

Passchendaele 27

This is the August 1, 1980 issue of Passchendaele, a magazine devoted to the play of Diplomacy (a game invented by Allan B. Calhamer, and copyright by Avalon-Hill) and published by François Cuerrier, Box 32, Station A, Ottawa, Ont. K1N 0T9 (I wonder where John Michalski got the idea that this is an Australian address, but anyhow...). No phone. This is Tethausaurus Presses Publication #85.

Subs are \$0.35/issue, but this will change drastically quite soon. I'll let go of the other usual riff-raff as this is mid-month issue; however, I will mention that it is raining, thundering, etc. outside, and that as a result it isn't too hot anymore. Great.

Moose Factory sneezed.

"Hey, is anything wrong with you?" queried Kraken. "Don't tell me you've come down with a cold."

"No, I don't have a cold," replied Moose Factory, rubbing his reddish eyes and drying a few tears on his cheeks.

"Oh, no!" disapproved Kraken, "Don't tell me you were crying...!"

"He was crying," observed McAlbrecht.

"I was crying," admitted Moose Factory.

"I asked you not to tell me that..." reacted Kraken.

"Now, now...why were you crying, Moose?" questioned McAlbrecht, giving Moose Factory a comforting embrace.

"Rock-a-roll, baby, on the tree tops,

"when the wind blows, the cradle will fall..." sang Kraken, sarcastically.

"I was only gobbing..." precised Moose Factory, "...because...because... (sniff)...because Randolph was nasty to me in Passchendaele#26, bottom of page two..."

"Ooooh...pooooor little babyyyy..." insisted Kraken.

"Will you be quiet?" ordered McAlbrecht. "You were responsible for this mess in the first place, y'know...! Now, I'd guess you'll just have to make it up to Moose, and apologize..."

"Ah well," snickered Kraken, "it seems this is a dispute between two CDO members, and the CDO constitution sez we should consult the..."

"CDO Ombudsman, I know..." interrupted McAlbrecht. "But is there any way we could resolve this between ourselves? Do you have any idea, Kraken?"

"Ah well, François is the CDO Ombudsman," chuckled Kraken. "Ask him."

"But...he doesn't have a phone number, and this is an emergency..." objected McAlbrecht.

"Humph...true enough," admitted Kraken. "Hum...good point..."

"Ah well, let's think about a solution," concluded McAlbrecht, "we must find a solution to this small problem..."

Quite a while ago, I had suggested a (limited) survey on hobby correspondence (frequency of correspondence and costs) and had asked for inputs. The results were rather disappointing, with only 3 persons responding.

Oh well, I'm stubborn, so I'll give it another try. I reiterate my request that my readers should take the 2 or 3 minutes needed to answer the following questions:

- (1) What is the average frequency (per month, preferably) that you receive letters for one particular game and one particular season. Try and select the most representative season of your most representative game.
- (2) Do you carry any extra-game correspondence?

- (3) On average, how frequently do you correspond per season per game?
 (4) What are your average correspondence costs, per month?

That will be all for the moment. Kindly feel free to expand on the above and provide detailed answers. All the above questions pertain to the regular Diplomacy postal hobby only; all answers will be kept in strictest confidence, of course...! Thanks much.

I promised last issue that I'd print all press announcements in this issue; so, here is:

1976A, Winter 1917/Spring 1918:

London: Proposes a 3-way draw & hopes for a NMR.

Turkey-England: Stop shooting down the proposals your just waisting time.

Turkey-Italy: Should be over soon.

1976CX, Winter 1914/Spring 1915:

Kiel--proposes a concession to Germany. ((Forget it, just forget it.))

Kiel--proposes an alternative EFGI draw.

Kiel-GM-- If I had the time this summer I'd go east and break your face. ((Oh... OK...by the way, Bob is a miner, so he must be awful strong...but he'd better watch out, 'cause I've got a friend called Ralph Morton, who has a biilig dog called Bullet...))

1978Q, Fall 1907:

Venice: Oooo! Did you see the big convoy Hugh did? Neat stuff. Boy, I wish I could do that sometime. Hugh...will you be my hero, please?

1978R, Fall 1907:

The Czar of Russia continues to send fresh troops to repel the treacherous Turkish assault. However he predicts the loss of Sevastopol before reinforcements can arrive to fortify it. He went on to report that on the whole things will improve for our forces as the navy enters the Mediterranean, and our armies dig in on the austro-italian front.

1978S, Fall 1906:

Pled-Ven: You should be able to retreat to Tyrolia, at least I hope so, and I think the risk was worth it.

Buddy's Pest News: Our special reporter in Stambul has solved t mystery of t Sultan's remark "Ah Shit!" widely discussed thru Europe all summer. Sultan Prester John was in a trance, a fact only his closest associates cd recognize. Later he told them, "I was starting to intone 'Allah', when I got a glimpse of t 1980 Olympics & a U.S. President's boycott, with no substitute Free World Olympics! ((Free World? I never realized freedom still existed anywhere...)) It shd hv been pubd, "A(1lah)-Shit!"

Wonders never cease! Allah ya fathek!

1979HY, Winter 1904/Spring 1905:

Paris-London: You treacherous liar, you get what you deserve!

London-Germany: You little pipsqueak!!! Who the hell gave you the right to take Holland? You will pay dearly for this.

1979KH, Fall 1903 (Note that the Italian "F Wes S A Pie-Mar" should have read as "F Lyo S A Pie-Mar" in the F03 adjudications--sorry for the typo.)

Turkey-Germany: Your press reveals the state of your mind.

Turkey-GM: Are you sure that you didn't mistype some of those last orders? ((Darn sure. Do you want a photocopy?))

Italy-World: If we don't do something soon we will have to endure the German's press for the entire game.
 London-Berlin: And Arthur said to Attila, "You've got such a big mouth, why don't you write your own bloody saga?"
 London-Paris: Congratulations! You're just in time for the funeral! For you, it's BYOC (Bring Your Own Corpse).
 Austria-Russia: Get out!
 Austria-Germany: Just call me and we'll get together.

1980U (Note: The Russian F Swe is actually Army Sweden, or so Claude says...),
 Fall 1902:
 France-Russia: Up your monkey tubes fungus-face.
 France-Italy: Am I on course?
 France-Turkey: Do not be afraid of the sleeping bear. Especially since he lost all his teeth.
 Berlin-Moscow: My ass is in gear! The only problem is that the gear is reverse.
 London-Moscow: When your northern fleet is disbanded we may communicate.
 London-France & Germany: The channel is a neutral zone. ((Hah.))

I might as well print the commentaries after the press:

1978R commentary, 1907:

Not a very eventful year, aside of the Bul/Rum swap (--Hugh must not have fully expected this...!).

Turkey has launched an all-out attack on Russia, and plugged the Arm/Bla "gap"; but she failed in plugging all gaps (as predicted): the collapse of her Mediterranean front is almost imminent, and she has lost both Ven and Tri.

Germany and Russia seem to be concentrating on Turkey, while somewhat ignoring France--as evidenced by the move of 2 fleets southwards and A Mun-Tyo, A Ruh-Mun. This means France was lucky in a back-handed way, as F Eng C A Wal-Bre, A Wal-Bre, (Russian) F Mid S A Wal-Bre, A Bel-Pic, A Ruh S A Hol-Bel, A Hol-Bel, would have guaranteed the annexation (by Germany) of Bre (in addition to Bel!). But GR are wisely treating France as a secondary front, the enemy being Turkey.

Turkey moved F Lyo-Spa(sc) (again), obviously thinking that Russia would move there; there is some question as to the wisdom of this move (i.e. a fleet in Spa(sc) gives a somewhat disjointed defense in the Mediterranean; also, if that fleet were to return to Spain anyhow, wouldn't it have been better to use it for action in Wes/Por/Mid instead of sending it to LYO?), but, on the other hand, T could not afford losing Spa very easily...

While the future is getting clearer, it still is somewhat nebulous. There seems to be little question that GR are firmly allied (thus, most T hopes in this game will gradually vanish)--however, what happens in 1908 will depend on the course of action they choose to a great extent.

In the west, G can swallow Bre in 1908; the rest depends on her own objectives. Will she concentrate on the Bur/Pic area, or rather the Gas/Por/Spa area? Note that A Wal seems poised for a cute convoy to Gas, or, alternatively, Por/Spa.

However, G might even go as far as pass up taking Bre in 1908 in order to deploy some of her fleets against T! (for instance, she could attempt F Mid-Wes/Por/Spa, F Iri-Mid, F Nth-Eng...)

Germany will likely build A Kie--a fleet being relatively useless for the moment (and A Kie-Ruh will plug the "gap" on the French front.).

Note that G could always elect to stab R in the North...a convoy to Nwy in the Spring and F Nth-Nwy, A Nwy-Swe could be particularly deadly. Alternatively, G might move F Nth-Nwy, A Kie-Den and then F Nwy H, A Den-Swe. Or, G could build F Kie/Ber and make a little incursion in the Baltic Sea area...or...

The above attacks would likely spell R's doom, which has only a rather limited capacity for "bouncing back" against G. However, an attack on Russia will probably mean less progress against F in 1908....but then, F is a secondary front for G. The stab option is interesting, all in all...

In the Black Sea/Balkans area the situation is rather confused, but on the whole doesn't look too thrilling for Turkey. R will probably build A War; T will probably ret A Tri-Alb, so as to plug the "gap" there and also because a build wouldn't be terribly useful now.

The action in the Bla area is pretty much a guessing game, largely dependant on both sides' intentions. For one thing, R. F Bul(ec) will be hard to annihilate if R does F Bul(ec)-Rum, A Gal S F Bul(ec)-Rum, A Tri-Ser, A Mos-Sev, A Ukr-Rum (A War-Gal/Ukr), as it cuts most supports for about any attack, unless, that is, T decides to do something in the style of A Rum-Bul (F Bla S, F Con S)--which would boil down to losing Rum (which is useful as it neighbours Gal, Bud, Ser, Ukr, and Sev...!) and perhaps even kissing good-bye to Sev in the long run. Yet, I think this would be a sensible option as it would simplify T's defenses (thus freeing F Con for action elsewhere--perhaps even in the Mediterranean) and would result in the annihilation of the sole Russian fleet in the area (yeah...the very fateful fleet that caused the RT war in the first place...!). Later, T could hope to retain Sev by doing A Bul-Rum, F Bla S A Sev, which would work unless R did A Rum-Sev, A Ukr S A Rum-Sev, A Mos S A Rum-Sev, in which case the positions would return to their S08 status, with the exception that T will have lost Sev, and R, a fleet. It is an interesting situation...

The Balkans situation is similarly complex, which is largely due to the presence of a Turkish A Rum and F Adr, which together tie up a large number of R units. Also, Bud is open and both sides might want to fight over it--which would reinforce the "guess" element in the Bla situation. (T or R may concentrate on Bud rather than following the scenario outlined above, with the probable result that some positions would be exchanged. However, note that R has more to gain in concentrating over Bud than T, as T would presumably be ousted out of Bud sooner or later...I mean, with all those Russians in the area...and their German ~~exposed~~ allies...)

The Mediterranean situation is simpler: yet, a considerable number of variables remain, such as whether Germany will invade, or whether Italy will finally pick sides. But, generally speaking, the balance seems to be tilting in favour of GR, which has 3 fleets to T's 2 in the immediate vicinity. (F Adr does not count--yet--though it may have some influence on the outcome in F09 if it moves to Ion.).

In my opinion, I's allegiance will be crucial to T. With the help of the two Italian fleets, T actually will have some chances of holding off GR in the Mediterranean...without I's help, GR should have relatively little trouble overrunning the entire western basin of the Mediterranean. On the other hand, if I does join T, perhaps it would be advisable for G to build a fleet after all...as it will be needed sooner or later, unless R feels confident she can crush T in the Balkans and the Black Sea area.

Note that G could actually invade I with A Tyo-Pie, A Mun-Tyo, though this would tend to stretch the French front rather thin...alternatively, G could simply move A Tyo-Pie. Also note how A Pie could be useful to G in cutting the support of F. A Mar for A Bur...

So, in general, the situation is not entirely limpid yet. However, RG should get the upper hand with their 19 units (+their potential in France...!) Still, the tide could change if they make tactical errors, don't cooperate optimally, or NMR...or if G stabs R...!

1978S commentary, 1906.

EG obviously benefited from the FT mistakes this year--still, their breakthrough everywhere was predictable.

The most decisive fronts are Austria and the Mediterranean, where the ATFR coalition got royally screwed.

In the Mediterranean, AT's 3 fleets are outclassed by GE's 4 fleets, especia

ly as 2 AT fleets are away from the main action, the Italian fleet is in a cooperative disposition towards GE, and GE have huge reserves in the form of F Mid, F Iri, and F Nth.

The Italy/Tyo/Balkans area is one war that AT are clearly losing, as GE have 9 armies to ATR's 6...and don't forget the Italians, who are on GE's side...

Nevertheless, the situation is not crystal clear. Germany could choose to go for Alb/Ser (probably Alb--which can't be covered by AT), to annihilate the Austrian A Tyo and then proceed onwards (A Boh S A Mun-Tyo, A Mun-Tyo will do it--as long as Pie, Ven, and Tri and Vie remain occupied; G must be careful to do A Vie S A Tri, and E; A Tus-Ven or A Pie-Ven...to cut any support from F Ven and cancel A Bud's support...and keep every retreat route blocked...of course, there are other ways of doing it...). Both options are quite attractive, as an A Alb would further outflank Austria and the destruction of A Tyo will remove a tiny nuisance in GE's flank and make A play one short.

A can't really counter any of these moves, and if G ends up in Alb in S07, AT will have a real time trying to cover Gra/Ser. And if T moves to Ser in S07, she might well end up there in F07 (move blocked by a German move...), thus making Austria lose one centre.

The defense of Bud is even more complicated--one type of defense could be Ven-Tri, A Rum-Gal, A Bud H, A Tyo-Vie, which would make any successful attack on Bud impossible for that season...however, GE's riposte could include A Pie S A Tus-Ven, A Tus-Ven (and I. A Rom-Apu--thus cutting support) and A Gal S A Ukr-Rum, A Ukr-Rum OR A Ukr S A Mos-Sev, A Mos-Sev. Thus, Bud's defense bill for AT could well amount to Ven and perhaps Rum or Sev (T has F Bla, A Bul, so she could defend Rum/Sev properly if she second-guesses GE...)....!

As I said, Ven could fall this Spring as outlined above--unless, that is, Austria does A Tyo-Pie, F Ven H, and A Apu S F Ven, and A Bud-Tri. But wait: this wouldn't be very good moves in terms of Bud's defense, now, wouldn't they? As I said: this is going to be a guessing game, one which GE are unlikely to lose in the long run. But anyhow: GE could still take Ven if they did A Pie-Ven, A Tus S A Pie-Ven, (I.: A Rom-Apu) A Mun-Tyo, A Boh S A Mun-Tyo, though this would allow the Austrian A Tyo to ret-Pie. It seems better to annihilate A Tyo in the Spring, and then take Ven.

What would help ATR is a EG war--though their overall outlook still would not be too bright. There are possibilities for a EG war--namely, the German build and F Nth could be used in a confrontation against E. Nevertheless, the prospects for impressive gains by Germany would remain somewhat limited, as E has reserves in Russia (which could be used in War/East Germany) and plenty of fleets in the vicinity of England (which can be used in repelling the second wave of G. attacks...)...and she has a build coming up, too.

1979AC commentary, 1906a

This is a very balanced game as it is now clear that no one will break through his opponents' lines in the North and Germany, unless, of course, England allies with AT, or if AT confrontation breaks out. England can make some headway against Turkey, to be sure, but she will never get past the Mos/War/Sil line unless the other western powers manage their way through Italy and start "unzipping" the Tyo/Boh/Sil, etc. line.

In fact, there's little anyone can do in the North. G does not need her build (and indeed, can't use it in an offensive in Germany...)--except perhaps as an asset against E (or F???), or to replace one unit the French might want to use elsewhere.

England basically has two options: renege her alliance (?) with FG and join AT, or attack T in Scandinavia. The first option would be disastrous for all of EFGI--true, E could always take Bre and Bel (and possibly more) by surprise, but this would only cause the crumbling of either the FI defenses in

the Mediterranean or of the PC defenses in Germany, allowing AT to move forward. The second option will tie down 60% of the English units (i.e., 2 units: F Bot/A-E Swe/F-A Dwy/F Bar), unless Turkey withdraws gracefully (count on it). But the final result will be advantageous, as the English position in Scandinavia will finally be secure, I will lose StP, and (eventually) AT could cooperate in "unifying" the Turkish positions in Pru and Lyn, thus making G's position slightly more comfortable. But they won't go much further.

AT's moves in the North seem to indicate that she has opted for option #2; however, her taking Lnl indicates that she is not entirely willing to play the role of the somewhat passive corner ally--and that she is looking for more. Indeed, E did not need Lnl--she took it only because she was a little, ah, greedy. England does not need more units if her goal is to fight T in Scandinavia.

IF will suffer slightly in the Mediterranean, as I must now remove a unit--probably F Spa(ac)--that would have been useful.

The only interesting area in the game at the moment is Italy and the Mediterranean. First, note that any Italian annihilation will hurt, as I can not build units; however, this might not happen just yet. But note that AT could do A Ven S F Ion-Apu; F Rom-Nap (cut support), which, in itself, cannot fail, and A Apu may well be annihilated (unless her move elsewhere succeeds). On the other hand, AT could find themselves in a more uncomfortable position in the Ion as a result of this successful battle.

Also, note that if AT ever manage to control Rom, Nap, Apu, Ven, Ion (with no enemy units "behind") they will have a full stalemate line extending from Ion to Mos, and will never be pushed back, barring stabs and MPRs, etc. The only thing left to do for the West would be to contain them. This is said assuming AT have the tactical ability to juggle their units around to form the said stalemate line with good timing, and that they will be able to recognize it once it has been formed.

Still, saying this ("AT can form a stalemate line if they capture Apu/Nap") is one thing; doing it is quite another. AT should have a real time taking both Apu/Nap and retaining Ion (might I point out that this is due to a strategical error made three seasons back?).

As things stand, FI seem to be getting a better and better position in the area all the time. They basically have two offensive options:

(1) a Mediterranean offensive: attacking the Ion in force. Attacking the Ion is a guessing game, as AT could do F Tus-Tyn, F Rom-Nap, and F Aeg S F Ion, which would lock up the area.

However, the enterprise could be successful, as AT do not know if the attack will be on the Ion or somewhere else. They might prefer countering a A Apu-Rom, F Nap S A Apu-Rom, for instance, in which case they would need to put more emphasis on defending the Ion. Given this uncertainty, an attack on Ion with 3 fleets becomes tempting.

If an offensive over the Ion is made, perhaps A Apu-Nap, F Nap-Ton, F Tyn S F Nap-Ion, F Tun S F Nap-Ion would be superior, as it would prevent A or T from slipping into either Tyn or Nap, though there is a real risk that A Apu could be annihilated. And I suppose there are other attacks, too.

(2) an attack in Italy. This can take the form of an attack on Rom, Tus, or Pie. The attack on Pie can be foiled if AT repeat their PC? moves (unless F does F Lyo-Pie, which would be bad, as it'd give T access to Lyo, and F Pie is rarely very useful...). However, if AT repeat their PC? moves and France does F Lyo-Tus, F Tyn S F Lyo-Tus, or vice versa, then the Turkish F Tus will be annihilated. On the other hand, AT can easily work out a set of moves foiling any attack on Tus, but which would endanger other areas.

AT can also foil any attack on Rom (e.g., A Ven S F Ion-Apu, F Ion-Apu, F Rom-Nap, F Tus-Tyn...)--but only at the risk of losing something else if the attack is not on Rom.

Note that AT can ill afford one defeat, especially in the Tus/Rom area, as this would result in the annihilation of the defending unit involved and the subsequent disintegration of their defenses.

On the other hand, AT can attack too: I've already outlined a possible attack on Apu; there is also the possibility of an attack on Tyn (F Tus-Tyn, F Ion S F Tus-Tyn, F Rom S F Tus-Tyn is only one variation.) or even on Nap (e.g. F Rom-Nap, A Ven-Apu, F Ion S F Rom-Nap.). Each and every attack can be foiled, if IF second-guess AT.

FI appear to have the upper hand, though the outcome of the battle could well depend on who gets one unit annihilated first. Italy is rather unique in this respect, as annihilations there occur rather frequently when units are walking all over each other...but it is an interesting situation...

I have assumed no stab is in the air at the moment, as any stab would likely cause both the stabber's and the stabbee's doom in the long run. As I said--this is a balanced game...!

I'm done with the commentaries...geez, I'm poofed...I'm too wordy. So I guess I should liven-up the atmosphere with a bit of humour...

O-OH SAY! WHAT THEY SEE!

(by Doug Ronson; reprinted from
Paroxysm #47.)

An article in the Canadian Magazine recently really caught my eye and I thought I would share it with the readers. It is an excerpt from Walter Stewart's new book, As They See Us. To write the book Stewart toured the United States interviewing people about what they thought of Canada. Following are some excerpts.

"Canada? I don't know nothing about it. This bus just goes to Faragut Square."
---Bus driver, Washington, DC.

"That's a very fine place, with very fine people, but they've still got a Queen up there tells them what to do. I wouldn't like that if I was them."
---Warehouse clerk, Providence, RI.

"I used to be all in four of Canada. Some of my best friends, and all that. But that was up until they elected that Commie Prime Minister, Trudeau is his name. A Commie, everybody knows it. A fellow from out west, he got up in the Congress and said it right out, that the Prime Minister of Canada was a Commie. Well, I naturally expected that to be the end of Mr. Trudeau. No such thing. If they didn't go and put him right back in the next time. All I can say is that was the end of Canada as far as I'm concerned and I don't care who knows it."
---Farmer, near Jutland, Vermont.

"Canada, that's up north, near New-York state, isn't it? Only it's not a state, it's a whole country. Is that right? Do I win a prize?"
---Liquor store clerk, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"Mountains, I think of mountains, and people singing."
---Housewife, Austin, Texas.

"Toronto's a terrific place, the police go around in little yellow Volkswagens. Zoom, zoom, up and down the streets. You haven't seen anything till you've seen a cop in a yellow Bug."
---Secretary, Blacksburg, South Carolina.

"Canada--just to say the name gives me goose bumps. It's so romantic. Vancouver, Canada or Montreal, Canada--when I see that in the paper it's like reading Paris, France. It has a faraway exciting ring to it."
---Typist, Albuquerque, New-Mexico.

"All I can think of is a railroad going through beautiful mountains. That's Canada."
 ---Student, Boston College, Boston.

"A lot of people think Canada is just a big pile of snow. Not true, I been up there, up to a place called Saskatchewan where my daughter lives, in Regina, Saskatchewan. It's flatter 'n hell and hotter 'n hell, and I come from Texas."

---Businessman, Waco, Texas.

"I don't know. All I think of, I think of Canadians going to work every day, walking across the tundra. Cute."

---Law student, Washington, DC.

(I know you shouldn't laugh at ignorance but it's hard to resist...)



I had written an article directed at the rank novices playing in this zine, and to all those who seem to have had problems with conditionals, Winter separations, etc. and had asked questions. But now I see that my commentaries took too much space (I told you I had been too wordy, didn't I?), so the article will just have to wait for Passchendaele #29, which I've scheduled for August 25 or so... (That will be another "mid-month" issue, following the August 22, 1980 issue in which I won't have space to print anything but the games and press.) And if I don't manage to print Randolph's stuff then, I guess it will go in Passchendaele #30.

Speaking of Passchendaele: I must reiterate my request for articles for my September 1980 issue, which will be my second publishing anniversary. As I said before, I'll accept articles on any subject, as long as well written. Just a reminder...

In the meantime, I'll go with one of Mark Berch's letters (along with my reply), which is the shortest submission I've got at hand at present. I might not have enough space to print it all, but I'll go with what I've got...

"P/#24 has finally arrived here, pack full of goodies. Naturally I have some responses.

"1. Some comments on NADF indicate to me that some people may be operating on incorrect assumptions. NADF has at its core its SC, but is a federation of hobby custodians, all of whom are actually independent institutions (except that they may have obligations to organizations that they represent). Thus, we are fundamentally different from a "mass" organization like IDA (membership defined by paying dues) or CDO (membership defined by receiving a zine). Thus, NADF could not really "merge" with another organization. Cooperation is quite possible, but that cooperation would not require any change in the essential nature of other organizations.

((You are snapping at gnats. I've already said "merger" was perhaps a loaded word. Yet, I maintain that Rod Walker's original proposals were quite close to "merger"--as CDO would have had to abandon its sovereignty over the orphaned games, the novice project, the ombudsmanship, and the census--leaving us with nothing worth our while to do. You may argue on technicalities, but once you cut through all the window-dressing, that is merger.

((I don't understand your argument that two organizations with different types of membership cannot merge. What does membership have to do with merger? As far as I'm concerned, two organizations with different types of membership can merge--just the same way that a share-selling corporation can merge with a private holding in "real life".

((Also, you don't seem to be responding to my arguments at all. You say co-operation with NADF does not require merger. I've never disagreed with that; I've just mentioned that cooperation (in the minds of many NADF people) did not exclude the possibility of merger...and that indeed an interpretation of the Charter in that sense is possible, however unlikely.))

"The objectives of the NADF are set forth in the opening sentences of our constitution. I hope and expect that NADF will, in the years to come, be judged by what it actually does, not by its structure or its stated goals.

((The opening sentences of their constitution are: 'I.1. The North American Diplomacy Federation (NADF) exists solely for the purpose of promoting the hobby of Postal Diplomacy.', and 'I.2. The NADF will promote the hobby primarily by coordinating, and assisting service projects, and by providing new services where needed.'

((Oh, oh, stop preaching, Mark: no one has said (in these pages, at least) that the NADF would not be judged by what it actually does in the years to come.

((I usually tend to evaluate an organization according to what it actually does and its structure. The organization could do the hobby the greatest good that I won't join it if I intensely dislike its structure...while still approving of what it does. So I kinda disagree with your hopes that NADF will be judged solely after what it actually does.))

"Rod did discuss at some length the structure of what you call "notables/custodians". That was in fact sufficient for our initial purposes in setting up the SC (Steering Committee).

((Yes; however, whether it will in fact be sufficient for the eventual success of the SC remains to be seen.

((I can't disagree with anything you've just said (and haven't in the past); however, I uphold that the hobby's most important institutions are the GMs, the publishers, and the players. I feel that if NADF is going to claim to be a DIPLOMACY federation (not just an association of custodians), then it should allow for equal participation from all quarters of the hobby... I'm not saying that NADF is necessarily bad just because it doesn't correspond to one of my preferences, though.))

"We do have provisions for 2 other arms: GM/publishers & General Membership. These are rather vague & formless at present, as we have been working on the S.C. They will become concrete--and the hobby's views will be solicited--when someone is willing to step forward & do the work involved.

((More power to you, then...))

2. "On page 18 you say that the CDO Coordinator" could eliminate offices by amendment." Huh? I thought amendment was only by 66% vote of the membership.

((So? All the Coordinator has to do is propose an amendment (eliminating an office); if 66% of the voting members sanction the amendment, then the Coordinator has eliminated the office by amendment, just the same way that the President of the United States can change the U.S. Constitution by amendment if he has the assent of 66% of Congress and 75% of the States...but I should have made myself clearer on this, yes...))

3. "I agree with your p. 18 views on indefinite appointments, and also agree with the CDO's selection of which offices are elective, which not.

4. "Your IX(4) is clearly contrary to the Rulebook. The general rule for "Conflicts" points to IX(3) for the exceptions. Two are specifically mentioned: "an order to move into a space" and "an order which supports an attack by another country" -- in both cases this will not dislodge one's own piece. But you want to read "supports" as "supports or convoys". The Rulebook is not "silent" on the point (any more than it is silent on e.g. defection of units). If it is not on the approved list of exceptions, it's not an exception. Note that in the discussion of the Convoy order under XII, there is no mention of this third exception. Contrast this with the move order exception which is noted in VIII. If you want to run your games that way, fine. But your IX(4) is contrary to the language of the Rulebook.

((You use the word silent with quotes, as though I had already (wrongly) used it. For your information, I never did.

((Also, nowhere does the Rulebook specifically say "if it's not listed as an exception, it's not an exception", thus allowing for discretion in places.

((My IX(4) is not, repeat not, contrary to the Rulebook, in that it does not go against the specific wishes of the Rulebook. An example of a rule contrary to the language of the Rulebook would be, e.g. 'LCXIII: A unit may support any attack on another unit of the same nationality, thus dislodging and forcing it to retreat'. That would be contrary to the language of the Rulebook.

((Enough semantics. You have convinced me; to my players -- cancel IX(4) (in my houserules).

((Y'know, I still would uphold IX(4) had it not been for the diplomatic and tactical advantages IX(4)'s abolition entail. My own philosophy is that what the Rulebook doesn't specifically forbid can be allowed, in some circumstances, within reasonable limits. But, in this case, the spectrum of possibilities available to the player is greater if you allow dislodgements of self by convoy than not....))

5. "Incidentally, you were wrong to say that I was "quite wrong" near the bottom of page 26. Randolph corrected that point immediately after I pointed it out to him.

((Oh...OK: I must have been wrong, then, if Randolph sez so. However, this revelation poses a problem to me--I quoted directly from Randolph's latest set of HRS; nor do I remember a formal change-of-policy statement anywhere in FSE. I wonder if Randolph could clear this matter up, then? And this isn't a "bookkeeping" rule either, so Randolph won't get away with his theoretical riff-raff about not following his rules--his response to this should be, ah, "interesting".))

6. "After plowing through the mass of material on appeal rights, including some interesting questions you pose, it appears that sometimes players can appeal, and sometimes they can't. The problem is, you get to decide whether they can appeal, you decide whether the dispute is in a "grey" area or whether it's a "questionable" decision, which really stacks the deck. And if a player does come up with a "wierd" interpretation, a quick decision by the Ombudsman (or his designate) resolves the matter. But what if your interpretation is wierd? After all, no one is perfect, we all have our blind spots. An appeal is useless because you are "right" by definition. I do not think you need the power to block any appeal on any decision. If the appeal is totally frivolous, the players may exact retribution on the board for delay-of-the-game. If not totally frivolous, then it should be permitted.

((Your statements really look good on paper, Mark, but they do not seem to square very well with reality.

((Might I offer the following interpretation of the HR? I am "correct" on the wording (i.e. semantics) of my own HRS by definition...however, I'm not ne-

cessarily inflexible...in fact, I'll never be inflexible...if there's the slightest possibility, however unlikely, that I'm wrong I will give the player the "benefit of the doubt" and refer the matter to an advisory opinion. But, of course, that stacks the deck...snicker.

((In fact, my general policy is to consult an advisory opinion even when there has been no protest; I'll refer the case to an advisory opinion as soon as there is a demurral; and I'll often consult other hobby notables (as well you probably remember...) when I consider a particular decision might come under fire before actually taking the decision...but that stacks the deck...))

((I'm open-minded about protests and demurrals...except that I want to prevent delays to the game (which harm everyone) caused by totally useless appeals (e.g. 'You should not have separated Winter and Spring, even if I forgot to ask not to do so--what can be done about that?) or facetious appeals (e.g. 'I don't want Turkey to have a build' when Turkey is entitled to one.)). I intend to use absurdly low standards in interpreting this HR (and note that the HR does not really exclude this interpretation categorically.)).

((I never considered this HR as a power, though I'd suppose you're right it is...I originally considered this as a service to the players...as a protection against totally irrational filibusters...))

((Oh well, I guess my next set of HRs should have a modification that will please your legalistic mind...!))

((I got kicks out of your 'retribution on the board' business. A player with a good position will avoid such frivolous protests precisely because he does not want to pay for it on the board. However, making facetious appeals will become his big joke should his position ever go down the tubes (in the case of a few individuals...)). So, you tell me, how could the other players exact retribution on the board if the player's position is already down the tubes?))

7. "I still maintain that in zines with rules as complete as yours, interpretation-of-the-HRs will be a or the most common type. Your set of cases (p. 23) that came before the CDO Ombudsman is not representative. Only a small proportion of all disputes go to an ombudsman (only one of mine did). Most are "resolved" by either 1) Player resignation 2) Player swallows hard & carries on.

((Well, your Gibsonian perspective is probably different from mine, then. I can assure you, even the weakest demurral (unless totally frivolous--they're in fact quite rare: $\frac{1}{4}$? $\frac{1}{2}$? $\frac{1}{3}$?) will be brought before the OAC or other advisory opinion around here...))

((I really do not think that most disputes are interpretation-of-the-HRs. If one sample is unrepresentative, it's bound to be your experiences, Mark. Face it--you have the ability to be extremely argumentative, and, ah, picky--which can be a great asset--but nevertheless twarths the picture of the average dispute.

((Your list seems to be incomplete. Some disputes are resolved by player vote; others by consulting prominent GMs (especially in Britain); others result in the expulsion of the protesting player; others result in a player drop out (contrast this with player resignation); others, in a game transfer (by the GM, or, more frequently, by the players); and finally, there are times when the GM will just vascillate and accept the player's views.))

"Further, the interpretation-of-HRs question is less likely to arise precisely because of attitudes like yours.

((Attitude? Oh yes. Yes, attitude. Attitude. That's a word that can have different meanings in different socio-cultural contexts: how did you mean the word? Oh...were you referring to my attitude as displayed in conjugate #2 to P#25, incidently?))

"All extensive HRs, including yours, have many places where differing, sensible interpretations are possible.

((Well, I can't argue with you on this point anymore, considering recent events (even though the players involved in that "recent event" did not dispute my own interpretation of the HRS...))--nevertheless, I still think you are interpreting my HRS too legalistically--I think my HRS, as a whole, allow me to transfer a dispute over to a higher authority whenever a differing, sensible, interpretation is presented by a player. It could be classified under "grey area" and "the GM will give the player the benefit of the doubt." You are simply taking shots at a particular HR without paying too much attention to the context... but, as I said above, my next HRS should satisfy you...))

8. "You say '...there must be someone somewhere who'll draw the line. The GM... is the only neutral party.' Huh? Most disputes are GM-player in nature, meaning the GM is not neutral. The fact that he is not affected by how the decision goes does not make him neutral. People can be in error, even if the error is innocent.

((Hah...! Here you appear to confuse "neutral" with "erroneous". Read your dictionary...))

"The GM might not have meant what he said, but the players must be able to rely on what HRS say & not be telepathic.

((Yes. Still, I don't think the provision prevents transferring sensible disputes over to an advisory opinion...The GM can be "correct" by definition, and still not be inflexible, and still consult an advisory opinion, and still give the player the benefit of the doubt.))

9. "Your comments on your neutral orders clarifies things considerably; your neutral orders are used for a different purpose. You aren't totally consistent, though. You give some countries moves that do damage them (e.g. England F Edi H) gratuitously (i.e. beyond the need to be neutral), but other countries, especially Turkey, are not so damaged." ---Mark Berch.

((I still disagree that England is harmed more than Turkey--both will have to be dependent on their neighbours not making a S01 hostile move (e.g. in E's case: A Mos-StP; in T's case: F Sav-Bla) to retain a good position...though I've already admitted to the possibility for improvements.

((Tell you what: you go ahead and design neutral orders...as long as they respect all the purposes outlined in Passchendaele#24, I'd guess I will accept them and include them in my next set of HRS. As I said above, I still disagree with you where it really counts, but if doing that will please you...I have no objection to it as long as the neutrals please me as well...))

This will be all for now...which means that I will be literally forced to leave page 13 blank...what a shame...(especially since there is no p. 13...!)

Fine-Jig-a-Doo....!

François.

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