pieces, especially fleets, in Ank and Russia is asked to refrain from building in Sev, especially fleets--but few if any restrictions are placed upon the other centers), (3) ability to ally with another country(s) without affecting the primary alliance (Turkey with Italy and/or France, Russia with England and/or Germany), and (4) ability to expand without interference (Turkey can move straight west and so can Russia and they will not be tripping over each other). Examine the same 4 points with an Austrian alliance with either country, and you will find less ability to move with the same degree of freedom.

If Turkey gains the Russian alliance, she has two gambits:

1. A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con, A Smy hold; then A Bul hold or support a Russian move, F Con-Aeg, A Smy-Con (note that A Bul can move but then F Con must go to Bul(sc) and that is not as strong)
2. A Con-Bul, A Smy-Con, F Ank hold; then A Bul-Gre, or Ser, A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con. The first assumes a potentially hostile Italy (in that case, the fleet to the Aeg early is most important); the second assumes a neutral to friendly Italy, and thus the backward fleet is not a weakness.

If Turkey does not obtain a friendly Russia, she must play to guarantee that the Black Sea not fall to Russia! The Black Sea is fantastically important to

whomever holds it, as it has direct access by move (or convoy) to 5 supply centers! If Russia gains it, she can insure Rum and can aid Austria versus Bul or even attack the Turkish mainland. Such a large "mix" cannot be granted Russia, carte blanc! Thus, if Russia is even neutral, F Ank MUST go to Black Sea! The precise total move is a function of whether you HAVE an ally in Austria and/or Italy. With an Austrian ally and a neutral Italy, you can play F Ank-Bla, A Con-Bul, A Smy-Arm. This is your strongest attack. Since Italy is neutral, Alb needs no support to Greece and Ser is free to cooperate with A Bul (or A Bud or A Gal!). Even if F Ank is bounced, A Smy must gain Arm--if A Smy is bounced, you gain Black. Thus, Turkey is in a powerful position to prevent Russian occupation of Rum, at a minimum. Only German intervention can save an early Russian southern collapse.

With a potentially hostile Italy (or a definite belief that Ger will move to Boh or Tyo), the move to Con (i.e., A Smy-Con) is more constructive. The attack upon Russia is not as severe, but you have mobility. You can move Bul to Rum and have Con still capture Bul for the build. You can still cooperate with Austria to insure Russia will not get Rum via: A Vie-Gal (hope for a bounce), A Bud-Ser, F Alb-Gre, and your standard move. If you bounce in Gal, you have two on two for Rum at a minimum and thus it stays neutral. If you gain Black or Gal, of course then Russia will likely lose Rum.

With a definitely hostile Italy, Austria must defend his borders but your move is the same: A Vie-Tyo! or A Vie-Tri being semi-standard for Austria. The Russian-Italian pincer of A Mos-Ukr, a War-Gal and A Ven-Tyo, A Rom-Ven can drive Austria right up the wall! If that happens, you are next!

Lastly, if you have reason to believe that Russia and Austria are teaming on you, but you have a friendly Italy, you are again forced into F Ank-Bla, A Smy-Con, A Con-Bul, then support A Bul in place for good 1902 play with Italy.

If you have NO ally at all, the move to Black and the army train in Bul and Con is the wisest. Turkey can never give Black up for free, and that is the thing to remember.

Turkey's 1902 play is a function of alliances, obviously. One of the most dramatic in the game of Diplomacy is the Austrian-Russian-Turkish alliance key-noted by: A War-Sil, F Swe-Den, F StP(sc)-Bot, A Rum-Gal!; A Vie-Boh, F Tri-Adr, A Ser-Tri support by A Bud (or A Bud-Vie; and F Aeg-Ion!, F Smy-Eas). This sudden three-power eastern shift can knock the slots out from under the unwitting western powers! The alliance can be decoyed quite easily. It is a tricky one to hold together, but the benefits are fantastic!

AUSTRIA-ITALY: SUPERPOWER  
by Douglas Beyerlein

As strategies and alliance patterns have evolved in the game of Diplomacy, two super alliances first dominated play. These alliances were England-France and Russia-Turkey. Each of these alliances or superpowers has the special properties of 1) consisting of an offensive country (France and Russia) together with a defensive country (England and Turkey) and 2) starting from the edge of the board. Also in their favor is the fact that the avenues of attack on the board run east-west.

In the past few ydars a new superpower alliance has come into its own. Italy with a good defensive position allying with Austria and an excellent offensive spot produces the third super-power: Austria and Italy. This alliance is one more of necessity than of opportunity. Game after game first Austria and then Italy have been overwhelmed and annihilated by the Russia-Turkey super-power. Only by allying into a super power of its own can Austria and Italy survive the attack from the east.

Austria-Italy can not wait to see what the Russians and Turkey will open with in 1901. To guarantee survival they must assume the worst and act accordingly. In 1901 Austria-Italy must establish a strong defensive line facing eastward. They should move as follows:

Spring 1901

AUSTRIA: A Vie-Gal, A Bud-Ser, F Tri-Alb

ITALY: A Ven-Tyr, A Rom-Apu, F Nap-Ion

Fall 1901

AUSTRIA: A Vie-Gal, A Ser (S) F Alb-Gre, F Alb-Gre

ITALY: A Tyr-Boh, A Apu-Tun, F Ion (C) A Apu-Tun

Winter 1901

AUSTRIA: Build A Bud, A Tri

ITALY: Build F Nap

Depending on the initial movement of the Russians and Turkey, the Austria-Italy superpower can either build an iron clad defensive line or move on to an offensive. An offensive can involve the Lepanto Opening or any other strategy which will first break Turkey and then Russia as a power.

When Italy has some fleets free it should move them westward toward the Atlantic Ocean. Austria with a couple of Italian armies can move northward into Germany and northern Russia. With a little luck, or help from England, Austria-Italy can then crush France and Germany and sweep the board.

Austria-Italy is probably the weakest, offensively, of the three superpowers. However, this disadvantage is offset by the element of strength through surprise as conventional alliance patterns must quickly adjust to this new threat or be destroyed by it.

So, remember that your position is not completely hopeless when you get Austria at the start of a game. Just hope that the Italian player also has read this article and you may be on to victory before anyone can stop you.

THE BALTIC OPENING  
by Edi Birsan

There is a prevailing current in Diplomacy circles that Germany, like Austria and France is best played very cautiously in 1901 saving its major moves for 1902.

Yet, many players thirst for action in 1901 to mutually satisfy a blood lust and a well guarded death wish. Regardless of the crigin of the motivation, let us explore some of the possible move sequence for a German attack on Russia early in the game.

When Germany is attracted to Russia in 1901 there are two basic 'traditional' patterns of development. By traditional I mean the most commonly thought of procedure for handling the attack. The first has been the all out attack or banzai charge into Silesia with Army Berlin usually accompanied by Fleet Kiel going to Denmark and then dancing around the north with the Russian fleet hoping to keep the Russians out of both Sweden and the Baltic while the main brunt of the fighting is done by armies punching into Warsaw from Prussia and Silesia. Sometimes the Eastern Stampede is made twice as ridiculous by the moving of both armies into Prussia and Silesia in 1901. Oddly enough, while such moves would rationally demand a very strong alliance with France and an equally strong alliance with England they have been accompanied by neither of them when these moves are resorted to on the Diplomacy board. The principle reason being that the German player has set as his goal the elimination of Russia or the destruction of Russia's chances to finish well in the game and has therefore decided to suicide against the Russians and thus drag him down with the eventual fall of Germany.

The other method for a German attack on Russia is far more common and involves the standing off of the Russian fleet attempting to take Sweden while the German keeps his fleet based in Denmark. This allows for the building of two (and sometimes three units if the French and the British have yielded up the lowlands without a fight) and the beginning of what I called before: the punching away of several armies into Warsaw. The Diplomatic maneuvers behind this are somewhat less than in the all out attack procedure, but high on the list of pre-requisites is a neutral France and England either hitting Russia in the North or occupied with France. The Russian answer to this has always been to threaten and sometimes actually move F Gulf of Bothnia to Baltic in the Fall 1901 move, thus positioning itself to attack Den, Kiel, Ber and Sweden as well as give support into attacks on Prussia. Thus we have a choice or a guess to face as the German player when we go to Denmark: if the Russians suspect a cross over to Sweden they may forget trying for a build there and instead go for position. If we try to block the position move we will be pulled out of a supply center and placed in an awkward position with the Russians getting a build for Sweden.

The alternative to all this is what I call a Baltic Opening. In the Spring of 1901 the Germans play to the Baltic with their fleet and the armies head for Ruhr and Kiel. In the Fall, the Germans play Army Kiel to Denmark, Fleet Baltic to Sweden and Army Ruhr to Holland, thus giving up Belgium to either France or England to try to cause discord there or to appease one side or the other. If the Russians play to Sweden they will be blocked by the move of F Baltic and will be confronted with the prospect of kissing off Sweden as the Germans would have A Den and F Bal on the centers' borders with no Russian unit but one fleet

to support it. If the Russians play to the Baltic the Germans will get three builds and can safely blast the Russians out of the Baltic as there will be units left in the coastal supply centers to prevent a Russian retreat to the area after being swiftly dislodged. In the Fall the Germans can then place crushing pressure on the Russians by following up their moves with the convoy of an army into Livonia.

The sequence of moves might look like:

S01 F Kie-Bal, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Ruh

F01 F Bal-Swe, A Kie-Den, A Ruh-Hol

W01 Build A Ber, A Mun

S02 A Den-Swe, F Bal S A Den-Swe, A Mun-Sil, A Ber-Pru

F02 A Sil-War, A Pru S A Sil-War

Or, if the Russians go for the Baltic: In W01 add F Kie and:

S02 F Kie-Bal, F Swe S F Kie-Bal, A Mun-Sil, A Ber S A Mun-Sil

F02 A Den-Liv, F Bal C A Den-Liv, A Ber-Pru, A Sil S A Ber-Pru

If either move missed in the Spring, then a support by the successful unit in the Fall will still bring the Germans into a position to place two armies on Warsaw in the Spring of 1903.

As the above moves sequence indicates, the Russians are actually worse off by trying the Baltic as it leads to the arrival of three armies on Warsaw in the opening Spring 1903 moves which means that not only may Warsaw fall, but also most of Russia in that year can go under.

The diplomatic keynote is to keep the West occupied. The Germans have at least one and possibly two armies to play around with on a supported attack on France if they please, or they can stand pat and hope that Italy will turn against France with the English. In the East the Germans could use the Turks as an ally. In fact the possibilities of a Turkish-German alliance have long since been ignored and maybe we should look into the possibilities later. Once the Russians are hit by the Germans with force, a wave of paranoia usually follows over such territory as St. Petersburg and Sevastopol as no country attracts vultures like Russia. A rough attack plan is one in which the Germans try to combine the attack with Austria as there is usually a dispute over who gets Warsaw and when.

I have seen the opening twice in over the board games and the results were hard to judge as in each game the players for Germany and Russia played so well during the middle to end game periods that it is hard to judge just how much of a boost or a hindrance the opening was. Why not try it out on your face to face group and keep the move sequences in mind for varying your opening play postally. Let me know what you think.

THE BLITZ  
by Douglas Beyerlein

In issue #6 of Impassable, I wrote an article titled "Options." It demonstrated the strategic gains made possible by first forcing the neighboring powers into conflicts and then choosing the side which will result in the maximum possible benefits. This wait-and-see attitude is just one possible way to play a country opening. In this article I will discuss the other side of the coin: the blitz.

As most people know, the term blitz is an abbreviation for the German word blitzkrieg. Made popular by Germany's early victories in WWII, blitzkrieg means lightning war or a sudden, swift, overwhelming attack. Applying that concept to the game of Diplomacy, we have a strategic plan that can often decide a game's outcome.

The blitz is most formidable in the opening stage of the game, that is, 1901. This is a period when all the major powers are at minimal strength, their frontiers are largely unguarded, and diplomacy and the acceptance of new ideas is at a maximum. Setting up a blitz of a neighboring power can be done in the following manner.

Step 1: Select the victim of the blitz. This has to be a neighboring power to whom you have good access.

Step 2: Conclude an alliance with another power adjacent to the victim. This is the most sensitive and trickiest part of the whole plan. You and your ally must have complete trust in each other--or as much as two Diplomacy players can have. There is no room for hesitation, blunders, or a breakdown in communications if the blitz is to work.

Step 3: Set up the victim with a fake alliance or pledge. This should make him make the necessary moves to cause the blitz to work. This takes a good job of diplomacy while not being too obvious about your real plans. And, of course, if you mention the blitz to some non-involved third power, don't expect it to remain a secret.

Step 4 is the actual movement of units in Spring 1901 which starts the blitz on its forward march. Complete coordination with your ally is the key, assuming the first three steps have gone on schedule.

Step 5 is when the blitz hits in Fall 1901. The victim's defensive position is smashed and all that is left for 1902 is the job of cleaning up the debris and gaining the victim's supply centers.

While the blitz may sound quite easy to perform, there are obvious risks involved. As you are setting up your victim for the blitz, your ally may be just going along to force you into a poor strategic position where an attack from unexpected quarters can catch you off guard. Also, the blitz forces you into an early commitment while the other powers may be taking a wait-and-see stance. This can result in other previously neutral countries now working for your downfall in terms of their best self-interest. Therefore, the blitz is an all-or-nothing offense. The player that lives by the blitz also can die by it.

Some examples of the blitz follow.

(1) The blitz of England. Assuming that all the diplomacy has gone as planned, Germany and France decide to blitz England. They invite Russia to take Norway. The moves:

Spring 1901: England: F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nwg, A Liv-Edi  
 France: F Bre-Eng, A Par-Pic, A Mar-Spa  
 Germany: F Kie-Den, A Ber-Kie, A Mun-Ruh  
 Russia: A Mos-StP



England now sees the stab, but what should he do? Defend London? North Sea? Attack Norway? It is now a guessing game. A good set of moves:

Fall 1901: France: F Eng (S) German F Den-Nth, A Pic-Bel  
 Germany: F Den-Nth, A Kie-Den, A Ruh-Hol  
 Russia: A StP-Nwy

No matter how well England guesses, he is doomed and will be lucky to live past 1903. The blitzers now only have to convoy into England for their gains.

(2) The blitz of Turkey. This involved Austria and Russia with Turkey not realizing the blitz is on its way until after the Fall 1901 moves are published. The moves:

Spring 1901: Austria: A Bud-Ser, F Tri-Alb  
 Russia: F Sev-Rum, A Mos-Sev  
 Turkey: A Con-Bul, F Ank-Con

It looks like a Russian-Turkish alliance, but...

Fall 1901: Austria: A Ser-Bul, F Alb-Gre  
 Russia: F Rum (S) Austrian A Ser-Bul, A Sev-Arm  
 Turkey: A Bul-Gre, F Con-Aeg

And before Turkey knows what has happened, Russia builds another fleet in Sevastopol and it is all over for Turkey.

There are many other possible blitz situations. And some that can be used as late as 1903 have devastating results. Only ingenuity and the diplomatic skill of the blitzers place a limit on the range and effectiveness of the blitz. The possibilities are as endless as one's imagination.

## STRATEGIC BALANCE

by Edi Birsan

While players often are able to come to grips with the basic tactics involved in the game, strategy or strategic balance appears to be the elusive mirage that many seek and few find. Strategy is the over view of the board and your attempt to alter or maintain the present alliances. Some strategies will lead to draws, victories or even your own defeat, but may not appear obvious to the player unless he has some concept of the broad spectre of the game.

A game played between strangers where there is little personality to begin with or developed as the game goes on, provides the best background for the 'ideal' development of strategic balance.

In the beginning there are seven countries and generally two spheres of conflict either divided East-West or Northwest-Southeast. As most of the countries start fairly equal in supply centers you have the following common possibilities for the opening seasons of war:

- 1) a 2 on 1 and a 2 on 2. Ex: E-F vs Ger and I-AH vs T-R.
- 2) a 2 on 1 and a 3 or 1. Ex: E-G vs Fra and I-Ah-R vs Turkey
- 3) a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  on 1 and a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  on 1. Ex: F-G-R vs Eng and I-AH-R vs Turkey

Your strategy is to always be on the odd side of the board. In short, in case #1, your best strategic position is to be one of the two countries hitting the one rather than paired off. The reasoning is that generally one on one or two on two situations stalemate with neither side going anywhere, while in most cases of two on one (or greater) the larger alliance always triumphs. Furthermore, you want to be in the smallest possible alliance that will work (ie take out the enemy) as this will mean a greater share of the spoils than if you had to maintain a large alliance. For example take case number two above. In the east each member of the triple alliance can expect one supply center from the Turkey bake and one power will get two centers. While in the West each of the two powers will pick up three additional centers with the fall of France. So after the initial period of the game, England and Germany stand at about 8 centers while the Eastern powers have 5-7. The only strategic advantage to being on the side of the triple alliance is one of time: hopefully you will get through with your target faster than the two power alliance. In short as you increase your alliance structure you are losing on the spoils side but hopefully gaining in time.

The massive 'Witch Hunt' depicted in the third case verges on the borders of a five power alliance against the "Wicked Witches of the North and South": England and Turkey. It leaves all the five powers with a center strength of about 7-8 after the two targets are eliminated. Then what?

Part of your strategy is to always plan not only for the present period of the game, but for the immediate future when your target country goes. Your future plans determine your builds and will allow you to have the actual forces with which to carry out the next stages. In the massive witch hunt, the Italians and the Austrians are generally pulled down into the Balkans and Turkey proper while the French have built several fleets and control at least two thirds of England. The Russians are in Scandinavia and generally spread out from Ankara to Norway. With five powers of equal strength you have only one common pattern of conflict: 4) 2 on 1 and one on one

Having survived the initial stage of the game, it is crucial for your development to be in the alliance that has 2 on 1. The reasons are simple: you will be dividing a power with a strength of about 8 leaving you with four centers in a

fair split, while when you come out of the conflict into the end game period, you and your ally will have 10-12 centers while the other two remaining powers will only have 6-7. Which means that you and your ally can then easily overwhelm any one of the two smaller powers and could make an arrangement by which you race each other for the win over the bodies of the two smaller powers. The other common possibility is the break up of the alliance and the degeneration of the game into a massive tactical contest with one major and one minor power on each side and no one left.

In terms of preventing draws or stalemates, your strategy should always be to maintain an odd number of major powers, this allows for a 2 on 1 situation, while an even number of powers generally tends to stalemate a game squaring off in a 2 on 2. Also note that when I talk of powers I'm speaking in terms of equal powers, for example of the 11 three-way draws known to Postal Diplomacy history, it was overwhelmingly a case of two minor powers uniting to stop a third power as it reached for 14+ or so centers. Your threats and promises and your stabs and attacks should then always be aimed at making sure you are in the alliance on the odd side of the board.

To carry out this ideal strategic outline in a game of people is the hardest nut yet. If the game remains impersonal and players are of equal skill then you most likely will have a long drawn out game in which everyone plays for balance in the game and thus there is only fleeting moments of imbalance (2 on 1). Players, though, will often take a course of action that strategically is unsound in exchange for personality/ego rewards. How many times have you heard: "I don't care what happens I want to get that so and so playing \_\_\_\_\_!" Or "I'm going to teach him a lesson." A player can often be persuaded to square off in a one on one situation (or a 2 on 2) if the personality rewards can be stressed over and above the game rewards. As you approach the end game period, and you reach for the win in the most obvious way, you generally will succeed only if you have persuaded some supporters that your victory is the least obnoxious outcome for the game. In doing so you can stress personalities in conflict ("If I don't win then so and so will") or player philosophy on placement ("I'll give you second place.") but you must play down the value of your win as compared with any other objective in the game.

With your allies keep focus on the tactical problems and the game objectives, amongst your enemies and non-allies, key on the players and their social/psychological interaction. In implementing strategy, you might remember to unite the countries and divide the players.

## OPTIONS

by Douglas Beyerlein

An option is the potential ability to change from one strategy or alliance pattern to another. Having as many options as possible in the game of Diplomacy is very important. Options allow a player to prevent or retaliate against a stab, change from an unproductive to a game-winning alliance, or do whatever is needed to win. In other words, having a variety of options is insurance against unforeseen events.

Options are important in every stage of a game. However, they are most critical and numerous at the start of a game. Assuming that there are no pre-set alliances each player is somewhat uncertain as to what the other six players will do until the Spring 1901 moves are published. It is then in this initial stage of the game where having options can make all the difference.

Options are dependent upon the plans of the other countries on the board. As a commitment is directly opposite to an option each player should try to get the neighboring countries committed to a line of action away from one's own country at the start of the game. This reduces your opponents' options and increases yours. Some examples of how this should be done follow. (1) Germany can try to get England committed to an attack on France with the move by England of F Lon-Eng on the Spring '01 turn. At the same time Germany is neutral to France with the conventional opening of A Mun-Ruh, A Ber-Kie, F Kie-Den. England now has little choice but to continue its assault on France (especially if France decides to retaliate after seeing the English fleet in the Channel) while Germany has the option to attack France, England, or Russia after its 1901 gain of neutral supply centers. If Germany does not want the English attack to succeed it can tell France of the planned attack and thus commit both of its neighbors while retaining its options. Obviously Germany could also work it the other way around with France instead of England moving to the Channel. (2) Austria can attempt to commit Turkey to moving A Smy-Arm. If this is achieved on the Spring 1901 turn Austria is almost guaranteed of a Russo-Turkish war while Austria is yet to be committed to either side. The Austrian player may then ally with either Turkey, Russia, or even Italy after spending 1901 protecting its borders and grabbing up Serbia and Greece in the Balkans. With Russia and Turkey committed to a war Austria can assess the situation and then join the side which offers the best chance of future growth.

As from the above examples, it can be seen that the interior powers (Germany, Italy, Austria) can make the best use of options and commitments. This is because they are the most exposed to attack and therefore must force themselves to give the interior powers a chance to win. However, the exterior powers can also make good use of options if they want to do so although it is not as critical to their success.

Options can be a disadvantage in special situations. When an initial game alliance involves a quick stab and blitz of a third party it is very important that there be no delays. The commitment is total, but the potential rewards great. If a player tries to be too uncommitted at the start of a game in order to retain all possible options that player will likely find all the neighboring powers converging on him and all his options now useless. Thus, it is the right combination of alliance commitments and open options which separate the winners from the losers. And of course remember this is all a result of good diplomacy and nothing more. Used as such success is only 18 supply centers away.

BASIC TACTICS OF DIPLOMACY  
by Len Lakofka

Much lore and riddle has been introduced into the Diplomacy literature of how to attack, what openings are available to each country, how alliances should be formed and nurtured. Yet basic tactical procedures in Diplomacy follow the simple rules of army tactics. Goals are best achieved through the following of these rules and devices for good tactical play.

1. Utilize the full intercooperation capability of your forces. Embarking upon a two or three-front war with just a few forces (including those of an ally(s)) is folly. You can not produce the second major tactical objective.

2. Secure your gains. Move up reinforcements as rapidly as possible and block the holes in your lines. Don't allow your spearheads to be cut off and destroyed.

3. Attack your opponent's weak points. Do not crash into a brick wall your opponent has set up in front of you. Always move so as to increase your attack potential or "mix" for subsequent moves, e.g., if you were Austria and were preparing to attack Germany, which non-supply center(s) would be most valuable? Silesia is correct. It attacks Berlin and Munich. Bohemia, Prussia and Tyrolia attack only one supply center. In each move, try to gain a position from which great mobility is afforded to you.

4. Spearhead and break through a line even if the piece(s) will be destroyed later IF you can require an opponent to use 2 or more pieces to each of your pieces AND he will have to weaken his line to do so.

5. Boldly attack a line that is just forming in hopes of breaking it before it takes shape. If you let an opponent casually erect a string of fortification, don't be amazed when you can't break it later. You often must resist the destruction of a few alien pieces to resist the formation of a solid defense elsewhere.

6. When you are met by doom, attack and infiltrate, abandoning your homeland if necessary! Such a bazaar tactic seems alien to the logical line of play, but reconsider. If your opponent knows where you are and can put his heel on you, he will crush you. If you evade him and make life miserable for him, you may actually survive, e.g., as Germany you are beset by English pieces landing in the lowlands. Your fleet in Helgoland can attack Denmark or Holland in the Spring. If you can, forego both and go to the North Sea if it is open! From there you can drive England wild and gain the wedge to have him grant your survival.

Now, let's look at some exact procedures and examples:

A. S04--Germany: A Tyo, A Gal, A Mun; Austria: A Bud, A Tri

What is the best German attack? A Tyo and A Gal S A Mun-Boh! Regardless of what Austria does, you capture Vienna for sure in the Fall.

B. S04--Italy: A Tus, A Pie; Austria: A Tri, A Bud, F Adr, A Gal

What is the best Austrian attack? F Adr C A Tri-Apu!, A Bud-Tri, A Gal-Vie (A Gal mentioned as the defense of Trieste could be questioned if A Tus-Ven, A Pie-Tyo.)

C. F04--England: (owns: Lon, Edi, Nwy, Den) F Ska, A York, F Nwg;  
Germany: F Hol, F Eng, A Ber, F Bel; France: F Nth

Can the French-German axis be sure of taking a center from England? Yes! F Nth-Den or Nwy, F Bel and F Hol S F Eng-Nth!?, A Ber-Kie. The French fleet takes a center directly or by dislodgment.

D. SO4--Germany: (owns Kie, Mun, Ber, Ven, Vie) A Pie, A Ven, A Vie, A Boh; Austria: A Tri, A Bud, A Apu, A Ser, A Alb; Italy: civil disorder, A Tus, A Rom

What attack nets the Austrians the best results? Here you have no sure way to capture a German center but you can play to outguess and outmaneuver him! A Apu-Ven, A Bud-Vie, A Tri-Tyol, A Ser-Tri supported by A Alb. If Germany misguesses, he is doomed, as Tyrolia can aid against Venice or Vienna or attack Munich and a center can be taken for sure if Tyrolia is reached.

This is an example of "mix." If Austria attacks Venice and Vienna, Germany can do nothing if they held in place with support, but Germany has to guess if Austria will attack or will develop his pieces for a sure capture in the Fall.

E. FO1--France: A Spa, A Bur; Italy: A Pie  
What is France's best move to keep Marseilles open so he may build there? A Spa-Mar, A Bur-Mar. Can Italy offset it? A Pie S French A Spa-Mar? Note France not only blocks Marseilles but does not get Spain either.

F. SO6--Germany: F Edi; England: (owns: Liv, Nwy, Hol, Bel, Lon) A Lon, F Nth, F Bel

Can England regain Edinburgh for sure and keep everything else? Yes. A Lon-Yor, F Nth-Nwg, F Bel-Nth and then in the Fall he will have 2:1 even if Germany moves F Edi-Yor or Nth or Nwg. If Germany moves F Edi-Cly, then England moves A Yor-Liv, F Nth S F Nwg-Edi.

TACTICS: DIPLOMACY'S FORGOTTEN CHILD  
by Douglas Beyerlein

The game of Diplomacy may be divided into three levels of play. Traditionally, these are: diplomacy, strategy, and tactics. Ever since players began voicing their ideas on what were the best methods of play to win, they have concentrated solely on the diplomacy and strategy levels of the game. In fact, at one time the idea of tactics playing an important part in determining the outcome of a game was considered counter to the spirit of Diplomacy. This sentiment is changing, but no one (outside of the Rulebook) to my knowledge has yet set down in print some of the tactical advantages a player may use. Hopefully, this article will be a small beginning in this direction.

Tactics play a very important part in Diplomacy and must be as well understood as the diplomacy and strategy which define the scope of the tactics to be used. As tactics must by definition change according to each individual situation, it is difficult to generalize. However, there are some standard uses which arise frequently and which I will comment on.

The self stand-off involves two or more units attacking the same unoccupied province, none with support. This will prevent an opposing non-supported unit from gaining the province and yet allow for each unit to remain in its original province, e.g., France: A Bur-Mar, A Spa-Mar; Italy: A Pie-Mar or hold. France will keep Marseilles open for a build, assuming it is a fall turn, whether or not the Italian A Piedmont attacks Marseilles.

Supported attack against a unit of the same country is used when a unit must attack to cut support and yet may be attacked by an opposing supported attack. This will result in a stand-off between the two opposing supported attacks with the lone unit in the middle unaffected and able to cut the support of an adjacent attack, e.g., Germany: A Mun-Sil, A Ruh-Mun, A Bur & Kie (S) A Ruh-Mun; Austria: A Sil (S) A Gal-War, A Tyr-Mun, A Boh (S) A Tyr-Mun. The German A Munich will cut Austrian A Silesia's support and Germany will keep Munich even if Austria attacks Munich with A Silesia supported by A Bohemia and A Tyrolia.

Offensive units are units which are adjacent to more than one opposing unit and which will probably be attacked. Most likely, any support given will be cut and therefore defensive units should attack enemy positions supported by defensive units.

Defensive units are usually adjacent to only one opposing unit and therefore their support cannot be cut. An example of offensive and defensive units: Germany: A Bur-Bel, A Ruh & A Hol (S) A Bur-Bel; France: F Bel (H), A Mar-Bur, A Par (S) A Mar-Bur. Germany's A Burgundy is an offensive unit while the others are defensive units. The use of the concept of offensive and defensive units is most important on a Fall turn when the gain of a supply center and a build is more important many times than a good position in a non-supply center province, like Burgundy in the above example.

The above four tactics are rather common knowledge among good players. However, the following tactic is so subtle that I am not sure if any other player knows of it. It is conditional moves based on no moves received from an opposing player by the gamesmaster. And it works as follows: an opposing country, A, has a retreat or build which must be made before the next Spring or Fall season. The gamesmaster, to keep the game moving on schedule, asks that the other players send in conditional orders based on where Player A makes his retreat or build and makes the retreat or build and the following Spring or Fall season's orders

due on the same deadline date. Conditional orders may be based on no retreat (thus annihilation of the retreating unit) or no build. Probably over 90% of these no retreat/build cases result from Player A missing the deadline and not only not sending in any retreat or build, but also obviously not sending in any orders for the following season of movement. Therefore, Player B, if fighting Player A, when faced with this situation, sends in to the gamesmaster one set of orders for no retreat or no build. The special set of orders is all offensive oriented to capitalize on Player A's units standing in civil disorder. If even just used once in a game, it has the potential to destroy the opposition's position. This tactic sent me on to win 1968AN when George Grayson's Turkey missed a retreat and the following Fall 1908 moves as my England grabbed both Warsaw and Sevastopol from Turkey based on my special set of orders. Perhaps the great success of this tactic is due to its subtlety and the fact that it is only used when an opposing player misses the critical retreat/build and following moves. Even then, a player may not know why his opposition was so successful during his ill-timed absence.

Although I have enjoyed great success with this tactic, I think that it is unfair and too great an advantage for its user. Gamesmasters should eliminate its practice and can easily do so by allowing a completely separate deadline for Fall builds (Winter), Spring (Summer) and Fall (Autumn) retreats to physically separate them from Spring and Fall moves. This would eliminate conditional orders and any possible use of this tactic.

In summary, I have only taken a brief look at tactics and their possible uses. Hopefully, in the future tactics will command great respect even if the name of the game is Diplomacy.



PSYCHOLOGY OF DIPLOMACY  
by Edi Birsan

PART I: SO WHAT DO I TELL HIM?

The initial contact made with the other players is undoubtedly very important, but your communication must be geared so as to always allow the target player to concentrate upon the straight content of the letter and not distracted or more importantly put off by the form of it. The basic letter must include the following to avoid annoyance:

Zine game is played in

Game number

Country of writer and reader

These three things can best be taken care of very early in the letter and ideally right above opening salutation of Dear Schmos: for example:

ARENA

1972 PB

France to England

It is generally helpful to always provide a return address somewhere in the letter and to make sure that your name is readable. Ideally type the letter or print very clearly.

Then comes the problem of what the devil to say, or at this point how to say it. Questions of making an alliance early in the game (usually on the Spring 1901 turn) can be handled with a simple format:

- (1) Announce that you want an alliance to attack So and So.
- (2) Give reasons for why you and the other party should ally at this point.
- (3) Give an analysis of what you expect other players to do in regard to the attack on the target state.
- (4) Provide an outline of expected allies of target and a brief appraisal of their ability to handle the upcoming attack.
- (5) List the division of spoils.
- (6) Give a reasonable strategic over-view of what the alliance will do or not do once the target and the spoils have been taken care of.

Such a listing will provide the reader with plenty of information as to your ability and also give him every opportunity to study the situation in a framework that you have defined by working around arguments that may detract from the alliance proposal.

Of course, if you and the person involved are long time friends and know each other well, it may only be necessary to make a partial listing as past experience will have stored up faith in you as far as doing what is reasonable.

Few things are as destructive as offering the Moon and outlining a plan that isn't able to lift a speck of dust your way. If you promise or propose to do great things then present the plan of action to the person involved so he may know of your ability or your foolishness. Also, by making such an outline you will aid your own conception of the alliance and of where you are going in the game.

When you want to propose that the two of you engage in a non-aggression pact with certain neutral areas then follow a similar course of action:

- (1) Announce that you want a non-aggression pact.
- (2) Give reasons for it again for why BOTH of you should want it.
- (3) Explain mechanism for backing up the commitment to gain neutrality in areas of concern (Mechanism meaning: Standoffs, future allies, etc.)

(4) Explain why you do not want to be an ally of the person at this time but leave open the possibility.

(5) Outline regulatory process for the future security of both of your agreed borders.

It is of the utmost importance that you present to such a person the attitude that you are undecided about what the future is going to be with your neighbors and thus want the neutrality pact to buy time. Hint at some allies but don't say too much as there is no need for it. Remember to always leave the door open for expansion of the pact to a full-blown attack alliance.

To get an attacker off your back is about 60% impossible. That is generally, once you are attacked by someone he continues to attack you and you counterattack for the rest of the game unless one side is wiped out. (The percentages may be even higher than 60%, but it sounds reasonable.) The important thing to remember in writing to an attacker is to present an argument whereby you are able to prove without being stuffy or high-handed that his attack on you is counter-productive and will hurt his chances of doing well in the game. Generally, you have to co-ordinate this effort with either some good moves on the board or in the Diplomatic scene via new allies. Then you present your letter to your attacker:

(1) Announce that the present state of war is useless for the both of you.

(2) Present a case by which you explore the happenings around the board if the war continues (example: Turkey will dominate the east and go for the win or Germany will be through with France in two moves and will turn on you from your weak side.)

(3) Outline a plan of withdrawal to safe and acceptable borders (too many wars have dragged on because the powers concerned don't know or don't try to figure out how to get out of the fighting.)

(4) Demonstrate that a course of peace can be maintained and will improve the possibilities for both of you doing better in the game.

The above three lists give you an idea of what to say when you want an alliance, neutrality pact or to turn aside an attacker. What to tell someone who you plan to attack is another part of the psychology or techniques of the game that will be explored later.

## PART II: WHAT DO IT DO?

There comes a time in every game when players have to make a crucial decision in regard to the game or even a small matter such as which supply center to cover and which to leave open. Under some types of decision stress players often can not make up their minds quickly. Matters are often so close that each path seems to be justified by as much as the other. Rather than lock yourself up in endless shaving of fine hairs there are several simple ways to come to a quick decision ONCE you have decided that there is merit to both paths and the results will be about the same providing you get away with it. This is to continue to negotiate so as not to waste any time in over the board games and to avoid a lapse into silence in a postal game, and then to put the decision to the oldest method involved: Toss a coin. Whether the coin is metal or not is of no importance. The dominant thing is not to get caught up in the decision making process so that you can not function in the game. Therefore, use a quick mechanical method or even leave it up to an outsider or a quirk of fate. In the recent game at the Chess House (House of Games), myself and John Stevens were playing Russia. We came to a decision in regard to an attack on Austria which we could not make up our minds. We therefore, decided to toss a coin and as it turned out made the wrong choice. "But then's the breaks."

The style with which you negotiate with a player right after having stabbed him is of great mystery to players at large. Some people think that the thing to

do is to flaunt your dastardliness at the player and to rub it in. This is more visible in over the board games than in postal games, but it is still not the thing to do. You must always remember that today's enemy might be and could very well be tomorrow's ally. Few stabs are made that are decisive enough to knock a player out of the game completely, although I would suspect that as time goes on this might change; thus always be careful not to flaunt your actions until after the game when the most that can happen is that you get punched out.

STABBING MADE EASY  
by Douglas Beyerlein

The stab is an integral part of the game of Diplomacy. Used properly, it means the difference between a good player and a great player. Used improperly, it will damn a player to indecision and botched win opportunities. Therefore every Diplomacy player needs to know when and how to properly make use of the stab.

Before I get into the intricacies of the stab there are a few things that need to be said. My definition of a stab is when one partner of an alliance attacks another player of that alliance in such an overwhelming manner so as to either win the game outright or remove the stabbed player from presenting any serious opposition in the future. Thus the stab is a very powerful weapon open to much potential abuse.

To properly use the stab a player must know when and how to take advantage of it. As pointed out in the definition there are two situations where the stab can be best utilized. The situation where the stab will produce a guaranteed win (assuming that the other player does not have the foresight to block the attempted stab) is the most obvious case. Once the stab is successfully pulled off it is too late for the victim or the other players to retaliate. The game is over and the desired result accomplished.

A definite side effect of such a tactic must be considered. The stab will produce enemies if anything will and this must be taken into consideration for future games. Once the stab concludes the game every effort should be taken by the stabber to console the victim and explain his or her action in a logical way. This may not make up for the stab in the eyes of the victim, but it may help dull the pain.

The second situation where a stab can be useful is in the opening stages of the game. Here a stab can quickly cripple a neighboring power. If done correctly this allows the stabbing player an avenue of quick expansion while the other players are locked in slow battles of attrition. This special use of the stab in the opening stage of the game is known as the blitz. A more detailed examination of the blitz can be found in Hoosier Archives #98.

Now to discuss when not to use a stab. A stab should not be attempted on an ally in the mid-game stage. Progress towards the win will not be aided if only two or three centers will be gained and the ally's position against opposing powers will be lost. In the long run this will usually decrease the stabber's chances of winning--which of course is just the opposite of the desired results.

Also it is not wise to spread the news of the impending stab to the other players in the game. Someone is always more than happy to pass on the word to the victim. At the same time it is a bad idea to telegraph a stab by moving units to strange positions just prior to the stab. This has got to make the ally nervous and probably will tip the player off to the coming attack.

There is one more thing that must be said on stabs. Every player when in the position to make a successful stab must individually weight the consequences of this action against the potential gains. There are times and places where it may be better to go with an alliance to the end. Excess stabbing can lead to a bad reputation and this factor must be placed in the analysis before the decision is made to stab or not to stab. Only then can a player have the best of both worlds.

DIPLOMACY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME  
by Chic Hilliker

One sees many fine articles about the various strategies and tactics involved in winning a game of Diplomacy. But deciding that you're going to form an alliance with Turkey against Russia is not going to do you any good if you get no response from Turkey.

How does one go about getting another player interested enough to join him? You don't start by sending the other player a list of moves you want him to make and say this is it fellow, take it or leave it. But that was a rather obvious example. Most people would instead write and suggest that perhaps Turkey would like to join them in a campaign against Russia. Then you might suggest some of the possible moves, but stress that these are just possibilities which can be changes. But you can even go a step further and try to get Turkey to suggest the alliance to you. Any business man or lawyer can tell you, it's always better to get the other guy to suggest the deal to you. If you can get Turkey to make an offer to you, then you have more leeway in shaping the deal. After all, it was him that suggested it. When it comes to that time of the game when you feel the desire to turn off your former ally, you can have the satisfaction of knowing that he was the one who offered the alliance, not you.

Another important point is that all alliances should start out equally if the partners start out equally. When you and the other guy are working out the alliance, don't try and make everything work out to your advantage. If you do, you're going to end up with either an ally who really doesn't trust you, or worse, an ally who you've scared into becoming an enemy, because of your demands. You both have to give a little to get along. Don't ask an ally to do something which may jeopardize his relations with another country.

The most important factor in developing an alliance is to just be cool and slowly develop a good working alliance. If you can do this, there is no reason why your alliance can't possibly last the whole game with either you or your partner coming in first and the other second.

There are three basic objectives you must accomplish in order to win a game of Diplomacy. They are:

- a) Insure your survival
- b) Finish the game, and
- c) Win the game.

All three of these objectives are different, although it may not seem so.

By insuring survival, I mean not being one of the first one or two out of the game. There is generally one or two countries which manage to get eliminated in the first two to four years. Obviously to finish the game, and to win, you must avoid being one of these countries. The classic example is Austria which is easily accessible from four greedy neighbors. In order to avoid this dilemma, one needs to do a little communicating. The obvious people to talk to are your immediate neighbors. But don't stop there, let's examine Austria a little closer. She must talk to Italy, Russia and Turkey, in order to survive she must work out some sort of agreement with two of these three. But what about the other countries? If Austria is on the ball, she will have been talking with them also. France can serve to counterbalance an aggressive Italy. Germany and England can act against Russia. That just leaves Turkey to worry about, and either Italy or Russia can counterbalance him. The problem is what to do when all three of your neighbors decide that you would be good for dinner. Well, all you can do

is hope that some of the other countries decide that you need saving, because if they don't, well there are usually other game openings.

The key to the whole thing is communication. If you're in trouble, and want someone to try and get you out of your troubles, their reaction is going to depend upon whether you've written them before. If a country has been talking to you before, and then you write them for help, chances are they will. But if out of the clear blue, they get a letter from you asking for help, well what would you do?

The point is to try and anticipate the worst. Sure it's nice to think about all your moves and alliances working, but it's also unrealistic. If you anticipate for the worst, and you have contingency plans ready to deal with it, then you wouldn't get caught in a bad situation.

Although I used Austria as a prime example, the content holds true for all countries. If you can communicate and anticipate, then barring any catastrophic first year, you will generally survive the game.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF NEGOTIATION, OR, HOW TO AT LEAST  
GO DOWN IN STYLE, IF YOU GOTTA GO DOWN  
by Brenton Ver Floeg

First, MAKE A DECISION! If you equivocate through too many years of play, if you play the neutral, first and foremost friendly to all powers, a couple things may happen to you: you may simply not get the initiative that you need to win, or you may find that all the cooperation that the other players have done while working together makes them rather more prone to continue working together than to split the alliance for you. Initiative, of course, is all essential, because no matter how fragmented the other half of the board, you have to be at about 8 or 9 pieces when their war starts to show a clear winner. If you don't commit yourself to an ally, the chances are rather greater that you will be several pieces smaller.

Once you have made the decision concerning your ally and direction of expansion (a more extensive discussion of this issue follows in Part II of the article, "Initial Negotiations"), stick with it! You will, it happens, often find yourself in slow going in tactical terms. Often, in fact, you get completely bogged down. Now, since your ally often is fighting alongside you, the tendency is for his or her lines to be most open, and you can often garner a couple of extra centers simply by stabbing the former ally. Barring very unique circumstances--don't do it. The gain in centers will often be compromised by a loss in credibility in general, and specific antipathy in the game where the attack occurs.

Along the same lines, try to avoid directly lying to your intended enemy. It is possible that he will be equally offended when you attack anyway, but he may not. Moreover, once you explain to others what happened, they may understand too. Recall that a single Diplomacy game does not stand by itself. This doesn't mean that you should get into 40 games so that you can make cross-game deals--it does mean that reputations spread very quickly. Enemies, as Doug says, often crop up simply because you attack them in a game. If you can avoid it, soften the blow by not making an iron-clad alliance with him with full intentions of breaking it later. You will note, of course, that this is often tactically expensive. Maybe he will suspect something, and come after you. Maybe you will lose a season in time, or maybe even a year.

It's thus at this juncture that you must balance in your own mind the basic tenet of keeping the initiative, discussed above, with some other basic principles. I suggest that it's often worth the cost, in extra time needed to subdue an enemy, to avoid the sort of truly "dirty" stab that many players seem to think the true beauty of Diplomacy. It's a decision you must make for yourself, and I don't pretend that my views are any better than anyone else's, but you should at least weigh the alternatives before plunging the dagger.

Along those lines, there is room in Diplomacy for a "Silence is Golden" rule, if applied judiciously. Doug ((Douglas Beyerlein)) says in his article, and it's generally true, that you should write absolutely everyone involved. That's almost always a good idea, but there are cases in which it might not be, and they almost always involve a case where you have decided to attack X player. This may be for reasons of country position, or for reasons of player structure, but the reason is immaterial--the point is that you have not promised this player anything, and thus, when the attack comes, you cannot justifiably be condemned for duplicity. The lessening of your Diplomatic option is the disadvantage but you may even get that back sometime later, in the following situation: suppose

that the battle lines and alliances change rapidly while you are still fighting the player you initially attacked. If, for reasons of your own (remember that this should be done rarely) you decide that you want to switch sides and ally with your former enemy, you are in a much better position to do so than you might have been otherwise. You can say to him "Look, we have been honest with each other. We have never lied to each other, and, in fact, we haven't even corresponded much with each other because we were fighting. We have illustrated our good faith to each other, but that damned X, in country Y, has made promises to the both of us. We should, thus, combine the good faith elements in this game and wipe the bastard out."

Nothing so inelegantly worded, however, is recommended.

There is a possible variation to this which might appeal to the intended enemy's sense of humor, in case, once again, you want to keep your options open in the future, which is always a good idea. You can write him a facetious alliance offer. The only time I have done this was in a game where I was playing Austria, and had a Russian alliance to attack Turkey. I wrote Turkey asking an alliance, but specifying the 'customary' terms--I got Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria in 1901, with Greece to be traded for Ankara in 1902. Turkey would, naturally, build nothing but fleets in Smyrna, but, to show good faith, would not build more than two units in the first six game years, regardless of how many centers he happened to take, and, well, you get the idea.

So, I agree utterly with Doug's wisdom--keep your options open. But I suggest to you that there are other alternatives to writing even enemy players all the time. Of course, there are many situations where you would want to correspond at all times. All I can recommend is that you use your best judgment. Diplomacy is 5% tactics (though in some cases, of course, games become 99% tactics), 45% Diplomacy, and 50% intuition (in which category I include lady luck).

Second, don't make a foolish BLUNDER when you write letters--avoid the TEMPORARY PLAYER SYNDROME. It's a basic fact of life that many Diplomacy players come and go. Consequently, when decisions are arrived at concerning the allies one will choose in a game, little things may make a difference.

There is, for instance, no rule that says that a player who signs himself "The Duke of Luxembourg," and emblazons his letter with all sorts of embossed royal seals, may not be a very excellent player. Many times, in fact, this is the case, and, many times, other players in the game tend to want to free themselves of the potential inexperience that this practice often indicates. (I do not say that this is done with justification, just that it is done). So, you gain nothing from using this technique. Write to the potential ally not as if he or she were a head of state, unless it's tied into your press, but as if they were exactly what they are--players in a board game in which you both have designs on success.

Another thing to avoid, as Doug says, is the "Bare Bones Diplomacy Letter." This is acceptable after you know the player and have an alliance, I suppose, but it's better not to do it even then. At the start of the game, however, it's a disaster. Again, many players who have a tendency to drop out write five line letters. This categorizes you right away in none too favorable a light. Moreover, the person you might intend to ally with could assume that you would never write him a letter like that if you intended to do anything other than attack him (see the 2nd full paragraph on this page for an analagous situation), and that isn't exactly to your benefit either. More importantly, however, you needn't be so cynical as this analysis in order to write longer letters. You might find, and indeed are likely to find, that the player you are corresponding with is an interesting person, and you may broaden your horizons.

The final aspect of the "short" letter is this: as Doug says, a major aspect of Diplomacy is being able to discern the personalities of your opponents



simply through the mail, and, sometimes, over the phone. If you receive a letter which just makes a brief proposal, and nothing else, that person isn't really giving you a chance to see what their thought processes are like, unless the letter is long and contains a lot of analysis concerning the game (there is nothing that says you have to be intimate). In short, they aren't giving you a fair break, and there doesn't seem to be much of a reason why you should give THEM one, does there? So, lengthen those initial letters, and discuss something more substantial than "Let's attack Germany--he's a dirty ass."

Then too, don't do anything stupid. If you are in a feud--that's stupid.

Third, manage your double-crosses well--STAB ELEGANTLY. There are two aspects to this, the first one of which is the oft-repeated tactical dictate that you should never, never stab unless its going to really hurt your opponent, and unless the momentum you gain is enough to counteract any adverse effect it may have elsewhere on the board (AND, I might add, elsewhere in the whole field, where your reputation might suffer. There is no reason why you should have to really stab someone more than once every two or three games).

To this, I add a second necessity, though it's hardly particularly original with me: always write a letter to the person you have stabbed, and try to make certain that it arrives after the deadline date (that is, of course, obvious) and before the magazine arrives. This last is less obvious, but equally as persuasive, if in a more subtle sense. There is always a shock when you see in the magazine that you have been stabbed. No press release can possibly explain all the reasons you might have, and, in any case, a press release can't be very persuasive. It sometimes helps to add a humorous press release (besides which--it's FUN) at the time of the attack, but you should NOT allow such an important letter as this to apply to public channels.

Note well that writing the person you attack, during the season of initial attack, does not only apply to people with whom you have had a close alliance (where it should be obvious) but also to EVERYONE you attack, save those people you attack early in the game that you have chosen not to write at all. (Parenthetically, I might add that you should NEVER use the 'silent' treatment on anyone other than someone you plan to attack at the start of the game). If you have not promised them anything of real value, if you have let the correspondence between the two of you grow cold...these are things which you should tell the person you attack. You should, in fact, be able to point to several indications you gave the person that you were, in fact, planning to attack him. The big catch--these should be TRUE.

If you're still reading at this point, you see a flaw: if you can correctly claim that you warned him, however covertly, HE should be able to see it too. That is of course accurate, but doesn't mean a great deal as far as disadvantages go. This is so because all you have done, in effect, is made your deals with this person in the same manner in which he has made deals with you. In fact, the way 95% of all Diplomacy players make deals with each other. The truth of the matter is that you don't have to attack a person simply because you leave that option open. In fact, as often as not, you may not attack them at all. Omission doesn't mean antipathy, and anyone that thinks so is being foolish. More, it is suggesting a situation I consider absurd, though it happens in perhaps the large majority of Diplomacy games: everyone allies closely with everyone else, and we find out whats REALLY happening in the Fall of 1901 and the Spring of 1902. There is no reason in the world that games cannot proceed to their end without ever having made a "firm" alliance.

It is, of course, a value judgment. Doubtless, it's possible to suffer at the hands of someone that thinks you plan to attack simply because you don't ally until 1920 with him, but you have to weigh these issues for yourself--it may be worse to ally with that person and then attack him. But keep one thing

forever in mind--there are large numbers of Diplomacy players that operate on amoral principles entirely, and you must be aware of that. NO system operates well in isolation, and meeting other players, and other systems of approach, is not only refreshing, but challenging.

The balancing act becomes acute, and if you reason that this article does nothing to point out just how you should lean, then you have correctly analyzed it. I haven't really regarded it as an attempt to do so. But this is a philosophical difficulty that everyone solves for themselves, and recall that it's only the third part of the general heading--General Principles. If you want to double-cross at will, feel free. But expect some repercussions in both the short term and long term senses.

#### INITIAL NEGOTIATIONS--COMMIT YOURSELF AND GO!

There is clearly not going to be space ((in his zine)) for this part of the article. I am truly long-winded. What I wanted to discuss here was the difficulty of making that initial commitment, and the manner in which it should be made: contingent upon other players, or the country you have? There are advantages and disadvantages to both methods, and distinctions are to be made between a position in which you know none of the people on the board, and one in which you know them all, either through past contact or through reputation (I know an excellent player who once studied all the games of his opponents, and, you can believe, was much stronger as a result). However, there isn't time for this now and will be concluded in next issue. ((the following is from next issue))

#### PART II--The Initial Negotiations:

It's clear enough, as I said last issue, that you have to reach a clear commitment with a certain group of allies, and then push as quickly and aggressively as possible towards that goal. But, as the years go on, it is apparent to me that to precipitate a commitment is a bad as none at all. Most initial negotiations periods are never over a month, and often actually use much less time than that. 90% of the first moves I have received in the three PP games ((his zine's games)) have been received weeks in advance of the deadlines. Sometimes, this is all you need, but sometimes I think that you need twice that long, if only to correctly analyze your enemy. My worst error in a Diplomacy game was in assuming that the grand strategy of the situation of the game was the most important, and that people could be moulded to that end. Unfortunately, I inverted friends and enemies, and was stabbed by the player who was to be the long-term ally, and befriended by my intended worst enemy. All too late for me to react with any degree of flexibility, naturally, and the game was hopelessly and irrevocably lost.

This implied at the time that all games should be run on the basis of the personalities involved. That sounds perfectly simple, I agree, but it involves disadvantages. The most irritating possible letter to receive early in a game is one that absolutely refuses to be committal in any way or form. He is waiting to see what YOU offer, which, by some strange coincidence, is just what YOU are waiting for. You'll probably end up fighting. At best, you'll end up with a very neutral agreement. It's for that reason that it is often best to try to get some idea what the players may be like BEFORE you write them. The best way to do this is to know them in advance of course, but, until someone does the very valuable work of preparing game records for certain players, you have to dig through all the records yourself, or pay Rod or someone else with the records to do it on their time. (They might do it gratis for someone with a few games, but after that you probably should give them something for their time).

Alternately, or perhaps supplementally, you can call them on the phone. Diplomacy ought not to be influenced by costs, but the simple fact is that Diplomacy IS so influenced. It is for that reason that players in the same geographic area have an advantage, because communication between them is so much more sure, or, at worst, cheaper. But there's the other side of the coin there too, because it's certainly a worthwhile Diplomatic weapon to claim that X & Y, residents of the same area, will therefore ally, so that they should BOTH be cleaned out before that happens. Naturally, it's not necessarily (or even often) the case that these people DO ally, but the burden is now on them to convince your potential ally that they are in fact mortal enemies, one with another.

If you can do this sort of initial groundwork, or get some sort of reasonably reliable hearsay evidence concerning the player whom you might want to influence, it's time to go to work. If the player is trustworthy, I suggest that you commit yourself to a specific initial line of attack, and ALSO COMMIT YOURSELF TO A GRAND STRATEGIC SCHEME. Andy Phillips, in regard to last issue, has written me that there should be better reasons to ally with someone than that he or she is a "Great Person." I of course agree 100%, and in addition to being reliable, you should doubtless be able to convince a potential and desired ally that you are both willing and able to fulfill your portion of the alliance. The Grand Tactical/Strategic proposal is of this nature. Here, you would describe the middle and end games, as you see them, in terms of what powers will be battling what other powers. After the initial round, if your alliance is accepted in a manner which you think is sincere, your alliance should be cemented into somewhat more detailed terms. Specific plans should be formulated concerning what is to be done with various other countries, and consideration should be given to how the situation might change. The ideal situation, which is actually not too hard to attain unless you have some real close-lipped people dragging down the game, is one in which you will not be surprised by anything that happens on the board. Allowing for a reasonable amount of breakdown, no massive strategic shifts should manage to perpetrate themselves without your knowledge, or at least some sort of idea that they might take place. Ideally.

And that, dear friends, is why it is next to impossible to "teach" Diplomacy. You can "teach" the tactics element, I suppose, and there are a large number of articles by those much more skilled than myself in that regard which you should read before even attempting prolonged play of the game. But the rest of it is by "inference." You must, on the basis of what is often nothing more than intuition alone, decide who you can trust and for how long. If you think that you are about to be attacked, please try to think compromise. That is--offer the attacker a center or two in order for him to go away and bother someone else. You'll not profit immensely by that, but you might stay alive to fight again.

This is winding down right now, I can tell. It's really almost next to impossible to get down in print all the myriad little things that run through anyone's head when they play a game of Diplomacy. I have played only four years now, which isn't a very long time compared to some of the real "old-timers" but I have seen some very clever tricks perpetrated. Reading can do something, but watching does more. Most of all, however, is interest. A player who doesn't give a shit is going to lose, 9 times out of 10. A player that is both interesting and challenging will, much more often than not, do well. Perhaps he or she will even win the game. Not only is interest contagious, it tells your potential allies that you are not about to become a negotiating drop-out, and makes you a very valuable friend, and very dangerous enemy. Sometimes things go poorly, of course, but it's then when you can earn the MOST respect of your enemies. I have never eliminated a player who has written at length while being attacked, and kept attempting to change my mind. Furthermore, I have always endeavored to ally with them in future games, because I know that if they fought hard when they were losing, they will fight doubly when they are winning.

## PHILOSOPHIES OF PLAYING DIPLOMACY

by Edi Birsan

Within the Diplomacy world there are several strong currents of attitudes on the play of the game. The intensity of these views approaches the point of a philosophy of play although often lacking the qualitative aspects of philosophy in the common sense of the word.

Sometime ago, John Beshara wrote a small outline of his "Philosophy of Winning Diplomacy" (Atlantis #14 reprinted with modification in H.A. #7) in which he stated that the "first minimal objective is to insure a stalemate." That is, providing you can not win the game, your actions must be directed as to deny victory to any other player. The obsession with victory of the Win Only School has many followers including amongst them the designer Calhamer, Prosnitz, Phillips and Beshara.

Directly opposed to the victory only school, comes the Strong Second School of thought championed by Brenton ver Ploeg. They hold that as victory becomes unattainable the best course of action is to secure as strong a finish as possible (hopefully second) and not to necessarily stop the front runner.

While there have been other possible entries on the list of philosophies, let us first deal with the confrontation between these two and see if it is possible to come to some kind of conclusions.

Suppose I am a player that has come into a game with a mixed board of Win Only and Strong Second people and that I have no philosophical trappings. My first question is who would make the best long term ally? The Win Only person is ideologically committed to stabbing me as soon as it looks like I might have a possible shot at a win. The Strong Second player in direct opposition, would tend to interfere less and instead try to finish as a strong second. Thus, the strong second character would be the best ally. My second question then is who is the best person to attack? To attack the strong second player would stack the game with people of the Win Only School who would be determined to stop any front runner. To attack the win only people, would stack the board with people who are determined to finish as best as possible and will probably bicker amongst themselves, making victory that much easier. Also, the Strong Second people tend to be more narrow minded when they are attacked and tend to therefore continue to fight to the death; while the Win Only School, shows much flexibility in alliance patterns and will if it looks like there is another front runner offer to ally with his previous attacker to stop the new front runner. Therefore, the Win Only School makes the best enemies.

In a game in which there are mixtures of only these two philosophies and say no outsider let us look at the board again. From the Win Only view it is only natural to choose a strong second person for your long term ally for the same reasons as above. The same goes for deciding on who to attack. For the Strong Second person, the best ally is one of his own kind, while the best enemy is again the Win Only person.

In a game with only players obsessed with victory what can we expect to see on the board? First, there will probably be no or few long term alliances. Second, there will probably be no victor if the players are of the same skill in tactics and reading the front runner. That is, we can expect to see constant stalemates.

In a game of only strong second players what can we expect? First off we can expect a higher degree of wins than in the Win Only games. Second we can

easily expect long term alliances. Third, we will probably witness a scrambling for supply centers instead of position as the game moves into its final stages.

Faced with the obvious advantage of attacking Win Only players a curious attachment has been added to their philosophy. This is the great bluff of a fight to the death. Often the Win Only people will try to counter the logic of attacking them by stating that they will fight any betrayal to the death. This is so much talk and in practice rarely comes true. When there is a fight going on with a Win Only player and another and it looks as if a new front runner may have a chance to secure an unstoppable position the Win Only player invariably approaches his attacker and states: "If we don't stop, so and so will win!" Only the interference of emotional factors of a major (read feud) will tend to make a confirmed Win Only Person rather die fighting for someone else's WIN.

As part of an empirical proof of the above I must point to my experiences. In New York City, which might be called the home of Win Only there was a period of almost two years in which there wasn't a single win in a face to face game amongst the normal Diplomacy crowd. It was only with the increase of the strong second school and a third group described later that finally brought a victory to the New York boards. Now, with the TDA consultant's in the City pushing the Win Only School we once again witnessed a rise in the number of stalemates in the City. To study alliance preference, one has to dig into the records of say Prosnitz and Beshara on the postal circuit and one will find the pattern of the win only school. For mixed games, you can follow the games of say Ver Ploeg. These will sustain the pattern that logically follows from the ideology choice.

The problem now arises in how to spot a member of either school so that one may use the predictable behavior patterns to one's own advantage. Prior to this article most players usually betray themselves in writing and by that label themselves. I'd have to suspect that after this article there would be a verbal switch in many of the Win Only camp while they maintain their philosophy in practice. Then the only way to spot one is by a careful screening of the past games and a quick alliance analysis correlated with school type. Which may seem to be a lot of work, but if it is to be done it will bring results. The problem of recognition is crucial and it will probably be one of the major reasons that the Win Only school may quietly persist from now on, although hopefully in decreasing numbers.

The Win Only School provides an interesting threat to our hobby in that if it dominates you will witness an increase in stalemates and a corresponding decrease in wins. This will tend to frustrate players and rob the game of enjoyment. This in fact did happen in New York after a long period of stalemates people were getting bored and annoyed at those whose obsession with victory leads to the denial of it to others and locked up board. Which brings us to a third philosophy of play.

The most important thing and by all true measures the first minimal objective is not to secure a stalemate, a strong second or even your own survival, but is in fact to ENJOY the game. A game in which you are bored, disgusted, annoyed and unhappy isn't worth a damn if you win or lose. To equate victory or placing in the top part of the board with enjoyment is to lose sight of the pleasures of a well played game, an alliance kept through thick and thin, or an impossible position played out to the best of your ability. To lose sight of enjoying your games is a true loss in a philosophical sense of the word.

RELATIVE TACTICAL VALUES OF THE DIPLOMACY COUNTRIES  
by Eric Verheiden

Recently, a number of articles have been published on the statistics of Diplomacy, principally Charles Reinsel's series, "The Statistics of the Postal Diplomacy Board." While Reinsel's numbers do indeed form themselves into very attractive tables, exactly what they are all good for has not as yet been adequately explained. One problem which might conceivably be tackled with statistics is determining exactly how good the various countries are in relation to one another, at least in a general way. To do this, one should first decide exactly what makes up a good country.

Two obvious criteria are an abundance of available supply centers and a lack of opposing units. All other things being equal, an initial advantage in home supply centers should confer a corresponding advantage in a game, as will increasing numbers of units as the game progresses. Next comes a more difficult problem, determining what simplifying assumptions can be made so as to make the problem solvable. It will be assumed that all countries expand in a uniform manner, their units moving in an expanding circle from their home supply centers. Further, the opposition at any point is proportional to a weighted sum of enemy home centers according to distance from the front, multiplied by a factor which assigns an equal share of all non-absorbed neutral centers to each home center.

With that in mind, the following table has been compiled. Please note that the defensive factor is equal to the number of occupied centers at each stage of expansion divided by the number of exposed border spaces.

AUS	T	S	H	DF	OF	ENG	T	S	H	DF	OF	FRA	T	S	H	DF	OF
0	3	3	0	1.00	16	0	3	3	0	1.00	7	0	3	3	0	1.00	13
1	8	3	1	0.75	20	1	8	0	0	0.38	13	1	8	1	0	0.50	22
2	13	6	4	0.92	17	2	10	5	1	0.80	14	2	15	5	3	0.60	20
3	17	8	7	1.18	10	3	13	6	3	1.08	15	3	22	12	8	0.95	11
4	15	7	3	1.80	7	4	10	5	4	1.90	12	4	14	6	3	1.93	7
5	10	4	1	3.10	3	5	11	4	4	2.09	11	5	9	5	3	3.56	2
6	7	2	2	4.71	1	6	14	5	3	2.00	6	6	4	2	2	8.50	0
7	2	1	1	17.00	0	7	6	6	4	5.67	0						

RUS	T	S	H	DF	OF	GER	T	S	H	DF	OF	ITA	T	S	H	DF	OF
0	4	4	0	1.00	18	0	3	3	0	1.00	18	0	3	3	0	1.00	15
1	12	2	0	0.50	22	1	10	2	0	0.50	23	1	8	1	1	0.50	20
2	16	10	7	1.00	16	2	16	8	6	0.81	18	2	13	7	4	0.86	18
3	19	8	4	1.26	10	3	22	11	7	1.09	10	3	15	7	4	1.20	14
4	13	5	5	2.23	5	4	16	6	3	1.88	4	4	19	9	5	1.42	7
5	11	5	2	3.09	0	5	6	3	2	5.50	1	5	11	4	3	2.82	3
						6	2	1	1	17.00	0	6	6	3	2	5.67	0

TUR	T	S	H	DF	OF
0	3	3	0	1.00	8
1	6	1	0	0.67	14
2	5	4	1	1.60	17
3	11	5	4	1.18	15
4	13	5	5	1.38	12
5	12	5	3	1.92	11
6	14	5	2	2.00	6
7	11	6	4	3.09	0

T=Total number of spaces at given distance from home centers

S=Total number of supply centers in T

H=Total number of non-friendly home centers in T  
(all foreign home centers in T)

DF=Defensive factor as explained above

OF=Opposition factor as explained above

The figures for distances above 4 are included mainly

for completeness only, since a country should win by that point, without having to expand further.

Finally, for each distance from the home supply center, form the quotient of the opposition factor and the total number of supply centers occupied at that point. Form the sums of these quotients for each country to the point where 18 centers are occupied. For the special case of Russia (with 4 home centers as compared with 3 centers for every other country), multiply the sum by  $3/4$ . Dividing all the sums by the Russian sum, the relative opposition factor is obtained.

	AUST	ENGL	FRAN	GERM	ITAL	RUSS	TURK
RCF	1.48	1.43	1.77	1.74	1.77	1.00	1.46
RWT	1.50	1.40	1.68	2.33	2.63	1.00	1.27

The upper figures (RCF) are the relative opposition factors; the lower figures (RWT) are formed by taking the win total for each country and dividing by the Russian win total, as found in the Calhamer Point Rating List in Hoosier Archives #104. The lower the number in each case, the better the country. As can be seen, Austria, England, and Russia do about as well as might be expected; France and Turkey do somewhat better; both Germany and Italy do considerably worse. This may be accounted for in part by factors not taken into consideration, for example, the fact that Italy, although usually a sea power, is given two armies at the start of the game instead of two fleets. Certain advantages in defensive position, in particular with Turkey (compare the defensive factors at different stages of expansion above), may account for some of the discrepancies. Finally, there is the admittedly rough nature of the figures obtained and considerations based on the typical alliance structures which arise in the course of the game.

POSTAL VARIANT GAME DESIGNATIONS (MILLER NUMBERS)  
by Lewis Pulsipher

Soon after postal Diplomacy became an established hobby, players began to experiment in postal games with rule changes, creating the first variants. In 1965 Don Miller, the most active designer and gamesmaster of postal Diplomacy variants, established a designation system for variants based on the "Boardman Numbers" system used for regular postal Diplomacy.

The system is simple. The designation consists of the year in which the game starts, one or two upper case letters indicating its position in that year's sequence, and one or two lower case letters indicating which variant is being played. For example, 1972Xt is the twenty-fourth variant game begun in 1972, a Middle Earth Diplomacy IV game. 1974AEbu would be the twenty-ninth 1974 game, a Youngstown Variant game. As each variant is played by mail for the first time it receives a designation in sequence. The most recent variants receive d- series numbers (da, db, dc, etc.) while an old game like Middle Earth IV has an early designation (t).

Miller was forced by eye trouble and other commitments to pass assignments of the variant designations to me in January 1972. Since then I have appointed a backup, Richard Hull, who will assume assignment of the numbers if I am unable to continue. Orphan variants are no longer permanently abandoned; I have assumed charge of finding new gamesmasters for such games. The assignment of variant game designations, and the finding of new gamesmasters for orphan variants, are not supported nor sanctioned by any organization. Both posts are passed by the current custodian to a successor, or to the backup if the currently responsible person defaults on his responsibilities.

Less than a year ago, Richard Vedder began to maintain the first rating system for variant Diplomacy games. Following a great decrease in interest in 1969-71, more variants are being designed and published, and about 50 postal variant games will begin in 1973. While Diplomacy variants are often ignored by the hobby as a whole, they have been and will continue to be a vital part of postal Dippydom.



## DIPLOMACY VARIANTS

by Lewis Pulsipher

Over 100 different variants of Diplomacy have been played postally, and many more have been designed, published, and often played in person. Variants can be categorized in two ways: first, by the percentage of changes from the regular game, and second, by scenario type.

Most of the early Diplomacy variants were "conservative." Only a few of the rules of Diplomacy were changed, and the board remained the same. For example, the only change for the Lebling Variant is the addition of a unit in civil disorder in every neutral center. This subcategory of conservative variants is dealt with in another article.

A second type of conservative variant uses a new or much changed board but few or no changes in the regular rules. Some games of this type are really moderate variants, since some new boards radically change conditions of play. An example of a conservative game using a new/changed board is the 10-player Youngstown Variant. Asia is added to the area of the regular board, which is slightly changed as well. A moderate game of this type is Imperialism VII (World War II), which includes over twice the number of units and spaces as the regular game for only six players.

Other moderate variants include many rule changes and a new board. Mordor Vs. the World (based on J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings trilogy) and 1776 (War of the American Revolution in North America) are two of the many variants of this type.

Radical variants include wholesale rule and board changes. The end result often bears little relation to regular Diplomacy, although there are always more than two players and the support concept is always retained. The most radical variants are Interstellar Diplomacy and Galactic Diplomacy. Hypereconomic Diplomacy is the best-known radical variant.

Sometimes a variant is played because the scenario is of special interest rather than because the game appears to be interesting as a game. For example, the popularity of the many versions of Mordor Vs. the World stems from player interest in Tolkien's Middle Earth. MVTW is very unbalanced, with some players having virtually no chance to win, yet many people want to play it.

There are three types of scenarios for variants, plus a fourth type consisting of games without scenario. Perhaps the most popular scenarios are basically of the same historical period as the regular game, that is, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Youngstown Variant, Abstraction (an attempt to reduce the imbalance and lack of realism which exists in the regular game), and Imperialism VIII (the addition of the rest of the world including two more players to the regular game) are examples. Science fiction and fantasy based scenarios are popular, particularly those based on The Lord of the Rings. A third loose group of variant scenarios are the historical scenarios not included in the first group. Jihad (the Arabian outburst in 622AD), 1776, and Imperialism IX (Peloponnesian War) are among the many examples. The fourth group includes such strange games as Chaos, Anarchy, Hyperspace Diplomacy, and Black Hole. Generally these use the regular board but rule changes which bear little relation to reality. For example, any two spaces can be connected or separated through "hyperspace" in Hyperspace Diplomacy. In Anarchy, players' home centers are spread about the board (perhaps at Edinburgh, Rome, and Portugal).

Two or **three** new variants are published each month, and many old ones are reprinted periodically. Currently conservative variants using new boards seem to be most favored by designers and players. Some moderate variants have appeared recently as well as a number of conservative variants using the regular board.

Why play variants? Some people become bored by the regular game, while others just like variety, both of scenarios and of tactical and strategic determinants and options. Variants also offer complexity not available in the regular game. Finally, a novice player with good potential ought to fare better against an experienced player in a variant than in a regular game, for both will have to analyze new determinants; the veteran cannot rely as much on experience rather than skill to win for him as he can in a regular game, particularly when the variant is radical.

This article can only convey a weak idea of the value of Diplomacy variants. A small book could easily be written on the subject.

A DIPLOMACY ARCHIVES  
By Walter Buchanan

Hoosier Archives began, I suppose, on October 26, 1970, although I didn't know it at the time. On that date I received complimentary copies of Numenor #7 and Lilliput #5-7 from Rod Walker. I had been the first to respond to the first postal Diplomacy flyer that GRI started putting in their Diplomacy sets in the fall of 1970 and Rod was apparently overjoyed at this event. Although I had been aware of FTF Diplomacy for a couple of years, I was completely oblivious to the postal game until I saw the GRI flyer. It intrigued me very much since I had been a postal chess player for nine years through Chess Review's U.S. Open Postal Chess Tournaments, and the idea of playing Diplomacy by mail too, fascinated me. In fact after a couple of months of postal Diplomacy I quit postal chess altogether as I didn't have time for both and in my opinion postal chess was no match for postal Diplomacy. (A more detailed account of the above appeared in SerenDip #72 in an article I wrote for John McCallum.)

After my discovery of postal Diplomacy and due to my postal chess experience, I did notice a couple of weaknesses. One was that there were no books about Diplomacy strategy and tactics or collections of completed games with analysis helpful for good play. These books abound in chess and I had found them quite useful in improving one's proficiency. I therefore developed the desire to make something of that order available for Diplomacy.

Due to the relatively small number of Diplomacy players today, a book on Diplomacy would be economically unfeasible. The next best thing I decided was to build up as complete a collection as possible of postal Diplomacy 'zines due to the extensive game records contained therein as well as occasional strategy and tactics articles. (Note that when I use the term "strategy and tactics" I mean "diplomacy" and alliance structures as well, indeed the most important part of the game.) The above data could then be used as a research source to make general articles and completed game records with analysis available to the Diplomacy public at large. Although I hope that this "archives" can eventually be used for the Diplomacy book of my dreams, as an interim measure I created the genzine, Hoosier Archives, to make some of this information available now. I am using Hoosier Archives for the present to complete and maintain a Diplomacy archives and to reprint strategy and tactics articles. In fact the response has been so favorable that I have been able to solicit original articles as well. In the future as these strategy and tactics articles near exhaustion and as time permits, I hope to publish completed game records with analysis as well. My procedure will be to first collect the completed game record from the archives as well as any contemporary commentary that was available. I will then send this data to the gamesmaster and players involved if they can still be contacted, in the hopes that a more detailed summary and analysis can be developed. (Already John Beshara has agreed to do this for his extraordinary win as Russia in 1966AI in ADAG and I have sent him the raw data necessary.)

If response similar to this can be solicited from other outstanding players and gamesmasters, Hoosier Archives will essentially be the Diplomacy book of my dreams in serialized form. It can also be a more polished data source for this Diplomacy book if it ever materializes and as it indeed must, if Diplomacy is to ever become a prominent game on a national scale.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those that have made the archives possible and in so doing the possibility in the future of an honest-to-goodness

book on Diplomacy. In particular, I would like to thank the following Diplonauts for their very substantial contributions: John Beshara, Doug Beyerlein, John Boardman, Lee Childs, Bob Johnson, Henry Krigsman, John McCallum, Hal Naus, Rod Walker, and Charles Wells. These gentlemen have not only sent me great amounts of material (Would you believe 4 four-drawer filing cabinets full already?!), but have taken the time and trouble to give me bibliographical information and sources for additional data. At the present time the archives is virtually complete back to 1966 and with many 'zines before that. If present sources pan out, by the end of the year the archives will be virtually complete in xerox or original form back to the very beginning. Who knows, maybe someday it will even contain a copy of Graustark #1, the genesis of our hobby?!

THE ORGANIZED DIPLOMACY PLAYER  
by Len Lakofka

The most vexing thing that happens to a player is a missed move. Second to that is failure to communicate with an ally because of carelessness. This carelessness can be due to poor playing ability or to poor organization. I'd like to address myself to the latter topic.

Organization is a function of how meticulous you are and how much time and money you care to invest in keeping accurate records. Early organization is just keeping all correspondence removed from the magazine and placed in a file for that game. If you are at home with a particular notation, then copy the moves from the zine and keep the game record in that form. You can use 7 different colored pencils, transcribe the moves or final positions to maps--if these can be obtained and/or afforded. Here are a few ways of keeping track of the game that are quite good.

Get a columnar pad with at least 34 horizontal lines and about 20 columns. Label the columns S'01, F'01, W'01. Use 7 different colored pencils to list the final position of each piece at the end of the move (retreats are noted in the next column in small print). Now, by placing the position of the piece in the next season's column, you can also trace the piece's movements. Growth and decline of each country can be seen as a 7-part, single-line graph as more (or less) spaces are used for each country.

Another method is to obtain a cork board, or large piece of cardboard, that can be moved and stored or hung in one place. Now, colored pieces of paper can represent pieces on individual maps or the orders can be tacked up next to one conference map. Thus, as the new adjudication arrives, you place the new position of the piece on the columnar pad, a map, or just replace the new moves with the old.

Phase two is organization of dated material. First of all, we have the deadlines for the games. These can be listed on (1) a large calendar, (2) a date pad (list the deadline FIVE days before the actual date of deadline), (3) use a note on a columnar pad for the particular game. This latter method will be elaborated on in a few minutes.

Other dated material involves correspondence. When you mail a note and expect a response (or require a response) by a certain date, be sure to note this on a columnar pad or on a date pad. Be sure to allow adequate time for the movement of the mails!

The actual submission of orders, using a receipt method (stamped self-addressed card or envelope or a postal receipt) is also dated material. If the receipt does not come back in time, zip off another set of orders. Also, the receipt method can be used to have an exact duplicate of the orders sent to the GM with his signature on it. This can be useful if there is a GM error.

Phase three is organization of the correspondence. Part one of this system is to keep up-to-date files of all addresses and phone numbers. This is best done in one of two ways: (1) keep a separate list of each game roster on a single sheet of paper in the game file or (2) go to a store that sells philatelic supplies and get a stamp ledger that holds individual stamps in creases in the pages. Now place each player's address on a blank business size card (available in all stationery stores for about 100/35¢) and place them on one page for each game. Address/player changes are made just by replacing the cards.

Part two of this phase is keeping track of the diplomatic notes. The best method is to keep a file on each player in a master file for the game. Blank file folders are only 3-4¢ each, and standing file racks are only a few dollars. Obtain a date stamp and date every piece of correspondence on the day it arrives--do not go by dates on the page--they are often wrong. Use colored paper, placed upright in a file, to signal a letter(s) you have yet to answer. Place all agreements and treaties, along with a note on duration, in a separate file folder in the set. In this way, you will always know what was and was not answered at the end of the week.

The columnar pad can solve a lot of problems. Head the columns: Game, Game #, GM, Player (for separate correspondence), Deadline, Deadline Extension, Season, Receipt Mailed On, Receipt Returned, Correspondence Sent On, Reply Received On, Sealed Orders Filed, Sealed Orders Updated, etc. Thus, with one or two more pages per game, you have complete and accurate records. Keeping the sheets in one binder puts all of your games at your fingertips!

As for myself, I use the Tower of Babylon system. This means--throw all your letters, bills, advertisements and mash notes in a large pile until it falls over. Place all loose pieces of mail in any envelope handy, shuffle and answer the first 10. It is a wonderful system!

FOLLOW THE ACTION!  
(The McCallum System of Notation)  
by Walter Buchanan

Since The Grudge Game ((Hoosier Archives)) is a demonstration game, hopefully many of you out there will learn something from it. That is why a detailed analysis of the moves in prior seasons will appear periodically. To enable you to learn more easily from the moves themselves and from this analysis, I would like to suggest to you the use of a recording system that was first proposed to me by John McCallum.

First of all, write Games Research, Inc., 500 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118 ((new address substituted)) and send them \$1.00 for 25 Diplomacy Conference Maps. This should be plenty to use for the system described below. Also, you will need seven crayons in the following colors: red (Austria), purple (England), blue (France), black (Germany), green (Italy), brown (Russia), and yellow (Turkey).

Now, to use the McCallum system, you take a separate map after each of the spring and fall seasons and record the armies with a circle of the appropriate color and the fleets with a line. For the winter season, instead of a separate map, you use the fall map and make square brackets around a unit built and round brackets around a unit removed. Lastly, retreats after the spring or fall season can be indicated by an arrow. Therefore, in the above way you can have a permanent record of the entire game and follow its analysis for a modest investment of 88¢, assuming the game lasts the average eleven game years.

From my own personal experience, I have found this system to be ideal in games you play in, too. Being an ex-postal chess player, I used to use the postal chess albums as put out by Chess Review. After mentioning this in an article of mine published in SerenDip #72, Brenton Ver Floeg suggested I use map tacks and board to adapt this to postal Diplomacy. However, due to the simultaneous moves, I have found the McCallum System works much better in postal Dippy, as you are less likely to misplace units.

Have at it, sports fans and follow the action!

POSTAL DIPLOMACY: FAD OR FIXTURE?  
by John Leeder

Games are usually carried on face-to-face. When a game is played by mail, I venture to say that it is for one of two reasons:

1. The game is so esoteric or difficult that it is impossible to obtain locally, sufficient nuts to carry on a face-to-face game.
2. The skill of the player has surpassed that of his local confrères and he wants to try his wings at a higher level of competition.

From my own experience, and my glimpses of the history of postal Diplomacy, it appears that most postal Diplomacy games have begun for reason number one. In the past, FTF (face-to-face) games have been so rare as to call for special notice. Many, many postal players (including myself until recently) have never played in a seven-player FTF game. Diplomacy does not make for a light social evening--it calls for concentration and commitment. Therefore the growth of Diplomacy as a person-to-person game has been slowed and cultish, mainly restricted to large population centers.

This is changing. The explosive increase in the number of postal players reflects the increased sales of the game, and, inevitably, the increase in opportunity for FTF play. This is a simple matter of numbers. The more people own games, and know how to play, the more chance to get seven people together for a session of insanity. (When a place the size of Huntsville, pop. 3500, can have a group which plays Diplomacy regularly every third week and irregularly in between, this has got to be indicative of a continental trend.)

Where does this leave the postal game? Will reason 1 be invalidated and reason 2 take over? In other words, will postal Dippy become an elitist activity carried on only by those players who have outgrown their local roots? Will the increased sale of Diplomacy sets spell the end of the postal game as a wide activity patronized by all levels of skill?

I think not, for reasons involving the basic nature of the postal game. However, the postal hobby should take steps to ensure that this does not come about. Read on.

Postal Diplomacy and FTF Diplomacy are basically two different games. All they have in common is that they use the same board and the same rules for movement of units. The negotiative element, that all-important factor determining the uniqueness of Diplomacy as a game, is utterly different in postal and FTF play. (It was no accident that the 49-player tournament at Diplocon in Chicago last summer, in which many of the top postal players participated, was won by a player who had never played a postal game.)

The two main factors differentiating postal from FTF play are: 1. Communication media and 2. Time scale.

Dealing with the first factor, it is not necessarily true that a player who is skilled in verbal communication will be likewise adept in the written form. Writing negotiative letters is a vastly different skill from negotiating verbally. Most of us aren't good at both. Ever wonder why various attempts at Diplomacy-by-cassette tape have come to naught? My theory is that postal players want to write, not talk. Many of them, anyway.

Time scale is the second factor. When most postal games last a year at least, the player's ability to maintain a high interest level over a long period of time becomes an important factor. Perseverance enters into the picture. The player who knows how to use the post office, to get moves in on time, to take



advantage of his opponent's lapses, has a better chance of succeeding. The necessary skills in this area are completely foreign to FTF Diplomacy (and in a sense, are a more accurate simulation of the real world.)

However, many people who enter the postal game are not really aware of these differences. The illegible letter and the botched move are far too common. So is the dropout, who finds that play-by-mail isn't really his thing after all. Novices don't need to learn solely by bitter experience after starting their first game. Nor do they need to be reached only by the public-spirited publisher mailing them a sample copy of his novice orientation zine. We can start right at the beginning, with the GRI flyer. As well as listing sources of information, to be sought out at the novice initiative, it should contain a brief rundown of the different and unique aspects of the postal game, not only to attract prospective players, but to deter those who aren't going to dig it.

Anyway, play-by-mail is a different game from FTF. The increase in FTF play doesn't necessarily doom PBM to an elitist role. I think the increase in postal games will continue, although the rate of growth will probably level off. (There are indications that this is happening already: less response to GRI flyers, etc.) PBM will not begin to decline until the entire wargaming hobby begins to decline, which will probably happen eventually, but not for some years yet. In the meantime, with the much greater number of postal players, I think we'll see the hobby start to stratify into "Major" and "Minor League" zines. The major league zines will carry only top-flight, invitation-only games, probably restricted to players who have won at least one postal game. Hoosier Archives' demonstration games are the first step in this direction. (I'm not so much advocating as predicting this trend.) Such zines should arise in about one year's time when most of the games begun in 1971, the first year of the explosion, will have to be completed.

I think the greater size of the postal hobby will be a positive trend in that it will help players of varying idiosyncracies, and the whole range of outlooks and attitudes from wildly individualistic to determinedly para-professional, to coexist with less friction than they could have in a small narrow cultish group. And that's good for the hobby and the world.