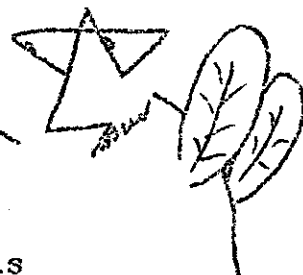


"WELL, NOW," SAID THE GOOD FAIRY OF POSTAL DIPLOMACY, "WHAT CAN WE DO FOR AMUSEMENT? WE POISONED PIGEONS IN THE PARK LAST WEEK, SO NOW WE CAN TYPE

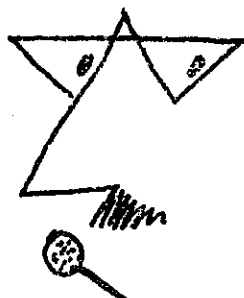
# EREHWON 79

15 August 1974

zowie!



Yes, folks, this is your reporter, Ivanhoe Pinkham, speaking to you from the ruins of the Chicago Sheraton. Now, as we understand it, this was the site of something called DipCon IX. And about three hours ago, by accident, John Boardman, Rod Walker, Walt Buchanan, John Beshara, Len Lakofka, Bob Lipton, and Edi Birsan were placed in the same Diplomacy game....



## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Director. . . . .	.Rod Walker
Producer. . . . .	.Conrad von Metzke
Program Notes . . . . .	.Eric Verheiden
MacBeth . . . . .	.Walt Buchanan
Lady MacBeth. . . . .	.Edi Birsan
First Witch . . . . .	.Nicky Ulanov
Second Witch. . . . .	.Bob Lipton
Third Witch . . . . .	.Larry Peery
Chorus of Witches . . . . .	.John Boardman
Sandwiches. . . . .	.Perdita Boardman
Duncan. . . . .	.Auntie Clio
McDuff. . . . .	.Len Lakofka
Lady McDuff . . . . .	.Carol Ann Buchanan
Banquo. . . . .	.Jeff Key
Fleance . . . . .	.Pussy Galore
Malcolm macDuncan . . . . .	.John Boyer
Ticket Sales. . . . .	.Gordon Anderson
Ticket Scalping . . . . .	.Richard Nixon
Props . . . . .	.Le Marquis de Sade
Prompter. . . . .	.John Beshara

More Dinki Cons!

oh, yes...  
Bye, Dick!

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WE WISH TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION, THE DIPLOMACY ASSOCIATION, GAMES RESEARCH, BUDDY TRETICK, AND CHARLES REINSEL ARE ALL AGREED: THIS IS THE MOST BORING ISSUE OF EREHWON EVER PUBLISHED.

Think we're kidding? Read on, baby...

SUPPORT DINKI CON I II



This is EREHWON, a semi-demi-pseudo-possibly monthly journal of postal Diplomacy and other Pulitzer Prize nominations. Subscriptions are 6/\$1, or 20¢ a copy. There are no game openings. Original articles, poems, and short humor items are solicited. The right to edit, in the interests of space, grammar, maximum effect, and some very low standard of "taste", is reserved to the Editor. Blanket permission to reprint any item in EREHWON is hereby given to any postal Diplomacy editor, subject to two requests: first, that the original author and source be properly credited; second, that a copy of the publication carrying the reprint be sent to me.

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#### DINKICON!

On Sunday, 25 August 1974, a bunch of California Diplomaniacs will get together in West L.A. to engage in our favorite form of sado-masochistic behavior. The event is from 10am to 4pm (or so) at Holmby Park, 601 Club View Drive, in L.A. Food (lunch) is available for \$1 a head, payable in advance to Paul Boozer, Box 24872, LA CA 90024. For further info, enclose a SSAE, or call Peter Shamray at (213) 474-6121. This is now formally billed as a "Diplomacy Barbeque", which has less to do with the food as the fate of those who attend. However, it is obvious that the original name, DinkIcon, was far superior. I therefore dub it DinkIcon-I, in the hopes that we will have more of these things. (For those who might be curious, Jim and I will be there, and we're dragging the infamous Conrad von Metzke along with us. I am going to GM some game or other, and Jim is going to play, and Conrad is going to stand around and absquatulate.)

#### RATING SYSTEMS:

##### A Conspectus

Rating systems are the thing these days, yes sir! And just to show you how in they are, your faithful Editor has compiled one (his third in all these years) and has sent the results off to DIPLOMACY WORLD--where they will shortly see the light of day. Aren't you thrilled?

Anyway, I thought I would say a few things about rating systems and discuss the ones which are currently available. I'm sure you're all terribly interested in this arcane subject, but....

A lot of systems have dropped by the wayside. Two of mine. Reinsel's BIG BROTHER system, the first ever proposed. The various versions of the GRAUSTARK center-year system. And others less well-known.

Comparing rating systems is rather hard, because each of them operates on different premises, and even includes a somewhat different set of games. However, what I would like to do here is to look at each active system briefly and show some of its results, faults, and problems in each.

Traditionally, the top players are frequently divided into "boards" of 7 players each ("top board" and so on), although this is not done so much these days. However, I am going to look at the top 21 names (3 boards) in each system, as well as the country rankings.

The Calhamer Point Count. If simplicity is a virtue, here is the ultimate in virtue. There is one point per game. The winner gets it. If the game is drawn, the point is divided among those in the draw in equal portions. Points are then totaled. Period, end of system.

Now, while the system is simple, it also lacks sophistication. It operates on the theory that the only thing that counts in this game is victory (obtaining it or denying it to others). I have discussed before, here and elsewhere, the logical failings of this point of view. It seems to me that a system which cannot credit various levels of performance is too obtuse as a measuring instrument. Furthermore, the CPC cannot distinguish between a player who has completed 6 games and won all of them, a player who has completed 12 games and won 6, and a player who has completed 100 games including 12 2-way draws and no wins. Each receives 6.000 on that system.

Finally, the system as presently run has an administrative weakness. When Walt Buchanan published his criteria for inclusion, a lot of exclusions were made which I feel are unwise. One of these criteria involves alleged unethical practices in games, but this is so difficult to prove as to render that criterion non-operative in many cases. One case in point is 1970E, excluded by Walt owing to alleged hanky-panky by John Beshara, the game's winner. The only thing for which there is any solid evidence is that the GM, John Boardman, allowed a highly experienced player to take a replacement position in a game originally open only to relative novices. That does not seem a grievous fault, and if we are going to dump games for trivia of this sort, why bother with ratings at all?

Hopefully, if we can get the Postal Diplomacy Rating Commission off its dead ass, the raters themselves can negotiate the question of inclusion and achieve some greater uniformity and rationality in their criteria. The PDRC has been moribund for years under two or three different Chairmen (including myself at one time), but maybe this year....

The last CPC update appeared in DIPLOMACY WORLD #1, covering 329 completed games. The rankings were then as follows, for 7 Great Powers and 21 players (excluding 4 whom I believe were inactive when the list was published):

63.733	RUSSIA	10.450	Doug Beyerlein	5.333	Tom Eller
51.167	ENGLAND	8.333	John Smythe	4.783	Len Lakofka
48.883	TURKEY	7.500	Brenton VerBoeg	4.250	John Koning
47.850	FRANCE	6.200	John Beshara	4.167	Jeff Power
42.967	GERMANY		Lewis Pulsipher	4.000	Mike Goldstein
41.950	AUSTRIA	6.167	Hal Naus	4.000	Buddy Tretick
32.450	ITALY	6.000	Walt Buchanan	3.950	Conrad von Metzke
12.950	Edi Birsan	5.500	Randy Bytwerk	3.700	Pete Rosamilia
11.517	Andy Phillips		Mike Rocamora	3.367	Rod Walker
				3.200	Dave Lebling

The Averaged Calhamer Point Count. This was first proposed by Brent Ver Ploeg in HOOSIER ARCHIVES #45, and maintained by him in his PLATYPUS PIE for some time. A similar proposal may have been made by Dick Miller in WAZIR #4, although I don't have access to a copy to check that one out.

Anyway, the system simply divides the CPC total by the number of games the player has completed. This system suffers from the same serious weaknesses as the CPC, although it has the distinct advantage of being averaged so that players don't simply accumulate points. It is thus a better measure of performance than the CPC.

The ACPC has recently been revived by the Diplomacy Association, although none of the original sources are given credit in IDA's announcement and the name has been changed to "A Rating Survey". Two changes are

apparent from Ver Ploeg's original. First, the games included are independently determined, rather than drawing the results directly from the published CPC list. Second, the score is multiplied by 1000 and (I'm quoting from the DA's announcement) "the resultant score is similar to a batting average in baseball"--or would be if batting averages were computed solely on the basis of home runs. TDA's announcement also asserts that "all the games of the major rating lists are included in this survey," but a list of the games rated has not been published, so it is impossible to verify this statement; I hope we may see such a list soon (plus a statement as to which rating systems the DA considers "major").

Another basic question about this system is, who compiled it? In CALIFORNIA REPORTS, John Beshara is quoted as denying he did it and that it was done by a body of unknown composition called the TDA Ratings Commission. A published announcement by the DA states that Eric Verheiden is Chairman of their "International Ratings Commission", which I presume to be the same body. It seems to me that those who did the work deserve the credit, and the public has a right to know who is involved here. Efforts on my part to elicit a public statement have met with firm refusal. This is most unfortunate, and is a part of TDA's apparent policy of keeping most of its operation under wraps (about which I will have more to say later). I see no purpose in keeping the names of those who worked on this system a secret, nor in failing to acknowledge that it is not completely original. I hope these omissions can be amended later by the DA.

Below are the results of the first two ACPC lists published by TDA. The first includes an unknown number of games; the second, 387. Countries are not computed, only players. Only 20 names are given, so I can't give you 21. Players are not included who have not been active in a game in the past year (which explains the omission of my name, by the way; a rough calculation suggests I'd do about 210). Players are not included who have completed fewer than 7 games (which explains the omission of Walt Buchanan, who has completed only 6 games, winning all of them, and whose score would be an astounding 1000 otherwise). I have to squeeze the columns together, so the numbers indicate: 1--Score, 2--Games won, 3--Points (computed as under CPC), 4--Games Played (i.e., counted in the system). The first TDA ACPC list ("rating survey") is on your left.

1	Name	2	3	4	1	Name	2	3	4
785	Mike Rocamora	5	5.500	7	773	Brenton Ver Ploeg	8	8.500	11
750	Brenton Ver Ploeg	7	7.500	10	722	Mike Rocamora	6	6.500	9
683	John Beshara	8	8.200	12	683	John Beshara	8	8.200	12
533	Thomas Eller	5	5.333	10	533	Thomas Eller	5	5.333	10
500	Randy Bytwerk	5	5.500	11	529	Peter Rosamilia	2	3.700	7
498	Doug Beyerlein	10	10.450	21	514	Lewis Pulsipher	6	7.200	14
477	Lewis Pulsipher	5	6.200	13	498	Doug Beyerlein	10	10.450	21
444	Monte Zelazny	4	4.000	9	458	Randy Bytwerk	5	5.500	12
397	Andy Phillips	9	11.517	29	444	Monte Zelazny	4	4.000	9
386	Jeff Power	4	4.250	11	397	Andy Phillips	9	11.517	29
362	John Smythe	8	8.333	22	386	Jeff Power	4	4.250	11
281	Len Lakofka	4	4.783	17	347	John Smythe	8	8.333	24
280	Gene Prosnitz	6	6.450	23	289	Len Lakofka	5	5.783	20
268	Edi Birsan	12	13.150	49	280	Gene Prosnitz	6	6.450	23
212	Dan Barrows	1	1.700	8	258	Edi Birsan	12	13.150	51
193	John Koning	4	4.250	22	189	Dan Barrows	1	1.700	9
185	Buddy Tretick	5	5.000	27	179	Hal Naus	4	7.167	40
179	Hal Naus	4	7.167	40	162	Larry Peery	2	2.917	18
172	Larry Peery	2	2.917	17	159	Bob Ward	2	2.700	17
160	Bob Ward	2	2.700	15	156	Buddy Tretick	5	5.000	27

The two lists above appeared in CALIFORNIA REPORTS #16 and 17, respectively, and a copy of the first was forwarded to me by John Beshara several weeks ago. The first list also appeared in EL CONQUISTADOR 11, and probably some other places--MIXUMAXU GAZETTE I believe, and probably in GRAUSTARK, although the latter has all but ceased to be a Diplomacy 'zine.

And in case anyone is interested, I am now an active player (Germany in COSTAGUANA's 1973EG)(a position I wouldn't wish even on Andy Phillips).

The ODD Rating List. This was first designed by John McCallum, who maintained it for a while. It then passed to Doug Beyerlein, who maintains it in CALIFORNIA REPORTS, and a detailed discussion of the system can be found in WASHINGTON REPORTS #5 & 8.

Basically, the system works in thisway: a new player starts out with 600 points. When he wins, he gains points from the other players; when he does not win, he loses points to the winner. The number of points thus exchanged in each completed game depends on how many points each of the players has when the game ends. The basic gain/loss is 50, but there are all sorts of handicaps and whatnot, and I refer the reader to the sources mentioned above, as well as to DIPLOMACY WORLD #3, where the latest print-out of the system is to be found.

The chief disadvantage of this system is the same as the CPC--it considers wins only. However, because it is zero-sum, it doesn't need to be averaged, and it does take into account the differing performances of the players--so that a player has to beat good players in order to get very many points. It is also hard to tell what games are being rated. Although Doug updates by game, he does not provide a single list of games in the system, and I think it would be nice to know.

The ODD system lists everybody in alpha order, but also the "Top 60" by rank, as well as the "Over 1000 Club", which gives the high-water mark of those who have made it over 1000. (Hmmm...my own high-water mark seems to be 1238, below Ver Ploeg, Rocamora, Turner, Beyerlein, Eller, Pulsipher, and Buchanan. Not too shabby. But now, of course, it's....)

Doug lists by asterix (\*) players he believes to be inactive and--amazingly--indicates me as active. I am going to leave out the players he has marked, except John Beshara, who is still active in the hobby, although not as a player. Score is to the player's left. No country ratings.

1335 Michael Rocamora	1132 Andy Phillips	1043 Michael Grayn
1276 Lew Pulsipher	1085 Randy Bytwerk	1039 Tim Tilson
1249 Walt Buchanan	1067 Ted Holcombe	997 George Lowrance
1228 Doug Beyerlein	1064 Lee Childs	959 Len Lakofka
1222 Tom Eller	1062 Rod Walker	952 Peter Ansoff
1217 John Beshara	1052 John Boyer	Allan Calhauer
1154 Pete Rosamilia	1050 Jeff Power	947 Ed Hille

The Rogues' Gallery. This is Len Lakofka's relatively new system, announced in a late HOOSIER ARCHIVES. The latest print-out, with the rules and everything, is in DIPLOMACY WORLD #2.

This is a pretty complex system. The basis of it is that survivors get 5 points per supply center held, and those who win get 170 more points (or those who draw split the said 170 points). Those who are eliminated lose points based on how long they lasted. (Although now the way you probably think: the longer you survive, the more you lose. Yeeesh!!) There are also a lot of provisions for replacements, including the concept of "corrected games", which means basically giving a replacement credit only for the amount of time he actually played the country. There are also 19 (count 'em, nineteen) rules on the basis of which a game is excluded from the ratings, in whole or in part.

I like this system. It gives a good idea of how a player is doing in the game. Although perhaps it is a bit complicated, it is not as complicated as the others. It is also a bit more comprehensive than the others. However, I would wish that Len weren't so picky in his criteria on what games he won't rate. Still, he includes a complete list of games he includes & excludes, which is great! He does not rate 37 games which I do (see below on my system--surprise!), but I don't rate 16 games he does. We're going to talk about these 53 games; it would appear that most (or all) raters would like to get closer in terms of the base of games we all rate.

In the list below, we start with countries. Columns are: W--# wins; D--# draws; S--# survivals, E--# eliminations. For the players, the columns are: #--# of games rated; C#--corrected games. Players believed by me to be inactive are eliminated. I don't know my own score, since Len has not published it, and I have no way of estimating. Included are 345 games.

Country	Score	W	D	S	E	Name	Score	#	C#
ENGLAND	17,139	44	50	124	127	Ed Rack	156.38	4	3.37
RUSSIA	17,051	57	32	96	160	Randy Bytwerk	156.36	11	11.00
TURKEY	16,294	38	47	135	125	John Beshara	153.80	11	8.81
FRANCE	14,436	37	43	138	127	Ted Holcombe	119.67	3	3.00
GERMANY	11,282	36	37	101	171	Elliot Lipson	116.54	4	3.81
ITALY	9,271	26	32	123	159	Doug Beyerlein	116.49	33	21.01
AUSTRIA	8,629	33	29	82	201	John Smythe	113.80	30	21.00
						Lew Pulsipher	112.34	13	11.34
						Len Lakofka	112.06	20	15.67
Name	Score	#	C#			Tim Tilson	108.67	5	3.00
Michael Grayn	275.00	3	3.00			Pete Rosamilia	104.03	12	8.43
Walt Buchanan	262.93	6	5.45			John Leeder	94.04	6	4.70
Bruce Kindig	213.87	4	3.75			Lee Childs	90.83	13	8.07
Brent VerPloeg	207.50	10	10.00			Jeff Power	86.29	16	12.91
Mike Rocamora	200.89	6	5.62			Hugh Anderson	86.10	4	3.54
Tom Eiler	162.65	12	9.21						

By the way, I owe Len an apology, although he doesn't know it. When I first saw that set of criteria for not rating games, I said to a couple of people that I'd bet Len was thereby excluding a bunch of games in which he did poorly. I'd have lost that bet. There are 53 games which one of us rates that the other doesn't (see above). Of those, only 1 (one), 1970C, is a game in which Len played. So much for jumping to conclusions....

#### BATTING AVERAGE RATING SYSTEM

The STARS & BARS System. DIPLOMACY WORLD #4 will carry, complete with print-out of the results, a new rating system. It is my little contribution to this mess. The print-out includes results from 405 games.

The basis of the system is simple. A player who is eliminated has lost and gets nothing. Each survivor gets 1 point per supply center he owns. No other points are assigned. Points are then totalled and divided by the number of games. This result is divided by 18 and the quotient is multiplied by 1000 to give a result similar to a batting average.

There are some provisions for replacement players, basically that the game doesn't count unless you play 3 game-years or more and have 6 or more centers at the end. You can read the rest in DW. Oh--the game winner always gets 18 points, regardless of how many centers he actually owns. The highest possible score is therefore 1000.0. Players are only included in the system when they have completed 5 rateable games or more.

My listing in DW includes everybody, active or not. The 21 names below are believed by me to be active in the hobby. In the country listings the two columns are, to the left, score, and to the right, total points. In the player listings we have score, name, and then a composite figure

which looks like this: 100/20. That means that in 20 completed games the player has accumulated 100 points. OK, here we go:

315.1	ENGLAND	2297	734.1	John Beshara	185/14
312.2	TURKEY	2276	677.8	Andy Phillips	305/25
287.2	RUSSIA	2094	666.7	Mark Tonneson	72/6
283.9	FRANCE	2070	631.9	Lew Pulsipher	182/16
240.9	GERMANY	1756	622.2	Peter Ansoff	56/5
221.9	ITALY	1618	600.0	Arn Vagts	54/5
191.4	AUSTRIA	1557	572.2	Lee Childs	62/6
			568.2	Doug Beyerlein	225/22
1000.0	Walt Buchanan	144/6	537.0	Don Berman	87/9
916.7	Mike Rocamora	132/8	534.7	Pete Rosamilia	77/8
811.0	Bruce Kindig	73/5	523.8	Dan Barrows	66/7
796.3	Brent Ver Ploeg	172/12	512.1	Rod Walker	212/23
783.3	Tom Eller	141/10	509.3	Steve Brooks	55/6
754.6	Randy Bytwerk	163/12	504.6	Jeff Power	109/12
			483.0	Hal Naus	313/36

Looking back over these results, we can see several things. First, the Great Powers are in the same slots they have always been in--England, Russia, and Turkey on top, France and Germany in the middle, and Austria and Italy in the cellar. Among the players, many of the same names crop up over and over again, but there are also new ones, and the placement of the names varies.

I have omitted the Beyerlien Player Poll because it is not a rating system in the same sense the others are, and the most recent poll has not yet been published. To some extent, this is a sort of popularity contest --it determines who has reputation, more than accomplishment per se. But it is important to know who are known as good players, and this poll is an invaluable guide.

And on top of all this I have a rating system design published in three other 'zines (hoping to find a curator for it). Furthermore, THE POCKET ARMENIAN #3 has just arrived, and in it is an interesting system design by Mike Honig. I'm anxious to see the print-out of calculations, if things ever reach that stage.

There. Wasn't that fun?

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**1. KEY'S GAMES.** I don't ordinarily advertise games, but there are two I believe deserve a lot of attention. After John Koning's death, Jeff Key revived aTab, giving up his own THE VOICE and other 'zines to do it. Jeff has a regular game open, the price for which is merely a paid-up sub during the game. Even more important, a section of the new War of the Kings Diplomacy game is now open, with only 3 slots left. Jeff is, I think, the big name in this field these days, and a chance to play in this game is not to be lightly overlooked. As an added inducement, I am actually going to play in this turkey. And write press releases, mostly. Interested parties should write Jeff Key, 6918 NW 78th Terr., Kansas City MO 64152.

**2. SUBSCRIPTION POLICY.** Effective immediately, EREHWON is not particularly anxious to accept new subscriptions. If somebody really wants one, we'll talk about it. Those who already subscribe are, of course, welcome to renew. The big news is that effective 1 September 1974, the

particular the Russians agree to intervene on behalf of the Germans, then things may be held up considerably, to the detriment of English chances.

France was undoubtedly the major beneficiary of the switch in alliances, but it is still far from clear sailing. The French have essentially lost two years, which, considering the speed at which this game is progressing, may be difficult to make up. In particular, it is reasonable to assume that the Italians will be rather upset at this latest turn of events and will certainly attempt to hold up the French southern offensive, if not reverse it completely. The English, diplomacy or no diplomacy, cannot be forgotten either; it is they who will be gaining most of the builds in the north and it is they who will have a lot of fleets with no place to go when and if the north is secured.

The key to long term Anglo-French prospects lies in breaking the Russo-Austrian-Italian alliance. If it can be accomplished, then presumably they should be able to pick up at least some of the pieces. If not, a draw may be in the offing.

Austria is still the dominant power in the eastern alliance, which is just as well for Austria. The power in the middle of a typical three-way alliance often runs into certain difficulties in the mid-game. Generally, Austria looks to be in a good defensive position, with both allies preoccupied on other fronts. Offensive possibilities, except perhaps against Germany, are somewhat dimmer. As the Anglo-French alliance begins to press on Russia and Italy, the difficulty with a stab will be to assure that the English or the French do not gain too much and the Austrians too little.

Italy has been forced on the defensive by the French attack, but it should not be anything that cannot be handled, if not leaving much for other fronts. Austrian assistance (in the form of a loaned fleet) may be in order.

The English stab was definitely a boon to the Russians, since the Anglo-German attack was beginning to hurt badly. However, they are not out of the woods yet by any means; there remains a slight retreat problem with Germany's A War if it must be driven out forcibly and St. Petersburg probably cannot be held indefinitely. However, with those adjustments, a good defense is possible, if not much else as with the case of Italy.

As for the moves, there is a number of possibilities and there is also the uncertain status of the Germans with the eastern alliance to consider. This, combined with the greater than average potential in this game for surprises, makes Spring difficult to predict. However, giving it a try anyway:

ENG: F Edi-Nth, F Nt-Hel, A Lon H, A Hol-Kie, F Bar-StP(nc), F Den-Swe S by F Nwy.  
 FRA: F Bre-Mid, F Spa(sc)-Lyo S by F Wes, A Mar-Pie, A Bur-Mun.  
 GER: A Mun S A Kie, A Pru-Ber, F Swe-Den S by A Kie, A War H.  
 ITA: A Pie-Mar, A Tri-Mun, F Ion-Tyn S by F Tun.  
 RUS: A Mos-War, A StP H, F Bal-Bot, A Con-Ank S by F Bla.  
 TUR: F Ank H.  
 AUS: F Aeg-Smy, A Bul H S by A Ser, A Boh S ITA A Tri-Mun, A Sil & A Gal S RUS A Mos-War.

CONRAD VON METZKE WANTS EVERYBODY TO KNOW THAT COSTAGUANA IS ALIVE AND WELL IN SAN DIEGO. HE IS STILL AT P.O. BOX 4, SAN DIEGO CALIF. 92112. RUMORS OF HIS MOVING, DEMISE, AND OTHER THINGS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION EVEN IF HE'S SPREADING THEM, ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. Th-th-t-th-that's all, f-f-f-f-folks!

1973IK -- ANALYSIS  
Eric Verheiden

In the last analysis, it was noted that "German fortunes could still reverse rather quickly". Apparently those words were rather more prophetic than I thought when I wrote them. For with the English stab, it seems apparent that rather than looking like a good possibility for second place, Germany now looks like a good possibility for second out.

Actually, to offer some consolation to the Germans, I tend to believe that the sudden revision in the western alliance structure was inspired more by personal reasons than anything else. As it happens, I know that in one of my own games (1973AL in Duane Linstrom's DOOMAFLECKIES), Brooks and Kelly are very strongly allied indeed. It is almost axiomatic in postal Diplomacy (or if it isn't, it should be) that when two players get into a number of games together, they tend to ally with one another generally or attack each other generally. This need not reflect a cross-game alliance of any sort, but merely the simple fact that if someone gets along well with you in one game, you are more inclined to ally with him in another and conversely, if someone stabs you, you are more inclined to return the compliment at the first opportunity.

In any event, it can be anticipated that a considerable amount of diplomacy will be conducted over the winter, upon the outcome of which will hinge the immediate prospects for German survival. Offhand, I would not say they look too bright, although the takeover of Russia by a skilled player like Arn Vagts improves them somewhat. The first difficulty which must be overcome by the Germans is what might be called the "revenge factor", i.e., "after watching you stomp on me for so long, now I'm going to see you get yours".

[Ooops; new paragraph--that last sentence above goes here.] Fortunately for the German, the major damage done was to Russia and as mentioned above, that country has a new player. The second difficulty is the fact that Austria has too many allies; with Turkey soon to be out of it an an ongoing alliance with Italy and Russia, if the Austrian allies with Germany now, where is he to go? Thirdly, we have the "investment factor". The Austrian player and his Italian ally have invested a certain amount of time and material to get into the position they now have against Germany. Under the circumstances, a certain amount of "return on investment" is to be expected, a prospect which leaves the Germans squarely caught in the middle. Finally, there is the simple question of what a functioning Germany has to offer. Opposing the English and the French would be helpful, but by moving through Germany, the Austrians, Italians, and Russians will shortly be in a position to do that themselves. Moving voluntarily out of Warsaw would resolve some problems, such as a potentially bothersome (but no more than that) retreat to Ukraina, but with that out of the way, the Germans might well find that they have "outlived their usefulness". I wish the Germans luck--they'll need it.

Getting on to saying a few words about the other countries: England gained some and lost some with its anti-German stab. It gained two immediate builds and most likely eventual control of northern Germany and Scandinavia, a new faithful ally in the French, and a cessation of the impending Franco-Italian attack on England. England lost one faithful German ally, a certain amount of time before France is developed to the point Germany was previously, easy access to the Mediterranean, and inevitably a certain amount of diplomatic credibility. Whether England gained or lost on balance remains to be seen. If the north crumbles before the English onslaught and either enough armies are built to move inland or penetration into the Mediterranean is achieved, one way or another, then the gamble will have been a good one. If on the other hand the north solidifies, in

subscription rate to EREWON will drop to 10¢/copy for postal diplomacy 'zines. This applies to new subs and renewals, but not to current subs (sorry, gang). This means that if you edit a postal Dippy 'zine, and we don't have a trade agreement, you can sub at the lower rate. For those who are part of a conglomerate publishing group, I'll have to limit that to one member of the group.

This is the first step in a plan I have for EREWON. In these days when universal trade agreements are not possible for most editors, and not wanted by some, communication between editors is falling off. But editors are the backbone, the mortar, the center of the hobby. I am therefore looking into whether this gap might be filled.

One idea I have had is for EREWON to come out more frequently (possibly with fewer pages); say, once every two weeks. It would pick up items of general interest from other editors and pass them on, reprinting articles, announcements, and the like--or publishing new material which any editor would be welcome to reprint if he wished. Hopefully, by that time the 'zine would go to all editors (or nearly all) by trade or sub. (This would be confined to the US & Canada.) Editors who wanted me to publish something could send it along, or point it out to me if I already had it.

I am interested in any ideas you might have on this. It's just a sketchy plan now; I will need help in filling it in. I know there is a need for this sort of thing. How best can I structure it so as to meet the needs of the hobby? (I am probably going to try this on a modest scale first, working with all of the California GMs, and will do some talking about it at the DinkiCon.) Anyway, your ideas would be much appreciated!

"WHY, NO, OFFICER," SAID THE GOOD FAIRY OF POSTAL DIPLOMACY, "IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT. I AM MERELY INVITING THIS CHARMING YOUNG MAN HOME FOR A CUP OF COFFEE. AND WHILE WE ARE THERE I WILL SHOW HIM MY ETCHINGS AND

### The Game

**1973IK:** EASTERN POWERS SUSTAIN DOUBLE SHOCK...GERMAN OBSEQUI AND SMASHING DEFEAT IN THE NORTH, AND FRENCH ONSLAUGHT IN THE SOUTH. SPHERES OF INFLUENCE DEFINED IN FORMER OTTOMAN DOMAINS. RUSSIAN MARINES PAY SURPRISE VISIT TO GERMAN CAPITAL.

**Spring 1903:** Stand-by players for the game are as follows: Austria, Conrad von Metzke; England, Robert Moshell; France, Mike Kostoff; Germany, Bruce Schlickbernd; Italy, James Thomas; Russia, Tony Pandin. Addresses and preference lists were published in BESEROVIA 10. General stand-by, Stephen Hall. Ron Kelly's ZIP is now 20061. Capt. Steven Brooks is now at 4960-B Ave. C, Great Falls MT 59405. The German retreats were submitted at a later date, but are printed with the adjudications.

**AUSTRIA (Scott):** A Gal S A Sil, A Boh & A Sil S ITALIAN A Trl-Mun, A Bul S RUSSIAN A Con [against Sultan's harem?], A Ser-Bud, F Aeg-Smy.

**ENGLAND (Kelly):** A Lon H, F Edi-Nth, F Den-Bal, A Hol-Ruh, F Nth-Nwy, F Nwy-StP(nc) S by F Bar.

**FRANCE (Brooks):** F Bre-Mid, F Wes-Tun, F Spa(sc)-Lyo, A Bur S GERMAN A Mun, A Mar-Pie.

**GERMANY (McKeon):** A Kie S A Mun, F Swo S ENGLISH F Den-Bal, A War-Mos, A Pru-Sil S by A Mun.

**ITALY (Blank):** F Ion-Tyn, A Trl-Mun, A Pie-Mar, F Tun-Wes.

**RUSSIA (Vagts):** F Bal-Kie /r/ (R-Ber), A StP looks longingly at Norway S by A Mos /r/ (R-Lvn) (A StP R-Lvn, that is), F Bla-Ank S by A Con.

**TURKEY (CD):** F Ank /h/ /d/.