

GRAUSTARK

#49

1965A

"Winter 1902"

21 March 1965

RUSSIAN OVERSIGHT LEAVES NORTH COAST VULNERABLE

As a result of the 1902 campaigns, Germany establishes an army in Munich, and Turkey establishes a fleet in Smyrna. Russia ordered the establishment of a fleet in St. Petersburg, but did not specify on which coast. Since "an order which admits of two meanings is not followed", no Russian fleet is established.

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This is

LONDON (UPI): The Admiralty is desperately attempting to launch a new fleet to bolster its control of the seas. The shipyards are working day and night in an effort to complete the new fleet for use in the spring of 1903.

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NORWAY: Two English sailors, veterans of Danish espionage, recently returned from St. Petersburg after laying groundwork for an invasion. Both sailors have volunteered to lead an English battalion into St. Petersburg. Advisors to King Edward believe the attempt will result in a defeat for England, but the King believes an English St. Petersburg necessary for English security, and hopes the bravery of Englishmen will win St. Petersburg.

WALEES: A fifty-foot statue of freindship is being built, complete with an inscription: "Liberty - Equality - Fraternity".

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LIVERPOOL: Two red cross ships loaded with food and clothing are sailing for Albania for eventual use by Austrian and Hungarian refugees.

NORWAY: English forces are mobilizing for another assault on St. Petersburg. However, the winter cold, combined with reports of a new Russian army in St. Petersburg, have lowered English morale to the extent that a policy of "just holding the line" may be forthcoming.

DENAMPK: An attempt to send food, medicine and ammunition to the Austro-Hungarian forces in Vienna is being planned. German forces in Bohemia will be asked by England to assist in transporting the supplies.

LONDON: King Edward will try to arrange a French-German cease fire. "Peace is our hope," proclaimed the King. "My greatest regret was not being able to help Austria-Hungary remain free."

The King denounced Italy and Russia, both of whom now occupy Austrian provinces. Parliament and the King have issued a joint ultimatum, demanding the withdrawal of foreign forces from Austro-Hungarian soil. "Grave conditions will exist if the ultimatum is not heeded."

HELP (August 1, 1902): At the daily news conference held by the Royal Chamberlain, it was announced that the Romanovs would remain, vacationing, on this tropical island for an indefinite period. To explain the reasons for the extension, the Royal Chamberlain had Colonel Dyeper, commander of the beach defenses, pass out a bulletin.

"The feared troubles with the West have materialized. A foul creeping thing, which heretofore had amused itself by squatting in its own filth, stirs. Already this grasping corruption has heaved itself upon the virgin shores of Scandinavia. Having engulfed the peaceful lands of Norway and Denmark, the gluttonous spawn of insignificance, its gross appetites unsatisfied, now attempts a greater adventure. But its cavernous maw will suffer great pains before the Russian follows his brother the Viking to oblivion. The peoples of Russia do not fear the seeking mouth of Albion. Undaunted and steadfast, the Tsar's children accept the challenge of darkness.

"To better lead his children, the Tsar suffers to stay on Help where he can better direct the defense of his beloved Russia.

"In the Tsar's own words, 'Will the world stand by and permit civilization to be

"...by the greedy, grasping Britons? Unite brothers and annihilate them! For, as sure as there is death, when mother Russia ceases to be so shall ye." The peoples of Russia seek the aid of all people of good will and courage. Russia will fight to the death for God and civilization."

MOSCOW (August 8, 1902): This most ancient center of the Moscow State has gone delirious over the recent victories in Hungary. The city is preparing to give the Grand Duke a Caesar's welcome when he returns for conferences with representatives of the Tsar. There are even rumors that the First Estate is petitioning the Duma to make the Grand Duke Nicholas the Tsar. No official is willing to confirm these rumors.

GENEVA (August 10, 1902): A spokesman for the publishing house of Justus Perthes, which puts out the Almanach de Gotha, today clarified for the benefit of the press the latest Moscow despatch. "The 'Nicholas' of this despatch is not the Tsar, but his cousin, a Grand Duke," the spokesman explained. "He is a grandson of Tsar Nicholas I. The title 'Veliki Knyaz', which means 'Grand Prince' but is usually translated 'Grand Duke', is borne only by sons of a Tsar, or by grandsons in the male line."

THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH

PAUL HARLEY, 123 South College, Oxford, Ohio: The ignorant war lord of Austria-Hungary begs to be informed of the mechanics behind the annihilation of his Army. ((Mr. Harley has reference to the moves of Spring 1902 in 1965A, in which he plays Austria-Hungary.)) The Austrian army attacking Trieste was repelled because the Italian army remained in Trieste. ((Correct.)) The Italian army attacking Vienna was repelled because the Austrian army attacking Budapest was repelled. ((Correct.))

Now the army in Budapest equalled the supporting army in Rumania, but this leaves the army in Vienna attacking Budapest and the army in Galicia attacking Budapest - why don't these attacks cancel one another?

((Russia ordered A Gal-Bud, A Rum S A Gal-Bud, and Austria-Hungary ordered A Bud-Rum, A Vie-Bud. Thus, two countries are trying to get into Budapest: Austria-Hungary with an unsupported army, and Russia with a supported army. Naturally, the supported army makes the move. The attack of the Budapest army into Rumania does not cut the support, since support is being given into the province from which the attack comes.))

DEREK NELSON, 18 Granard Blvd., Scarborough, Ontario: Well, I guess congratulations are in order for Mac for his victory in 1964A, but I'd sure like to take things back to 1908 and play from there again...I should have moved to help Italy sooner.

This may sound like sour grapes (and it is), but it doesn't raise a problem in Postal Diplomacy that tends to worry me. The effectiveness of alliances. In actual fact no nations switch their allegiances and double-cross their allies as often as in PD, or, now that I think about it, in across-the-Board Diplomacy.

I don't like this, for the heart of Diplomacy is compromise, something that never seems to happen in PD. The game should really be called Total War, or something similar, for one can never proceed on the assumption that his flank is secure, for the stab-in-the-back is the common phenomenon in all PD games. I'm bitching, of course, because it keeps happening to me, and I don't know what to do about it except break treaties myself, and otherwise join the crowd.

Doesn't anyone else ever play the game in hopes of attaining something less than absolute victory?

And, to voice a complaint already put forward by Calhamer and yourself, whatever happened to natural allies? The continued collapse of Austria and Russia in every game but Ruritania ((1963B, but see also 1964B and 1964D)) is a bit silly, to put it mildly. And to tie this in with my above point, Ruritania is the only game in which an enduring system of alliances was worked out, and is the only one where Austria and Russia survived. ((It's also the only game in which two of the players are married to each other.))

Partly to make the game more effective and realistic, and partly for my own peace of mind, I'd like to see a little more stability in international relations.