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OUT OF THE ARCHIVES

The "article" below is the sixth installment of "Out of the Archives" longest strategy and tactics reprint series to date, a seven-part series comprising Larry Peery's book, Diplomacy--Introduction to the Strategy and Tactics of Diplomacy. The book is broken down into seven chapters, one for each of the seven major powers in Diplomacy. This issue features Chapter 6 on Russia.

DIPLOMACY--INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY & TACTICS OF DIPLOMACY

by Larry Peery

Chapter 6: Russia

Russia is at one and the same time the most difficult, yet interesting countries in Diplomacy to play. Though it does start with four units instead of three as do all other countries, it is still given only a middle listing in rankings of player's favorite countries and their choice of probable winners.

Perhaps because of its borders on four first-tier countries (England, Germany, Austria, and Turkey), perhaps because of its poor defensive position vis-a-vis these countries, perhaps because Russia calls for such flexible and varied playing, it is not a favorite among players. Still, a good player who is willing to take certain calculated risks can often parlay Russia's position in the beginning game into a strong position in the end game.

It would appear that the reason Russia is often crushed by various alliances in the mid game is because of her usually rapid increase in units in the early stages of the game. Such a strong Russia is regarded by her neighbors as a universal threat and thus they seek to eliminate her before she grows larger.

A. Acquisition of Unoccupied Supply Centers. Russia traditionally has two unoccupied supply centers which it can occupy in the first year, Sweden and Rumania. Both of these flank provinces can be occupied by fleets or by the combination of fleets and armies (which is often dangerous since using her two armies to take these provinces in the first year leaves Russia's middle front dangerously exposed). Using standard opening moves: (Spring 1901) F St. Petersburg-Gulf of Bothnia, A Moscow-St. Petersburg (usually designed to put pressure on England by forcing her to support herself into Norway), A Warsaw-Galicia (if planning on fighting Austria) or A Warsaw-Ukraine, and F Sevastapol-Black Sea. Russia also has the option of moving Moscow to Livonia and then convoying it to Sweden in the Fall or she may move A Moscow to Sevastapol and Sevastapol to Rumania in the Spring. In the Fall, Russia moves F Gulf-Sweden, A St. Petersburg-Norway (if fighting England), or to Finland, A Ukraine-Rumania, F Sevastapol-Black Sea (or supports Ukraine to Rumania) again since it almost invariably is stood off by the movement of the Turkish fleet Ankara to Black in the Spring. If Russia is going to fight England or Turkey, she must be careful to leave her coastal supply centers (St. Petersburg and Sevastapol) open in the Fall so she can build

additional fleets.

One of Russia's basic faults lies in the fact that in acquiring its unoccupied supply centers, it must often reveal its future plans as to whom it intends to fight. In fact, the very process of acquiring these two centers often forced Russia into a position where it must fight England and/or Turkey, if not to protect itself, then to prevent them from seizing key neutral areas (Barents, the Black Sea, etc.).

B. Alliances. Because of Russia's poor defensive position, she is often forced into fighting a defensive game, but through the skillful use of diplomacy, Russia can often find herself as a partner in any one of several useful alliances. Russia is unique in that it is probably the only country that can fight a two-front war against two major powers in the beginning game and prosper. The secret to this lies in picking the two countries which are to be fought.

1. With England (France) Against Germany. If Russia can avoid entangling herself in a war with England over Scandinavia, she often can persuade England and/or France to join her in an attack on Germany.

Normally, such a three-way attack finds English fleets attacking Denmark (with Russian support from Sweden) and Holland, while French armies put pressure on Kiel and Munich. From the east, Russian armies advance through Prussia and Silesia to seize Berlin and, if possible, Kiel or Munich. Often it is to Russia's advantage to avoid a three-way attack on Germany in favor of a two-way one since she not only gains a greater share of the spoils but leaves one of the two remaining weaker western powers for future attack. This must, of course, be balanced by the consideration that her ally may decide to join with her weaker neighbor against Russia after Germany is destroyed.

2. With France (Germany) Against England. If, as often happens, Russia is faced with an English attack from Norway on Sweden, or English fleets move into the Barents to attack St. Petersburg, Russia must face England. To do this successfully, she needs Germany or France to help her (or else it takes so long to drive England out of Scandinavia that her exposed rear can be attacked by Turkey or Austria). An alliance against England is of great benefit to Russia since it offers her not only a larger share of spoils (Norway and Edinburgh), but gives her access to the Atlantic and a clearly dominant position in the Scandinavian area. Once England has been driven from Norway and England herself is eliminated, Russia can use her position on Germany's north, east and west to move with France against Germany. In fact, an alliance between Russia and France is about the best alliance in the game since it has both beginning, mid and end game uses.

3. With Italy (Germany or Turkey) Against Austria. On the southern front (and indeed, consideration of Russia's game demands that we think of her position as being on three fronts--one facing Germany and England, one facing Germany and Austria, and one facing Austria and Turkey), Russia is sometimes approached by Italy and Turkey for an alliance for several reasons: Austria is easily reachable, it requires a minimum number of Russian units, and most importantly, keeps Turkey off Russia's back in the beginning game. Depending on what future plans she has vis-a-vis Turkey (and whether she has a long-term agreement with Italy to eliminate Turkey--which should be a consideration of Russia's agreement to an alliance against Austria), Russia can demand Budapest and either Vienna or Serbia as her share of the spoils. If yielding either Vienna to Italy or Serbia to Turkey will persuade that country to attack the other and leave Russia alone, Russia is better off to console herself with Budapest and what gains she can make in the north while she has time to shift her forces to face either Italy or Turkey in the south.

4. With Turkey Against Austria. Occasionally Russia finds that Italy has gone to war with France and that Turkey needs a partner to attack Austria. Russia should not agree to be that partner unless Austria has refused to join her in an attack on Turkey. If Russia has the choice as to attacking Turkey or Austria, it is better for her to ally with Austria than Turkey. Still, a two-nation attack on Austria can be successful, and Russia can expect to gain Budapest, Vienna, and perhaps Serbia or Trieste.

5. With Austria Against Turkey. Russia's best course of action in the south is to ally with Austria against Turkey (or even with Italy against both Austria and Turkey). This offers both short and long term benefits to Russia, although the risks are high. Among the short-range benefits are the safety of her southern front, control of the Black Sea, and often access to the Mediterranean as well as Ankara, Bulgaria, and perhaps Constantinople or Smyrna. In the long range, it offers Russia access to the central Mediterranean and a

better position to fight Austria from.

6. With Italy Against Turkey. It is impossible to imagine a situation where Austria would be neutral toward Russia, neutral toward Italy and unwilling to join a three-way attack on Turkey, but should it happen, there is the possibility of a joint attack on Turkey by Russia and Italy. There is much more of a chance of such an alliance in the mid game after Austria has been eliminated.

C. Non-aggression Pacts. If it is to survive, and particularly if it is to fight a two-front war, Russia must have strong non-aggression pacts. Normally, Russia's best course of action is to seek non-aggression pacts with her neighbors on her central front (Germany and Austria) and move to acquire her flanking supply centers. Should Russia have any doubt about her central front, she should seek non-aggression pacts or alliances with her flanking neighbors, England and Turkey. It is unwise for Russia to attempt to fight one flanking country and one central power (eg. England and Germany, Turkey and Austria) since the other countries will often join such an alliance and overwhelm Russia.

1. With England. If Russia is to fight either Germany or Austria, she needs England's help, or at least neutrality. Such a non-aggression pact should include the neutrality of the Baltics, Finland, Skaggarak and Norwegian Sea.

2. With Germany. If Russia is fighting a flank war, she needs a non-aggression pact with Germany. This is a dangerous pact for Russia to make since often a mere shift of one move in the position of German armies can threaten Russia's home supply centers. Normally, it includes the neutrality of Prussia, Livonia, Silesia and the Baltic. Russia should always station armies in Moscow or Warsaw to protect her middle flank since often her greatest mistake is in making a non-aggression pact with Germany and Austria and then moving against England and Turkey. This leaves her homeland wide open, and Germany and Austria can move right into Warsaw and Moscow.

3. With Austria. Those conditions which apply to a non-aggression pact between Germany and Russia also apply to Russia and Austria. The only condition for an Austro-Russian non-aggression pact is the neutrality of Galicia and a firm agreement on the division of the Balkan supply centers. Austria's best potential use as an ally of Russia is against Turkey in the beginning game and later as an ally against Germany.

4. With Turkey. If Russia is forced to fight with England and is doubtful of her status vis-a-vis Germany and Austria, she should seek a non-aggression pact or alliance with Turkey. Such a pact is useful, again provided that Russia maintains adequate strength in the south to deter a Turkish attack. An agreement between Turkey and Russia often provides for the neutrality of Armenia, the Black Sea and a limitation of the number of fleets each power may build and where. Sometimes if Russia and Turkey don't agree, they each attack the Black Sea with one fleet, thus standing each other off continuously.

D. Fronts. Occasionally when referring to different countries, I have used the term front in the same sense it was often used during World War Two to describe a broad area of conflict. In Diplomacy, I would distinguish between a single-nation front (eg. France vs. Italy) and a dual or multi-nation front (eg. France vs. England and Germany, or Russia vs. Austria and Germany). Fronts are particularly important to Russia, who possesses many fronts depending on various alliance combinations. Some of them I have arbitrarily designated: England and Germany (Northern front), Austria and Turkey (Southern front), England (Northern flank), Turkey (Southern flank), Germany and Austria (Central front).

It is in these fronts and how Russia organizes her forces to face them--positioning her main forces opposite the main threats to her while keeping adequate defensive forces elsewhere--that determine whether Russia will survive or prosper.

E. Defensive Game. If Russia's neighbors form an alliance and attack her in the first year of the game, there is little chance that she can defend herself without Second Tier state assistance (eg. from France and Italy). In most cases, Russia will be attacked by one or two of her neighbors and such an attack need not prove disastrous (as it surely would be in any other country's case) if Russia has aid from her second tier allies and can make progress on another front and quickly build up additional forces in the threatened area. For example: assume Russia has committed herself to fighting against England with French help and has joined Austria in an attack on Turkey, or in other words, is fighting a war on her two flanks. This is not dangerous unless either Germany or Austria turn against her, and even here, if Russia has maintained strong defensive positions in her homeland, she can continue to hold her own.

F. Offensive War. Most often, Russia will find herself fighting just such a conflict as I have mentioned--a holding action on one front or flank and an offensive action on another. Usually Russia's offensive attacks will either be aimed at her flanks or at her central front. Both types have their advantages and disadvantages. The flanks make better use of Russia's fleets and give her quick access to key sea provinces. It also, in the mid game, gives her a better encircling position around the center of the board. The drive through the center of the board usually gives Russia's armies a pre-eminent position in the center of the board and allows them army possible directions for advance. Still, usually a flank approach is more successful and less dangerous since it exposes her forces to less enemy pressure.

Russia's greatest danger and difficulty lies in her first tier neighbors which are so arranged as to prevent her from playing them off against each other. To the north, Russia faces England across Scandinavia, which separates England from Germany. To the south, the Balkans separate Turkey from Austria. In the center, Germany and Austria are separated by various neutral and non-essential provinces and the constant threat of attack from other directions. Thus, Russia often finds herself without the benefit of direct support from her allies, even if they are first tier states. Russia's main hope must lie in support from second tier states who can bring pressure on their first tier enemy's rear.

TRADING LIST ADDENDUM

The following names and addresses should be added to the "Archives Trading List" in Hoosier Archives #26. Again, if there are any other editors currently publishing Diplomacy material, Hoosier Archives would like to be informed of their existence.

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- 46. Tony Pandin, 10406 Shaker Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44104
- 47. Mark Verheiden, 3245 SW 185th Street, Aloha, Ore. 97005

It should also be noted that the address given for Perry Andrus is no longer correct. His new address is: 4614 Kachina Dr., Tempe, Ariz. 85281.

ARCHIVES LISTING

Due to its present large size, the archives listing will only appear infrequently or when substantial additions have been added to the archives. Since Hoosier Archives #27 was published, no significant additions have been made.

DIPCON SAN DIEGO

Plans for DIPCON IV in San Diego are booming. It will be held from August 26-29th with Larry Peery as chief coordinator. We would appreciate any publicity from publishers of other 'zines. For more information, you can contact me, or Larry at: 816 24th Street, San Diego, California 92101 (714-233-8321). TIME DRAWETH NIGH!

ADDRESS CHANGE: During the last part of August I will be visiting my in-laws in Colorado and attending the DIPCON IV in San Diego. My addresses will be as follows: August 14-21: c/o Nelson Saunders, R.R. 1, La Junta, Colo. 81050 and August 22-28: c/o Larry Peery, 816 24th St., San Diego, Calif. 92102.