

# TRAN TOR

#12/SVG #12

"Winter 1904"

March 21, 1964

## BELLIGERENTS GATHER SECOND WIND

### FRANCE GAINS NAVAL SUPREMACY IN MEDITERRANEAN

Toulon, France (December 7, 1904): France's program of naval construction has reached feverish proportions. In 1904 no less than ten new capital ships were laid down, launched and completed trials. It seems that the French admiralty has managed to win the dispute with the army over the allocation of funds. General Foch is reputed to have said, "damn fools, damn fools", as he left the office of Loubet.

With the new squadrons Admiral de Fomor is expected to remove any Italian influence still remaining in Africa. With the pirate Italian fleet destroyed all that will remain to obstruct de Fomor are the yet untried fleets of Austria-Hungary and Turkey. Though the Austrian fleet has six battleships of the new design, the experts do not rate the Austrian fleet too highly. The Imperial Fleet has never been to sea and the newest ships do not compare either in armor protection or weight of guns with the behemoths of the French fleet. It goes without saying, that the ancient rams and coastal defense vessels that are the Turkish fleet will not last ten minutes against the 12-inch guns of de Fomor's squadrons. All the experts agree that the fleet now at sea will enable the French to wrench undisputed control of the Mediterranean Sea from the Balkan alliance.

Venice, Austrian Zone of Occupation, Italy (November 15, 1904): After 38 years, the Queen City of the Adriatic, whose marriage with the sea was once symbolized by a wedding ring cast into its waters, is again under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. An army is headquartered here, looking uneasily across the plains of the Po at the French in Milan. A direct clash between these two powers is expected in the spring.

After abandoning the futile attempt to get a pass in disorganized Rome, I set out on horseback to reach the Austrian lines. Unfortunately, my horse was stolen near Assisi by the bandits whom the prevailing conditions of anarchy have permitted to flourish unchecked. By cadging rides from peasants, I finally reached the Austrian lines at Fabriane. The Austrians, naturally apprehensive of spies, sent me on to Venice for interrogation.

My host in this ancient city has been my interrogator, the young Grand Duke of Noumaria, who is the imperial commander's counter-intelligence aide. After I satisfied His Highness of my bona fides as an American correspondent, he graciously invited me to be his guest in a confiscated palace said to have been the residence of a Doge's mistress.

Rudolf Franz Maria von Seyecourt-Breschau is living example of the contradictions that war and nationalism have brought to Europe. This part-French young nobleman is nominal sovereign of a vest-pocket grand-duchy which was confiscated by the German Empire at the beginning of the war and is now under either French or Turkish occupation. But his services are unreservedly at the disposal of the elderly Imperial and Royal Majesty at Schonbrunn. He is intently resolved on pursuing the war against the French Republic (whose predecessor guilleted one of his predecessors) until "Europe need no longer fear this mad

nation in which the son of a duke must yield the way to the son of a shopkeeper". When I asked him about rumors that Austria-Hungary supported the restoration of the Bourbon-Orleans pretender, he simply smiled cryptically.

As with any armed camp, Venice seethes with rumours about the future disposition of the troops here encamped. One lieutenant solemnly assured me that next year at this time he would stand me a glass of cognac in Marseilles, while his mate told me on the best of authority that the Turks in Galicia had treacherous intentions and that they would soon be ordered back to defend the capital against an Ottoman onslaught. Both men expressed disquiet over the actions of the mysterious Turkish leader known only as "The Mule", despite the fact that Turkey and the Dual Monarchy are allies.

James Branch Water  
Lichfield Times-Despatch

Paris: Dear Mule, The French won't stop you if you want to go to Portugal or Spain and make an --- of yourself.

- The Frog

Geneva: It appears that a major game of intrigue and espieglerie within the game of war now being played in Europe is developing between two agents, "The Mule" and "The Frog". May you keep the game clean, and the best man lose.

"So I make a jest of Wonder, and a mock of Time and Space,  
The roofless Seas an hostel, and the Earth a market-place,  
Where the anxious traders know each is surety for his foe,  
And none may thrive without his fellows' grace."

- Kipling

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As everyone sent in their moves early, I was able to put-to-bed this edition of Trantor one week early. The deadline for the spring moves for 1905 is April 3, 1965. Please mail your moves in on time.

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BUILDING MOVES FOR THE WINTER OF 1904 ARE:

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: A Vie

ENGLAND: F Lon, A Ed1

FRANCE: F Brest, F Mar

GERMANY: no change

ITALY: no change

RUSSIA: no change

TURKEY: no change

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

ENGLAND: Phil Castora, Apt #4, 619 South Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles, California, 90005

## COMMENTS

Derek Nelson, 18 Granard Blvd., Scarborough, Ontario, Canada: As one of your delinquents (three moves missed) I'd like to comment. Boardman's argument is a good one, in that a nation's collapse sometimes corresponds to real life (Russia -- WW I). But at the same time, something should be done to prevent these vacuums. So how about three moves missed and the Gamesmaster sends a list of alternatives to the player who, if he has no intention of playing, should affirm one as his successor. If he is too lazy even to do that, then there's nothing that can be done. But if it ever came to a vote among PD fans I think I'd back your proposal lacking any alternative. A year and one half play time is enough for a nation to re-establish itself.

I must admit that the comments that have appeared in this and earlier editions have tempered my thoughts on the proposed rule change. I agree with Mr. MacKenzie that the Gamesmaster must use judgement when selecting players to play the game, but the only problem arising would be cries of "favoritism", etc.. I believe that there should be a rule governing the problem of players who miss moves. So, I propose that the manner in which players are selected not be changed, but that an applicant who has a history of missing moves will be permitted to play but will be notified that he is on probation. Should the player on probation miss two moves the Gamesmaster will choose the first alternate to replace said player. A list of alternates will be published by the Gamesmaster with the regular list of active players.

If the player who is placed on probation does not like the ruling of the Gamesmaster, then the dissatisfied player may withdraw his application or abide by the rule.

Now the only problem is how do we define, a history of missing moves? Any applicant, who in his last game did not send in moves or who regularly missed sending in moves, will be considered a player who has a history of missing moves. This definition will allow a player to prove that he has become a responsible player.

Of course, any player who does not have a history of missing moves would not be placed on probation and would not be covered by the rule.

Any comment?

One last thought, I do not know what to do about a player who is playing simultaneously two or more games and is missing moves in only one game. In this situation the Gamesmaster would have to use his own judgement.