

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF
POSTAL DIPLOMACY

FRANCE

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INTRODUCTION

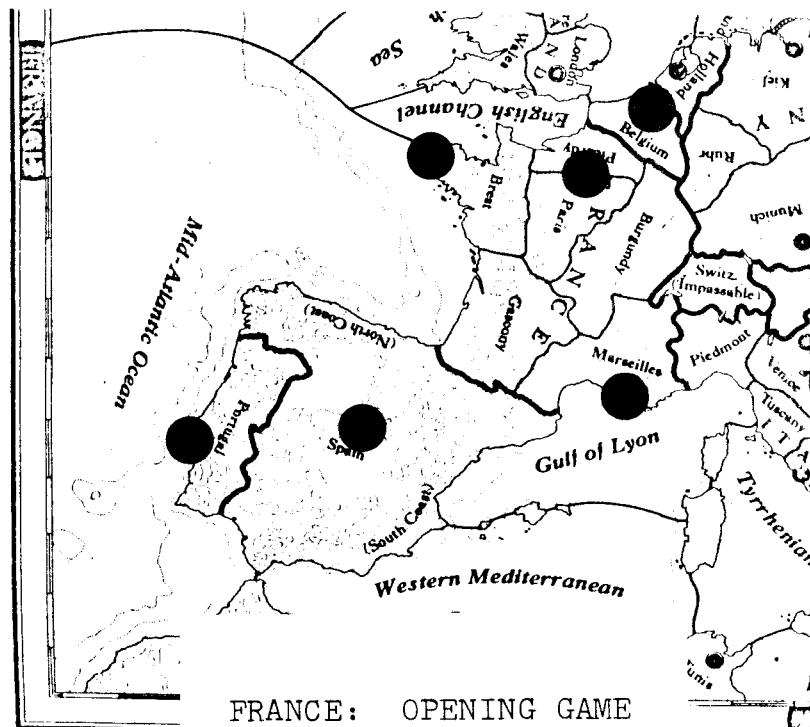
Appearances to the contrary, this is not the definitive study of France in Diplomacy; it is undoubtedly the longest yet written; however. Part of that length is due to the extreme generosity with which blank spaces were used in preparing this edition. That was deliberately done, inspite of the higher costs, to encourage readers to use this as a "working paper" which can be written on and in which insertions can be made. The length can also be explained in part by frequent repetitions of key materials and concepts.

Because this paper is intended for the novice Diplomacy player and not the experienced player, although no doubt he to will find it of interest, much thought and effort has gone into making this a readily useable reference guide for the novice. For that reason a very rigid organizational structure has been formulated for use in this entire series of papers to aid the novice in finding the information he needs easily. In addition the structure aids in the development of the concepts and materials presented.

In general specific illustrations, by referring to past postal Diplomacy games, etc. and discussions of improbable, although possible, situations have been avoided. Some of the more esoteric possibilities will be explored in later chapters.

Maps have been included at key points to illustrate the development of the French position. An elaborate Outline of Contents is included to serve as both an index and a table of contents. An Appendix is included.

The first part of this paper was written in 1967 and early 1968 and published then. The portions covering the Mid and End Games were written in 1974.



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I. THE OPENING GAME (1901-)

In postal Diplomacy games France has traditionally been one of the favorite Powers among the more experienced players. This is due, in large part, to the difficulty involved in playing France well. Anyone can govern, or play, France---as various French kings and presidents have proven, but to govern or play France well requires a Louis XIVth, a Napoleon, or a DeGaulle. Success in playing France requires the utmost effort by the French player not only in the Opening Game but in the Mid and End Games as well. Nor will success in one area, such as tactics, or strategy, or diplomacy, be sufficient. The French player must do his best constantly in every area if he hopes to win. He must be a superior tactician to overcome the natural propensity for an English-German alliance to attack him in the Opening Game. He must be an expert strategist to overcome his three powerful neighbors. Extensive and intensive interpersonal diplomacy is required with every other player to give his truly European and continental influence the greatest area in which to work. I have played France in perhaps a dozen different postal Diplomacy games and although I have never won a postal game playing France I still remember some of my favorite games and best performances as a player of that most fascinating of all the Powers, France.

With all these things said it must still be noted that to gain the maximum pleasure from playing France the Diplomacy player must be as conscious of his style of play as he is of his mechanics. Unfortunately, a discussion of style is beyond the scope of this introductory volume.

A. Acquisition of Unoccupied Supply Centers

France has the greatest share of any Power in the division of the unoccupied supply centers; which works to both her advantage and disadvantage. If she comes to terms with her neighboring Powers, England, and especially Germany, there is no reason why she should not occupy Spain, Portugal, and Belgium during the first year of the game. Sometimes, particularly if she faces an English or German attack, France will only gain two of these centers but under ideal conditions France should gain all three. In passing, I might note that in the great majority of the games in which I played France, I gained all three of these centers during the first year of play---but that didn't help me win a game. In one game I didn't gain any of the three centers in the first year of the game but I still managed to survive until the end of the game.

The mechanics of acquiring the three centers are relatively simple and the various possibilities for Spring and Fall 1901 orders tend to fall into the various patterns noted below.

1. Spain

Spain is perhaps the most certain of France's 1901 conquests since she can capture it by moving from Marseilles on the first move.

Using standard opening moves in Spring 1901:
 Fleet Brest-Mid Atlantic,
 Army Paris-Burgundy, and
 Army Marseilles-Spain, taking Spain should be accomplished without difficulty.

There are, however, other considerations. France must be cautious vis-a-vis the Italian unit in Venice. If the Italians move Army Venice-Piedmont in Spring 1901 and the French have moved Army Marseilles-Spain then for the Fall 1901 moves France faces a difficult dilemma: to move Spain back to Marseilles, to block the Italians from moving Piedmont-Marseilles, or to remain in Spain and take the risk of losing Marseilles. The Italians, in the Fall 1901 moves, might order Army Piedmont-Hold, letting the French retake Marseilles and preventing a French build there in Winter 1901, which would be the logical outcome of a 1901 stand-off. The French defense against such an Italian move is to order both her armies, Spain and Burgundy, to Marseilles, thus standing her own units off, and the Italian unit in Piedmont as well. The Italian counter-move to this is to use her unit in Piedmont to support one or the other French unit back into Marseilles; which would then be a successful move. This simple problem illustrates the complexities of even the opening moves of a Diplomacy game.

Spain can also be taken by either of the other two French units, Fleet Brest or Army Paris, by moves through the Mid Atlantic or Gascony. However, such moves are risky in my view as critical French provinces are left unguarded during the critically important Opening Game.

2. Portugal

If the standard opening Spring 1901 order of Fleet Brest-Mid Atlantic has been used France will have no difficulty in moving Fleet Mid Atlantic-Portugal in the Fall, thus taking her second center.

Here again, however, problems can arise if the English move Fleet London-English Channel during the Spring 1901 season. France may face the same dilemma as she does in the Piedmont-Marseilles confrontation. The English fleet in the English Channel may be harmless or, it may move into Brest in the Fall 1901. If France moves to Brest in the Fall 1901 she may prevent the English from taking Brest, if that was their intention but the English may then move into Belgium, with German support, or even move into the Mid Atlantic, threatening no less than three French centers (Brest, Spain, and Portugal). It is extremely important to prevent the English from moving into the Channel in 1901. Even if Belgium must be sacrificed to prevent it the time and supply centers gained make the exchange worthwhile.

3. Belgium

There is no guarantee that France will acquire Belgium in 1901 since England and Germany are also concerned with the ownership of that center. However, France has a very definite interest in the center and that interest should not be sacrificed through neglect or disinterest. Even if France fails to gain Belgium she should gain something from the other Powers for the price of her acquiescence in allowing another to occupy it. For example, England might agree to a joint alliance against Germany in exchange for the occupation of Belgium. Germany might agree to a joint attack on England in exchange for rights to Belgium. Or, as does happen, England and Germany may stand each other off and leave France holding the balance of power in her hands.

If France does go after Belgium there are two ways to do it: alone or in a joint attack with another Power. Going it alone does not obligate France for a quid pro quo but it does make the chances of success less. Conversely, with help from another Power, either England or Germany, France's chances of success are greater but so are her obligations to that assisting Power.

By either method France should try and place an army in Belgium, probably the one in Paris. Using the fleet from Brest is not advisable as it leaves the seaward flank of France too exposed. Moving Paris-Burgundy in Spring 1901 is a guarantee that Germany will not move Munich-Burgundy, as does happen, in a surprise attack on France. Even better is using Marseilles to support Paris-Burgundy in Spring 1901, thus making sure that Paris does make it to Burgundy. Then, depending on what transpires with Germany and Italy, France can move Burgundy to Belgium or Marseilles to Spain in the Fall 1901.

If the cost of taking Belgium is facing a joint English-German attack in Spring 1902 France is better off letting one or the other of those two Powers have Belgium and seeking an alliance with the other Power. Belgium is one of the key pivots around which the war in the west will revolve.

B. Potential Alliances

France, because of her strategic position, has a large variety of alliances and non-aggression pacts that she can choose from. Each of them offers her certain advantages but many of them also contain hidden liabilities.

The great danger for France at this stage is that a move without hostile intent but appearing to be threatening, such as the move of a French fleet to the Channel, or a French army to Burgundy, may be just the catalyst needed to drive potential allies of France together as her enemies. Thus, to avoid this danger France must use diplomacy constantly to prepare her allies and her non-aggression pact partners for her various moves---without alerting enemies to her intentions.

1. With England Against Germany

Often, if Russia is faced with attacks from Turkey and Austria, France and England find themselves fighting Germany alone. This is not dangerous as long as Italy remains neutral toward France, or France has a strong defensive position in the south. The usual strategy is for French armies to hold German forces in Munich and the Ruhr while English fleets are seizing Denmark and attacking Kiel, Holland or Berlin through the Baltic. In almost every case the overwhelming tactical position of the French armies and the English fleets is enough to defeat Germany.

2. With Russia &/or England Against Germany

Like every other country Germany cannot withstand a three Power attack on her without outside assistance. In this case the attack would come from France, England and Russia. Normally, as French armies drive from Belgium and Burgundy into the Ruhr and Munich, English fleets are attacking Denmark and Kiel. From the east Russia sends her armies into Prussia and Silesia to attack Berlin. Such a three way attack usually gives France Munich and the assured possession of Belgium. This is less than England or Russia gain, both tactically and in units, since England gains a strong foothold on the continent as well as Holland and Kiel, and perhaps Denmark, and Russia gains Berlin and, usually, Denmark.

3. With Germany Against England

Sometimes, France is able, through an unusual series of circumstances (e.g. Italian neutrality vis-a-vis France, Germany not fighting an eastern front war, etc.) to develop an alliance with Germany against England. Such an alliance can win but it is France that must take the burden of the conflict and receives the smallest share of the spoils (London and Liverpool at best). The wise manipulation of the French fleet in Brest, the German fleet in Kiel, and the adept use of convoys can bring England down, though rarely quickly. France is wise to consider carefully such an alliance since it builds a German front across her northern and eastern borders and leaves her only with the prospect of fighting a massive German front, or attacking Italy (and rarely will Italy remain passive while the threat of a French attack is looming). In light of England's superior defensive position and the difficulty of making gains against her, France is rarely wise to attack her early in the game.

4. With Russia Against England

Although it is unlikely it is possible that France may find herself allied with Russia against England in the Opening Game. With the forces moving south from Russia and French forces moving from the Mid Atlantic and Channel much

pressure can be put on England although whether it would be enough to crack the English defensive lines is hard to determine. The problem is Germany which, by a well executed doublecross, could move into France and Russia and destroy them while they were deployed against England. Thus, this possibility only becomes practical if Germany is tied up fighting Austria or Italy in which case the game is a most unusual one.

5. With Germany Against Italy

Once in a great while France finds herself involved in a conflict with Italy, with Germany as an ally. This would presuppose that Austria is involved in a Balkans campaign with Russia and Turkey and Italy has attacked either Germany, in Munich, or France, in Marseilles.

An Italian army in Tyrolia, appearing to be about to attack Trieste can, and sometimes does, move into Munich in Fall 1901, thus raising havoc with the German tactical position. Germany must then drive out the Italian unit, without losing another center in the process (more than one Italian army has been blasted out of Munich only to retreat into Kiel or Berlin), and often French tactical help is solicited.

Although the tactical problem is difficult it poses no serious strategic threat to France.

6. With Austria Against Italy

This would be the most probable alliance situation against Italy for France. Austria makes a good ally for France. They can aid each other but not seriously threaten each other in the Opening Game. For this reason, if other circumstances allow, France and Austria may launch a joint attack on Italy.

In addition to the main front to her north France must also consider the southern front facing Italy. Since Italy rarely challenges France for control of Iberia unless she is planning a general campaign against France and France can hardly prevent Italy from taking Tunis there is little for France to gain except from Italy itself. Perhaps more important than the supply centers France can gain from Italy is the improved tactical and strategic position she can acquire by controlling the Mediterranean; particularly, the Ionian Sea.

France and Austria can easily crush Italy. However, as I mentioned, France's main advantage from such an attack comes not from the two supply centers she gains, Rome and Tunis, but from her improved board position. If France can establish herself along the line Tuscany-Rome-Tyrrhenian-Tunis she has either an excellent defensive position from which she can hold off anyone advancing from the eastern Mediterranean or an excellent base for a drive into the Balkans.

Depending on the course of the Mid Game France may, after crushing Italy, decide to move eastward through the Mediterranean or swing north against England or Germany.

7. With England and Germany Against the Board

Conrad von Metzke (of Costaguana fame) has made a case for this three-way alliance against the other four Powers. His argument is made on the basis of two contentions: first, that England, France and Germany working in conjunction are more effective than Italy, Austria, Russia, and Turkey; and, second, that because she is isolated behind Italy, Austria, and Russia, Turkey will not be an effective member of the four Power alliance

Von Metzke suggests that if England moves north, against Russia, Germany moves east against Russia, and France moves south, against Italy, the three powers cannot be stopped. Although I have seen this approach used successfully in face-to-face Diplomacy I have never seen it implemented successfully in a postal Diplomacy game.

Still, it does seem to me that most postal Diplomacy players fail to go beyond bilateral alliances and few efforts are made to realise the potential gains from three or four player alliances. Perhaps, as the sophistication of players grow we will see more complex alliance patterns developing. Certainly the potential for them exists.

C. Potential Non-Aggression Pacts

Since France obviously cannot fight England, Germany and Italy at the same time she must secure a non-aggression pact with at least one, or preferably two, of her neighbors.

1. With Italy

If possible France should acquire a non-aggression pact with Italy and encourage her to move eastward against Austria. This gives France sufficient first year builds (at least two) and ensures her of enough strength to meet a German or English attack if one develops. If such an attack does not come France may either ally with England against Germany or with Germany against England. Or France may remain neutral on her northern front and turn against Italy with Austrian help. The terms of a non-aggression pact usually include the neutrality of the Piedmont, the Gulf of Lyon, the Western Mediterranean and North Africa.

2. With England

In most games England and France agree to a non-aggression pact, if not an outright alliance against Germany, since both Powers have more to gain elsewhere than by fighting each other. A neutrality pact should include the Channel, the North Atlantic, and the Irish Sea and probably a provision banning the building of fleets in Brest and Liverpool except by mutual previous agreement.

3. With Germany

Unless she can be certain of English or Russian support France cannot attack Germany alone and must, in such a case, seek a non-aggression pact with Germany. She cannot fight Germany alone (at least in the beginning of the game). Since a non-aggression pact with Germany (and not an alliance) precludes an attack on England (since France cannot successfully attack England alone either) France must either fight Italy or remain neutral. A non-aggression pact with Germany should include the neutrality of the Ruhr and Burgundy after the first year (in the first year France must move Paris to Burgundy, both to protect herself from a surprise German attack or to use it as an advancing point to Belgium).

D. Defensive Game

Because of her continental position France must often fight a defensive war; though she has what is probably the best defensive position of any of the continental powers. There is no reason why France cannot successfully fight a defensive war until her opponents are either tired of fighting her or are themselves attacked from the rear and forced to turn their attention to their own defense.

France's defensive game is a complex one and for that reason I have broken the discussion down into its possible major component parts.

1. Against England, Germany and Italy

As with any Power facing three determined attackers, France cannot hope to survive such an attack (especially if it comes in 1901) although she may survive longer than most other powers under similar circumstances; especially if she has a chance to pick up her three builds in Spain, Portugal, and Belgium. If France is attacked from all three sides there is a chance she may survive for a considerable time if her opponents do not fully coordinate their moves. There is, always, the possibility that a second tier power, such as Russia or Turkey, will intervene by attacking one of the attackers, drawing off enough of their forces to give France some indirect relief.

2. Against England and Germany

If she is allowed to concentrate all of her forces against units attacking from England and Germany, France can, if played well and with some luck, hold off both Powers almost indefinitely. In such a conflict the Mid Atlantic and Burgundy are key provinces.

3. Against England and Italy

This combination can really be more dangerous to France than an English-German attack. If Italy is not fighting Austria and has built a fleet in her first year for

her gain in Tunis, and England has built fleets in the south, they can jointly move against Iberia, while France tries vainly to cover both fronts. France's best means of protecting herself against this attack comes from her first three builds. France must remember that those two or three builds for the first year (assuming she does occupy Spain, Portugal and Belgium) will be her only ones until she takes a supply center from another Power and should accordingly plan her builds to aid her in attacking some other Power. Normally France builds at least one fleet, and sometimes two; or if she is planning to fight a continental war against Germany she may build all three armies. The last alternative is not recommended.

4. Against Germany and Italy

This would be a most unusual alliance as both Germany and Italy are themselves too exposed to launch an attack on France without the cooperation of England, Russia, Austria, etc. Breaking up such an alliance is more of a diplomatic problem than a tactical one.

E. Offensive Game

The neutral position of Switzerland and its separation of France's eastern front into two parts has important ramifications for France. To the north France has only two real choices: support England against Germany or support Germany against England. Occasionally she involves herself in an alliance with Russia against either England or Germany but this is often a risky business. To the south France must decide whether to fight Italy or not. Because of the location of Switzerland there is little real possibility of playing off the nations of the first tier against each other, as England can. France is thus somewhat limited. It can fight a defensive war in the south and an offensive war in the north or vice versa which is something few other Powers can do.

1. With England Against Germany

A joint attack on Germany by France and England has good prospects for success provided that France and England carefully coordinate their moves. The operation is essentially a tactical one and is, I feel, one of the more interesting problems of the Opening Game.

At least two French and two English units are required and five are better. The French units should be in Burgundy, a must, and either Picardy or Belgium, desirable, at the beginning of the attack. The English units should be in the North Sea and Norway. It is also desirable to have either a French or English fleet in the English Channel. Even if Germany has previously occupied the Belgium supply center the alliance, by possibly occupying Burgundy, Picardy, the Channel, or the North, is almost certain to either dislodge the German unit or eventually

annihilate him. Once Belgium has been occupied by a French army it should support an English army into Holland, probably convoyed from Norway, with support from an English fleet in the Helgoland Bight.

By this time sufficient forces should be available to put pressure on Denmark from the Skaggerat and Helgoland Bight, or on the Ruhr, from Burgundy, Belgium, and Holland. Sooner or later Kiel will fall and the rest of Germany should fall easily.

2. With Russia &/or England Against Germany

The addition of Russia to the alliance described above gives it sufficient flexibility to put strength on Germany's rear front and the Russian forces can draw off German units to protect Berlin, Munich, and, perhaps, Denmark.

3. With Germany Against England

An Opening Game alliance against England by France and Germany is a novelty but one that may pay off. The first requirement is to make sure that neither France or Germany will be double-crossed and attacked from the rear just as they get themselves into position to attack England. If, and only if, that can be accomplished the attack on England offers an interesting variant opening.

The chief tactical requirement is to secure control of the English Channel, by France, and the North Sea, by Germany. This either requires both Powers to use their two fleets in conjunction or to build at least one fleet, and hopefully two fleets, in Brest and/or Kiel to make them available for the attack. Three or four fleets by 1902 should be sufficient to break England's natural tactical defensive line: Norwegian-North-English Channel.

When either the Channel or the North Sea has been seized France and Germany must be prepared to convoy one or two armies into England to work against the fleet barrier from the inside. The armies can cut supports of units in England, threaten supply centers such as Liverpool, and generally multiply the options available to the alliance.

A favorite tactic is to convoy armies into Wales, from Brest or Picardy, and Yorkshire, from wherever, and use them to take Liverpool, and then Edinburgh, leaving London to fall at the end or to be captured by one of the fleets.

4. With Russia Against England

This is a much more difficult operation than the alliance discussed above as France and Russia cannot support each others' forces, at least in the initial stages of the attack, and they lack immediate access to the English homeland.

Still, if Russia can bring sufficient pressure on England from the North, taking Norway, and moving fleets into the Norwegian and/or North Atlantic, and France can push hard enough from the south against the Channel, England should crack.

With the risks, and they are considerable, being what they are I cannot recommend this alliance to anyone except two good players seeking to experiment with a more dynamic Opening Game.

5. With Germany Against Italy

Why Germany should want to attack Italy in the Opening Game, especially with France as an ally, is hard to say. Nevertheless, I am sure some will, just as some have. How successful such an alliance would be is difficult to imagine.

Germany would have to move south, through Tyrolia, to make an effective contribution to the attack and this would surely be resisted by Austria. But in the case of a French-Italian stalemate between Marseilles-Piedmont that one unit might make the difference between French success and failure.

The reason why I mention some of these so-called "esoteric" alliance possibilities is to encourage players, especially new players, to go beyond the so-called "traditional" openings in their Opening Game. Breaking out of the old patterns and establishing your own identity as a player, even if you suffer a few defeats in the process, is the one way to become a good Diplomacy player. Too many players are content to find a "formula" for success and then work it to death. The Diplomacy game, for them, becomes a monotonous repetition of the same moves and same Diplomacy. Great Diplomacy players are developed by experimentation and growth, not conservative stagnation. Being afraid to learn something new, and make mistakes in the process, is not the way to improve one's skills in Diplomacy.

6. With Austria Against Italy

Austria and France can work much more effectively as a team against Italy, sharing joint borders with her northern provinces. In fact, as discussed below, this alliance is our first choice for France in the Opening Game.

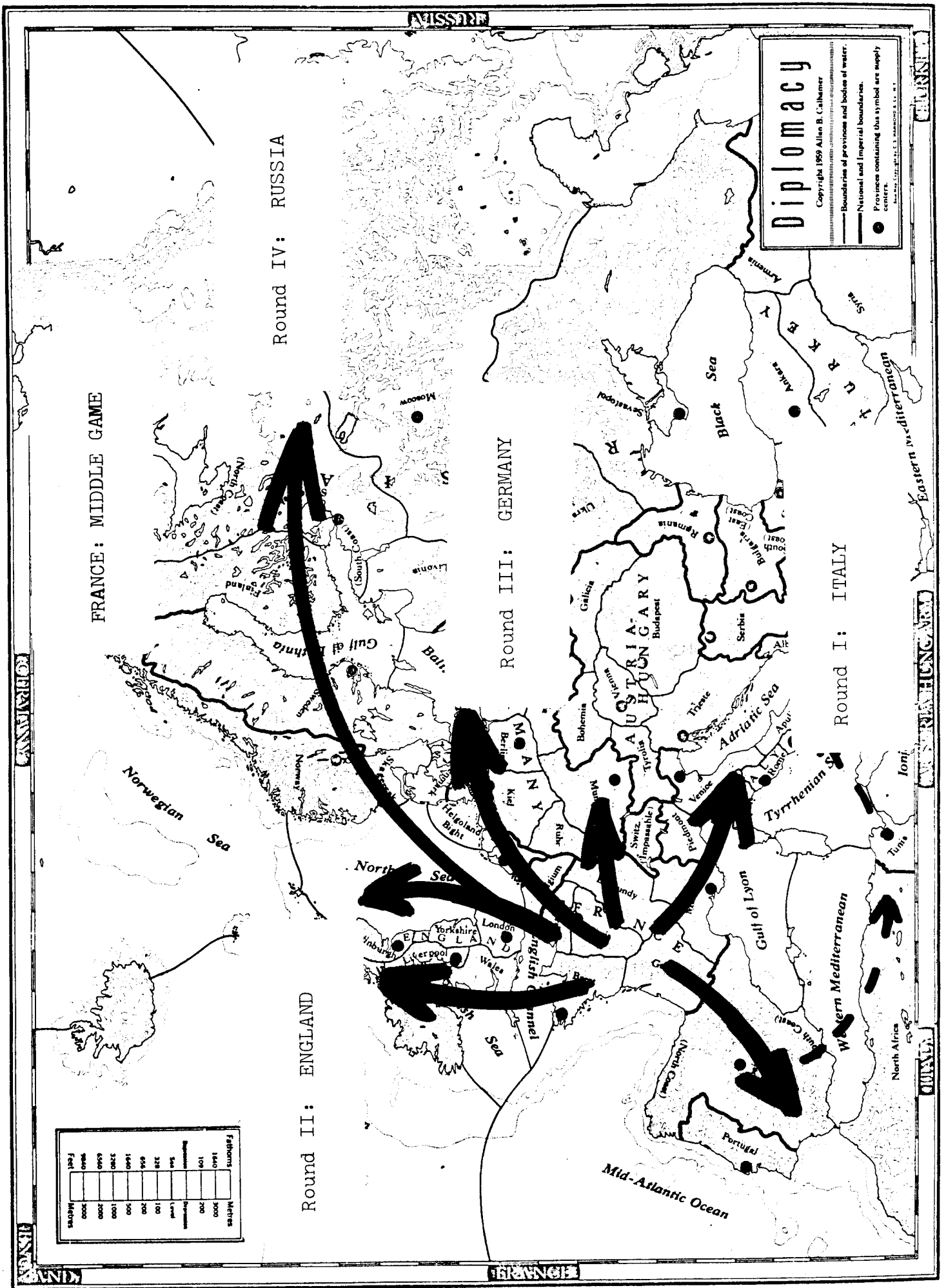
7. With England and Germany Against the Board

Only good diplomacy can make this possibility a reality.

F. Waiting Game

A strong case can be made for France taking a waiting position during the early Opening Game. Until she sees which way England, Germany, and Italy are moving---and especially if they are going to move against her---it is difficult for France to execute a viable policy and strategy.

A Waiting Game is not a cautious or passive game. Rather it is an active attempt to influence the course of effective action by other Powers without committing herself to any positive and irreversible action. Translated into common



English that means in this case France does not actually involve herself in the conflicts going on but seeks to turn those conflicts to her own advantage; looking for alliances, considering all proposals, keeping her options open as long as possible, before committing herself against any of her neighbors. This is a difficult game to play, perhaps the most difficult. There is a strong urge to grab the first alliance offered, or accepted, regardless of the long-range implications of the alliance.

Many participants in both face-to-face and postal Diplomacy games think they have to attack some other Power in the Spring 1901 or, at the very latest, in the Fall 1901 or Spring 1902. This is not the case.

For France the primary goals of any Waiting Game are to prevent a three power or two power coalition from ganging up on her, to seek allies in case such an alliance should develop, and to gain control of Belgium, secure the neutrality of the Channel, and make sure that the Italians stay out of Piedmont.

G. Adjustments

During the course of a successful game France will build twelve or thirteen units, perhaps more. In general about half of these should be fleets and half armies. As noted above the first two or three builds are critical as they determine which way France will play the Opening Game. If fleets are built she must move to the coastal provinces, if armies she will probably have to face Germany. Pay particular attention to maintaining a strong defensive position in the Mid Atlantic and the Western Mediterranean. From here much is possible. A strong defensive position based on the southwest corner of the board is a valuable asset.

H. Possible Positions & Supply Centers At End of Opening Game Winter 1901

Fleet Brest, Fleet Marseilles, Army Paris, Army Belgium, and Fleet Portugal, Army Spain.

II. ROUND ONE: THE MIDDLE GAME (1902-): FIRST VICTIM: ITALY

If France chooses Italy as her first victim her first diplomatic efforts must be directed toward encouraging either an English-German conflict or obtaining non-aggression pacts with both England and Germany. Secondly, France should do everything in her power to encourage Austria to put pressure on Italy's eastern front. Third, and also very important, France must do everything it can to make sure that Italy does not expect an attack from France.

The chief reason I recommend this approach is to minimize the chances for France having to fight all three, or any two, of

her neighbors simultaneously. In addition, Italy is an easier target for France in the Opening Game than either England or Germany.

Finally, there is the advantage that France gains from having a secure southern front when she does turn against England and Germany.

Two comments should be noted here. First, I realize that some players, especially novices, may object to attacking someone after trying to convince him that he is not indeed the intended victim. Such scruples pass quickly in postal Diplomacy and, after all, lying is permissible. Second, some, especially more advanced players, may object to my stressing the attacking of weaker neighbors first and leaving stronger players and Powers to later but for novices I think the easier path is the better one, at least in the first few years of the Game. There will be plenty of stronger Powers to attack later.

A. Acquisition of Occupied Supply Centers

In moving against Italy France is concerned with four Italian supply centers: Venice, Rome, Naples, and Tunis. If France were to attack and occupy Italy by herself she might reasonably expect to capture all four centers. More realistically, France will attack in conjunction with Austria and Austria will want her share of the spoils. Austria will probably take Venice and want Naples as her share. This leaves Rome and Tunis for France.

1. Tunis

To take Tunis France will have to bring at least three and probably four units to bear on Italy. Two armies, one in Marseilles, to put pressure on Piedmont, and, perhaps, a second to be convoyed over from Spain to North Africa, and one or two fleets to take the Gulf of Lyon and Western Mediterranean, should be sufficient, in conjunction with an Austrian or Turkish attack on Italy's rear, to bring Italy down.

If, as frequently happens, a two-two deadlock develops over Tunis with French forces in the West Mediterranean and North Africa, and Italian forces in Tunis and the Ionian or Tyrrhenian, or both, France will have to take the Tyrrhenian before taking Tunis so as to be able to bring three units to bear on Tunis which Italy will be able to devote only two units to defending.

2. Rome

With the Tyrrhenian as a base to operate from France should be able to push an army, or armies, south from Marseilles through Piedmont to Tuscany and the two units working together should be able to occupy Rome without much difficulty. The Austrians, or Turks, in Venice or Naples by this time, may be able to lend some support.

If France finds it impossible to break through the Italian defensive line in Piedmont she may be forced to consider a convoy through the Gulf of Lyon of an army from Spain, or even Marseilles, into Tuscany. This end run effectively by-passes the Italian defense.

B. Potential Alliances

As noted above France has three primary targets in the early Mid Game: England, Germany, and Italy. For illustrative purposes I have chosen Italy as the first target and thus France will be seeking an ally against Italy, either Austria or Turkey. However, the possibility does exist that France will be drawn into a conflict with England or Germany in the early Mid Game. Therefore, those two potential enemies and possible alliances directed against them are also considered here.

1. With England Against Germany

France can move against Germany in conjunction with England such an alliance is a common one. Unfortunately in most cases it works to the ultimate advantage of England, not France. The reason for this seems to be that while France is building armies for the invasion of Germany, England is building fleets which can initially be used against Germany but later can be readily used against France. And, no one has yet found a way for French armies to be used against a strong English naval force.

Still, if such an alliance should be offered, and accepted, France would want to be certain of obtaining clear possession of Belgium and, perhaps, Kiel, or less preferably Berlin.

Another problem is the danger that Russia will walk into the backdoor of Germany just as France and England crack the German defenses, taking Germany's home supply centers.

My chief opposition to an early attack on Germany by France is the inherent strength of the German defensive position, Holland-Kiel-Ruhr-Munich, with appropriate intersupports. As long as Germany's forces are relatively concentrated, as they are in the early Mid Game, it is difficult to create a break in their intersupporting position. Greater gains can be had elsewhere, at lower cost.

2. With Germany Against England

If the German player is a good one and France is a weak or inexperienced player it may be to his (France's) advantage to ally with the stronger Germany.

The two Powers, if surprise can be obtained, can sometimes launch an effective assault on England, if England has committed herself by moving her fleets into an anti-Russian position.

Either the Channel or the North Sea will have to be taken and armies convoyed over into England for assaults on London, Liverpool, and Edinburgh. Germany should launch an attack on Norway, or encourage Russia to put pressure on that province.

Still, the dangers of having a dynamic Germany sitting across the top of France are such that I cannot recommend this alliance. But, if it comes down to it, a strong Germany does make a better buffer for France than does England.

3. With Russia Against England

I like the potential of this alliance but, unfortunately, in the early Middle Game it is a bit dangerous for France and Russia. France is too exposed to Germany and Italy, and Russia is too exposed to Austria and Turkey.

Still, there is always a chance that the development of the diplomacy in the Opening Game will permit a different alliance structure and one of the prime assets that any player can have is an ability to recognize such a situation and, especially important, an ability and willingness to take advantage of it. A key concept for the novice to keep in mind is that while he should play a liberal and flexible strategic and diplomatic game, he should play a cautious and conservative tactical game.

Naturally, before taking out England, France and Russia would have to make sure that the other four Powers are embroiled in conflicts of their own. Then, Russia can move south, taking Norway, and putting pressure on England from the Norwegian, North Sea, or North Atlantic. Not only does this divert some of England's forces while France moves north, it gives France a strong potential ally or lever against Germany.

4. With Russia Against Germany

This is probably the classic example of the Diplomacy "squeeze play" with France and Russia moving from opposite directions against Germany.

It's an awfully easy alliance and an appealing looking one but it has a tendency to bring the other Powers down onto France and Russia en masse.

Nothing will unite the other Powers against a single Power or a "dual alliance" faster than a move to split the board down the middle (or across, as in this case). This is often not a deliberate move but an unconscious move by the other Powers to protect their own access to the rest of the board.

Thus, as is so often the case, the short-term benefits of this alliance are insufficient to justify the long-term risks.

5. With Austria Against Italy

This seems to me to be the preferred alliance at this stage for France. Not only does it secure France's southern flank but it does not strengthen Austria to the point where Austria can threaten France.

These traditional assumptions have made the dual attack on Italy in the early game one of the most predictable events in any Diplomacy game. It was just assumed by the other Powers that France and Austria would take Italy out in the first years of the game. Today this is not always the case and some players, such as John Smythe, demonstrated conclusively that Italy, if it survives, can become a major Power and win games.

In moving against Italy France will want to make sure that she gains a position of preeminence in the Western Mediterranean. She can do this by controlling the line Piedmont-Tuscany-Tyrrhenian-Tunis. In addition the occupation of Rome by France is usually desirable. This leaves Austria holding Venice and Naples, two supply centers which cannot directly support each other.

C. Potential Non-Aggression Pacts

In choosing Italy as her first victim France automatically requires a non-aggression pact(s) with either or both of her northern neighbors, England and Germany.

In seeking to continue the agreements worked out, hopefully, in the Opening Game, France must be watchful for signs of an anti-French alliance springing up between England and Germany. Only by making sure that one or the other, or both of them, are actively involved in a conflict with Russia or Austria can France guarantee, to some extent, her own safety via a non-aggression pact.

1. With England

The conditions of a non-aggression pact between France and England remain relatively static through this part of the game: the neutrality of the English Channel, the security of Belgium as a French supply center, etc. But it is important that France acquiesce in England's desires for a path to expansion. The secret of a successful non-aggression pact is not to totally contain the neighboring Power but to provide him with a directed opportunity for expansion in a direction away from yourself.

2. With Germany

Germany is less of a threat to France, although many have been the times that a German army moved into Burgundy and brought the French house of cards down. Germany, still, faces more potential enemies than most Powers and as such secures non-aggression pacts wherever she can. France should take advantage of this fact. The vital elements of the pact remain as noted above.

D. Defensive Game

Normally France would not be expected to find herself waging a defensive game at this stage. There is, however, a tendency in some quarters to gang up on France in the early game if France is being played by a superior player.

France has a good defensive position and it takes a strong attack to destroy her, especially if she has gained two or three supply centers in 1901.

Unfortunately, if a strong attack does come, in 1902 for instance, France's units may not be in the best position to oppose it. Units in Spain and Portugal are almost worthless and an unsupported unit in Belgium is a likely candidate for dislodgment. But given a chance to reposition her units France can make a strong defensive stand by holding one of two defensive lines. In the North, France would hold the Mid Atlantic, the English Channel (or Brest and Picardy), Belgium, and Burgundy. An additional unit in Marseilles provides a good safety factor. To face a Southern attack, France would want to hold Marseilles, the Gulf of Lyon, West Mediterranean, and the Mid Atlantic. If either of the sea provinces are lost to Italy a unit in Spain is vital. The obvious problem is trying to hold both a viable northern and southern position against a dual attack by both England and Italy.

E. Offensive Game

As an offensive Power in the early game France has three possible targets: England, Germany, or Italy. While it is possible that France might cooperate in an alliance with one or more other Powers against two or more of these neighboring Powers; for our purposes we will consider only the more likely possibilities in terms of alliance and victim combinations.

France's position does not lend itself to a one-to-one attack on any of these three Powers. It is too easy for the Power being attacked to establish a secure defensive line which France cannot breach. Thus, France usually must work with at least one other Power in attacking England, Germany, or Italy.

The early game offensive battles are characterized by great fluidity and rapid changes in alliance structures. France must be prepared to swing with the changes in developments during this stage. An early ally may prove unreliable, or treacherous; an early foe may become an ally as circumstances change.

1. With England Against Germany

Should circumstances dictate France may enter into an alliance with England directed at Germany or, as has happened, be forced into such an alliance by German diplomacy or German attack. Nothing except my previously stated reservations in this situation prevents France from gaining in this alliance.

France's natural inclination is to drive for Munich; moving on to take Kiel or Berlin if the opportunity arises. In doing so she isolates England in Holland, Kiel, Denmark and the sea provinces immediately adjacent. Unfortunately, in doing so she creates a scenario in which England is almost always forced to turn on her because other avenues of expansion are sealed off. If this seems likely to happen the best thing France can do is to make sure that she has some fleets and secure defensive lines.

Invading Germany is a time consuming task and each supply center will be contested. In addition the German "Iron Cross" (Denmark, Holland, Berlin, Munich, and Kiel are all supply centers and all inter-locking supports) is an especially difficult tactical web to unravel for the novice player. Normally Denmark can be taken by English fleets; which then can move into the Helgoland Bight. Holland can be taken with support from France's unit in Belgium and; by now, a French unit in the Ruhr. With luck the cutting of various German inter-supporting units will allow the French to take Munich.

Obviously, the taking of Germany's homeland is a difficult tactical problem and one that presents many challenges to any player, novice or advanced.

2. With Germany Against England

The reverse is not quite so true. Attacking England is tactically less difficult than attacking Germany. But the problems involved are just as complicated and the additional factor of convoys creates further challenges.

For France and Germany to turn outward, away from the center of the board, and attack England means exposing their defenseless rear flank to a multitude of potential attackers. It is this grim reality which most often prevents this alliance.

Still, if conditions allow, the problem is an interesting one to tackle. By building a second fleet in 1901 France can bring two fleets to bear on England and if Germany builds a second fleet the two Powers can bring a total of four fleets to bear on England. The normal course of events is for one or the other Power to support the second in taking a province adjacent to the English homeland. Then armies can be convoyed into the English homeland. The biggest part of the battle is gaining control of the sea provinces around England and doing it quickly.

3. With Russia Against England

If England and Russia stumble into a confrontation over Norway or Sweden, France may want to consider entering into an offensive alliance with Russia against England. Russia need only put pressure on Norway to tie up one or two English units at a time when those units are needed to defend the homeland. Russia, if she should manage to occupy the Norwegian

Sea, might be able to put further pressure on the English homeland. Naturally, in the meantime France will be moving to take the Irish, or the Channel, and attempting the convoys into the English homeland.

4. With Russia Against England

The French-Russian alliance against Germany is a viable one but, as noted above, suffers from special drawbacks vis-a-vis the other Powers. Since the logical French positions in Belgium and Burgundy can be stalemated by a German line based in Holland-Ruhr-Munich it becomes imperative that the Russians break through in the east. A Russian thrust into Silesia and Prussia can either cut the Munich support or force German withdrawal in the west. The Ruhr and Silesia are the key provinces in this alliance.

5. With Austria Against Italy

If this is the adopted course of action France will probably enter 1902 with an army in Spain, a fleet in Portugal and a fleet in Marseilles. As quickly as possible France should bring her fleets into the Mediterranean for a push on Tunis. The army, and an additional one if possible, should be brought into Marseilles or Piedmont to prevent an Italian move there. France may have an opportunity, once her position in the Gulf of Lyon and West Mediterranean is established, to try some convoys. A convoy into Tuscany, probably from Spain or Marseilles, can by-pass an Italian defensive position in Piedmont. Similarly the French may want to convoy an army into North Africa to help in the attack on Tunis. If the Italian unit in Tunis can be isolated it will be possible to capture the center with just two units, probably in North Africa and the Western Mediterranean. If, however, Italy has a supporting unit in either the Tyrrhenian or Ionian Sea it will take three units to capture the supply center. In such a case France will almost have to take the Tyrrhenian as a prelude to an attack on Tunis. Doing so does aid in the subsequent drive on Rome which can then be assaulted from the sea or land. French units in the Tyrrhenian and Tuscany are essential to a successful attack on Rome. Even Austrian support cannot replace the need for French units on the spot.

F. Waiting Game

There is a possibility that France will want to engage in a waiting game during the first year or two of the game. This becomes a real possibility if England and Germany are engaged with each other, or Russia; and if Italy becomes embroiled in a conflict with Austria. The temptation may be for France to sit back, consolidating her position in Spain and Portugal, as well as Belgium.

But it is important to note that any waiting game should not consist of passive inactivity. At no point should France, or any other Power in similar circumstances, become a mere idle spectator as events pass her by. Rather, periods of tactical inactivity should be used for intensive and extensive diplomacy. France should be exploring all possibilities as her options are greater at this time than at any other period in the game. But, once a decision is made the commitment should be a total one. Vascillation merely makes France a prime target for a determined Power looking for an easy victim.

G. Adjustments

France's gains from the occupation of Tunis and Rome must be governed by two dictates: her own defensive requirements and the selection of her next victim. I would recommend the building of another fleet, or perhaps two, and another army. If the potential for exploiting the gains made in the Mediterranean is there, or if it is decided that England will be France's next target, France will be wanting to build fleets in both Brest and Marseilles. Construction of an army in Paris seems a prudent defensive move.

H. Possible Positions & Supply Centers At End of 1903

Army Paris, Army Burgundy, Army Spain, Army Belgium, Fleet Brest, Army Tuscany, Fleet Rome, and Fleet Tyrrhenian. Home, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Tunis and Rome as supply centers.

III. ROUND TWO: THE MIDDLE GAME (1904-) : SECOND VICTIM: ENGLAND

Having secured her southern flank, France can now turn to her perennial foe, England. Make no mistake about it, at any stage of the game in which England is a viable Power; she is the primary threat to France. Even as an ally of France the potential for an English attack on France is so great that France can never afford to relax her guard. I would hazard a guess that more Mid and End Games have ended with England double-crossing France than in any other single manner.

Such is the caliber of the English threat to France that only the gravest of reasons suggest that France should first dispose of Italy before engaging England. Among some of the reasons that come to mind are: 1) give her time to gain some badly needed builds; 2) allow her time to seek allies against England; 3) give her an opportunity to take the measure of the English player; and 4) give her some tactical decision-making experience. Only when all these things have been done and France has carefully prepared herself to concentrate fully on a conflict with England should France make what is probably the most crucial decision of her game, the decision to attack England rather than to wait for England to attack her.

By way of contrast to my discussions of Austria and England, in my analysis of France I am going to violate one of my own precepts, that of continuity of attack. In my discussion of England the proposed order of victims was Russia, Germany, France and Italy; a continuous, logical, and consistent progression of English forces from the north to the south. Now, for France, I find inconsistency is better. Having secured her southern flank against Italy, I turn France against England, her northern neighbor; by-passing the next logical target, Germany. The reason for this is France's need to preserve Germany as a Power for as long as possible. The use of Germany as a buffer zone is important to France as long as France can dominate Germany.

As we begin Round II we assume England has pursued the strategy outlined in S&TPD Volume I, ENGLAND, Round I, and attacked Russia. Thus, in Spring 1904, we have England established in Norway and St. Petersburg, with two new fleets built in London and Edinburgh. Germany has occupied Holland and Denmark, and has built a fleet in Kiel. Her original fleet is in Denmark. Russia continues to possess a fleet in Sweden along with an army in Moscow.

France instead of building an army in Paris, as noted in the last section, has opted to build a second fleet, in Marseilles.

In preparing to attack England, France is faced with the need to move her forces from the southern front to the north. Any such moves will alert the English to the coming attack. In her diplomacy with England France should attempt to convince the English player that there is a chance France may turn against Germany and that is why her fleets are moving north. England won't believe it but it may raise enough doubts to delay his redeployment of his own forces against France.

A. Acquisition of Occupied Supply Centers

Perhaps now is a good time to repeat one of the given assumptions on which this project is based. I have assumed that no player will, of his own will, attack another Power on a one-to-one basis, at least during the early Mid Game. Later on in the game it becomes a different story but during the early Mid Game, when there are still seven functioning Powers, I assume any Power will seek an ally or allies when attacking another Power. He may not always find them, obviously, but it is assumed that he will seek them out. This applies especially to novice players in mixed games with more experienced players. The second assumption I have made regarding this matter is that in most cases the allies will divide the supply centers of a third Power more or less equally. I would not expect a Power to aid another Power without some real gain. In Diplomacy, as in many other things, it is the real, the tangible, and the concrete benefit that is sought. I can count the times, in my experiences, when a Power aided another Power without an ulterior motive on one hand, and still have three fingers left. Thus, in the current example I have assumed England's supply centers consist of London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Norway, and St. Petersburg. Of these I assign the first two to France; as being the nearest and most logical choices. The other three might fall to Russia or Germany, depending on who the allied Power is (or, it is possible that Turkey might occupy St. Petersburg). Naturally, if England is defeated solely by France it would be expected that France would obtain all the supply centers. In point of fact that does not often happen. Another Power will just walk into one of them, as Russia might do in Norway; the English might invite another Power into her centers with no resistance: or France might yield up one or more of them in hopes of buying a friend or bribing an enemy. Always, always, remember that the sole end of the game, from a tactical and strategic viewpoint, is to gain control of a majority of those thirty-four supply centers.

1. London

From the very first move of the game the question of control of the English Channel and the security of London and Brest is paramount in the minds of both France and England. Unless a workable non-aggression pact is achieved the neutrality of the Channel and the security of Brest and London will depend on the assignment of French and English units to protect them. Thus, although France may move out of Brest in 1901 to take Portugal; she will almost always make one of her first builds another fleet in Brest. That move always stirs a reaction from England and the battle is launched. England will move her fleet in London to either the Channel or the North Sea in Spring 1901. A move to the Channel means an attack on France in Brest or an attempt to take Belgium. The other possibility is that both France and England will move to the Channel, keeping it unoccupied in Spring 1901, and as long thereafter as necessary.

If France can seize the Channel in a surprise attack, so much the better. Otherwise the attack on England will be a long process. Assuming the English make no serious tactical errors the French player will begin his attack by moving at least two and probably three of his fleets into positions bordering the Channel. Fleets in the Mid Atlantic, Brest, and Picardy; with an army in Belgium for France; and English fleets in the North Sea, London, and Irish Sea, and an army in Wales form a typical opening deployment. France can try a direct attack, taking the Channel and then London, by sheer forces of numbers or, if necessary a more round-about method by first trying to out-maneuver the English and taking the North Atlantic or the Irish and then convoying an army in Wales, Liverpool, etc. With an army in England taking the English supply centers from the rear becomes a real possibility. With enough units adjacent to the English home supply centers sooner or later France can either force herself into one or capture one by out-guessing the English defender.

2. Liverpool

By the time London falls England will probably have lost St. Petersburg and/or Norway to the Russians or Germans. In addition German units may be putting further pressure on the English in the North Sea. The removals England will be forced to make at this point will pretty much shatter her remaining defensive line. As a result Liverpool should fall without much difficulty to a French attack coming from either Wales, Yorkshire or the Clyde. In capturing Liverpool France will want to be considering her next victim and positioning her forces so as to continue her offensive as soon as England falls.

B. Potential Alliances

By now France should have a pretty good idea of who the better players in the game or, where the alliances exist, and what lies ahead for the rest of the Mid Game. Unless England or Germany have been very successful against Russia, the French conquest of Italy will make her (France) the dominate western Power. As such there will be a tendency for the other western Powers to group together against her. France must move forcefully in her diplomacy to prevent this and seek alliances wherever possible.

1. With England Against Germany

Our selection of England as the second French victim precludes a French-English alliance. However, if things have not developed as we have proposed than France might want to consider this alliance. For instance, if Germany and Russia have allied against England in the north and kept her to only three or four supply centers, France might want to throw her weight into an alliance against Germany and France. The alliance can be a successful one with England concentrating as a naval power and France providing the needed armies to conquer Germany and Russia.

*2. With Germany Against England

As we have already seen this seems to be the best possibility for France given the situation I have outlined. It continues the protection of France's continental flank and yet it is hard to envision Germany becoming sufficiently strong, at this late point, to be a serious threat to France. Germany is always vulnerable to an attack from France. In essence, Germany is the junior partner in this alliance giving France just enough assistance, in the form of pressure on English flank positions, to allow France to break the main English defensive position in the Channel.

3. With Russia Against England

If, for any reason, France cannot secure an alliance with Germany against England; she should turn to Russia in seeking an ally against England. Since England will probably already have attacked Russia in St. Petersburg and, perhaps, Sweden, there should be no great difficulty in persuading Russia that an alliance with France would be a good thing. If France seeks an alliance with Russia it would be to her own benefit to encourage an Austrian-Turkish conflict in the Balkans, thus leaving Russia free, for the moment, to concentrate her forces against England. A Russia beset by an alliance attacking her in the south is not going to be much of an ally, or help, to France. But, never underestimate the importance of even a single unit. A single Russian unit in Sweden can sometimes tip the balance of tactical power in a conflict in Scandinavia.

4. With Russia Against Germany

Should France decide not to attack England as her second victim then the next best target it seems to me would be Germany. Among the reasons why France might decide not to attack England at this stage are: 1) England is too strong in her defensive position vis-a-vis France (or, conversely, France is too weak in her offensive position because of poor board position, lack of the proper units or incorrect builds); 2) England is too weak as a Power and an attack on her might disturb the balance of tactical power on the board in a way unfavorable to French interests; or 3) A English-French alliance has proven to be particularly useful to France and promises to continue to be so. With Russia as her ally France can move her armies against Munich from the west and Russia can attack Berlin from the east. Provided the two Powers are not disturbed by England they should have no difficulty in over-whelming the German defensive position.

5. With Russia &/or Turkey Against Austria

This would seem to be the most logical second victim for France considering she has just disposed of Italy and her forces are already positioned in the proper area to continue an advance into the central Mediterranean. But, to me, the

dangers involved in moving so many French units so far from the center of French interests, western Europe, and thereby exposing France to an attack from England and/or Germany, outweigh the considerable tactical advantages to the easier path.

C. Potential Non-Aggression Pacts

At this point France must concern herself with two non-aggression pact possibilities: Germany and Austria. Once again, if neighboring Powers cannot be enlisted as allies they must be secured as neutral neighbors. France must not attempt to fight a two-front conflict by herself.

1. With Germany

While fighting England a non-aggression pact with Germany would include the same provisions as before; the neutrality of the Ruhr/Burgundy area being of prime importance. Obviously, since any French forces in Belgium will come into use in the attack on English forces in the Channel or North Sea, Germany must respect the French interest in Belgium.

2. With Austria

Having successfully destroyed Italy, France should encourage Austria to turn her attention to the Balkans. France might want to keep one or two units in Italy, just to keep the Austrians honest and any other Power from walking into those French conquests, and perhaps might want to consider keeping one fleet permanently in the Ionian area just to keep the Turkish forces out of the central Mediterranean. If the French-Austrian rapport can be maintained there is no reason why the two Powers cannot turn their attentions outward, leaving a peaceful power vacuum in the central Mediterranean area.

D. Defensive Game

As France's power grows there will be an increasing tendency on the part of the other Powers to unify against her. Thus, France must be careful to make sure that some of the other Powers are also building up their forces. By this stage there should be five Powers remaining in major roles with France perhaps the second or third largest of these. Italy and, perhaps, Russia or Turkey, should have been eliminated. If France comes under attack it will probably be from an English-German alliance in the north, attracted by France's position of weakness at home; or in the south by Austria, in a conflict over spoils from the Italian conflict. France should have no problem holding her own in the south with the units already there but defending her northern front with the units already there might be more difficult. The best defense lies in a good offense and making sure that France has potential allies in attacking anyone who attacks her.

E. Offensive Game

After eliminating Italy, France has three primary potential targets. I have selected England as being the most practical but I want to discuss the other possibilities briefly in case the "real world" situation dictates another course of action. Germany and Austria are the other two possible second round victims.

1. With England Against Germany

If France finds herself allied with England against Germany the natural course of events will dictate that England builds fleets and France builds armies. Since the English fleets will be moving south against Germany from the north France will pretty much have to fend for herself in attacking Germany in the interior. Assuming France has built two or three additional armies she should have ample units to make the necessary tactical moves. Her first priority will be to take Burgundy to reinforce her position in Belgium. A third army might be placed in Picardy. Or, perhaps, the third army might remain in Marseilles, or Paris, to follow the unit moving into Burgundy when it moves into the Ruhr or Munich. The other French armies, in Italy, might want to consider moving into the Tyrolia (if Austria agrees or is so preoccupied elsewhere that it cannot effectively stop the French move) in order to bring pressure on Munich from the south. Taking the Ruhr is a useful first step to taking Munich and provides an additional province for later attacks on Holland or Kiel.

2. With Germany Against England

In discussing the tactics of the French-English conflict at this stage of the game I am going to postulate the optimum hypothetical situation. That is to say that I am going to assume that both France and England have had sufficient time to position their forces available for this conflict in the best positions available to them for a French attack and an English defense. Obviously, these are not the only possibilities and there is no guarantee that anything even remotely like them will actually be attained, but for illustrative purposes they should serve to discuss the case at hand.

England will have fleets in the Mid Atlantic, Brest, Picardy, and an army in Belgium. England will have fleets in the Irish Sea, London and the North Sea. An examination of the situation quickly reveals a three-three fleet balance which would mean a tactical stalemate unless one or the other of the contending Powers makes a tactical error. Thus, France must either attempt to out-maneuver the English position by better tactics, such as out-flanking her from the North Atlantic, or by besting her in diplomacy, by persuading the Germans to help her. Unless France wants to strip herself completely bare in the Mediterranean (not recommended) and bring yet another fleet

into position, assuming there is a position available for the fleet; it will have to be German or Russian units that break the English line. If Germany or Russia can draw just one or two English units, especially her fleets, away from the southern front; France should be able to crack the English defensive line. For instance, German fleets in Denmark and the Helgoland Bight (or Holland) might dislodge an English fleet in the North Sea, or prevent it from supporting an English fleet in the Channel or London. Russian armies, on the other hand, might be used to occupy St. Petersburg or Norway, forcing England to remove some of her units or divert units to the defense of those centers.

3. With Russia Against England

If it is Russia who is France's ally against England the chief requirement is to make sure that England doesn't put all her efforts into repelling the French attack, leaving the Russians free to occupy the English centers in Scandinavia or even to advance into Edinburgh. France should make every effort to make it look like it is Russia who is the chief villain in the attack. The Russian forces will either have to occupy English centers or bring their own fleets around into the Atlantic areas to help cut the English supports. While not as tactically clean as the French-German alliance the French-Russian alliance can still do the job on England; it just takes longer.

4. With Russia Against Germany

In a case where Russia and France are allied against Germany the French moves will be just about the same as if she were attacking Germany by herself. Thus, using her positions in Belgium, Paris and Marseilles (all armies) she will occupy Burgundy and then proceed to take the Ruhr. Once in the Ruhr attacks can be launched on Holland or Munich. From the other direction Russian forces will be advancing from Livonia and Warsaw into Prussia and Silesia to put pressure on Berlin and Munich. A Russian fleet in Sweden can also aid in cutting German intersupports. Working together carefully the two, France and Russia, can bring sufficient forces to bear to encircle the German armies in an ever-narrowing circle. Then either by annihilating units or taking supply centers one-by-one the Germans can be eliminated.

5. With Russia &/or Turkey Against Austria

Any French participation in an attack on Austria at this stage would have to be confined to attacks on the Austrian centers in Italy, Venice and Naples. These two centers, and perhaps Trieste, are about all France can expect to reach without overly extending herself. The French units in the area are enough to take those centers if Austria is suddenly confronted with a massive assault from Turkey or Russia which endangers her positions in the Balkans and her homeland. By taking Naples first, France could bring sufficient units to bear on Venice, by occupying Apulia, Rome, Tuscany, and/or Piedmont, to ensure her capture of Venice.

F. Waiting Game

A Waiting Game at this stage makes sense for France if by so doing she can avoid an attack on her by a coalition of neighboring Powers determined to bring down "number one." Another reason for a Waiting Game might be to allow France's ally, whoever it may be, to enlarge herself so that the two of them may confront a third major Power on an equal basis. Being the front runner in these situations is not always an advantage and France should be careful to pace her growth so as not to outdistance the pack too far.

G. Adjustments

If England is France's second victim and London and Liverpool do fall, or if France moves against Austria and picks up Naples and Venice, or even if Germany is the victim and France acquires Munich and Holland, France will have to consider what her new supply centers will mean in terms of new units. Looking ahead to the next round, when France will be attacking Germany, France will probably want to build at least one and perhaps two armies. An army in Paris is definitely in order. The second build will depend on several factors and the general strategic and tactical situation. If there is a single strong power to France's north, Russia, or the south, Austria, then perhaps a fleet in either Brest or Marseilles might be in order. If Germany seems likely to offer a special challenge then perhaps another army might be wise. But, where there is no clear and present danger, in general balancing armies and fleets, north and south, seems to be the best policy.

H. Possible Positions & Supply Centers At End of 1906

Army Paris, Army Belgium, Army Liverpool, Army Piedmont, Army Rome, Fleet Irish Sea, Fleet London, Fleet English Channel, Fleet Marseilles (or Army Marseilles), and Fleet Ionian Sea. Home, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Tunis, Rome, London, and Liverpool as supply centers.

IV. ROUND THREE: THIRD VICTIM:(1907) GERMANY

Sometime around 1907, perhaps as early as 1906 or even as late as 1909, France, working in conjunction with Germany and/or Russia, will have eliminated England as one of the major Powers. Simultaneously, in the south, I would expect that Austria and Russia would have contained, at a minimum, Turkey and, perhaps, even eliminated her. Thus, Italy, England and, perhaps, Turkey, would be gone. This strategic situation would probably be based on the following diplomatic situation: France and Germany have a working alliance; France and Austria have a non-working alliance

and an operational non-aggression pact; Austria and Turkey are at war; Russia and Turkey are at war; Austria and Russia are allied; and Germany and Austria have a non-aggression pact in operation.

As soon as England and Turkey are eliminated; there will probably be a realignment of the game's alliance structure to include a French-German alliance against Austria and Russia or, perhaps, a French-Russian alliance against Germany and Austria. Almost any pairing is possible depending on the current tactical situation, how each player evaluates his, and the other Powers long-range strategies, and what diplomacy is conducted among the Powers.

For illustrative purposes I have selected Germany as France's third victim to show the multitude of alliance possibilities still possible even as the game approaches its mid point. But, it must be noted, that the realities of the game are such that an attack on Austria cannot be ruled out at all.

A. Acquisition of Occupied Supply Centers

I will assume at this point that Germany controls her home supply centers, Holland, Denmark, Edinburgh and, perhaps, Norway. Norway may have fallen to Russia during the collapse of England and since that is a matter for discussion between Germany and Russia it may be that France can use that decision as the lever to provoke a German-Russian conflict. France's main goals during this period will be to consolidate her position in England and increase her strength in the central board area (the Lowlands and western Germany). A ruler placed on the board with one end on Iceland and the other end on the Ionian will indicate just about where the French sphere of influence and zone of control should be at the conclusion of Round Three.

1. Edinburgh

Having already occupied London and Liverpool, France should have no great difficulty in making the tactical moves needed to take Edinburgh from the German unit occupying it. However, if it comes to the point where taking Edinburgh will require more than one or two units, leave it until later and concentrate the units on attacking Germany proper. Then, in due course, Edinburgh will fall of its own accord. Failing that, use Edinburgh as a bribe to encourage the Russians to join in the attack on Germany. However, be careful in such a case that the Russians do not pour several fleets into the Norwegian, North Atlantic, North Sea, etc. on the pretext of taking Edinburgh and "aiding" France.

2. Holland

In attacking Germany France will want to take Holland and Munich. Whichever comes first will depend on the tactical situation that develops. One can say that the attack on Germany will have to be in the form of a blitzkrieg in reverse; sudden, massive and on all fronts. Burgundy and Tyrolia will have

to be occupied simultaneously as a prelude. Then, France will have to blast her way into the Ruhr and North Sea. When those provinces have been occupied; actual attacks on German centers can be undertaken. The French player should be constantly on the lookout for German units that can be annihilated by surrounding his units with superior forces or dislodging German units that have nowhere to retreat to in the tight-knit areas involved.

3. Munich

If Holland proves too difficult a nut to crack France may find it easier to attack Munich with forces positioned in the Ruhr, Burgundy, and Tyrolia; especially if an additional supporting unit can be made available by Russia or Austria.

4. Kiel

Taking Kiel during this stage would be the frosting on the French attack. In most cases Kiel falls to whomever gets there first and keeps it longest. That may be France or it might be Russia or Austria. It is entirely possible that Kiel will change hands several times during the conquest of Germany. Units dislodged from other centers have a way of retreating there that can be very annoying. If it is necessary to pacify the Russians a bit longer (in addition to their taking Norway, Denmark, and Berlin) France might want to let them have Kiel for the moment and start making overtures to Austria for a new alliance power.

B. Potential Alliances

There are really five potential alliances open to France at this stage; three against Germany and one each against Russia and Austria. Almost any of the alliances against Germany will work and the one France chooses should be the one most likely to benefit her in the long term. Make no mistake about it; France should be thinking about the long term. Once Germany has been annihilated it will probably be France against the remaining Powers. So, at this point France should be carefully considering whether she wishes to face Austria or Russia in the End Game and determining her alliances accordingly.

1. With Russia Against Germany

If Russia has the necessary units available to use against Germany's rear, then France should seek the Russian alliance. This is recommended because Russia will still be occupied in the south with Austria and Turkey, if Turkey does remain as a Power. To make sure Russia is occupied in the south, France might want to encourage an Austrian attack on Russia as soon as Turkey is eliminated or, even better, encourage Austria to attack Russia even before Turkey is eliminated. This complicates things even more.

Russia really need only bring two or three units into the alliance; just enough to tip the balance of power against Germany and provide the units needed to cut German inter-supports and threaten German supply centers from the rear. In the course of which, naturally, Russia will want to occupy all of Scandinavia and extend herself into Germany as far as possible.

2. With Turkey Against Germany

If Turkey is being played by an exceptionally good player there is a chance that France's master design for the Balkans will have failed and instead of Austria being the major Balkan Power Turkey will be. If Turkey has carved out an empire in the south, then France may want to consider forming an alliance with Turkey against Germany. However, if Turkey has moved so fast as to destroy Austria and Russia in the south, France may want to start searching for a means to delay her further growth. However the situation develops, France should be careful not to help Turkey grow so strong as to leave her the only Power in the east. The step from major Power in the east to End Game victory is a short one.

3. With Austria Against Germany

Building on their past cooperation in conquering Italy, there is no reason why France and Austria cannot renew their alliance. This time the natural target is Germany. This is only possible if Austria has pretty much eliminated Turkey and has no problems in dealing with Russia. Austria makes a fine ally for France at this stage because there is little that Austria can do to hurt France even if she does double-cross her later.

4. With Germany Against Russia

If Russia has become the major Power on the board and is successfully expanding in both the north and the south, then France will probably want to make an alliance against her, probably with Germany as a partner. France must prevent Russia from gaining a preeminent position in Scandinavia if she has already conquered the Balkans and contained, or destroyed, Turkey. This alliance is an awkward one for France because Germany is in the way of any effective French action against Russia except in the north. Still, by not attacking Germany from the rear and supporting her where possible, France can help Germany hold the line against Russia while she turns elsewhere.

5. With Russia &/or Turkey Against Austria

If Austria has eliminated the Russians in the south and isolated Turkey in her three home supply centers, then France might want an alliance with either of them (Russia/Turkey), or both, against Austria. Under these conditions, Austria will have something in the area of eleven supply centers and should be prevented from

growing further. Since both Turkey and Russia have been pretty well decimated helping them does not pose any threat to France's security.

C. Potential Non-Aggression Pacts

By now France should have settled on some "Grand Strategy" for the rest of the Mid and End Games. She should have analyzed her foes' strengths and weaknesses and decided how to effectively avoid the one and exploit the other. If possible, she should have established herself as the leader in the coalition resisting whichever Power is the largest at the moment. If by some chance, France has already established herself as the largest Power on the board; she should be looking for another Power willing to settle for second spot in the game and willing to act as France's foil in the French win. These are the things France should already be thinking about, although she is still a long way from the actual End Game. She must decide who her enemies and allies will be later in the game. Future enemies should be approached about non-aggression pacts and even "ify" alliances and future allies should be offered tempting alliances against present enemies or neutral Powers.

1. With Austria

Since Austria will still be occupied in the Balkans, or Turkey and/or Russia, there is no reason why their non-aggression pact cannot be continued for a while longer. Sooner or later, when each has established his own sphere of influence and zone of control, they will start to cast longing eyes on the supply centers of the other. But that is later.

2. With Russia

With England out of the way, and Russia probably positioning her own units close to French forces in the North Atlantic areas or even adjacent to German units, which France may be planning to attack; France will want to consider carefully whether her relations with Russia call for a non-aggression pact or an alliance against Germany.

3. With Turkey

A non-aggression pact between France and Turkey is possible only if Turkey has survived or has made inroads into Austrian territory. As long as Turkey stays out of the Ionian and Adriatic and doesn't move into Tyrolia there is no reason why the two can't have a non-aggression pact.

D. Defensive Game

A French attack on Germany will pretty much guarantee that France is, or soon will be, the major Power on the board. Therefore, it is almost certain that some other Power, probably Germany, will raise the cry, "Stop France!!!" A coalition of

Austria and Germany, perhaps supported by the few remaining English or Russian units in the north, could attempt to erect a barrier to French expansion in the central and northern regions. Against their superior numbers France has a number of important assets: interior lines of communication, a single command of units, no need for correspondence to coordinate orders, the momentum of attack, etc. The main French concerns must be to maintain her momentum of attack, especially in the north where a power vacuum will exist; and attempting to drive the remaining minor Powers, such as England, into civil disorder; thereby eliminating their harassment. Above all, France must not panic. There is still every chance that she can break the alliance against her or overcome it. Her chief methods for doing so should be: 1) diplomatic; attempting to persuade one of the members of the alliance opposing her that a sure second place is better than a possible win (This is where the psychological aspect of the game is so important.); 2) strategic; seeking to separate the weaker members of the coalition from the stronger ones; and 3) tactical; throwing everything possible at the weakest members of the opposition. Since by now I would expect France to have established strong defensive lines in the south and have most of her mobile forces in the northern and central regions there is no reason why the attack cannot go on.

E. Offensive Game

If Germany is to be the target for France in Round III, then France should concentrate on two strategies of conquest; strengthening her own alliance of attackers and isolating Germany from her allies. Tactically, over-whelming the German defenses with superior numbers of units and out-manuevering the German defensive barriers, are most important. These goals are not so hard to achieve as they may appear but they do require concentration of forces and extensive diplomacy on France's part.

1. With Russia Against Germany

If Russia is France's ally against Germany then France should encourage Russia to put as much pressure on Germany as possible in the Baltic regions. A line of Russian units in Sweden, Skagerrak, the Baltic, Prussia, and Silesia can threaten, or occupy, Denmark, Kiel and Berlin. France will want to bring her fleets into the North Sea, if she hasn't already, and into the Helgoland Bight. Using those units and armies positioned in Belgium, Burgundy, Tyrolia, and the Ruhr, when occupied, she should be able to take the German supply centers one by one. As each one falls the French can advance and narrow the provinces available for German forces. Since Holland, Denmark, Kiel, Berlin and Munich are inter-locking and inter-supporting defensively, it will require considerable forces to break up the bloc. Still, either doing it en masse (by annihilating two or more German units simultaneously) or piece by piece is possible.

2. With Turkey Against Germany

Should it be Turkey who is France's ally against Germany a slightly different approach must be used since there will be no Turkish fleets available to put pressure on Germany's Baltic centers. The entire approach from Turkey will have to be land-oriented. Turkish units will probably advance westward from Russia and north from Austria into Bohemia, Silesia, and Prussia. These units can threaten Berlin and Munich; thereby diverting German forces to their defense. In the meantime, French fleets will be striving to cope with the German coastal provinces and the German fleets. Convoys of armies into the German provinces, if there are any open, may also be useful, especially in conjunction with supports from Turkish interior units. If the Turkish advance is particularly rapid and Turkey is growing at a rapid rate, which is entirely possible at this stage, France may want to slow down her own attack on Germany, leaving Turkey to become embroiled in a conflict with Germany, and concentrate her own forces, especially her fleets, in Scandinavia and the Baltic.

3. With Austria Against Germany

An alliance with Austria is similar in nature to one with Turkey in action against Germany. Austria may want to occupy Tyrolia herself and there will have to be some agreement between France and Austria as to who gets Munich. France might agree to support Austria in and then let Austria move into Kiel, or vice versa. The advantage to an Austrian alliance is that the element of tactical surprise can be used handily. Austria can move several armies into German territory in a single turn, thus putting considerable pressure on German forces in Berlin and Munich. Again, France will pretty much have to make her own way in the west.

4. With Germany Against Russia

If France allies with Germany against Russia she faces a far more difficult task because France will have to move whatever fleet or army units are available north into Russian centers; thereby weakening her own central front and opening the way for a possible German double-cross. But, if it seems the right thing to do (and never underestimate the element of hunch in this game), France can send a few fleets, two or three at most, north to take Norway, and perhaps St. Petersburg. Since this has little real tactical and strategic importance; it almost becomes a holding action while France waits to see what is going on in the south.

5. With Russia &/or Turkey Against Austria

This alliance might come into being as part of a combination attack. France could ally with a still powerful Russia or Turkey against Austria and Germany. France might con-

tribute one, two or three units in the south to put pressure on Austria's rear; while Russia or Turkey carries the ball there. And, in the north, Russia or Turkey might contribute a few units to aggravate the German defense while France carries the ball there. France's main goals in the south will be to occupy Naples, without losing the Ionian, and take Venice, without dislodging an Austrian unit into Rome or Piedmont. Once the Italian peninsula has been secured France can consider going on to attack Austria proper. But, unless the game develops as an extremely fluid one, there isn't much chance of France making it into Austria's homeland. The best bet is to build a solid line from Tyrolia through the Adriatic to the Ionian and then turn elsewhere for further gains.

F. Waiting Game

If the situation in the east is confused France might want to delay an attack on Germany until the alliances sort themselves out. Such a delay might be combined with some tactical repositioning of French units, from north to south, or vice versa, depending on which Power France decides to make her next victim. It should be pointed out, again, I think, that different areas of the board, and different Powers, may be moving at different speeds. Thus, while France may be in her late Mid Game, another Power might be in an early Mid Game, or even entering the End Game. Sometimes it may be to France's advantage to delay or speed up her own progress to keep more harmonious pace with her allies.

G. Adjustments

During Round III France will probably gain three or, perhaps, four new supply centers. Depending on whether she is going to push against Russia or Austria in Round IV she should build either two armies and a fleet or two fleets and an army. If the movement is going to be to the north or interior, two armies and a fleet seem wisest. If the movement is going to be to the south, then two fleets and an army seem best. The fourth unit should be an army. In general four units in the north, four units in the south, and five or six in the central area seem a reasonable dispersal of units. Fleets at the flanks and armies in the interior is a generally useful guide for France.

H. Possible Positions & Supply Centers At End of 1909

Fleet Brest, Fleet Marseilles, Fleet North Atlantic, Fleet Edinburgh, Fleet North Sea, Army Liverpool, Fleet Tyrrhenian, Fleet Ionian, Army Rome, Army Piedmont, Army Holland, Army Kiel, Army Munich, and Army Ruhr. Home, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Tunis, Rome, London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Holland, Kiel, and Munich as supply centers.

V. ROUND FOUR: FOURTH VICTIM: RUSSIA (1910-)

Round IV marks the last phase of the Mid Game and, in this case, marks France's attack on her fourth victim, Russia. By now the board has been reduced to three major Powers; although pockets of one or two units of some of the minor Powers (England, Germany, Italy, and Turkey) could still exist. The three major Powers are France, with fourteen units, Russia, with nine units, and Austria, with eight units. I am assuming Turkey still controls two units. If not, those units should be added to Austrian or Turkish totals. At this point one of two things can happen. If France manages to maintain an alliance with either Russia or Austria; then in all probability France will win. If France falls victim to a Russian-Austrian alliance; then France will probably lose. The "Three Great Powers" balance of power is inherently unsteady and will tend to reduce itself to a two-sided confrontation. That is the nature of the Fourth Round.

A. Acquisition of Occupied Supply Centers

I am postulating that France will fight Russia in Round IV in which case her new supply centers will come from Russia but will probably be centers that originally belonged to other Powers: England, Germany, etc. This is important to note because although taking these centers will deprive Russia of some units and will gain some units for France it will not eliminate Russia as a Power. This is because Russia will continue to control her own home supply centers and with them an ability to raise new armies and fleets. Only when a Power ceases to control its own home supply centers does it cease to be a major Power. From Russia France will probably gain in the Scandinavian area: Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Berlin. If, on the other hand, France turns against Austria she will probably pick up the two remaining Italian home supply centers, Greece, and perhaps Trieste.

1. Norway

France will require a minimum of four fleets and some armies to make gains against the Russian positions in Scandinavia. She will have to simultaneously put pressure on the Russian positions in Germany to tie down Russian units there; try a flanking movement into the Norwegian and Barents Seas with her own fleets; convoy armies into any continental provinces not held by the Russians; and prevent Russian fleets from moving into her territories or convoying Russian armies into England. This is a big order. Taking Norway will mean the prepositioning of French fleets in the Norwegian, North and Skagerrak. If possible France should convoy an army into Norway for use later in moving into Sweden, Finland, or St. Petersburg.

2. Denmark

Denmark may well fall before Norway does. Once France has positioned herself in the Skagerrak, North Sea, Helgoland Bight and Kiel she should be able to blast her way into Denmark; either annihilating the Russian unit there or forcing it to retreat to Sweden.

If possible a fleet should go into Denmark. That fleet can then move into the Baltic and be in a position to support a French unit in Kiel or Munich which is attempting to move into Berlin. France should then make every move possible to push her line of units forward to include Prussia and Silesia. This gives her some breathing space in the central region and adds a protective buffer between her German centers and the Russian home supply centers.

3. Berlin

Berlin can fall to an army or a fleet. The army may come from Kiel or Munich and then move on into Silesia with support from another French army moving into Munich. As soon as possible France should position a fleet in Berlin to support another fleet in the Baltic. Thus, France can construct an offensive and defensive line on Germany's eastern frontier. The exact nature of the French line will, of course, depend on the number and type of Russian units facing it. Let me note that although I have rattled off the three centers France can gain from Russia with ease the actual taking of them will not be easy at all. Just as France has demonstrated her ability as a diplomat, strategist, and tactician by advancing to the point where she can attack Russia; so Russia has demonstrated her own skills by merely surviving as a Power. France must be extremely cautious at this stage to not become over-confident and assume that the victory will be hers. Nothing could be further from the truth. If anything she will have to work even harder.

B. Potential Alliances

Now, let us step back and consider some of the other possibilities. My suppositions thus far have eliminated England, Germany, and Italy as Powers. What of the east? I am assuming that Russia is the major Power there. But, in fact, it could just as easily be Austria or Turkey. Perhaps the two of them have eliminated Russia. Perhaps all three are stalemated. Whatever the realities of the situation our basic precept still holds. Whoever the Powers are, France should be looking for allies among them. So, let us consider each possibility.

1. With Turkey Against Russia

Instead of Austria being the third Power perhaps Turkey will be. If so, Turkey will hold her homeland, most of the Balkans, and probably the three Austrian centers. This would give Turkey a very respectable nine or ten units. And, importantly, Turkey's flanks are not so exposed so her forces can be concentrated on the northern and western fronts. If Turkey is France's potential ally against Russia there will be few problems, except the danger of a Turkish double-cross in the central Mediterranean. Turkey will advance into southern Russia and probably into eastern Germany. As soon as Turkey occupies Moscow

she will probably run into problems attempting to take St. Petersburg since that is the traditional northern boundary for Turkish expansion. As Turkey moves west, sooner or later, she will run into French units moving east. But, for the moment, no problems should arise as long as they maintain their distance in the south.

2. With Turkey Against Austria

Let us assume that Russia has been demolished and that Austria and Turkey are the other major Powers. Austria will probably have expanded into Russia's northern centers, perhaps as far as Moscow and Warsaw, with Russia's remaining forces being confined to St. Petersburg and Scandinavia. Turkey will have occupied Sevastapol and, perhaps, Moscow. In either case, Austria is caught in the middle of a French-Turkish vice and can be effectively contained and then eliminated in an old-fashioned squeeze play.

3. With Russia Against Austria

Our favorite alliance is the one with Austria against Russia. But what if Russia agrees to an alliance and Austria seems prepared to threaten France's interests in Italy? Then an attack on Austria is in order. Italian centers and perhaps Trieste or Greece will fall to France. The rest will probably fall to Russian units. In the meantime France will be repositioning most of her forces for the End Game.

4. With Austria Against Russia

Assuming Austria has eliminated, or contained, Turkey and has positioned herself against Russia and not France; then France should seek the closest alliance possible with Austria and give her every assistance against Russia. France will need the Austrians to draw away some of the Russian armies and especially to keep those armies tied down in the south so French units can get into Scandinavia. France could concede to Austria all of Russia, less St. Petersburg, and perhaps even Berlin if Austria needs, or wants, it. Whatever Austria wants to attack Russia France should give but making sure that first Austria attacks Russia. And, beware, at this point the Austrians and Russians could very well hatch a scheme to get France. Suppose the Austrians do move north, taking, perhaps, Rumania, and positioning themselves in Galicia, Bohemia, or even the Ukraina? Is that an attack on Russia? Not necessarily. It could be a clever deception aimed at lowering France's guard against Austria who would then turn and move into Germany and throw her southern units at the French in Italy. It's happened before.

C. Non-Aggression Pacts

Even at this stage there are possibilities for non-aggression pacts. Since France is going to attack Russia that leaves only Austria and, if she still exists, Turkey as objects for non-aggression pacts.

1. With Austria

If France can't persuade Austria to join in the attack on Russia (something that seems hard to believe but things like that do happen in Diplomacy) then she can hope for a continuation of her own non-aggression pact with Austria. The same provisions continue to apply. But, at this stage France must be extra vigilant in case Austria begins to consider a double-cross of France.

2. With Turkey

If Turkey is still holding out somewhere France should attempt to encourage and help her as much as possible, just to tie down Austria and/or Russian units.

D. Defensive Game

If there is ever a time when France will have to consider fighting a defensive game this is it. If Austria and Russia do finally team up on France; what then? Well, since the momentum of attack still rests with France, go on with the attack, attempting to gain centers and territory as far north and east as possible. Hold in the south and push hard in the north and central regions. The chances are good that it will take a year or two for Russia and Austria to bring all their units to bear on France and that may be enough time for France to gain a few more centers. France will have to work extra hard to make sure that every one of her units is doing as much as possible. No units can be wasted. As the French line advances to the north and east continue to move up units as quickly as possible to get them into the line or in positions where they can support more than one front-line unit. Construct inter-locking and inter-supporting positions, yet leave some provinces open for dislodged units to retreat to. Units annihilated are as good as units lost. Threaten to make removals that will help the weaker (or stronger) of the opponents. Only a careful evaluation of the opponent players can guide France on one key matter; whether to resist hardest against the stronger or weaker opponent. If France does have to retreat, where? Those are key questions that each player must resolve for himself.

E. Offensive Game

In effect the French attack on Russia amounts to a strong swing to the north and east against Russia while holding firm in the central and southern areas. French fleets will have to move north as rapidly as possible and French armies will have to hold off the Russian units in the central regions.

1. With Turkey Against Russia

By the very nature of the geography of the board any alliance against Russia at this stage precludes much inter-supporting except in central Europe. So, France will have to perform as outlined above and Turkey will have to move her forces

up the "pipeline" against Russia; taking Sevastapol, Ukraina, Moscow, Warsaw, Livonia, etc. Gradually the two Powers will flow toward one another, wiping out Russian units and occupying Russian supply centers in the process.

2. With Turkey Against Austria

If it is Austria that remains as the major Power and target; then France should concentrate on bringing her forces to bear on Austria from the west and north, leaving Turkey to move from the south and east. Austria has a number of inter-locking and inter-supporting defensive positions which can make her a hard nut to crack. Still, the fact is that sooner or later Austria will have more provinces to defend than she has units to hold and support with. Then it becomes a matter of finding the right weak spot and attacking it in strength. Traditionally, Galicia is the key province in the Austrian defensive structure. It will take some time but it can be done.

3. With Russia Against Austria

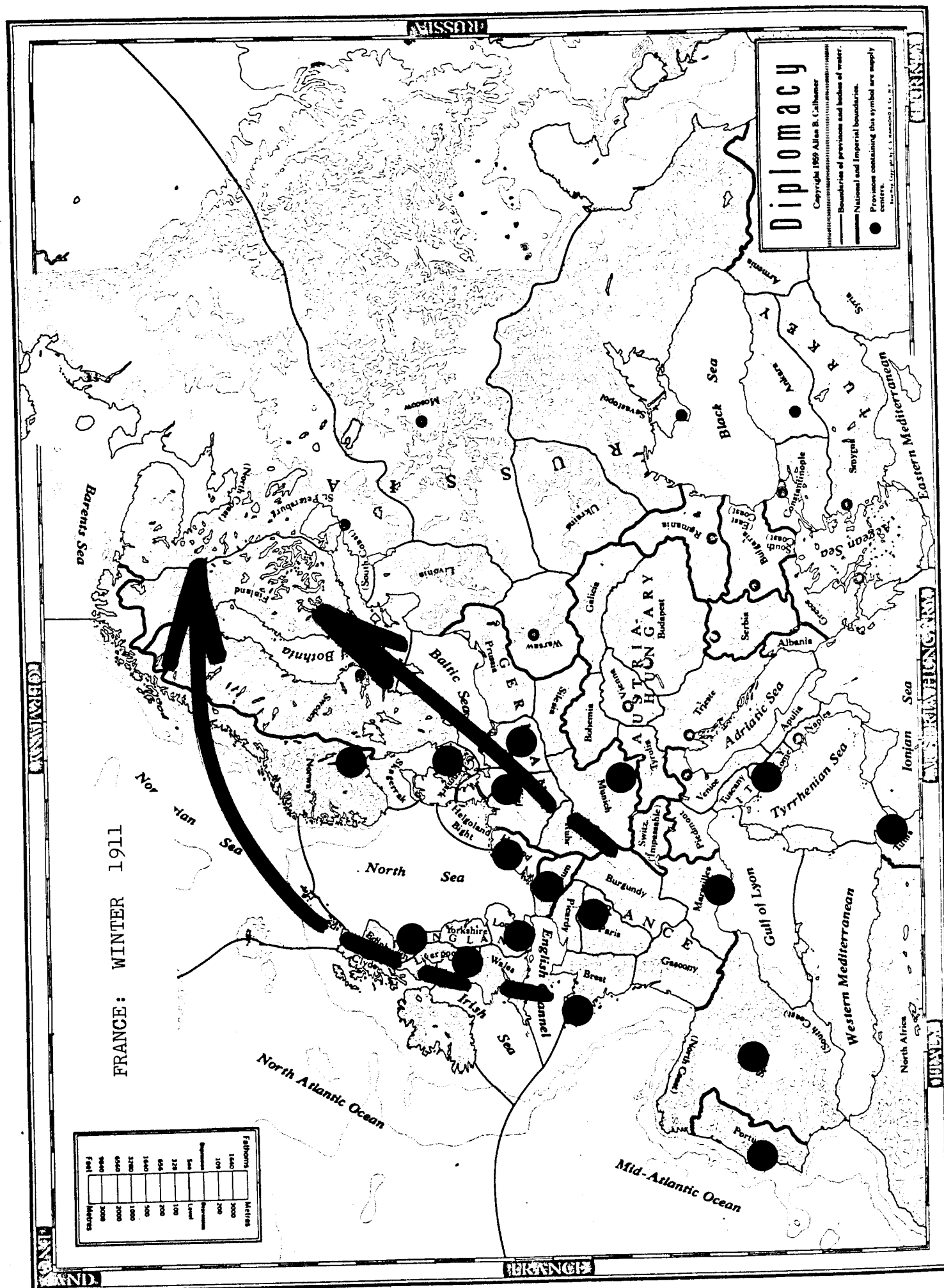
If this is the situation; then France will be advancing from the west and south, leaving Russia to advance from the east and north. The strategic situation is similar to the alliance with Turkey but this time it will be Russia who makes most of the early gains. France should continue to move her northern units, which can be of no use to her in this campaign, into position for the End Game. Bringing as many units as possible onto the continent and preparing chains of fleets to convoy units around the Northern seas and through the Baltic are good tactical preparations for the End Game.

4. With Austria Against Russia

Since the Russian forces will already be divided among several fronts: Scandinavia, central regions, and the south; it shouldn't be hard for France and Austria to find her weak spots and hit them hard. Taking Russian centers in Scandinavia and the Balkans won't be too difficult as long as France and Austria have superior numbers. Attacking the Russian homeland is a different matter since its geographical layout lends itself to a strong defense. France's biggest problem will be getting armies into Russia, either through Prussia and Silesia, or through St. Petersburg. Having a fleet or two in the Baltic is a definite plus at this point since they can be used for convoys, breaking coastal inter-supports, etc.

F. Waiting Game

This is no time for a Waiting Game.



G. Adjustments

If, in fact, France has done as well as I have projected she will be, at this point, within a unit or two of having a majority of the units on the board and a majority of the supply centers. If France is making good progress in the north with her fleets then armies can be built for either convoying to the north or strengthening the central regions. However, if the French advance shows signs of slowing in the north build another fleet or two and move them up. One more fleet, or army, in the south may also be wise just to maintain the strong French position there.

H. Possible Positions and Supply Centers At End of 1911

Fleet Brest, Army Paris, Fleet Norway, Fleet Finland, Fleet Gulf of Bothnia, Fleet Baltic, Fleet North Sea, Army Berlin, Army Denmark, Army Kiel, Army Munich, Army Ruhr, Army Piedmont, Army Rome, Fleet Gulf of Lyon, Fleet Tyrrhenian, Fleet Ionian, Home, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Tunis, Rome, London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Holland, Kiel, Munich, Norway, Denmark, Berlin.

VI. END GAME (1912-)

The End Game comes when opposition to the French advance becomes futile and the French victory is certain. Normally that means France needs only another unit or two to gain the needed eighteen centers. Unless the game has become extremely well balanced between France at, say, seventeen units, and the opposition coalition of Russia and Austria with seventeen units; the End Game is usually anti-climatic. Only if the possibility of a tie game is a real one is the End Game exciting.

A. Acquisition of Occupied Supply Centers

Any center that France needs, and can take, to win at this point is fair game. Most probably it would be a stray center in Scandinavia, such as Sweden; perhaps a Russian center that France can sneak into or blast her way into, such as St. Petersburg; or even a center from a neutral or allied partner, such as Venice or Naples. Taking centers from allies or neutrals to win games is a touchy subject. In most cases, I believe, the better player, already looking ahead to future games, will want to preserve his allies intact and, indeed, if possible at no cost to himself, build up their positions until they can come in as a respectable second place finisher. Sometimes, just to get a game over with, an allied power will offer a supply center to his larger ally. Such should be acknowledged by the victor and not dismissed as a double-cross or stab.

B. Potential Alliances

At this point the board is divided into allies of France and her foes. Possibly somewhere a neutral Power still exists but I would doubt it.

C. Potential Non-Aggression Pacts

These are no longer needed.

D. Defensive Game

By definition the End Game is such that it is no longer possible for France to be waging a Defensive Game. However, tactically it is possible that France will be fighting a defensive game on one, or more, fronts while advancing to the victory or stalemate position. In a closely contested game, as I mentioned above, France may find herself on the defense against an opposing coalition. If France can gain sixteen or seventeen units she can probably gain the eighteenth quickly for the win. But, if there is any delay in gaining that last center or two, she had better start looking for a stalemate position. There are any number of these down the middle of the board, across it, or bisecting it. You, as a novice player, wouldn't think so but, believe me, there is no finer tuned system than a Diplomacy board. Take a ruler and count the supply centers on either side of it as you place one end on St. Petersburg and the other on Spain, or Edinburgh and Smyrna, or Norway and Naples. Surprising, isn't it? There is nothing more heartbreaking than to go so far and be stopped at seventeen units. So, if it seems that a stalemate position is going to develop, gamble, for once, and try for the win. Then, if the gamble fails, start looking for one of those stalemate positions and hope your opposition makes another mistake and gives you another chance at a win.

E. Offensive Game

The propensity is to advance, as France has been doing. Some players continue to advance right up to the end, grabbing as many supply centers as they can. Some games end with one player having twenty, twenty-one, or twenty-two supply centers. Well, it may be nice but all you really need is eighteen. The offensive game will go on, somewhere on the board, until France has the needed eighteen centers or the definitive stalemate position is reached.

F. Waiting Game

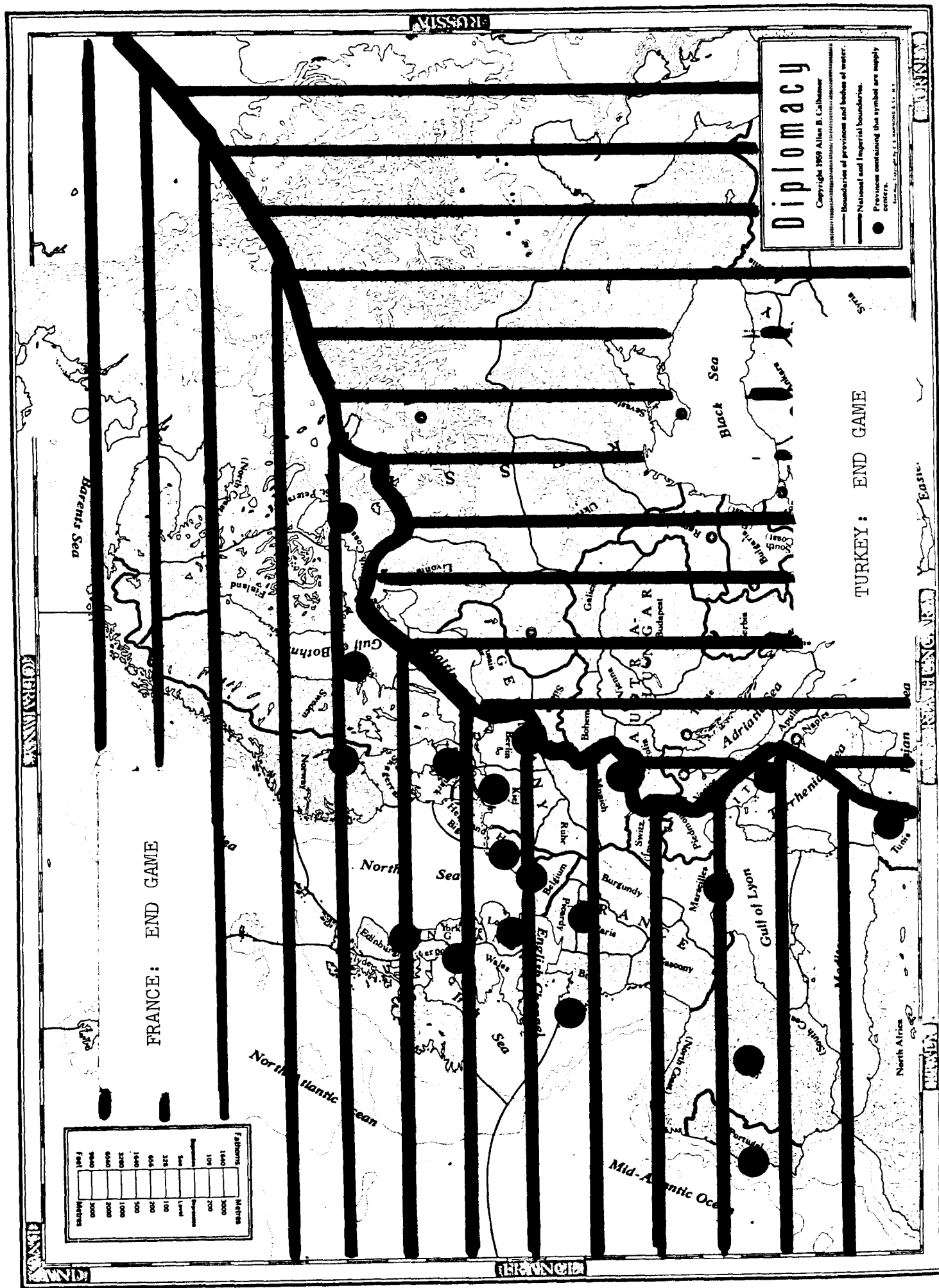
Hardly.

G. Adjustments

Don't get sloppy and forget to make those last few builds just because you think victory is so close. You might need the units if a stalemated position begins to develop. In addition, all those same colored pieces on the board look real nice. Although by this time you will have discovered that, at least in the wooden pieces sets, there are only sixteen pieces for each Power. Oh happy day when you have to decide which other color you want to use.

H. Possible Positions and Supply Centers At End of Game
c. 1912

Fleet Brest, Army Paris, Fleet St.Petersburg n.c.,
Fleet Sweden, Fleet Finland, Fleet Gulf of Bothnia, Fleet Baltic,
Army Denmark, Army Kiel, Army Berlin, Army Munich, Army Ruhr,
Army Piedmont, Army Rome, Fleet Gulf of Lyon, Fleet Tyrrhenian,
Fleet Ionian, Fleet English Channel, Fleet North Sea.
Home, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Tunis, Rome, London, Liverpool,
Edinburgh, Holland, Kiel, Munich, Norway, Denmark, Berlin, Sweden,
St.Petersburg



CONFERENCE MAP

APPENDIX

<u>Year</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Supply Center</u>
1901	A Paris A Marseilles F Brest	Home
1902	F Portugal A Spain A Belgium *F Brest *A Paris *F Marseilles	Home +Spain +Belgium +Portugal
1903	A Burgundy A Spain A Belgium A Tuscany F Rome F Tyrrhenian *A Paris *F Brest	Home Spain Belgium Portugal +Tunis +Rome
1906	A Belgium A Liverpool A Piedmont A Rome F Irish F London F English Channel F Ionian *A Paris *F Marseilles	Home Spain Belgium Portugal Tunis Rome +London +Liverpool
1909	F North Atlantic F Edinburgh F North Sea A Liverpool F Tyrrhenian F Ionian A Rome A Piedmont A Holland A Kiel A Munich A Ruhr *F Brest *F Marseilles	Home Spain Belgium Portugal Tunis Rome London Liverpool +Edinburgh +Holland +Munich +Kiel

1911

F Norway
 F Finland
 F Gulf of Bothnia
 F Baltic
 F North
 A Berlin
 A Denmark
 A Kiel
 A Munich
 A Ruhr
 A Piedmont
 A Rome
 F Gulf of Lyon
 F Tyrrhenian
 F Ionian
 *F Brest
 *A Marseilles

Home
 Spain
 Portugal
 Belgium
 Tunis
 Rome
 London
 Liverpool
 Edinburgh
 Holland
 Kiel
 Munich
 +Norway
 +Denmark
 +Berlin

1912

F St.Petersburg n.c.
 F Sweden
 F Finland
 F Gulf of Bothnia
 F Baltic
 A Denmark
 A Kiel
 A Berlin
 A Munich
 A Ruhr
 A Piedmont
 A Rome
 F Gulf of Lyon
 F Tyrrhenian
 F Ionian
 F English Channel
 F North Sea
 *F Brest
 *A Paris

Home
 Spain
 Portugal
 Belgium
 Tunis
 Rome
 London
 Liverpool
 Edinburgh
 Holland
 Kiel
 Munich
 Norway
 Denmark
 Berlin
 +Sweden
 +St.Petersburg

* Indicates new build
 + Indicates new supply center

All years are for winter season