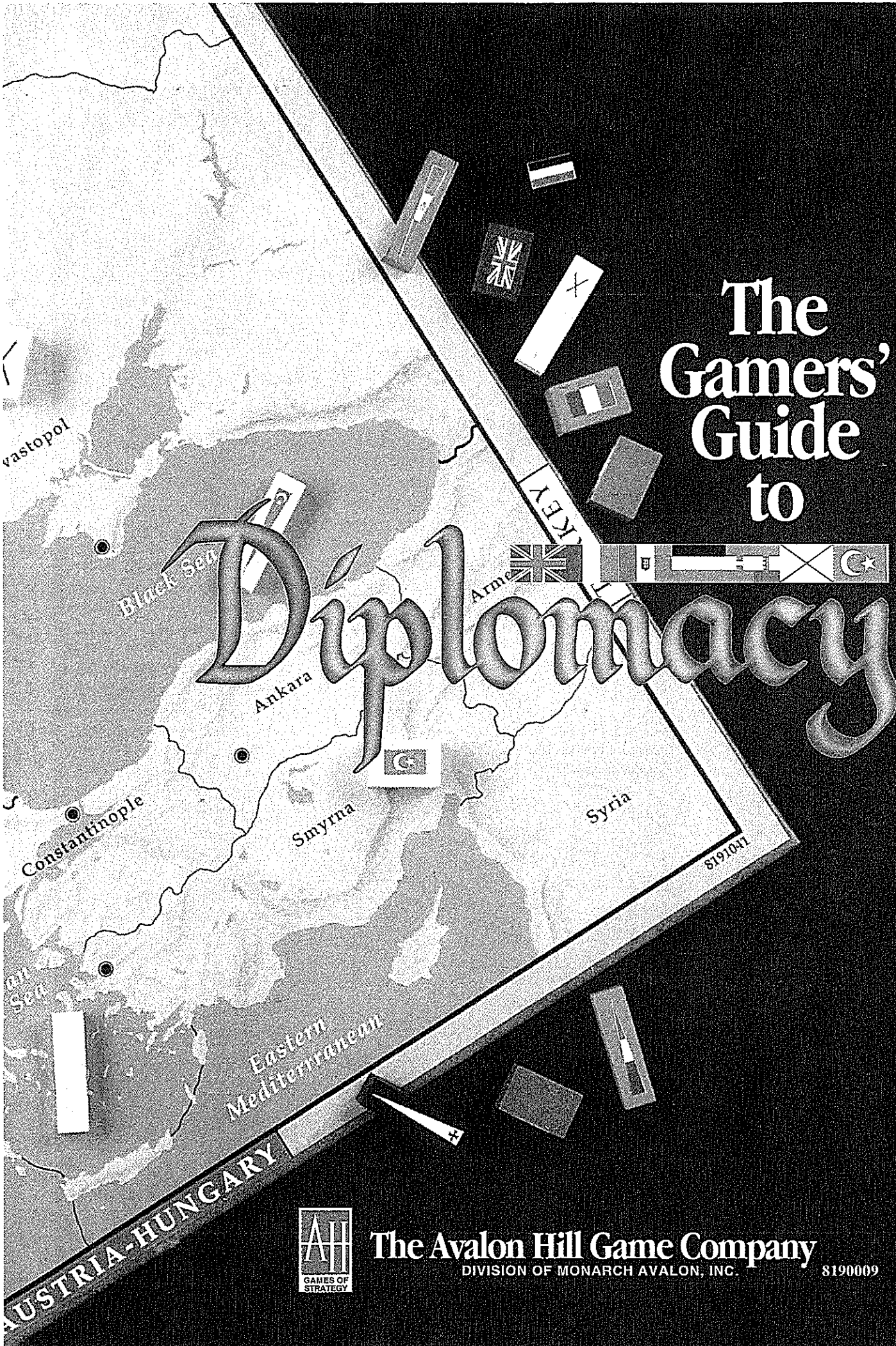


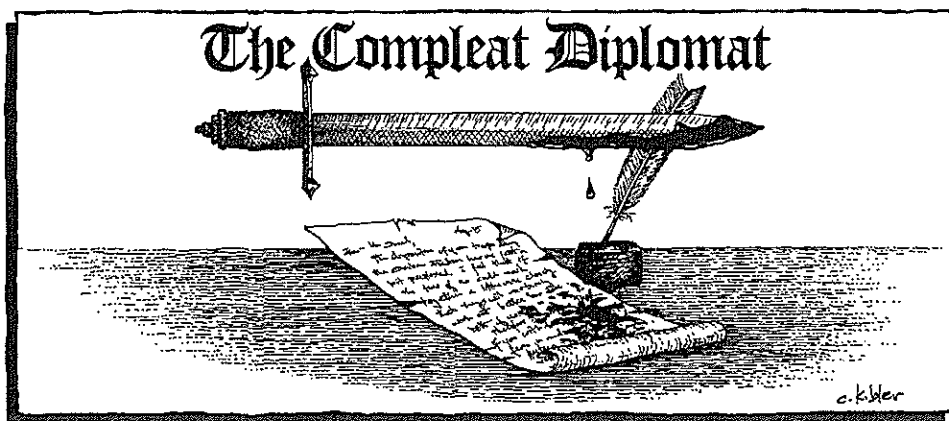
The Gamers' Guide to

Diplomacy



The Avalon Hill Game Company
DIVISION OF MONARCH AVALON, INC.

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It's called *DIPLOMACY*. The sweeping strategic movement of armies and fleets are dictated by negotiation, intrigue and treachery. The result is a game which is unique—the player's abilities in cooperating with or misleading his fellows is as important as his skill in moving the pieces across a map of Europe. The challenge is endlessly fascinating. This is a simulation of war, yes; but it is also political policy, applied economics, practical psychology, high drama, all devoid of the random element of chance so beloved by wargamers.

DIPLOMACY is one of the world's few true classic games (along with the likes of Chess, Bridge, Go and *Monopoly*). If nothing else, after three decades the game can claim to have stood the twin test of time and fickle fads, and continues to gain new admirers every year. No other boardgame, except perhaps Chess, can boast the type of following that *DIPLOMACY* has achieved. Fandom—a term which loosely covers all the tournaments (from intimate "housecons" to large competitions at major gaming events), amateur magazines which feature postal play of the game and letter columns, colorful personalities, hobby awards, rating systems, popularity polls, record-keeping services and such which have grown up about this phenomenal game—is the glue that bonds players together from around the world. Sometimes acrimonious, sometimes harmonious, this kaleidoscopic fandom is as unique as the game itself. And this brotherhood is as appealing for some as the actual play of the game itself.

The envious must surely wonder why *DIPLOMACY* is so obviously a classic, and has engendered such loyalty among its fans. There are three reasons readily recognizable: 1) the mechanics of play are extremely simple and easy to teach to others; 2) the strategy for winning is complex and interesting, and ever changing yet able to be analyzed at length; 3) the design is original and unique. *DIPLOMACY* was the first game to deliberately combine the tactical aspects of Chess with the psychological aspects of Poker. The interplay of seven competing players is the key ingredient in the final outcome, not the mere shifting of brightly-colored wooden blocks on a map. Mastery of this game demands the utmost of a player's emotions and intellect. There is drama in each match as players combine and recombine in new alliances, each one seeking both to win and to prevent the others from winning. There is a tension here that no mere two-player wargame can bring to your tabletop.

In celebration of this most successful and enduring of all multi-player games, we offer a second *Gamers' Guide*. The first, a 36-page booklet produced by Avalon Hill in 1979 and long out-of-print, was the work of Rod Walker, one of the leading hobbyists of the time. His emphasis in that publication was upon the play of the game, and much of that material can now be found in the rulebook included in our *Deluxe DIPLOMACY* set. When I decided to produce a new *Gamers' Guide*, I wanted to take a different tack—and offer a different perspective. While the reader will find a number of fine articles on strategy in this *Guide*, there are also articles on the hobby, the many methods of play, variants, and even a sample game, penned by a variety of fine writers. To top off this 64-page feast for the connoisseur, Allan Calhamer offers an inside look at the design of his famous and addictive game.

In the hope of presenting a balanced glimpse of this multi-faceted phenomena, I recruited a number of folk to help me. Chief among them were Gary Behnen, David Hood and Cal White. Following an open hobby meeting at the 1992 DipCon in Kansas City, they volunteered to support me in my efforts to bring this newest *Guide* to publication. For over a year they made suggestions, tracked down previously-published articles, and put me in contact with the authors whose words would paint this entertaining picture of *DIPLOMACY* for you. These three gentlemen also became the motivating force behind the effort to guide newcomers into postal play of the game (see the advert on Page 39 herein), selflessly giving of their time to better the hobby. Along with Don del Grande and John Caruso, they personify the very best aspects of *DIP* fandom.

But the most important person in the hobby equation remains you—the gamer. It's you who play in the postal games and support the 'zines, who attend the conventions and introduce *DIPLOMACY* to your friends on wintery evenings. You've been doing so for some 35+ years now, and this simple, elegant test of personality and strategy has grown far more popular than ever Mr. Calhamer envisioned. That's why the operative word in the title of this publication, for this editor, is "Gamers". The following articles are meant to entertain you, whether novice or grey-beard; if you learn something new about the game or the hobby from them as well, so much the better.

Rex A. Martin

AVALON HILL'S

Diplomacy

The *Gamers' Guide to DIPLOMACY* is devoted to the presentation of authoritative articles on the strategy, variation, history and hobby of *DIPLOMACY*, gaming's premier multi-player challenge. This *Gamers' Guide* is published by the Avalon Hill Game Company (4517 Harford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214, USA) solely for the edification of the serious *DIPLOMACY* aficionado in the hopes of improving the player's proficiency and broadening his enjoyment of the game.

Of interest also to the *DIPLOMACY* buff would be Avalon Hill's bi-monthly periodical *The GENERAL*. Despite its much broader field of interest (namely, the entire Avalon Hill line of games), rarely an issue goes by that does not have new material on the hobby and events of interest to *DIPLOMACY* players. Mailings are made close to the end of February, April, June, August, September and November. One-year subscriptions are \$18.00; two-year subscriptions are \$29.00. Paid advertising is not accepted, but news of importance to the gaming community is solicited. Convention announcements must be received at least six months in advance and contain information pertaining to any Avalon Hill titles for which events will be offered.

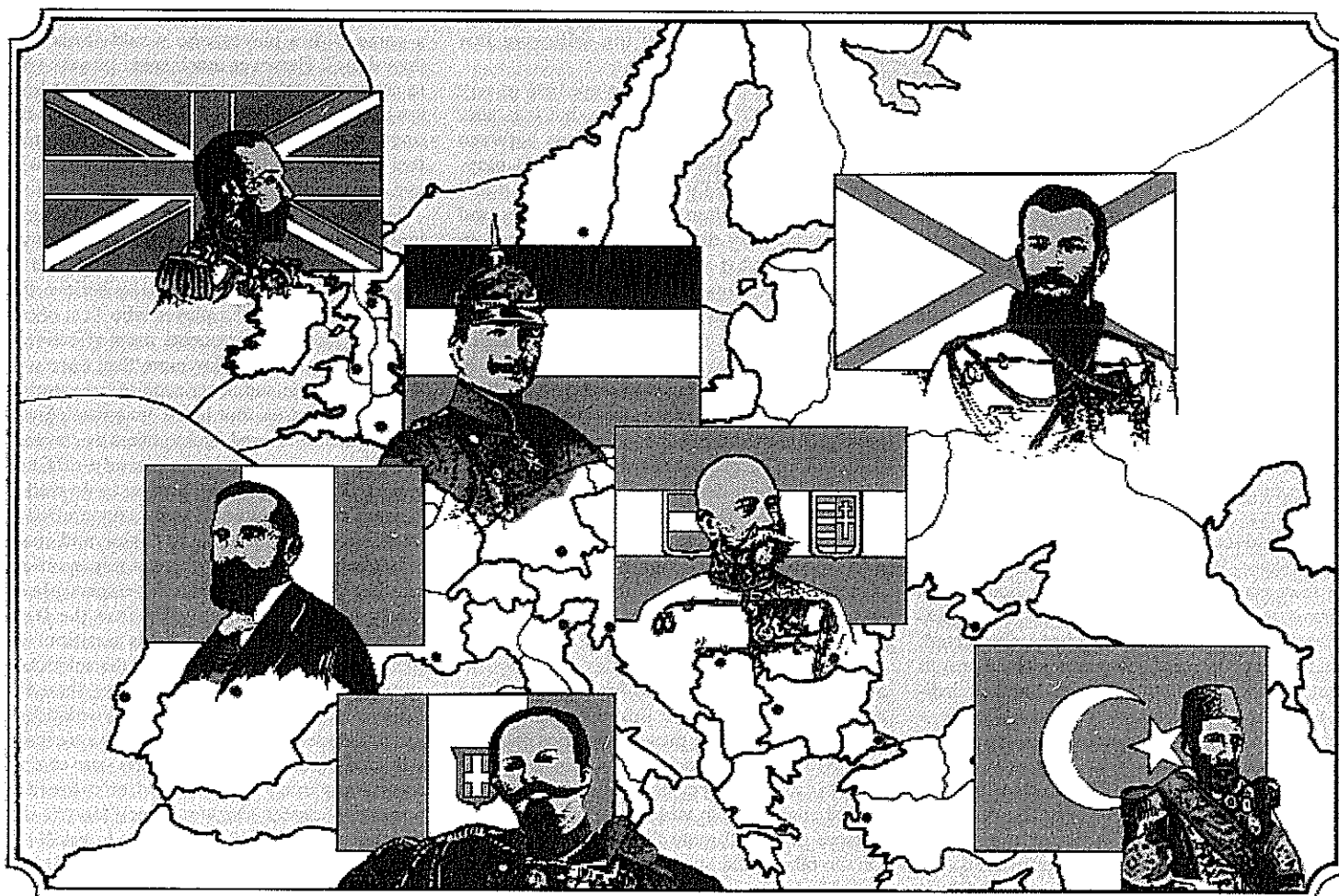
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THE ART OF DIPLOMACY

An Introduction to The GAME

By Lewis Pulsipher

There are those who don't consider DIPLOMACY a "wargame". Indeed, some of the very best practitioners of the game would take exception to that term themselves. DIPLOMACY enthusiasts have always been a breed apart from the mainstream of the wargaming. In fact, long before DIPLOMACY became an Avalon Hill product, the "wargame hobby" was generally conceived to consist of three branches: boardgames, miniatures games, and DIPLOMACY. Although dwarfed in comparison to the other two branches, DIPLOMACY enthusiasts made up for their lack of numbers by being highly visible and vocal, imaginative and productive. DIPLOMACY players by their very nature are an intelligent but argumentative lot who have always made more noise than their numbers might warrant. More often than not, when meeting other hobbyists, they would refer to wargaming in the past tense: "Oh, I used to play that until I discovered DIPLOMACY." (Today, of course, there are many fine multi-player games available, so that refrain is less common.)

The passage of years since those halcyon days have not been indifferent to DIPLOMACY. Although that sense of snobbery still exists among its faithful, their ranks are, if

anything, smaller than they were in days gone by; they have relinquished their hold as the "third branch" of the hobby to fantasy role-playing games (which, for that matter, have also surpassed the other two branches in terms of sales volume). Yet, The GAME has a devoted following which persists in recognizing every postal match played in North America with an identifying serial number and adding it to a 30-year sea of statistics kept on game results, best countries, top players, and so forth. Their hobby seems to thrive on the fact that it requires seven players and may be suited better to postal than live play—factors which would certainly have condemned a lesser design long ago. Despite its great age in this day of fads and soon-forgotten wargames, every game convention still seems to have a well-attended DIPLOMACY tournament. What other "wargame" can make such a claim after three decades?

The following, by one of the icons of the early DIP hobby, was meant to serve as an introduction of the game to the readership of *The GENERAL* (Avalon Hill's long-running periodical devoted to the wargaming hobby). It first appeared as a three-part series in Volume 18 (Nos. 1-3, long out of print). What

impact it might have had over a decade ago can't be judged now, but it still serves as one of the best overviews of the game, its precepts and its strategies that I know. And it serves very well as an introduction to all that follows in this "Gamers' Guide to DIPLOMACY". To that end, I reprint it for novice and old-hand alike. Hopefully, each will find at least one new thought on our favorite game among these words.

Welcome to DIPLOMACY

DIPLOMACY is a multi-player board "wargame" well known to most strategic game players—probably the most widely known conflict game in the world if one excludes traditional games such as Chess. It is marketed in the native tongues of Germany, Italy, Japan, Brazil, France, Spain, Israel, Holland and Argentina, and in English from Australia to Scotland. About a half-million copies have been sold worldwide since its commercial introduction in 1959 by a variety of game publishers. It is one of the few boardgames, and the only proprietary board wargame, so well-known that a book about the game and its play has been published and marketed.

The heart of *DIPLOMACY* is negotiation between the seven players who represent the Great Powers of World War I: Austria, England, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and Turkey. (This is not a simulation, of course; Turkey and Germany were not comparable Great Powers in the actual war but Turkey's position is as strong as Germany's in the game.) Facilitating the negotiations are the simple mechanics of simultaneous movement of a total of 34 armies and fleets, with no luck involved. Deals and alliances are made and broken during the game, and no one can be certain whether other players will react as expected. In other words, avoiding the clumsy conventions of dice and tables, the players themselves provide the chance element in this game.

In the mid-1960s, some science-fiction fans organized a postal game of *DIPLOMACY*, players negotiating by letter and sending movement orders to a non-playing referee, who resolved and reproduced the orders and sent a copy to each player. Wargamers soon became involved in increasing numbers, and today about 20000 people worldwide play postal *DIP*. Over 1000 recorded postal games have been completed, each requiring two to three years (or more) to reach the final resolution. Several hundred dedicated folk act as referees (or GameMasters—GMs), most editing and duplicating their own fan 'zines to carry the results.

One of the attractions of *DIPLOMACY* is the simple but flexible game system. The rules can be adapted to construct a strategic game on almost any subject requiring more than two sides. No other game, except perhaps Chess and *D&D*, has engendered so many diverse variations. *DIPLOMACY* "variants", as they are usually called, differ from such for other wargames in their scope, insofar as many use a new mapboard and many of the rules of the parent game may be changed. The result is often virtually a whole new game. In fact, certain *DIP* variants were the first fantasy and science-fiction games to be played nationwide. In this article, however, we concern ourselves only with "classic" *DIPLOMACY*.

It is the mark of a great game, such as Chess, that even the "experts" cannot agree on a best way to play to achieve a victory. *DIPLOMACY* is no exception. Consequently, the advice below is my view of how to play successfully; others would disagree (as I sometimes indicate). No doubt, in later articles in this special issue, the reader will find many other hints on negotiation, strategies and tactics. Try as one might, however, no one will ever "master" this game. The points I (and all the other authors) offer are intended merely to serve as a starting step for your development into the consummate diplomat.

The Art of Negotiation

Telling someone how to negotiate "well" is a difficult task. A person's attitudes toward life and toward the game itself have a strong, immeasurable, and probably unalterable effect on how, and how well, he or she negotiates in *DIPLOMACY*. Literally hundreds of pages have been written about this subject. There are, however, certain principles and common failings which can be described, and which no

player who hopes for victory can ignore. These are the subjects of the following few paragraphs.

The advice below may be applied to any well-played *DIPLOMACY* game, but it is necessary to recognize the differences between face-to-face (FTF) and postal (PBM) play. When you play FTF with people you don't know, you will often encounter attitudes and conventions very different from your own. In the extreme, what you think is perfectly common-place ruthlessness might be, to them, "cheating". In postal play with experienced opponents, you'll encounter fewer "strange" notions. Incompetent players can be found in any game, of course, but many who enjoy PBM are experienced and, hence, less bound by convention. On the other hand, postal games suffer from failure by players to submit orders before the adjudication deadline—the dreaded NMR (for "No Moves Received"). A failure to move at a crucial time (a rare happening in a FTF game) usually causes significant, if not decisive, changes in the flow of the play. Both FTF and postal games suffer from "dropouts"—people who quit playing before their countries are eliminated. Part of a good player's range of skills is the ability to keep his allies (and his enemy's enemies) from dropping out. In the best matches, none of these difficulties occur.

In FTF play, it is easier to coordinate routine attacks, and to form coalitions to stop the largest country from winning—communication is more rapid and more frequent than by mail. On the other hand, more elaborate and brilliant tactical play is found in postal games because each player has hours, if he so desires, to study the board and look for the very best moves. (The pressures of a time limit often causes tactical mistakes in FTF games.) Finally, dogged persistence of argument is valuable in FTF, where a weak player often does whatever he was most recently told to do. In postal play, persistence (via numerous letters and long-distance phone calls) is valuable, but written negotiation requires a more careful, and more logical, approach than oral negotiation. Every player has plenty of time to think things through, to notice holes in your arguments, to hear opinions from every other player—no one can monopolize his time. For that reason, to do well in a postal game probably requires greater skill than in a FTF game.

When you begin a new game, you must first learn something about each of your opponents. Sometimes you will know quite a bit to begin with; but you will still want to ask people who know the opponent better than you do about their style. You want to know if your opponent is generally reliable or not, what his objective is, whether he is a "classical" or "romantic" player, and whether or not he is good at negotiation, strategy, and tactics. (This is a controversial point, insofar as some players—usually the notoriously erratic and unreliable—say that a player's previous record should have no effect on your decisions in the current game. However, the more you know about another player, the better you'll be able to predict his actions. It would require a peculiar view of life for a player to knowingly ally with someone who has never abided by an agreement in 20 games!

Nor would you offer to work towards a draw in a game with a player who would "rather die than draw". However much some players wish to pretend that they are really government leaders and that World War I is happening just this once, most *DIPLOMACY* players recognize that it is primarily an abstract game of skill, and act accordingly.)

Let's consider each point you're trying to learn about your new opponents, beginning with "reliability". Novice players, urged on by the rulebook introduction, usually believe that the winner will be the player who lies, cheats and backstabs his opponents most effectively. Perhaps if you never play more than once with the same people and never acquire a reputation, this would be true. But in the long run, players learn to treat liars and backstabbers as enemies. Why invite disaster in an already difficult game? Obviously, for one person to do well in a game with six others, some cooperation is necessary; cooperation is easier and more effective between those who can rely upon one another (to some extent). An expert player rarely lies, and then only because the lie is likely to radically improve his position. He prefers to say nothing, to change the subject, to speak of inconsequentials, rather than lie. When he agrees to an alliance of some kind, he usually abides by the agreement. By specifying a limited duration—until a certain year or until a certain country is eliminated or reduced to one supply center—he won't back himself into a corner which would require him to break one agreement or another. When he backstabs (attacks an ally), he stabs to virtually destroy a country's power, not merely to gain a couple of centers. The stab leads directly to accomplishing his overall strategy, not merely to increasing his total of supply centers. He wants to be known as a reliable player, because this will make other players more willing to cooperate with him in future games.

Some players say that only "mutual self-interest" should determine whether an agreement is kept, or a lie is told. When the agreement is no longer in one player's interest, he should break it. In the short term this might be true, though a pointless lie or backstab early in a game will no doubt be remembered later in the game to the detriment of the perpetrator. The expert player looks at the long term, since few people play just one *DIPLOMACY* game. It is in his interest to maintain his agreements, to avoid lying, in order to establish and maintain a reputation for reliability that will carry over to future games. There is no altruism involved. (Incidentally, the reliable player is less often on the receiving end of an emotional barrage of anger from a disappointed player—no small gain.)

Though it may be surprising to long-time wargamers, not every player wants to accomplish the same thing in a *DIPLOMACY* game. Some play for the sheer excitement, not caring if they win or lose as long as the game is full of wild incidents. Many do play to win the game, but there the ways often part. Some players believe that, failing to win, a "draw" is the next best result, while anything else is a loss. Taken to the extreme, even a seven-way draw is better

than second place. Other *DIP* players believe that to survive in second place while someone else wins is better than any position in a draw. At the extreme end of the spectrum are those who would "rather die than draw". (I should say that I believe in working towards a draw if a victory is impossible, and find the latter view intellectually and emotionally incomprehensible, but surveys show that a large majority of postal players are partial to the middle course.)

Such a fundamental disagreement in objectives can have a decisive effect on your negotiations. If you propose a plan to establish a three-way draw, someone who prefers to work towards a sole second-place finish won't be interested. If you offer to help a player of a weak country to attain second place if he helps you win, you'll get nowhere if he's inclined to a draw, but a someone who plays for placement among non-winning survivors would be favorably impressed. The latter type of players make better "puppets", but those enamoured of draws can be just as good as allies. In some situations they are better, for they won't abandon you (when they feel they can't win) in order to try for a second place instead of a draw. But when you're winning, you're better off with an ally who favors a strong finish, who is a little less likely to attack you than someone working towards a draw would be.

Whether a player's style is "classical" or "romantic" is rather harder to define. Briefly, the classical player carefully maximizes his minimum gain. He pays attention to detail and prefers to patiently let the other players lose by making mistakes, rather than try to overwhelm them by force. He tends to like a relatively stable alliance and conflict structure in the game. He tends to be a reliable ally and very good at tactics.

The romantic player, on the other hand, is more flamboyant, taking calculated risks to force his enemies to make mistakes, trying to defeat them psychologically before they are defeated on the board. (Too many players give up weakened but not yet hopeless positions simply because they're convinced that they've lost.) He tends to try to maximize his maximum gain, though theoretically this is less effective than the classical player's method. He can be unpredictable, relying on surprise and the "Great Stab" for victory. Tending to be an unreliable ally and a sometimes sloppy tactician, he likes a fluid, rapidly changing alliance-and-conflict structure.

Finally, it's useful to know whether your opponent is a poor, average or good player, and what facets of the game he is best at. You can risk a one-on-one war with a poor tactician but not with a good one. An alliance of limited duration with a player who is deficient in strategy can leave you in a much better position as you outmaneuver him in dealing with the players on the other side of the board. Some players like to eliminate inferior players early in the game, while others try to use the poorer players to eliminate strong opponents. It's all a matter of developing your own playing style, your own art.

To re-emphasize the point of this "sizing up", the more you know about your opponent's tendencies, the better you can predict his reaction

to any given stimulus. As you negotiate, you should attempt to learn even more about his preferences. In the extreme case, you can try to make yourself appear to be a particular kind of player in order to gain the respect or sympathy of your opponent, but this is quite hard to do. Even if you begin a game with six unknown quantities facing you across the board, you should be able to learn something about their styles before you write your Spring 1901 orders. If necessary, talk about yourself and your own views on this marvelous boardgame in order to draw out the other players.

There are five other principles of negotiation beyond "know your opponents" in my theories on sound play: 1) talk with everybody; 2) be flexible; 3) never give up; 4) explain plans thoroughly; and 5) be positive. Let's look at each separately.

1) At the beginning of the game, and periodically throughout, talk with all other players—even your worst enemy. Someone on the other side of the board may know something of interest to you. Trade information, when possible, with those who haven't an immediate stake in what you do in next couple of turns. However, don't be too free with the information you obtain yourself, or it may get back to your source, who will then decide he can't trust you with more. As explained in the next section on strategy, an expert player takes account of, and tries to control the actions of, every player in the game—and he can't do that if he doesn't talk with them.

2) Be flexible. If you expect everyone to play the way you do, you'll surely lose. Don't get emotional, though it isn't necessarily bad to simulate some emotion in order to modify an opponent's behavior. It is only a game, and stabbing is a part of it. If you are stabbed, or someone lies to you, anger will do you no good. The best thing you can do is make sure your antagonist regrets his action, with the idea that your next game together he'll remember and won't do it again. (The advocates of "short-term" *DIPLOMACY* go even further. They would say, forget about the stab—what is in your interest now? You could find that you should ally with the person who just betrayed you!) When you are at war, always think about possible deals with your enemy—especially if he has the upper hand! No rule in the booklet says you must fight him to the bitter end. You might both fare far better by doing something else, such as jointly attacking a third country or separately attacking other "neutral" countries. Always have an alternative plan in case things go wrong. Humans, especially *DIPLOMACY* players, can be an erratic lot.

3) Never give up. Keep negotiating with your enemy even as he wipes you out. You may be more useful to him as a minor ally than as an enemy. As long as you have a single unit on the map, you can affect the course of the game. There have been postal games in which a player reduced to two supply centers later won; and in tournament FTF games, even one-center countries have come back to win. In the fluid conditions of most *DIPLOMACY* games, dramatic reversals of fortune are common—so long as you remain ready to profit from them.

4) Explain your plans to allies thoroughly. When you've sized up your opponents and selected your strategy, make your approach to those you would woe to your side. Explain in detail and at length what you expect both you and your potential ally to accomplish. If he can't see any advantage in what you propose, he won't accept—or more likely, he'll pretend to agree and then backstab you at the first opportunity. Some players prefer to be non-committal in such initial negotiations, to get the feel of things during the first season or first game-year. Others like to form solid alliances as soon as possible. Whichever you prefer, be sure you put some effort into your attempts to come to agreements with others; even if you intend to break them, give plausible reasoning for your plans. If things go wrong, you may find yourself relying on an agreement you intended to break. If you don't seem very interested in the agreement when you propose it, the other player won't believe you. For example, when you propose an offensive alliance, don't merely say "Let's you and me get him". This isn't negotiation—this is an invitation to be treated as an inferior player. Instead, talk about why it is in the interest of both your countries to eliminate that country or player, how it can be accomplished (tactics), what other countries will probably be doing (strategy), how the spoils will be divided, and what each of you can do afterward to avoid fighting each other. If the attack doesn't give both of you prospects for a win, your potential ally will be suspicious—especially if the alliance appears to favor him and not you. No one playing this game seriously is that altruistic.

5) Be positive. You must *convince* the other fellow, not tamely hope that his ideas coincide with yours. Negotiation in *DIPLOMACY* is a mixture of aggressive persuasion and attempts to seem innocuous, to avoid drawing too much attention to oneself. People who are good at it in postal games may have difficulties FTF, and vice versa. However you go about it though, don't be discouraged by initial failures. Analyze why you succeeded or failed in each instance after each game. There's simply no substitute for experience in developing your "people" skills.

The Art of Strategy

While negotiation is the art of convincing other players to act as you desire, the "art" of strategy is choosing the combinations of countries, and overall direction of movements (thrust east instead of west, by land instead of by sea, and so forth) which, if executed as planned, will result in a win for you. It is the most neglected of the three aspects of good *DIPLOMACY* play, the one in which the average player is most likely deficient, and the one which separates most "experts" from the "merely good" players. The average player is content to let his negotiations determine his strategy rather than vice versa. Consequently, he seldom looks beyond the next game year, the immediate identification of enemy and ally, to what he ought to do later in the game.

I assume in all the following discussion that the player's objective is to win, or failing that, to be part of a draw. Those who eschew draws

in favor of survival as someone else wins will approach some points of strategy differently, but until late in the game there is virtually no difference between the two I've found.

Strategy in *DIPLOMACY* is strongly influenced by the shape of the board. Spaces near the edge are larger than central spaces, so that movement around is as fast as movement through the middle. More important, the board is divided into two strategic areas or "spheres". The eastern sphere includes Austria, Russia and Turkey, while the western is England, France and Germany. Italy sits astride one of three avenues between the two spheres. The northern route through Scandinavia and the Barents Sea enables Russia to have some influence in the western sphere. The central route, between Germany on one hand and Austria and Russia on the other, looks short but is rarely used early in the game.

Normally the game revolves around efforts by players to dominate the two spheres. Early in the game a country rarely moves out of its own sphere—it can't afford any diversion of effort until the conflict in its own sphere is resolved. However, the country or alliance which gains control of its own sphere first, enabling it to invade the other sphere, usually gains the upper hand in the game as a whole. A continuous tension exists between the need to completely control one's own sphere and the need to beat the country which dominates the other sphere to the punch. Commonly, two countries in a sphere will attack the third, attempting at the same time to arrange a long indecisive war in the other sphere so that it will be easier to invade later. Sometimes the two former allies will fight for supremacy in their sphere before the winner goes on to the other sphere; more often, the players of the other sphere, becoming aware of the threat from the other side of the board, will intervene and perhaps patch up their own differences. Poor Italy is trapped in the middle. Naturally, an alliance which endeavors to dominate a sphere wants Italy to move into the other sphere, probably to establish a two-versus-two stalemate. And the odd man out in a sphere turns first to Italy to redress the balance of power in his realm. In either case, poor Italy is stuck in a long, drawn-out war. Any Italian win is usually the result only of a long game.

This discussion shows us the most important principle of strategy: *everything* that happens anywhere on the board affects every country. If you concern yourself only with the two or three neighboring powers, you'll never become an expert player, though a glib negotiational skill can go far to compensate for some strategic deficiency. If you, for instance, as Turkey can influence the move of one French or English unit, it could make the difference between a win and a draw, game years hence. If you can strongly affect an entire country's movements, even at that distance, you should go far on the road to victory. The expert player knows where many foreign units might be ordered each season, and he tries to direct them to his advantage subtly, by misdirection and through intermediaries (it doesn't do to attract too much attention in this game).

One of the most important considerations of strategy is the attainment of a "stalemate line"

by your country or alliance. Your long-range goal is to win; but unless you are a quite romantic player who prefers instability, your immediate objective is to be sure you don't lose—then worry about going on to win. A stalemate line is a position which cannot possibly be breached or pushed back by the enemy. The area within, or protected, by the line includes supply centers sufficient to support all the units needed to form the line. There are many stalemate lines, but these have been discussed at length in books and fan 'zines about *DIPLOMACY*, even in the new rulebook itself. I will limit myself to describing the two major lines, which roughly coincide with the two spheres (and not by accident). [In the following, U means "unit"—that is, either army or fleet.]

Eastern Line: A Vienna, A Budapest supports A Vienna, A Trieste supports A Vienna, U Venice, U Rome, U Naples supports U Rome, F Adriatic supports U Venice, U Apulia supports U Venice, F Ionian, F East Med supports F Ionian, U Sevastopol, U Rumania, U Bulgaria supports U Rumania, U Armenia supports U Sevastopol.

Western Line: U St. Petersburg, U Norway supports U St. Petersburg, U Kiel, A Ruhr supports U Kiel, A Burgundy, U Marseilles, A Gascony supports U Marseilles, U Spain, U Portugal supports U Spain, F Mid-Atlantic, F English supports F Mid-Atlantic. (This line can be expanded to hold Berlin and Munich. Alternative: nothing in Spain and Marseilles, F Portugal supports Mid-Atlantic, A Brest supports Gascony, and A Paris supports Burgundy.)

With 13 to 15 centers, or as many as 17, within a line, a player is almost certain of being part of a draw. If he reaches the line soon enough, and alone, he can move on to prevent any other player from conquering the rest of the board, and a draw or win is assured.

A drawback of reaching a stalemate line is that it can put all other players on their guard against you. If they know they can't knock you down to size, they'll be more reluctant to fight one another. This is a danger any strong country faces, however, and it must be noted that a perfectly played *DIPLOMACY* game will end in a draw, not a win. (Of course, this statement depends partly on the players' styles, obviously—theoretically, a game among seven players of equal ability all playing to win will never end, just as the maneuverings in Europe itself never have.) You can win only if other players make mistakes. The better the players, the fewer mistakes and the more likely a draw will be.

So far we've been discussing the fundamental strategic structure of the game. Next we'll consider what to remember as you devise a unified strategy for the coming game, and lastly we'll talk about individual differences between the seven countries.

When you devise a strategy, you plan the general direction of your movement, expected allies, expected enemies, and what you want countries not adjacent to yours to do to improve your chances. At each step you should have several alternatives, for barring great

good luck something will usually go wrong. Inevitably, the styles and personalities of the other players will strongly affect the strategy you choose. But let's assume that one player is as suitable (or unsuitable) to your purposes as another. First, consider the nature of your country. Is it a natural land power, a sea power, or both? Is it on an outer edge of a sphere (England or Turkey), an inner edge (Germany or Austria), or in between (Italy)? Think about this, look at the board, and decide where you're going to get the 18 supply centers to win the game. You must eventually capture several centers in one sphere, or in Italy, even if you control the other sphere entirely. Your plan must include: a means of gaining control of your sphere without hostile incursion from outside it; attainment of a stalemate line in at least one part of the board; and penetration into the other sphere (or Italy) to reach 18 centers. (Note that Italy is within the eastern stalemate line, and that the western line is anchored in the eastern sphere (St. Petersburg); such seemingly minor points may have a strong affect on your plans.) You can plan to jointly control your sphere with an ally, but then the "penetration" must amount to eventual control of the other sphere as well. You must include a means of reacting to any attempt to disrupt your plan from outside your sphere. You must provide for other contingencies; for example, if someone dominates the other sphere before you can dominate yours you must be prepared to stop him. You must be flexible, though you try to implement your original plan as best you may.

In all this plotting, Italy is left out in the cold. The Italian player looking for victory must either be sure that neither sphere is dominated by any country or alliance early in the game (allowing Italy time to grow) or Italy itself must quickly dominate one sphere. From the purely strategic point of view, Italy is definitely the hardest country to play.

Here is a brief example of a strategic plan for England. Let's say you don't like the Anglo-German alliance, or the German player is notoriously unreliable. So, you plan to offer a limited duration alliance to France for a joint attack on Germany. You'll offer Belgium, Munich and Holland to France while you take Denmark, Kiel and Berlin. You don't mind if Russia and Germany get into a fight over Sweden, but you want Russia to concentrate, with Austria, on attacking Turkey. This will leave Italy free to peck away, initially at Germany, later at France. When your alliance with France expires, you plan to attack France with Italian help, and at the same time pick off Russia's northern centers (Germany should fall sooner than Turkey—if necessary you'll give Turkey tactical advice to improve his chances). You want Austria to attack Russia after Turkey falls. This is vitally important in your game plan, because Austria-Russia would be a formidable alliance against you as England. It is possible—but not likely—that you could reach a stalemate line as Italy collapsed to an attack from Austria; but it is much, much better to have just most of the eastern units fighting one another. In the end, you should be grinding down an outnumbered Italy (England will gain more from attacks on Germany and France than Italy will, simply by

nature of the positions) while Austria keeps Russia busy. For supply centers you want England, France, Germany, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, Iberia—a total of 16—plus any two from among St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Moscow, Tunis and Italy's three. To go into all the alternatives and potential threats and problems with this specific plan for an English victory would require many more pages. Suffice to say, that such considerations and planning as in this example are what set apart the good, and the great, *DIPLOMACY* players.

Now we come to look at the individual countries. Reams of statistics are available about the success of each country in postal play, but the percentages have varied as years passed; statistics of American and British postal games even show some differences. Generally, each country has a good chance of success—except, perhaps, for Italy, which is handicapped by its between-spheres position. (Some pirated South American versions of *DIPLOMACY* gave Italy a fleet instead of an army in Rome, and added a supply center in North Africa; these changes certainly strengthen Italy and probably make *DIPLOMACY* a better “balanced” game.) Russia tends to be an all-or-nothing country because of its extra unit, its long borders, and its connection with the western sphere and stalemate line. Russia wins outright far more than any other country. The inner countries, Germany, Austria and Italy, are harder to play.

The next few paragraphs briefly state what to look for when you play each country. “Natural neutrals” are neutral supply centers which are usually captured by the Great Power during 1901. The most common opening move is also mentioned; but remember that tactics are subordinate to strategy, and even the most common opening is used no more than half the time. One important point remains to be made. In general, in *DIPLOMACY* the Western countries can await the development of events and negotiations longer than the Eastern countries before committing themselves to agreements. The Easterners are too close, with too many centers at stake, to wait. It is the conflict between the Eastern powers over the Balkans that, as it did in 1914, fuels the drive towards dominance.

Austria: Land power; natural neutrals, Serbia and Greece. Turkey and Austria are almost always enemies, for Austria is at a great disadvantage when the two ally. Turkey usually owns territories on three sides (Mediterranean, Balkans, Russia) of Austria if the alliance is successful, and Austria is just too easy to stab. Russia and Italy are the best alliance prospects for the Austrian, especially the former. If Russia and Turkey ally, Italy can often be persuaded to aid Austria in order to avoid becoming the next victim of the eastern juggernaut. Germany usually agrees to a non-aggression pact; nor should Austria commit units in the western sphere at this stage. The early game is often a desperate struggle for survival, but a good player can hang on until events elsewhere and his own able diplomacy improve his position. Unfortunately, normally Austria must eliminate Italy to win because the seas and crowded German plains halt expansion elsewhere. In the end, this land power must

become a sea power in order to grab the last few centers needed for victory.

Commonly, Austria opens with: Fleet Trieste-Albania and Army Budapest-Serbia (followed in Fall 1901 by Serbia supporting Albania-Greece). Army Vienna is used to block whichever neighbor (Russia or Italy) seems hostile, by Vienna-Galicia or Vienna-Trieste or Tyrolia.

England: Seapower; natural neutral, Norway. England has an excellent defensive position but poor expansion prospects. An Anglo-German alliance is not as hard to maintain as the Austria-Turkish, but neither is it easy. England must go south when allied with Germany, but it can hardly avoid a presence in the north, facing Russia—which puts it all around the German rear, inevitably causing the Kaiser some concern. England-France is a fine alliance but it may favor France in the long run. Whichever is the ally, England may be able to acquire Belgium if he works at it. Patience is a necessity, however, unless Italy or Russia comes into the western sphere. If either does, one to attack France (or even Germany) or the other to attack Germany, England must gain centers rapidly or be squeezed to death between its former ally and the interloper.

England can win by sweeping through Germany and Russia, but all too often the eastern stalemate line stops this advance short of victory. Similarly, a southern Mediterranean drive can founder in Italy, but this part of the defenders' stalemate line is harder to establish. If England can reach six or seven units on the board, it has many alternatives to consider.

Usually England opens with: Fleet London-North, Fleet Edinburgh-Norwegian, Army Liverpool-Edinburgh. The army can then be conveyed by either fleet, while the other can intervene directly on the continent.

France: Balanced land and sea; natural neutrals, Spain and Portugal. France may be the least restricted of all the countries, vying with Russia for that distinction. There are many, many options for good defensive and offensive positions. An alliance with Germany or England is equally possible, though it is easier to cooperate with England. The astute French player can usually obtain Belgium regardless of which Western country he allies with. Italy's movements are of some importance to France, since French penetration into the Mediterranean is usually necessary late in the game (if not sooner). Russia can be equally helpful against England or Germany. In fact, a French-Russian-Italian triple alliance against the Anglo-Germans is possible. At any rate, if France is attacked, there are several players to ask for help.

A common French opening is: Fleet Brest-Mid-Atlantic Ocean (heading for Iberia), Army Paris-Burgundy, Army Marseilles-Spain.

Germany: Land power; natural neutrals, Holland and Denmark. Like Austria, Germany must scramble early in the game. But the defensive position for Germany is better, alliance options are broader—and Italy isn't quite at one's throat.

Alliance with England is difficult because England usually sits in the German rear as the game progresses. (As England, I have been stabbed several times by German players who just couldn't stand the suspense, though I had no immediate plans to attack them.) Germany-France is a better alliance, though France may gain more from it in the long run and you can be left dangerously extended between France and Russia. Either “romantic” methods or great patience is required for a German victory. Fortunately, Austria rarely interferes early in the game (nor should Germany waste effort in the eastern sphere) and conflicts with Russia are rare if the German concedes Sweden.

A common opening is: Fleet Kiel-Denmark, Army Munich-Ruhr, Army Berlin-Kiel. Kiel-Holland or Munich-Burgundy are also common.

Italy: Balanced; natural neutral, Tunis. An Italian player needs patience and luck to win. Fortunately the defensive position of Italy is good, but immediate expansion possibilities are very poor. Don't be hypnotized by all those Austrian centers so near. If Russia and Turkey ally, Italy's life span isn't much longer than Austria's—full support of Austria is required. Italy tends to become involved in the eastern sphere more quickly than in the western. Unless England and Germany are attacking France, Italy stands to gain little by an early push in that direction. Although Turkey seems far away, Italy can attack her using the famed “Lepanto Opening”: Spring 1901 sees Army Venice Hold, Army Rome-Apulia, Fleet Naples-Ionian (which is also the most common Italian opening to gain Tunis); followed in the Fall by Army Apulia-Tunis, Fleet Ionian convoy Apulia-Tunis. Then build Fleet Naples. Spring 1902 has Fleet Ionian-Eastern Mediterranean (or to Aegean), Fleet Naples-Ionian. In the Fall of 1902, Italy can convoy Army Tunis to Syria. This attack requires Austrian cooperation, of course, but can be devastating to a Turkish position already under attack by Austria and/or Russia.

Russia: Balanced; natural neutrals, Sweden, Rumania. With a foot in the western sphere owing to its long border, Russia has an advantage in expansion; but its defensive position is weak despite the extra unit. Russia often feels like two separate countries, one in the northwest and one in the south, and it may prosper in one area while failing miserably in the other. The eastern sphere is initially more important and usually gets the attention of three of Russia's starting four units.

Russia has no obvious enemy. Because the Austria-Turkish alliance is so rare, Russia can usually choose its ally in the East—but don't become complacent. In the north, Germany can usually be persuaded not to interfere with your capture of Sweden. But an Anglo-German attack will certainly take Sweden and threaten St. Petersburg. However, Russia can lose its northern center and still remain a major power (something no other Great Power can afford). A Franco-Russian alliance can be very successful, provided Germany and England start the game fighting one another.

The common Russian opening is: Fleet St. Petersburg (sc)-Bothnia, Fleet Sevastopol-Black, Army Warsaw-Ukraine, Army Moscow-Sevastopol. Moscow-St. Petersburg is rarely seen (and very anti-English). Warsaw-Galicia is anti-Austrian (with Moscow-Ukraine). Sevastopol-Rumania is very trusting of Turkey. However, for the Russian player, there are many options to consider. For no other country is determining (and following) a sound game strategy so important.

Turkey: Balanced; natural neutral, Bulgaria. Turkey has the best defensive position on the board. Its immediate expansion prospects are not bad either, and at one time it was notorious in postal circles for "spreading like wildfire" once it reached six or seven units. Now experienced players realize that an Austria-Russian alliance, or the Italian "Lepanto" opening, can keep Turkey under control.

Austria is an unlikely ally (see Austrian notes above). Russia-Turkey can be an excellent alliance, but if Russia does well in the north Turkey will find itself slipping behind. Nonetheless, beggars can't be choosers. The Italo-Turkish alliance is seldom seen, perhaps because all too often Italy becomes the next victim for Russia and Turkey. A fight between Italy and Turkey on one side and Russia and Austria on the other is rare, for Italy prefers to go west in such a case and hope Austria will attack Russia after finishing with Turkey. Turkey has plenty of time to look for help from the other side of the board while fighting a dour defensive campaign in such circumstances, but help usually comes too late.

A common Turkish opening is: Army Constantinople-Bulgaria, Army Smyrna-Constantinople (or Armenia, to attack Russia), Fleet Ankara-Black. The favored alternative, if Russia is definitely friendly, is Ankara-Constantinople while Smyrna holds.

The Art of Tactics

Anyone who plays and studies *DIPLOMACY* can become a good tactician, for the tactical art of the game is the simplest and most predictable of the three elements to be mastered. Tactics is the ordering and arrangement of your units so as to accomplish your strategic objectives. The more numerous force usually succeeds and, if not pressed by developments elsewhere on the board, never loses. Tactical problems can sometimes be solved with the help of mathematical game theory, but that is beyond the scope of this article. Little can be said about good tactics as a whole, but many individual points can be made.

According to game theory, the best way to play a game is to maximize one's minimum gains—to assume that the enemy is a perfect player and move accordingly. When reduced to mathematics, this can involve a certain amount of probability, even in a game such as *DIPLOMACY* which uses no chance mechanism (dice or cards). In terms of *DIPLOMACY* tactics, it means that you must look for a move that will make gains regardless of what your opponent does; but always remember that there is rarely a single best move—outguessing the opponent, whether by intuition or by probability, is part

of the game—although the best players strive to limit the options an opponent enjoys. A gain can be possession of a supply center, destruction of an enemy unit, or, especially in the Spring turn, occupation of a non-center space which will lead to capture of a supply center in the upcoming Fall. "Spring is the season of maneuver; Fall, the season of capture." When you outnumber the enemy, you're virtually certain to succeed if you don't make a mistake, and if unit mix and positioning haven't handicapped you at the start of the war. If you're outnumbered or desperately need a quick advance to prevent a third player from gaining the upper hand, then you must take chances. Try to figure out how the enemy will move and then order your units to take best advantage of that move. As with Chess, you must be able to see all the possibilities for every piece on the board if you are to hope for consistent success. You'll probably get clobbered, but you might be right and leave your enemy in all kinds of trouble, and rather wary of future moves to boot. Remember, in every case, tactics must be subordinated to strategy. A slow withdrawal in one section of the map might be better than a flamboyant but risky attempt to turn the tide if you're doing well elsewhere.

I mentioned unit mix and positioning above. Numbers are important in *DIPLOMACY*, but other factors can alter the obvious balance. The ratio of fleets to armies can be vital, for instance. If you have too many of one and not enough of the other, you could be beaten by a weaker enemy. Each country tends to have a natural mix of units, as explained above, and certain areas have obvious optimum mixes as well. The Mediterranean, including the adjacent lands (Italy, Iberia, southern Balkans, Turkey, Africa), is an area where fleets are much more valuable than armies for instance. Central Europe is an area for armies. While this seems self-evident, all too many players fail to plan ahead when building their new units. Think about where you intend to be two or three game years hence, and build units which will help at *that* time. After you've expanded to about ten units, it will take one or two years for new ones to reach the battle lines—plan ahead for this eventuality. Moreover, think about where you will build a unit *before* the opportunity comes, to avoid hasty decisions when faced with the short time limit.

When you are doing well, you need to expand as rapidly as possible, getting units behind enemy defenses (especially stalemate lines) before they form. I call this "headmaning", from the hockey term for moving the puck up to the most advanced attacker. In a sense, the most advanced attacking unit "carries the puck" for the whole attack; and if it is stopped, the entire force will bunch up behind it. Get a few units out front as fast as possible and let the newly built units help destroy enemy resistance nearer your country. A single unit, leading a stream of units, can make the difference between success and failure for an attack which takes place several years hence. For example, when Turkey is expanding west, it should "headman" a fleet into the Atlantic as soon as possible, probably before the last Italian center is captured, so that the western coun-

tries cannot seal Gibraltar (by Fleet Portugal and Fleet English Channel supporting Fleet Mid-Atlantic).

When the units to headman aren't available, a lone "raider" behind the enemy lines can disrupt an enemy attack or defense for years. Most spaces on the *DIPLOMACY* board border six other spaces. Although land/sea differences help, three to five units are needed to force a lone unit to disband for lack of a legal retreat. A common way to start a raid is to retreat after battle into enemy territory rather than toward home, but in many cases a wary opponent will make sure this isn't possible.

Another trick of retreating, the "fast retreat home", can be worked with an ally. One player dislodges a unit of the other, who disbands it rather than retreat. This allows him to rebuild the unit in a home center at the end of the year, barring loss of a supply center. He can change an army to a fleet in this way, or bring a useless unit back home to defend against or help eliminate a raider.

Whether attacking or defending, write your orders carefully. In almost every game, an unintelligible or miswritten order has ruined even the most brilliant plan. Double-check! It's easy to write one thing when you mean another. Some players take advantage of this too-human failing by deliberately mis-writing an order. This may be meant to confuse the enemy, but more often it's a means of double-crossing an ally while pretending innocence.

Defense is often a boring affair for the average *DIP* player, but imaginative use of attacks is sometimes the best means of successful defense. For example, if Russia has Army Bohemia and Army Galicia and Austria has Army Vienna and Army Rumania, it appears that Russia has a sure two-to-one attack against Vienna because Rumania cannot support Vienna. However, if Austria orders A Vienna-Galicia supported by A Rumania, then the Russian will be stood off if he attacks with Galicia supported by Bohemia (two-to-two) as he is likely to do. (If he attacks with Bohemia supported by Galicia, then A Rumania-Galicia would cut the support and save Vienna.)

A more complex example: Russia has Fleet Aegean and armies Bohemia, Galicia, Rumania and Bulgaria. Austria has armies in Vienna, Budapest, Serbia and Greece. Outnumbered five-to-four, at first glance Austria seems certain to lose a center. Russia can concentrate two units on Vienna, two on Greece, and use Rumania to cut one support. If Austria merely "stonewalls" (Budapest and Vienna support each other while Serbia and Greece support each other), he is certain to lose either Vienna or Greece this season and another center next season. But if he attacks with all four units (Vienna-Galicia, Budapest-Galicia, Serbia-Bulgaria, Greece-Bulgaria) he may actually catch the Russian napping. If the Russian chooses to attack with Bohemia rather than Galicia, with Aegean rather than Bulgaria, his supports will be cut by Budapest and Serbia and his attacks will all fail.

The Austrian, however, takes a serious chance because he may lose two (or even three) centers rather than one, if orders are written as follows:

*Austria:**A Vienna-Galicia* (dislodged)*A Budapest-Galicia**A Serbia-Bulgaria**A Greece-Bulgaria* (dislodged)*Russia:**A Rumania-Budapest**A Bohemia support Galicia-Vienna**A Galicia-Vienna**A Bulgaria-Greece**F Aegean support Bulgaria-Greece*

On the other hand, the Austrian suddenly finds himself behind the Russian lines in Galicia and Bulgaria with Warsaw and Sevastopol standing open. If the Russian is an unimaginative tactician, the risk of all-out attack is often worth the shocking result.

Nonetheless, an attack is not always the best means of disarranging the enemy. First you can stand pat when your opponent expects you to attack and moves to block it. This will leave his unit(s) out of position and could even cost him a center. For example, France moves Army Marseilles-Spain in Spring 1901 while Italy moves Army Venice-Piedmont. Now France wants to protect Marseilles but he wants to end the Fall season in Spain in order to claim it (Spring occupation is not sufficient to control a center). If France orders Army Spain back to Marseilles and Italy orders Piedmont-Marseilles, France will protect Marseilles, capture Spain and leave Marseilles itself open for a possible build. But if Italy holds instead, France is left with his army in Marseilles, no captured center and no place to build a Mediterranean fleet to resist Italy further! This is a classic guessing game. More often than not, France moves to Marseilles for he can't afford to lose a home center.

Another example of doing the unexpected: a nominally attacking unit can actually support a defender's move in order to disrupt the defense. For example, in Spring 1901 Russia moves Army Warsaw-Galicia while Austria orders Army Vienna hold, Army Budapest-Serbia. In the Fall, Austria wants to protect both Vienna and Budapest and capture Serbia, so he orders a self-standoff: Army Vienna-Budapest and Army Serbia-Budapest. This is the classic means of defending three spaces with two units. Russia, however, may order his own Army Galicia to support the Austrian Army Serbia-Budapest. Then Serbia-Budapest succeeds (two versus one) and Austria does *not* capture Serbia. Later in the game, a similar situation can occur but with Serbia now owned by Austria and a Russian unit in Bulgaria as well. Russia could order Galicia to support Serbia to Budapest, thus capturing Serbia. But in either case, the Austrian can outguess the Russian by standing where he is. In cases like this, luck and intuition (and game theory if you know how to use it) are your tools. There is no "best" move. That's what makes *DIPLOMACY* so endlessly fascinating.

Finally, in closing, a word of advice: avoid center-grubbing. Position can be as important as possession of an additional supply center. Don't disarrange a good position on the board in order to immediately capture an invitingly vulnerable center. You may sacrifice so much

that you'll soon lose that center and more besides. In particular, never open a hole in your line unless you're sure you can close it before an enemy raider gets through. One enemy unit behind your lines can delay or cancel an entire offensive. Be ever wary of dislodging a defender where the defender can retreat through your lines into your rear. Don't be lulled by the apparent simplicity of any position. Every good tactician pays attention to details which the less skillful don't notice or don't bother about.

DIPLOMACY is the ultimate game of negotiation and strategy. Don't be fooled by its seeming simplicity. There are dark depths of complexity beneath that placid surface. And these dark depths extend to the players themselves. This is, perhaps, the irony of it all. No other

game makes deceit, trust, vengeance, cooperation, communication, wit, and a host of other peculiarly human traits so integral a part of its play. There is an undeniable fascination in exploring these depths in others as well as in ourselves. Perhaps that is why *DIPLOMACY* is so addictive. The one "art" I have not touched upon here is the Art of Psychology, so necessary for the diplomat to be successful. However, even a cursory examination of that would fill far more than a mere 64 pages.

Nevertheless, if one masters the arts of negotiation, strategy and tactics, one can look forward to the occasional victory. It is my hope that the above too-brief examination of some elements of these helps the readers of this *Guide* avoid the more dangerous undercurrents long enough to perfect their art of playing The GAME.



"Vorwärts! Vorwärts!"—German infantry press forward into the breach at St. Quentin in March 1918.

EUROPEAN TOUR

Opening Strategies for the Great Powers

In the previous article, Mr. Pulsipher touched upon a number of elements of the game, offering general observations and hints. Here, some of the hobby's best players offer more concrete suggestions on opening strategy for each of the seven Great Powers. As do chess masters, many hold that the opening moves of DIPLOMACY carry within them the seeds of victory or defeat. There is no doubt that more ink has been spent on the possible openings than on any other aspect of strategy and negotiation. The thoughts of the following writers—tournament champions and postal winners all—should serve as a sound basis for your own initial deliberations when next you play.



Playing AUSTRIA

By Michael Lowrey

Many a *DIPLOMACY* player reacts with a sense of dread when dealt the role of Austria. "Austria is the weakling of Europe," they say. "It has no future, crushed between waves of Turkish, Russian and Italian armies. Even if somehow it doesn't get squashed like a bug in 1902, Austria still can't win for it's easily kept from grabbing the 18 centers needed for victory." And so on, and so forth.

All this is, I think, overly pessimistic. Austria, if well played, can be very successful. Its offensive potential is vast and its position on the mapboard excellent. Indeed, at the first DixieCon *DIPLOMACY* tournament in 1987, Austria outperformed every other Great Power in the final statistical analysis. All that is needed for the experienced *DIP* player to be victorious as this "weakling of Europe" is an understanding of the peculiar Austrian situation and some adept negotiation. Key points to remember are:

- 1) Austria can't fight a two-front war. Her fundamental problem is not that she can't defend herself; she can readily hold her own (at worst) against any one of its neighbors. Her problem comes when attacked from both west and east. Key support orders will be cut, leaving the Austro-Hungarian forces impotent—and soon dead. The primary Austrian diplomatic initiative must be to keep this from happening, to never be forced to fight a two-front war.

- 2) Austria is a magnet. The Austrian player sits atop the largest collection of supply centers on the board: the Balkans. For any power to dominate the eastern half of the mapboard, it must control the Balkans. It's just that simple. This creates a temptation for all your current and future neighbors to come after you. This is most notable if Austria shows any sign of weakness. Even your allies will choose to attack you to get a piece of the pie. As a result, an Austrian empire without momentum, without prospects for some growth, can quickly find itself in trouble. Time does not favor the Austrian player in *DIPLOMACY*.

- 3) At the same time, though, the very things that make Austria a target can also make it the strongest power on the board. The position that makes you vulnerable to being the meat in a T/R/I sandwich cuts both ways. It also means that you can easily attack any of those three countries, as well as Germany across the neutral zone. Austria's offensive potential is immense, which can be a key factor if you can survive to exploit it later in the game.

- 4) Austria's weakness in naval strength and position is not as crucial as it may first appear. This sword truly cuts both ways: while Austria will have difficulty using fleets effectively, enemy fleets can't threaten three of Austria's four core centers (the home centers of Vienna and Budapest, along with the captured Serbia). And the Mediterranean is narrow, so just a fleet or two of yours can go a long way.

With all this in mind, now let's examine Austria's relationship with her neighbors:

Turkey: If there is any Great Power that needs your centers to become a threat to win the game, it is Turkey. The Turk's natural route of expansion, and the quickest and easiest way for him to grow, is through your centers. There are only two ways to remove this threat: alliance or war. Simply ignoring Turkey is not an option for the Austrian, as all too soon you will find he is not ignoring you.

Both these solutions are not without their drawbacks. To eliminate Turkey and remove the threat of the worst possible two-front war, fleets are necessary. So an ally is needed. The good news is that both the Italian and Russian might well be interested in removing the Turk. The bad news is that the success of the operation depends largely upon your ally's fortunes; a sudden change of policy in Moscow or Rome could leave you stalemated against Turkey and facing the possibility of the dreaded two-front war.

The other option—alliance—is equally dangerous. Be forewarned; this is not at all an easy thing to pull off in the first place. The obvious target for it is Russia, with Turkish units going to the Black Sea, Armenia and Bulgaria while Austrian units move to Albania, Serbia and Galicia. By the end of 1902, his builds might allow Turkish fleets to put pressure on the Ionian while Austrian armies assault Venice. Beyond these immediate and short-term goals, however, the alliance becomes strained. Turkish builds are far from the likely fronts in the Med and middle-Russia. New Austrian units will usually get wherever the fight is much quicker. As a result, it is likely that Austria will become larger than her ally. At the same time, the Austrian heartland is a tempting target for the Turk, who finds it much easier to stab you than for you to stab Turkey. If you ally with the Sultan, keep your eyes open. And keep some armies nearby. (This is almost as bad as a two-front war.)

Russia. To Austria's north and east looms Russia, potentially a great ally...or a great enemy. Russia is quite capable, especially with Turkish or Italian help, of launching a brutal and game-ending (for you) attack on the Dual Monarchy. On the other hand, the combination of Austria and Russia is one of the most powerful in the game; and after Turkey is eliminated, both are free to sweep westwards without causing problems for their neighbor. Whatever the situation, Austrian approaches to Russia should be cautious. While a long-term alliance is desirable, Austria's initial focus must be short-term and concerned with two spaces on the map: the Black Sea and Galicia.

While the Russian may do many things in 1901, the one you should most fear is an alliance between he and the Turk. There is absolutely no doubt as to the intention of such a pact. Your best weapon—maybe your only one—is the mutual mistrust that exists between them about control of the Black Sea. Use this mistrust to your best advantage. You should try to create conflict over who will control this key space by noting, loudly and often, the threat the other poses. Use the Black Sea to swing the best deal you can with one or the other.

A second spot on the map the Austrian must be concerned about during the first year is Galicia. A Russian army there at the end of Spring 1901 creates real headaches for the Austrian; indeed, the headache can be, in the long run, fatal. Don't let this happen to you. If there is even the slightest doubt about Russian intentions, cover Galicia.

Italy: While Austrian strategies vis-a-vis Russia and Turkey are fairly straightforward, your relationship with Italy is problematic, at best. These two share the only border where differently colored pieces start adjacent, each occupying a home center! This uncomfortable situation, and a perceived lack of alternatives, makes Austria a frequent target for the Italians in 1901. Still, a fight with Italy in 1901 is never in Austria's interest. The Italian peninsula is easily defended, so your chances of success in KOing him one-on-one are virtually nil. In any

early war against the Italian, you have no immediate help either (the French or Turks can't get to the scene of the action for several seasons). Worse, such a war will distract you from the important theater, that facing Russia and/or Turkey in the East. Distracted Hapsburgs are, as noted above, very tempting targets.

The other option, though not much better than the offensive one, is to play defensively versus Italy from the first turn by having Fleet Trieste move to Venice or hold, or by moving Army Vienna to Trieste as the fleet goes to Albania. Such moves will be productive if the Italian attacks you, but there is a cost. Fleet Trieste doesn't get to Greece, or Army Vienna doesn't cover Galicia. If Italy hasn't attacked Austria, you've only put yourself in a weaker position against Russia and/or Turkey.

To make matters much worse, making such moves may even backfire and cause the Italian to attack. Consider your opening move of "F Tri-Ven", which would seem to be an effective move in the spring to slow any Italian aggression. If he doesn't attack, you could end up in Venice without a unit to support your fleet faced by two adjacent Italian units. He kicks you out, you build only one new unit (remember, you haven't taken Greece as usual), and the Italian is convinced you are neither reliable nor trustworthy. He talks to Russia (or Turkey), and then attacks you in combination with them.

So, if an assault in Italy is out, and merely playing defensively is risky, what should Austria do? Obviously, in all good faith you should approach the Italian seeking an alliance, or at least a non-aggression pact. Ironically considering the position, Italy is the closest thing to a natural ally Austria has at the beginning of the game. To tell the truth, if Italy attacks you, Austria is probably "toast" and the Italian doesn't even get much out of it. I like to dangle the possibility of eliminating the two-front threat that hangs over both of you by joining forces to crush Turkey. With some luck, the Italian will go along with your reasoning.

The West: Given all these challenges on the eastern side of the board, it would appear that the Austrian player would have enough to do in the early game. But the successful Emperor can't ignore the three western powers either. Remember, Austria can't fight a two-front war. In the long run, even if you deal successfully with the Russians, Turks and Italians, a quick-moving Western alliance will be drawing near the mass of centers in the Balkans, destroying whatever security you have created for yourself.

As ever, it's useful here to ponder the short- and long-term goals of your position. Austria's short-term goal is straightforward with regard to the West—to be left alone. You've a lot to do in the East in 1901. Being "left alone" means talking to Germany and agreeing to a treaty of non-aggression. Achieving this with the Kaiser, who has enough to do in the West no doubt, isn't too hard. As Austria, you'll probably hear overtures from Germany and England about attacking Russia; these are to be expected and treated only as secondary distractions.

Austria's long-term goal is equally simple when looking westward: keep any one power or group of powers from becoming dominant until you are ready to face that direction. This means playing the "balance of power" game. Make sure that all the others recognize the threat any emerging power or alliance there represents to the Eastern powers. Play one Western power off against another; keep 'em fighting. If you have the unit(s) available, consider intervening directly; sending an army to Tyrolia to either help or hinder Germany can make a big difference.

Obviously, these efforts won't always work. One of the Western threesomes will become too powerful for you to distract. In general, England is the least threat to your growth, for its fleets are far less of a danger to you than French or German armies. Keep in mind, too, that any of the three can make a good partner later in the game if facing Russia or Italy; at that point, you may need to change your policies and the direction of your diplomacy.

Let's look at each of your initial three units and consider possible Spring '01 moves. Turning to *Fleet Trieste* first, it has only four potential orders of worth: moving to the Adriatic, to Albania, to Venice, or merely holding its position. If you have no fear of Italian treachery, go

to Albania so you can take Greece with support from Serbia in the autumn. The other three options are all, in one manner or another, defensive moves against Italy (and at least one is openly hostile). For the merits of moving to Venice, see above. Going to the Adriatic is an anti-Italian move, and pre-supposes that you'll commit at least one (if not both) of your armies to a do-or-die assault on Italy. This is rarely done, primarily because the result is usually the "die" option. Finally, a "Hold" order, which offers protection against an Italian stab but at the cost of taking Greece, while not opening antagonistic to your nearest neighbor isn't going to win you any friends, for you still threaten Venice come the Fall.

Army Budapest should probably move to Serbia on the first turn. This is a neutral center, and the linch-pin of your southern approaches. The only other order which might make any sense for Army Budapest would be "A Bud support A Vie-Gal" if you have a strong alliance with Turkey against Russia and trust the Sultan without reservation. "A Bud-Rum" is a third possibility, but gains nothing of value that a move to Serbia wouldn't do without antagonizing the Russian.

Army Vienna takes on a defensive role initially, just as the mission of the units in Trieste and Budapest is to gain you new builds in 1901. Vienna's first priority is to cover Galicia if you have any doubts about Russian intentions whatsoever. Losing a center to Italy is bad enough, but having a hostile Russian unit move to Galicia in Spring 1901 can prove fatal. Your secondary defensive concern is to guard against Italian aggression by moving to Trieste (or Tyrolia). If you feel that Galicia isn't at risk to rampaging Russians, it's much better to send the Army Vienna to protect your coastal home center while the fleet is moving to Albania, from whence you'll get an extra build for Greece.

If Italy and Russia are both thought to be friendly, then "A Vie-Bud" is perhaps the best option even though this move gains you little other than a fine defensive position. Yet another possibility is a move to Bohemia or Tyrolia as your contribution to a combined assault on Germany with Russia and/or Italy. While this move can assure the destruction of Germany in short order, that usually does not help Austria much—and may actually weaken your position. At the most you might gain a center or two in 1902 or 1903, but they will be hard to defend and far from your main area of interest in the Balkans.

In conclusion, taking the role of Austria can be a very harrowing experience, particularly for the novice player. But, with skill, lots of effort, and a little luck, Austria can become an offensive powerhouse early in the game. In what other country is it possible to gain 18 centers without a single fleet; several such victories have been documented in postal and tournament games. Maybe yours will be next.

Playing ENGLAND

By Kevin Kozlowski

OK, so you are starting a game of *DIPLOMACY* and you find that you have just drawn England. The obvious questions come to mind: What are the "standard" strategies you can pursue to achieve success? What fundamental elements of play must you be aware of due to their critical impact on the success or failure of your position? What should your opening moves be in Spring 1901? Hopefully, the following will answer some of these questions. But first, we need an overview:

The first thing to notice about England is that each of its home supply centers are on a different land mass than that of each of the other six countries. The implications of this fact are the most fundamental and important things to understand about playing England. Here are just a few of the consequences:

1) England itself can only be conquered by powers that have fleets in the northern sea areas of the board.

This means that one of England's most important goals is to limit the number of Russian fleet builds in St. Petersburg, the number of new German fleets in Berlin and Kiel, and the number of French fleets built in Brest. The English player should also keep an eye on any Mediter-

anean fleet builds, as they always threaten to break out of the Med into the Mid-Atlantic and north towards the English island. However, it is generally sufficient to deal with the more immediate concern of limiting the number of northern fleets.

In the game of *DIPLOMACY*, convenience often determines the course players take. If Germany has no fleets, then it will generally not be convenient for him stab England. Thus, the odds of being stabbed by Germany can be reduced (but not eliminated) if you can convince your German ally to build armies rather than fleets. If Germany instead has two fleets hanging back in, say, Kiel and Sweden, then this added convenience of attack could be the deciding factor that causes Germany to stab you rather than to stab someone else. This is particularly true in face-to-face games, where stabs and shifting alliances are more common than in postal play.

The builds made by Germany and France in the Winter of 1901 are probably the most telling indicator of how well your England will do. If they build only armies, then England will do very well. Every fleet built, however, significantly reduces the odds of England becoming a major power. The sole exception to this rule occurs when France builds one or two fleets and promptly attacks Italy with all of his might, including all of his fleets. In this case, France has indeed built two fleets but the outlook for England is excellent, for they will likely soon be in the Mediterranean.

So Rule #1 for the initial diplomatic efforts of England is to work hard to convince France and Germany to build only armies at the end of 1901. Note that in face-to-face play, where there is no diplomacy allowed between the fall and winter turns, these sort of discussions about new units must happen before the Fall 1901 moves—if they are to happen at all.

2) England has a strong defensive position; the flip side of this coin is that it is often difficult for England to find room to expand. The strong English defensive position crumbles quickly if English enemies can outnumber Britain's fleets near the British isle, while England's difficulty in expanding disappears once he finally gets a couple of armies onto mainland Europe.

The strong English defensive position is mostly a result of the first point. England begins play with two fleets, and can almost always gain a third one in Winter '01. To defeat three defensive fleets, at least four, and preferably five or more, offensive fleets are needed. In the beginning of the game, France starts out with one fleet and Germany starts out with one fleet. Thus they need one new fleet apiece to gain a narrow 4-to-3 advantage, while if either of them builds two fleets then that country is vulnerable to a stab from each other or from southern or eastern powers. Furthermore, any second fleet built gives away the motives of the attacking player(s) immediately—very little (if any) diplomatic deception is possible. What this means is that an F-G assault on Eng-

land will generally move slowly in 1902, and may only pick up steam in 1903 when an extra fleet built by one or the other finally does England in.

What this all means is that in the early parts of the game, English naval power makes his island home difficult to attack. However, if the English player does not effectively limit the northern enemy fleets, then his position can crumble very quickly. Alternatively, if too many English fleets wander too far away from home, then a quick jab from a nearby power with only a fleet or two can be the beginning of the end for England. The strong defensive position of England disappears rather quickly if local fleet superiority is gained by the attacking side.

3) If England can capture Scandinavia and St. Petersburg from Russia, Brest and Iberia from France, and eliminate Germany from play, then England has a stalemate line that can be held all by himself, and is thus invulnerable and guaranteed to survive the game. Even if England is not able to completely fulfill all of these conditions, then often a "hold-fast" line is possible instead. (A hold-fast line is a line that can theoretically be broken by persistent attack from enemies, but will take such a long time and such perfect orders that in practice this line is invulnerable.) Whenever you play England, keep this concept firmly in mind, because there will be times when a particular tactical plan can lead to a significant improvement in the English position due to the hold-fast line gained by a successful attack.

Any opening strategy or plan that England pursues must be made with the above fundamentals in mind. In Spring '01, England has three units for use: Fleet Edinburgh, Fleet London, and Army Liverpool. There are four "established" openings for England with this configuration:



Prince Rupprecht (left) and the Kaiser

- #1) F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nrg, A Liv-Edi
- #2) F Lon-Nth, F Edi-Nrg, A Liv-York
- #3) F Lon-Eng, F Edi-Nth, A Liv-York
- #4) F Lon-Eng, F Edi-Nth, A Liv-Wal

England has two "primary" neighbors and one "secondary" neighbor. France and Germany are its primary neighbors, while Russia is its secondary neighbor. England and its two primary neighbors make up the so-called Western triple. Generally, this is where most of England's initial energy will be devoted to.

Initial strategy in your game cannot be set in stone, but instead must be dependent upon the relationship—or lack thereof—that you develop with each of your neighbors. Let's explore some of the permutations, starting with the least pleasant and moving towards better and better results. It must be stressed that, once you know who the other six players are, it is very important to contact each of your three neighbors as

soon as possible, and it is helpful to contact more distant powers for the purpose of gaining information about the intentions of your three neighbors.

Possibility #1: France and Germany seem to be intent on attacking you...or at the least are unwilling to work with you. Furthermore, you have good reason to believe that Russia will move Army Mos-StP. This is the worst possible case. The expectation is that France will open to the English Channel. It is uncertain if Russia will actually move to StP in Spring '01, but you feel you cannot rule this out.

In this case, opening #2 is the proper one, even at the cost of allowing France into the English Channel. There is one very important advantage to this move. By ordering "Fleet Nth-Nwy, Fleet Nrg supports F Nth-Nwy, Army York-Lon" in the Fall, you guarantee that you will build one unit in the Winter, even if Russia does move to StP in Spring '01. The importance of gaining this build is that it buys a little time to try to break up an alliance that will quickly crush you if it stays intact. Every effort must be made break up the indicated R/F/G alliance, and crafting a strong defense may give you the time to do so.

Possibility #2: France and Germany seem to be allied, but Russia is definitely your ally.

The news is still bad, but the third opening will give you time to set up a nice defensive line. If Russia is your ally, then you need only one fleet to take Norway, and you can utilize Fleet London to keep France out of English Channel, slowing down the F-G attack. The army in Yorkshire is usefully located to defend any threatened supply center. Furthermore, moving to Yorkshire instead of to Wales gives you the opportunity to present your move to English Channel as defensive in nature. Diplomatic efforts should be undertaken on two levels: a primary effort should be made to break up the F-G pact, and a secondary effort should be made to get Italy to attack France and to secure active Russian help against Germany. Note, however, that these are somewhat mutually exclusive. Asking Italy to attack France could backfire and destroy a potential alliance with France if Italy spills the beans on you. However, overtures to Italy must be made, because if Italy attacks France then France will be far more likely to agree to a deal with you. Even if he does not agree to work with you, he will not be able to devote as much force against you, slowing down the F-G attack on the British isles.

If F-G are allied against you, then one diplomatic tactic that can be tried is to offer alliance to the person who does *not* own Belgium. Offer to support this person into Belgium as an incentive for your new friendship. Breaking up any F-G alliance must be the number one English priority, and Belgium is often the "bone of contention" between these two powers.

Possibility #3: France is offering an alliance, and is willing to move against Germany. He has agreed not to build fleets in Winter 1901. Furthermore, Germany does not seem to be a promising ally.

This is a normal situation. E-F can make a solid alliance that is reasonably "stab-proof", but has difficulty breaking southern stalemate lines. Opening #2 is generally the one to use, although there may occasionally be a case made for moving Army Liv-Edi instead. In the instance of an alliance with France, about the best possible situation that can happen for England is for France to get three builds (including one for Belgium) and then build three armies. This pretty much guarantees that France will be attacking Germany for a long time—after all, he will have five armies and only one fleet. In this case, you will have two attractive possibilities. If France is someone you trust very much, then hit Germany to help conquer him as soon as possible. If you have only a little trust for the French, or if he tends to be annoying and you desire to cause him pain, then go about your own merry way overrunning Scandinavia while he beats his head against an entrenched Germany. And then, when you have secured a strong base, you have the choice of either finally helping France against Germany, or of building fleets in Liverpool and London to attack France from the rear. With only a single fleet, and only a small possibility of getting the seventh center to create a second one, France becomes pretty much helpless to either oppose you or attack you.

Possibility #4: Same as number three but here Germany is your ally instead of France. Any of the openings can be used, depending on how aggressive you and your German ally wish to be against France and/or Russia, whichever has become your target. One difference between the E-F and the E-G alliances is that the former must attack Germany, while the latter enjoys a choice of either attacking France, or of pretty much ignoring France and hitting Russia first. One note of warning: E-G versus R-F tends to become a stalemate with England finding it difficult to make progress against either France or Russia. If France is willing to mark time (or better yet, hit Italy), then an E-G alliance can take the time to capture northern Russia, at which point England is in a commanding position to hit France with his new fleets in combination with the new German armies. More frequently, however, Russia agrees to a non-aggression pact in Scandinavia, allowing E-G to concentrate on France. If the Frenchman is a good defensive player attacking France can be a long and tedious experience, and can generally only be ended when English fleets outflank the French by taking the Mid-Atlantic space from the north, thus exposing France's Iberian provinces and cracking his defensive line. An overland route relying mostly on German armies is doomed to failure as the corridor into France is simply too narrow to exploit effectively. If France is defended poorly, then of course just about any attack against him is destined to succeed.

In dealing with Germany, work very hard to convince the Kaiser not to build Fleet Berlin in Winter '01. He will want to, no doubt. His announced justification will be that he wants to take Sweden from Russia, and that he also wants to keep Russia out of the Baltic Sea. These are very legitimate reasons for Germany to build a fleet. However, it is well worth your while to try to convince Germany to build armies instead—even at the expense of letting him have Belgium. As with France, a Germany that builds three armies in 1901 is England's permanent and loyal ally.

Possibility #5: France and Germany seem to hate each other's guts, and want your help against the other. In this case, you get to make a choice. You have the leverage to enforce your will on whichever of the two you decide to ally with. Talk to both; emphasize you desire that they build only armies; and join with the one who is more willing to meet your needs. Given a choice between equals, some players would prefer an E-F alliance; others would choose E-G. It's simply a matter of taste. But in practice, the player that offers the better offer is the one that should be your ally.

Possibility #6: France and Germany want to try a Western triple alliance.

This is a very strong opening for England. He generally gets Belgium as part of the agreement, and then sets about taking Scandinavia from Russia with German help. These are centers that England would normally want anyway. Meanwhile, France builds fleets and moves all of his forces against Italy, while Germany builds only armies and moves them south and east. Perfect! However, such a triple alliance will never last the whole game. So all England has to do is take Belgium, Norway and St. Petersburg and maneuver to stab either France or Germany (depending on which is more convenient). Since both of these countries will have a large number of units tied down on their southern flanks, they will have difficulty in effectively responding to your stab. You need have no pangs of guilt about your treachery; no doubt one or both are planning doing the same to you during the midgame.

England is a "defensive" Great Power more than an "offensive" powerhouse. Thus, the main attribute needed to play England successfully is patience. Gains often come slowly for England early in the game, but once a new center is in hand it can be very difficult (if not impossible) for others to take away. A strong England can command a stalemate line all by himself, but even a strong England is generally unable to prevent the formation of southern stalemate lines. For this reason, many players are ambivalent when they are tagged to play this Great Power. England is a solid and sturdy country to play, with all the corresponding benefits and problems for newcomers to this marvelous game of strategy.

Playing FRANCE

By David Hood

France is probably the most balanced of the Great Powers in the game of *DIPLOMACY*. What do I mean? Well, there are some countries on the board that start with poor defensive positions, such as Austria and Germany. There are some with good defensive positions, such as England and Turkey. Alternatively, the offensive potential of Italy is weak while that of Russia is strong in the opening game. However, for the lucky player who draws the French, there are good prospects—both offensive and defensive. Early elimination of France from the game are almost unheard of, while solo French victories constitute a large percentage of total wins in recorded postal and tournament play.

There are several thoughts on the success of France in *DIPLOMACY*. For our purposes, however, it is enough to say that a novice player can do well with this country where he might falter with an Italy or Austria in his first game. The primary advantage for the newcomer is the fact that France's first gains (Spain and Portugal) are relatively easy to get, while its home centers are usually easy to defend in 1901. That means that the novice French player is likely to be around longer, and thus learn more in a game, and will not be discouraged in his first playing. His adversaries may not be as lucky.

That brings to the fore the question of whom France's adversaries will—or should—be. The grand strategy for France is the conquest of the West before an assault on the Mediterranean. Let's examine each of the three stages of a "normal" game to identify France's goals at each step.

Opening. In the first part of a game of *DIPLOMACY*, France seeks at least one ally in the West, to double-team the remaining Western power. The more traditional alliance is with France's historical ally in WW1, England. If the English Channel can be de-militarized, the spheres of influence of the two countries are distinct, and therefore less prone to the instability and distrust that wrecks so many alliances. Obviously, the initial target is Germany in this case, which can be a tough nut to crack. Thus, it is essential that France and England start moving aggressively immediately if they are going to blitz Germany quickly.

In alliance with England, the opening orders of "F Bre-Mat; A Par-Bur; A Mar-Spa" are generally the norm. The move to Burgundy may result in a bounce, but at least the Germans won't be there. A foreign unit in Burgundy is usually the death knell for the French. Too, the German is often quite amenable to leaving Burgundy open as he would prefer to move to the Ruhr instead to have a shot at capturing Belgium in 1901. Another option would be to have "A Mar support A Par-Bur", possibly after having arranged a stand-off in Burgundy with the German player. Your perfidity would strand the German in Munich without many options in the coming Fall, which is always a fine thing for the E/F alliance. The only drawback to such a scheme is that, in order to take both Spain and Portugal, the fleet must end up in the latter, unable to go to the West Med in Spring 1902 to meet any Italian threat or opportunity.

The initial stumbling block to an alliance with England will be Belgium. The English player will often ask for it "to even up the builds". Don't fall for this line. You do not want an English army on the Continent—France can handle the land war just fine. In addition, you want that build yourself because England will grow more than France will in 1902, which will "even out" the strength of the two powers in the alliance anyway. Remember that an English army in Belgium is very often the opening of a combined E/G attack on France.

It is a wise move to discuss with the English exactly how you envision the division of centers. Clearly you should have Munich, and probably Holland, while England takes Denmark, Kiel and Berlin from Germany. The best thing about such a split of the spoils is that England must often fight with Russia for his three, while your two "German" centers are relatively uncontested by the other powers.

The other standard opening for France is an alliance with Germany, aimed at the "Wicked Witch" England. The advantage of such a plan is that England is, in the long run, a much greater threat to each of you than either of you will be to the other. In addition, the F/G pact is much less common, and thus a more surprising development to the rest of the board. Often, the Eastern powers will react to a E/F alliance much more aggressively than to a F/G pact. The drawback to any alliance between Germany and France is that both must build fleets, so your spheres of influence as England dies becomes muddled. Careful planning and negotiation is needed to assure that immediate warfare does not break out between rival French and German fleets around the British Isles (at least, not until you are ready for this...).

There are two schools of thought regarding a French assault on the English. Since England itself is not easy to invade in 1901, some experienced players believe it is best for France to adopt an innocuous want-'n-see opening (F Bre-Mat; A Par-Pic; A Mar-Spa). This can then serve as a basis for either anti-English or anti-German moves in 1902. This set of orders also gives France the possibility of three builds in 1901, though that may be an unlikely result. Another, relatively bland, opening is "A Mar-Gas; A Par-Bur" (or vice-versa), which allows a great deal of defensive flexibility but is inferior to the other options in a number of subtle ways.

The other primary school of strategy, to which I subscribe, is to open strongly against the English immediately with "F Bre-Eng; A Par-Pic; A Mar-Spa". (Personally, I prefer "A Mar-Bur", but we'll discuss that below.) The avowed purpose here is to convoy the army to Wales in the Fall, or better yet to support the German Fleet Denmark (or Holland) into the North Sea that turn. The latter is a devastating blow to the English. Detractors of this plan point out that two French units are being used to gain position in 1901 rather than new centers, which is risky in the early stages of the game. Possibly that is true...but novice players, as well as veterans, too often forget that, in the tactical game of *DIPLOMACY*, position is everything, especially against a power such as England. The extra units France might have had would be nice, but those units will rarely be involved against England right away. If, on the other hand, England is allowed to entrench unmolested they may be of little use anyway. Spain and Portugal will fall just as easily one at a time as both together.

Which brings us to the topic of unconventional French openings. I have always liked "F Bre-Eng; A Mar-Bur; A Par-Pic" even though it ignores the Iberian centers completely in 1901. Why? For starters, it brings all your units to the front against whichever target you have chosen rather than a move "backwards" towards the southwestern edge of the board. Your build will be Belgium, which you are very likely to get with two units supporting the attack. Even better, you can support yourself there with one unit while either supporting the German fleet into the North Sea or moving "A Bur-Ruh" or "A Mun" for a position against Germany. But, be warned that this is a "gutsy" move by the normally stolid French; a hostile Italy can challenge you for Iberia if you don't watch your back.

There is also the unusual option of moving against Italy immediately with the order "A Mar-Pied". With Austrian help, you can probably cripple Italy in the Fall of 1901. But unless you like to be a "wild card" as a player, this is probably not a viable plan. A better result for such an opening move is to use it as a flanking maneuver against a compact German defense. You can move from Piedmont to Tyrolia in the autumn and so be ready to attack Munich from the south in Spring '02. (I personally think that it would be far better to instead convince the Italians to do this. A wonderful Fall ploy is to order "A Bur support Italian A Tyr-Mun"; this takes away a German unit and paralyzes his defenses in 1902. And the Italians are fairly easy to root out of Germany when the time comes to end your alliance with them.)

Another unique option is to ally with both Germany and England, and order "A Par-Gas; A Mar-Spa; F Bre-Mat". The usual follow-up is to bring the fleet into the West Med and have the two armies occupy Spain and Portugal. An even more dynamic attack on Italy is to move to Piedmont and take only Spain in 1901. If you are adept at negotiation

and compromise, these moves can be very profitable in the long-run. But remember the "Hood Theorem of Triples": they don't really exist. *DIPLOMACY* is primarily a game of bi-lateral agreements (particularly when played by post). As such, be very sure that the English and Germans don't have a hidden bilateral understanding that doesn't have your French interests at heart.

Now, what of the rest of the board? Russia must be communicated with often, as she is the punitive fourth Western power. If an E/G alliance occurs, you will need to work with the Czar to maintain a balance. To, if Germany is your first target, you might want Russia to consider moving against Germany by promising support from Munich and aid against England and things like that. As with the Italian, you can always root Russia out of Germany in the midgame. If England is instead your target, you want Russia to leave your German ally alone and send Army Moscow to St. Petersburg to help the cause by taking Norway in 1902.

The "far" East is another matter. France has little to say to the Austrian or Turkey at first, but don't forget that their interests often parallel yours. Turkey doesn't want a strong Italian navy, and neither do you. Austria can occasionally be convinced to join in a war against Italy or Germany, so a serious attempt at negotiation should be made if either of these are in your plans. In fact, the attitude of every major power is crucial to your midgame success.

MidGame. In the second stage of a normal game, you will have finished off Germany or England and be ready to make your move towards dominance. France is now faced with a choice between two options. You can stab your Western ally as you squabble over the carcass of the initial victim, or you can sally forth into the Med to attack the Italian or "rescue" him from the clutches of an evil eastern empire. A stab in the West is usually easier to engineer because your units are closer to the intended target, and because you can likely obtain Russian help...regardless of who the ex-ally may be.

However, don't lose sight of the primary stalemate line that runs from St. Petersburg to the West Mediterranean. France needs, like all the major powers, to cross that with authority sometime in the midgame in order to have a chance at winning. A strong move into the Mediterranean will accomplish this if it is well-timed and combined with an alliance of some sort with Italy, Austria or Turkey. A pact with Italy can put you in the front line against the A/T fleets that would otherwise be coming your way eventually, while leaving you near enough to Italy to engineer a devastating stab if the opportunity presents itself. Alliance with Turkey or Austria offers Tunis, Rome and Naples to add to your Western conquests.

The midgame is an exciting time for France because these two primary options are both viable. Choose carefully, for you can't do both at the same time.

EndGame. Now France is pushing for the victory. If she has not yet stabbed her Western ally, now is the time. It is always a good idea when entering the endgame stage to count up the centers you control, look over the board, and figure out which other ones you have access to and how to reach them. If you have too many fleets or too many armies, your unbalanced force might compel you to attack your allies. Of course, they might have plans to do the same to you, so be ready to launch a pre-emptive strike if necessary.

Another common endgame situation France faces is that of a strong Turkey or Austria racing for a win of their own. Be very sure you have covered the Munich and Mid-Atlantic choke-points, as this is where they must make headway to grab that 18th center.

In sum, be happy when you are given France to play. France easy to defend and expand, and everyone will want to ally with you. You've many options to consider. Indeed, some *DIPLOMACY* writers in the past have stated that France has too many options for the novice player to handle. My advice, if you've not played France in competition before, is to sketch out a rough plan of expansion in the beginning so

that you control your destiny rather than merely react to the moves and wishes of others. Smooth and easy growth follows as you march to victory, just as the rest of the players realize that they are about to lose, again, to a well-played France.

Playing GERMANY

By Melinda Holley

Since Germany is located in the middle of the board, it is somewhat reminiscent of an octopus. Just like the octopus, the German player can spread out in many directions and influence any country on the board. And just like the octopus, that can get him in trouble at times.

Historically (that is, in terms of the play of *DIPLOMACY*), Germany can pick up Holland and Denmark for two builds in 1901. If France is not in Burgundy and there are no armies in Tyrolia or Silesia, Germany might also pick up Belgium in 1901. This action, however, could possibly concern both France and England, even if they are at war with each other. A six-center Germany in 1902 can be a powerful threat to both of them.

The smart approach here, unless you as the German are very certain you will be able to deal with their alliance, is to allow your ally (either France or England) to take Belgium while you are "satisfied" with but two builds. However, if France is menaced by an English fleet in the English Channel, or if an Italian army is in Piedmont, or if Russia has opened by sending his Army Moscow to St. Petersburg (thereby threatening England's ability to take Norway in Fall 1901), you may be able to convince your ally to allow you to take Belgium, thus denying it to your common enemy.

There is thus always the question of whether or not to open to Denmark or Holland with your Fleet Kiel. By opening to Denmark, the German has a valuable diplomatic card to play in the east. He can help another country in denying Russia a build (by bouncing him in Sweden) in Fall 1901. Conversely, he can do Russia a favor by not bouncing him (and possibly angering another power). Unless the German feels ready to deal with an irate Russia in 1902 or is more than reasonably confident that Russia will not be able to retaliate, there is little reason to bounce Russia in Sweden unless Russia's Spring 1901 moves are openly hostile to Germany—or Germany wishes to curry favor with a third power. By opening to Denmark, on the other hand, Germany immediately forgoes an almost guaranteed third build in Belgium.

The option of opening to Holland rather than Denmark allows you to influence events in the west by controlling the fate of Belgium. (Opening to Denmark allows you to influence events in the east through Russia.) By opening to Holland, the German player is placed squarely in the west. The German enjoys a valuable bargaining chip. Even if England and France ally against Germany, the German player can still (assuming there is no French army in Burgundy) obtain Holland (in Spring 1901), take Denmark (Fall 1901), and support himself to Belgium (A Ruhr-Belgium with support from Holland in Fall 1901) or bounce the combined E/F forces in Belgium. If England has decided to bounce Germany in Denmark in Fall 1901, the E/F forces cannot take Belgium. If the E/F forces combine to attack Belgium, they will bounce Germany in Belgium.

Obviously, a great deal depends upon Germany's immediate negotiations with France to keep Burgundy neutral. If England and France are allied against Germany and a French army is in Burgundy, the German player can still gamble on picking up (or bouncing in) Belgium and leave Munich open. If this situation has developed, the German player is well advised to enlist either Russia or Italy (if not both) in an immediate alliance against the West.

Most often, before the first turn, Germany will seek an alliance with either France or England. If Germany has allied with England against France, then support of England to Belgium in Fall 1901 is to be seriously considered. The Anglo-German forces are then in a position to force the fall of Burgundy in 1902. This strategy works especially well if England is able to support himself to the English Channel to threaten

Brest and the MidAtlantic in 1902. Without the intervention of an outside power (Russia or occasionally Austria), France is soon doomed. The "Iron Dream" is within your grasp.

After France is eliminated (or significantly reduced so that attention can be turned elsewhere), the German player must decide whether to remain with his English ally or turn on him. If he has not built any new fleets, he's better off marching his armies elsewhere. Without significant naval support, England cannot be conquered. Germany could stab his English ally and take continental supply centers, and then build fleets I suppose. However, this could be *very* risky unless Russia is in a position to attack England in the north or Italy's fleets are moving northward through the MidAtlantic. Either or both of these will be necessary to beat down a strong England.

If Germany decides to remain with the G/E alliance, attention should be focused on the Russian centers no matter who occupies them. A combined G/E attack on Russia could prove very effective. However, their forces would have to move quickly and decisively since they are moving from the western edge of the board to the eastern. Conceivably, if Russia itself is on the ropes, England and Germany could assist the wounded Czar by sending England's fleets racing towards the Ionian as Germany's land forces move either against Italy or Austria. In either case, the G/E alliance must split its forces to move against Russian territory, or down the middle of the board towards Italian and Austrian territory.

Another option is for Germany and England to attack Russia first. Either these two nations have agreed to participate in what is called a "Western Triple" (Germany, England and France) with the idea of stabbing France as soon as Russia is crippled, or they have secretly included Italy in their devious negotiations to ensure France is too busy defending against a combined G/E/I to threaten them.

The German-Russian alliance is usually formed in response to a strong E/F threat. Russia's interests are not well served to stand idly by and watch Germany fall to the two Western powers as he is likely to be England's next target. If possible, the German would also want to convince Italy to send at least one unit against France. This would force both the E/F to fight on two fronts.

The Germany-France agreement usually targets England first. If conditions are right, the G/F alliance can take possession of the North Sea and prevent England from getting any build at the end of the first year:

Spring 1901...	(Germany) A Ber-Kiel; A Mun-Ruhr; F Kiel-Den (France) A Mar-Spa; A Par-Pic; F Bre-Eng
Fall 1901 ...	(Germany) A Kiel-Den; A Ruhr-Hol; F Den-Nth (France) A Spa-Port; A Pic-Bel; F Eng s GERMAN F Den-Nth

If this succeeds, both Germany and France gain two builds (Belgium and Portugal for France; Denmark and Holland for Germany). In addition, England has lost control of the North Sea and is kept to a maximum of but one build at the most (Norway). The G/F alliance has gained a strong tactical position against England from which to threaten England's home centers in 1902. Most importantly, the G/F alliance now controls the North Sea, one of the key spots on the map.

Of course, any G/F alliance has to immediately deal with the problem of Burgundy. If time can be spent in doing so, a Spring 1901 stand-off in Burgundy gives the illusion of a possible G/F confrontation. This allows both Germany and France to mislead the English how much they want an alliance with him. You're likely to get some good advance information this way. However, such a stand-off could allow England to take Belgium if Germany isn't in Holland in Spring 1901 or if France has not opened with his Fleet Brest-Picardy (a rather unusual opening gambit).

Another contrived stand-off which could buy Germany some security is to order A Mun-Tyr in Spring 1901. Even if France has opened to Burgundy, Munich can still be covered with one unit. If Germany suspects a possible F/I alliance, he has protected Munich in Fall 1901.

As a bonus, he has probably gained Austria's good will since Italy's opening move of an army to Tyrolia threatens Vienna and Trieste as well. If facing a hostile Italy, Teutonic solidarity is a must.

Given Germany's central position, it is inevitable that the player will be approached by two others looking to put together an early-game "triple". Naturally the first triple alliance which comes to mind concerning Germany is the "Western Triple". While this gives Germany freedom to move against the east with allies on either side, it also puts Germany squarely in the middle between a growing England and a strong France. Not only is Germany caught in a vice, both his allies are to his rear. A watchful eye must be turned in that direction at *all* times.

In the Western Triple, Germany allies with England against Russia and with France against Italy. The Western Triple is usually formed in response to a strong R/T alliance. Therefore, opening moves could look something like this:

Spring 1901...	(Germany) A Ber-Kiel; A Mun-Tyr; F Kiel-Den (England) A Liv-Edi; F Lon-Nth; F Edi-Nrg (France) A Mar-Pied; A Par-Gas; F Bre-MAt
Fall 1901...	(Germany) A Kiel-Hol; F Den-Swe; A Tyr s FRENCH A Pie-Ven (England) A Edi-Nwy; F Nth c Edi-Nwy; F Nrg-Bar (France) A Gas-Spa; F MAt-West; A Pied-Ven

In this scenario, all members gain builds (if Russia has opened A Mos-StP, England may have to forgo moving to the Barents Sea and support his convoy to Norway with F Nrg). England can then pick up Belgium in 1902 for his next build or be allowed by Germany to take Sweden in 1902 and allow Belgium to go to one of his partners (often Germany) for their next build. In the south, France and Germany are in good position to attack Italy by Fall 1901. In the following year, Germany can then support himself to Bohemia and put pressure on Vienna while France moves on into Italy.

The "Northern Triple" consists of Germany, England and Russia. Mutual control of Scandinavia is essential. Once that decision is made and implemented (either by totally evacuating the area, or by each retaining units in Denmark, Norway and Sweden respectively), a united northern front can sweep south. England and Germany can move against France while Russia and Germany march against Austria. Germany's presence in the Austrian-Italian theater can be quite detrimental to the southern powers thereafter.

However, the sticky question of Scandinavia will wreck this alliance quicker than anything else. Russia sees St. Petersburg as vulnerable to an English stab. Germany sees that Denmark is threatened by a combined E/R attack. England realizes he could be suddenly outmaneuvered and lose not only Norway but control of the North Sea as well. An early agreement must be reached, preferably before Fall 1901. The best way to avoid a stab by either of the three partners is to evacuate Scandinavia completely in the Spring of 1902.

The "Central Triple" consists of Germany, Austria and Italy. This allows the Central Powers to form a solid core and protect each other. It also allows Germany the option of operating in alliance with either England or France in 1901 during the early game. One bonus to this triple is that it is a shocking surprise to the other players. An A/I alliance is not unusual. But Germany's participation in this triple would come as a revelation, since Germany would have been involved in the west until time came for him to actively support the A/I alliance against Russia or Turkey! A true "diplomat's dream".

Germany's obvious strength is that, located in the middle, it can affect the play of every other country to a great degree. Germany's worst weakness is that, located in the middle, it is a tempting target for everybody in 1901 except Turkey. But there is no denying that the German player will have many options, and face many tough decisions. That's what makes playing Germany so challenging, and success so memorable.

Playing ITALY

By David McCrumb

Over the years, Italy has been one of the least favored powers in the game of *DIPLOMACY*. While everybody concedes that it does not take a great deal of skill to simply survive to the end of a game when playing Italy, obtaining a victory or even being part of a draw is not an easy accomplishment. Many gamers would prefer to play Germany or even Austria, because these powers will either do very well in the game or be eliminated quickly. In other words, with most of the other "Great" Powers, you either have high hopes of a strong finish or have the option of finding another game because you are soon removed. But the general consensus is that Italy rarely does well but usually manages to hang on with two or three centers long enough that the game ends.

Despite the perceived difficulties associated with the play of Italy, there are a growing number of *DIP* players who enjoy the challenge. In fact, there are a few who have developed a reputation for inevitably doing well when tagged as Italy. Kathy Caruso (see "Leviathan" in this *Guide*), while certainly the best known, is but one of several top players who do well as the Italian monarch. The secret behind the successes of these players is that they have come to understand that Italy must take control of its own destiny, rather than allowing the flow of the game to control it.

I believe that Italy is the most exciting power on the board to play due to the multiple opportunities it enjoys. Not only are there four potential targets in 1901, every power is a potential ally. With so many options, many novice players are simply overwhelmed by the permutations that can result. Because of the problems they face in deciding which course of action to follow, which offer to accept, some players tend to wait for the game to "develop" before deciding upon what they will do in response. While such a "wait-and-see" strategy might be possible, and even recommended, with powers such as England or France, if playing Italy it will quickly see you labelled as a "minor" power.

Sitting and waiting to react to the actions of others keeps Italy from entering the flow of the developing game. With Tunis being the only neutral center available, Italy must step on somebody's toes to pick up the second build (and every one thereafter). Since your immediate neighbors (France, Austria and Turkey) will each normally gain one to three new centers each in 1901, you must take the initiative before these powers gain those extra units to block any further Italian expansion. The best time to do this is before they have grown too powerful; this translates into a direct attack in 1901. Not only will it limit or halt your target's growth, but it will place Italy in a solid position with two or three builds early in the game.

When selecting that first target, you must undertake the same basic analytical look at your opponents that you would when playing any of the other powers. You must—as a player—decide who you can trust, who could be a problem in the future, and who you simply cannot work with. Assuming that this weighing of the opposition leaves you with no clear choices, it is time to look at the geography and precepts of the game in the hopes of solving Italy's dilemma.

When considering Italian possibilities at the beginning of the game, most players see only Turkey. Not only does Turkey have a great defensive position, it can build two fleets every season and quickly surpass Italy as the major sea power in the Mediterranean. With the Balkans so close an inviting, it is also quite feasible for Turkey to obtain the centers to support the construction of those new fleets. This makes Turkey the greatest long-term threat to Italian security. During a Turkish attack to the north, they will eventually be stopped in Russia somewhere. An attack on Austria will bog down as it approaches the stalemate line near the German border. In order to reach the 18 centers required for victory, the Turk will have to go through Italy. Since Turkey will have the luxury of a single front and perhaps of numbers as well, it will have the advantage. Due to this looming threat, many Italian players opt to help destroy Turkey while it is still possible.

Since the Turks also pose a major threat to both Russia and Austria, it is often possible to talk one or both of them into joining in on this effort. Under a combined assault, Turkey must eventually fall.

The most common Italian opening aimed at Turkey is so popular, it even has a name: the "Lepanto Opening". This strategy involves a Fall 1901 convoy of an Italian army to Tunis via the Ionian Sea. After building another fleet in Naples, the fleets then occupy the Eastern Med and the Ionian in the spring of 1902, convoying the army from Tunis to Smyrna or Syria during the autumn. Turkey is threatened from all directions in the early game and quickly expires. This means that Italy's greatest threat to survival is eliminated, and Italy herself is in a good position to attack a second victim.

A second popular strategy when Italy is contemplating an allied assault on Turkey is known as the "Key Opening", involving very close and trusting cooperation with Austria. It begins by looking like an attack on Austria when the Italian Army Venice moves into Trieste in Spring 1901. During the fall season, this unit is then moved into Serbia with Austrian support. Used in conjunction with the Lepanto, it can be devastating to Turkey, leaves Austria in a better defensive position with regard to Russia, and shows the Tsar that you two are wholeheartedly committed to the destruction of the Turk.

Since both of these openings are used so frequently by Italian players, they are quickly recognized by and defended against by veterans. The Key Opening, in particular, tends to cause problems for Italy. These problems come, not from Turkey (who can do little to interfere with your moves), but from other powers on the board. The others, especially the Russian, observes the very trusting nature demanded of this ploy and leap to the conclusion that the Austro-Italian alliance is forged in steel and game-long in duration. You must undertake some effective diplomacy to quash this belief, or Italy will find itself facing a strong alliance or even the dreaded triple.

But the Key Opening is not only a fine method to attack Turkey, it is also the best method to attack Austria. Since the Austrian player fully expects you to move to Serbia, he often commits only one unit to re-occupying Trieste (if any). If the second Italian army instead moves to a position to support Trieste in the fall while the fleet takes Tunis, Italy is at five units with a powerful force already in position in Austria. With the Russian and the Turk rushing in to pick up the pieces of a collapsing empire before they disappear, you should be able to pick a new target in short order.

However, the most commonly used method of attacking Austria in the early game involves a move to Tyrolia and Venice. This will pit an Italian army against a vacant Vienna or two units against Trieste. Usually Austria can order one army back to Vienna or support a unit back into Trieste, so the Italian attack becomes a guessing game. Most "good" *DIPLOMACY* players hate guessing games, unless they are absolutely necessary. Thus, this strategy is rarely used; although if convinced that you will receive Turkish support into Greece in the autumn, it can be used to limit the Austrian to no more than one new unit in Winter 1901, guaranteeing at least one Italian build, and leaves Tunis open for a leisurely capture in 1902.

It is apparent that the obvious Italian strategy is to look for open centers that are available for capture in 1901. Munich is always a possibility. It is easy to convince most German players that you are not interested in his realm but in attack Austria, so it is rarely guarded. It is an easy center to take by guile. The only problem is that it causes many problems for Italy. Firstly, it angers one who might well be a very important ally in the midgame. Secondly, Germany can usually retake Munich with little trouble in 1902. Third, if you funnel more forces in to hold and expand this bridgehead, the Italian peninsula is likely stripped of units and exposed to invasion by Austria and/or France. While the move may initially look promising, an attack on Germany can be your death knell. Nine times out of ten, Italy ends up such an adventure with Berlin or Kiel being their last center.

On the other hand, the capture of Munich can be used to great advantage. If it is taken with German consent, it can very easily serve as a base for a second front against France. Combined with an army in Pied-

mont and fleets built with the new centers, France will have problems very quickly. With German armies following your units in, and the potential of English involvement, this could be a quick campaign. Success against France might well give you access to the Atlantic, a great help if Italy is to win the game. If the English should side with the French, the majority of the French centers lost will still fall to the Italians, so even that will not be a total defeat. If your attack does bog down, it is fairly easy to blockade the Straits of Gibraltar to stymie the Western powers, allowing your extra units to try their luck in the East.

A more straightforward attack on France is usually a risky proposition. The smart French player will move Army Paris to Gascony or Burgundy. This allows him to still capture Spain and Portugal while covering Marseilles. A Franco-Italian war will be a slugfest, so you must be very sure of the attitudes of the players behind you in the East. Great attention to your diplomacy will be demanded, both to insure neutrality of the powers at your back as well as acquisition of allies against France.

While attacking someone is *the* way to get ahead in *DIPLOMACY*, it is always nice to have a friend to help in your successes and your troubles. Since all the others are potential Italian allies in 1901, you must weight your future plans carefully, looking at where you wish to be at the midgame and endgame. To conclude this brief look at Italy, let's consider her "friends".

Russia is perhaps the best ally that Italy could ever hope to have. Russia is not a power to ever threaten any Italian home centers (unless Italy is in serious trouble already). Furthermore, Austria and Turkey are conveniently positioned between Italy and Russia, while Germany is accessible to both. Turkey cannot be defended along both her northern and southern borders simultaneously against the armies and fleets that a Russo-Italian alliance can field. With Austria contesting Turkey for the Balkans as well, there is little for the Turk to do but die. With Turkey gone, the Russo-Italian forces now have Austria hemmed in from three directions; it is a simple matter to reposition some armies and overwhelm her. The alternative, first attacking Austria before eliminating Turkey, is also a sound strategy for the Russo-Italian alliance. After that, Germany beckons. The two friends are also free to individually attack France and England in a race for the win.

Allying Italy to Austria is a very popular strategy. While these are the only two powers to have bordering home centers, rather than a round of center-grabbing this fact frequently leads to close cooperation. Realizing that they must work together or drag each other down, the Austro-Italian alliance can quickly become very powerful. With Austria providing the bulk of the armies and Italy the naval power, they can work together not only to eliminate the Turks and Russians, but are then poised in the middle of the map to make a quick swing in the midgame and attack the Western powers.

While it is rare, an alliance with Turkey is not out of the question. This takes a great deal of cooperation and trust, but since that is one of the precepts of the game two good players can make such an odd marriage work. Once again, Italy serves to provide the fleet strength while Turkey supplies the armies. The major difficulty facing this alliance is that the Italian must be very careful to insure that Turkey has room to maneuver once Austria and southern Russia have been overrun. If the Turk starts to feel hemmed in, he will stab you. But, despite the risks, it is unexpected alliances such as this that makes the game challenging and enjoyable.

Italy's best Western ally is England. England can be used to draw French and German strength away from Italy. During a combined offensive, England provides the second front so vital in a victorious war. At the very least, England can serve as a constant worry to any of your enemies on that side of the board.

Germany can also be a helpful ally. She can put tremendous pressure on France right from the first turn; with France thus focused on the northern threat, Italy can often seize Marseilles and the Iberian centers. Likewise, Germany can serve as a distraction in any attack on Austria, although few German players will be interested in such early

in the game. Similarly, come the midgame, Germany can be a useful friend when faced with a hostile Russian. Since the Germany and Italy can avoid stumbling over each other when fighting any of these, the match is one with minimal friction to threaten success.

France is surely the least helpful ally for Italy early in the game. The only target the two of you can cooperate against is Germany; since this is not a recommended course for Italy, there is little the two have to talk about other than neutrality. Late in the game, however, France might well be the best ally Italy could ask for. Both could attack a strong Germany, England or Russia from two sides, sweeping the enemy from the board. One unusual tactic in such a strategy is for France to allow Italy to send one fleet into the Atlantic for use to annoy England, keeping it preoccupied until France is ready to take it on.

As you can see, there are quite a few possibilities for decisive action when "stuck" playing Italy. The best players all recognize that fact; they also recognize that Italy will only occupy Tunis and then stagnate if there is no aggressive plan of action. While the possibilities may seem endless, electing to follow the best one given the unique personalities and play of each game is what separates Italian victors from mere survivors.

Playing RUSSIA

By Fred Townsend

Russia, a highly volatile power, where the wins are quick and the eliminations even quicker. Over the thousands of recorded postal games, Russia shows the most victories, but only an average rating. Why? Because only Austria gets eliminated from the game more often. It's my hope that the following might help you avoid becoming another sad statistic in the record book.

To start our study, let me pose a question. In the first two years of a *DIPLOMACY* game, your primary objectives as Russia should be: a) defending your home centers, b) capturing as many neutral centers as possible, c) crippling one of your neighbors, d) finding a trustworthy ally or two, or e) getting your orders in on time? Quick, what's the answer!

In my book, it's "d" (and, of course, "e"). *DIPLOMACY* is a game of alliance; the object is to negotiate your way to a victory, not to take centers. Centers are simply to be used as the fertilizer for alliances, not as an end in themselves. For the Russian player, this is particularly important. Russia needs two allies, one in the north and one in the south. Indeed, Russia is the only country with significant interest on both sides of the mapboard at the start of the game. When analyzing Russian openings, it is crucial to think in strategic terms for the two areas separately.

In the south, the most common alliance is with Turkey. As this alliance advances, with Turkey building fleets and Russia armies, the two do not get tangled and can proceed evenly to the endgame. Indeed, so strong is this alliance that, in most games with experienced players, Italy and Austria are forced to ally early for fear of the R-T steamroller. One important consideration when crafting such an alliance is to precisely delineate the centers which will become white, and those that will become yellow. Russo-Turkish alliances too often unravel because both parties think they should be entitled to Vienna, or Budapest, or even Munich.

Obviously, the first target of such an R-T alliance will be Austria (though you can sometimes talk a gullible Austrian player into an RAT triple). However, as the Russian you cannot ignore the north entirely. If an English army slips into St. Petersburg, for instance, you are in deep trouble. So always take a global approach in your negotiations. Italy will be the target for much of your opening blather while allied with Turkey. To the Italian, you can offer to stab Turkey once Austria is gone (and, believe it or not, Italy makes an excellent ally for a midgame attack on the Sultan), or try to convince him to head westward after France in the early game. What you do not want is for the Italian to "wake up and smell the coffee", as a joint Italian-Austrian defense can be very hard to crack if they cooperate from the opening moves.

Russo-Turkish alliances do indeed scare the rest of the board into action at times, for they are so very powerful. For this same reason, Melinda Holley, an experienced player of the first order, favors a Russian alliance with Austria to avoid this deadlock. Certainly Russia should cooperate with Austria if attacked by Turkey, but in the absence of a Turkish attack upon Mother Russia, my preference is to join forces with the Sultan. Let the others stop the steamroller if they can.

If you elect to go with Austria as a partner, remember that both Russia and Austria are primarily land powers (at least, in the south where it matters to you). If this alliance is going to last very long, you must begin building fleets to break out into the Med as soon as you can. There is no situation more amenable to treachery than idle Austrian armies waiting on your borders for you to beat up on Turkey. Try to get the jump into the Black Sea early and often.

So, what of Italy as an early partner for Russia? There is merit to this approach, but Italy and Russia cannot cooperate as closely or actively as Russia with either Austria or Turkey. If an Italo-Russian alliance sandwiches Austria, you still have a potentially strong, potentially hostile Turkey with which to deal. Cooperation is possible with the Italian, but I would suggest that no Czar put all his Faberge eggs in one basket. Friendship with Italy is best as a compliment to an active alliance with one of the other Eastern powers—not instead of such with either.

Up north, the preferred ally is Germany. To start, if Germany moves Fleet Kiel-Denmark, Russian hostility will guarantee that you do not take Sweden in Fall 1901. Looking at the longer term, a Russian attack on Germany usually only succeeds when both France and England cooperate, but when Germany is eliminated due to the two-front war England is much more likely to turn on Russia than on France. (On the other hand, remember that there is nothing sadder than the loneliness of an unallied *DIPLOMACY* player.) In the midgame, Germany is much less of a threat. It is also often possible to coordinate with France against England (or Germany), and this becomes a necessity if the E-G alliance starts off with an attack on you and/or an isolated France. The English are harder to work with than either of the others, but if you can convince him to leave you Norway if he gets all German holdings except possibly Munich, it is possible to set up a stable border for the endgame.

With these two allies in tow (Turkey and Germany), my preferred Russian opening moves are quite obvious. The fleet in St. Petersburg should always go to the Gulf of Bothnia, while conservative moves are recommended for the other three units. If you think you can tell who your allies and enemies are going to be before fall 1901, you're dead wrong. Actions speak far louder than words, so let your neighbors' orders verify their pleas for alliance. For Russia, this means bouncing in

both Galicia and the Black Sea. An arranged bounce with both Austria (moving from Budapest or Vienna) and Turkey (from Ankara) keeps Russian options open without creating unnecessary enemies. "Army Moscow-Ukraine" completes the conservative opening I favor, with the end objective being to take both Sweden and Rumania with conflict.

A more daring opening sees Army Moscow moving to St. Petersburg. This is blatantly anti-English and should be done only when Germany promises to move Fleet Kiel to Holland. In Fall 1901, write to France suggesting that if he will bounce England in Belgium you

will order your army to Norway with the hopes of preventing any English growth this first year. Now the fickle Frenchman tells England, the English player supports himself to Norway, and your move of Army St. Petersburg to Finland sets up a new fleet in St. Petersburg (nc). Assuming you have Sweden and a firm German alliance, Norway should fall into your hands in 1902.

Down south, my favorite tactic is the "Sev-Con Shuffle". Turkey moves Army Smyrna to Armenia while you move Fleet Sevastopol to Black Sea. Then you loudly proclaim to all you are each attacking the other. In the Fall, your fleet goes to Constantinople (even as the Turkish Fleet Constantinople sails into the Aegean Sea) while the Turkish army slides into Sevastopol. Austria and Italy do not now know whether Turkey and Russia are actually allied, and away you go.

Occasionally, the Turk actually is hostile. Thus, the favored anti-Turkish opening is "A Mos-Sev, A War-Ukr, F Sev-Bla (or Rum)". The plan is to slip the army into Armenia in the Fall, which generally cripples Turkish expansion. If you can come to an agreement with Austria, this opening works quite well in containing and then destroying the upstart Turk. If aimed at Ger-

many, Melinda Holley and the venerable Rod Walker both recommend "A War-Sil", but I do not think that a good option. Rod also favors "A Mos-Lvn" to convoy to Sweden in the autumn; no thanks, Army Moscow has better uses elsewhere.

In general, the most common mistake novices make as Russia is to try to grab too many centers too soon. A seven-center Russia in 1901 becomes everybody's target in 1902. So, settle for five or six centers and concentrate upon building a firm alliance structure. Indeed, if it will cement your pact, you should even consider supporting Turkey into Rumania or Germany into Sweden.

There are only three tactical problems that you might be faced with at the end of the first turn. When Germany moves Fleet Kiel to Denmark and it is clear that he will bounce you in Sweden, consider moving your fleet from the Gulf of Bothnia to the Baltic instead of making a fruitless attack on Sweden. If Austria gets into Galicia in the Spring of 1901, it is my experience that he almost never attacks Warsaw in the Fall 1901 turn; so use Army Ukraine in an attack on or defense of Rumania.



General Sukhomlinov (left) with his staff

Finally, if Turkey has moved to Armenia and bounced you in the Black Sea, common experience is that she will again order Fleet Ankara-Black Sea in the upcoming turn, so consider moving your own fleet to the Black Sea again, even if you do risk losing Sevastopol.

Russia's general objective in the midgame is to maintain centers on both sides of the St. Petersburg-to-Spain stalemate line. That is, if you are advancing. If retreating under an unbreakable Austro-Turkish offensive, your objective is to hold on to St. Petersburg at all costs to make yourself essential to the stalemate. If attacked by Germany, who has a fleet in the Baltic and an army in Kiel, watch for the enemy convoy to Livonia. Many new players tend to forget that Kiel borders the Baltic, and are unpleasantly surprised to find their line outflanked.

It is sometimes necessary to strategically cede St. Petersburg and Sweden in the midgame and so become a three-center southern power. If England has attacked, for example, you could offer him minimal resistance in exchange for him basing a fleet in St. Petersburg rather than an army. Remember that the primary stalemate line passes through Warsaw and Moscow. Don't let Germany or England get the jump on you in the early stages of the midgame, or you will go way of all Czars.

Due to Russia's unique position, you are the one power that can snatch the victory the quickest. The midgame stage for Russia often consists of continuing to roll along as you did in the opening game. Move quickly and decisively, for the best opponents will realize that you can win with a sudden five-center gain across a broad front in a single game year. Try to get an ally on the other side of the line, like France or Italy, to help you over the hump if necessary. Keep in mind that any stalemated game usually means Russia has been relegated to second-class status as the Great Powers fight over your Warsaw-Moscow corridor. Unlike England or Turkey, you cannot get ahead by playing a stalemate strategy. Go for the gusto, and do it with confidence.

In the endgame, Russia's sole objective is to rush for the win. Since Russia is the only power which straddles the main stalemate line, it is difficult for the others to frustrate you. A Russian player should accept a draw only if forced into it by the impending loss of several centers or his position. But, as the statistics show, this is rarely necessary. You can sometimes take 18 centers just with armies in the center of Europe, but more likely Russia will need some fleets in the Atlantic or Mediterranean or both. Try to reach this step as early as you can in the midgame, even if it means bypassing a build. Once that goal has been attained, victory is within your grasp.

Thus, the "Townsend formula" for success as Russia: seek out allies, don't grow too fast, and straddle the stalemate line. Until we meet over a gameboard, best of luck to all the would-be Czars.

Playing TURKEY

By Mark A. Fassio

Turkey. The images conjured up by this country are generally of a notorious nature militarily: *Bashibazouks* and Mamelukes, Janissaries and serfs (*fellahin*). Pillagers of Constantinople and twice besiegers of Vienna. Impalers of heretics and, of course, the "sick man of Europe". Well, put away that thermometer and body bag and break out the harem and hookah! When playing *DIPLOMACY*, you'll find that Turkey is one of the strongest countries on the board when properly played. While it's true that the skill of the player will generally decide how he or she fares in relation to the other nations, I submit to you that a mediocre Turkish player can still outdo a good Austrian or Italian by following a few simple guidelines.

Turkey's geographic location, in terms of the *DIPLOMACY* map, offers a natural "hedehog" defensive position. It's a nice, compact area that is hard for others to root you out of early in the game—unless a solid A/I or A/R alliance develops. Even then, the hostile alliance usually tips their collective hand by Fall 1901, giving the Turk plenty of time to prepare a defense and send letters to his enemies' neighbors.

But let's not think of Turkey solely as a passive defensive power under attack; she also has great offensive potential!

Turkey should be able, through astute diplomacy, to link up with one of his three Balkan "neighbors" and engineer some tensions between the other two. As to the choice of allies, Turkey's best choice is either Russia or Austria. (An alliance with the Italian, while possibly beneficial in the early game, creates a lot of tension between the two allies in the midgame; a long-term I/T alliance, while interesting and fun, is a rarity.) Let's look at the R/T alliance first.

Almost all the considerations of such an alliance are positive. For one thing, the R/T creates a solid front against any enemy. The two have no rearward enemies to worry about, and they protect each other's flanks. Militarily, you're squared away when in such an alliance, because of the ease in coordinating an offensive against Austria. Once you breach the land bridge of Galicia-Rumania-Bulgaria, you've got a natural, mutually supporting springboard for nailing the ArchDuke's coffin shut. Russia should keep the peace with Germany, thus allowing his full attention to be directed toward helping you (the Austrian) in the Balkans. If you're really sure of your Russian ally and trust him explicitly, a strategically sound Spring 1901 move could be:

(Russia) A War-Gal; A Mos-Ukr; F Sev-Bla; F StP-Bot
(Turkey) F Ank-Con; A Con-Bul; A Smy holds

More often than not the Warsaw-to-Galicia move will bounce, but this still leaves the R/T alliance with units in the Black Sea, Bulgaria and Ukraine. (Austria, if opening "normally", will have F Alb, A Ser and a bounced A Vie.) In the autumn, you and the Tsar combine for:

(Russia) A Ukr-Rum; F Bla s A Ukr-Rum; F Bot-Swe; A War-Gal
(might as well keep trying for it; an alternative is A War-Ukr, opening Warsaw for a build if needed)
(Turkey) F Con-Aeg; A Bul-Gre; A Smy-Con

Done adroitly, Russia should build two new units (he will, of course, pester Germany to allow him to have Sweden in return for peace between them). Turkey meanwhile builds one. These moves offer many advantages. They ensure that the R/T pact controls the land bridge of Rumania/Bulgaria for concerted future operations, as well as gets a Turkish fleet into the Aegean Sea for further immediate anti-Austrian operations. Russia's Fleet Black Sea can stay to provide support for either power, or slide along the Bulgarian coast (or through Constantinople in a spring turn) and thus get a another fleet out against the common enemy (and away from Turkey's centers in Constantinople and Ankara)! In the winter, the Turk builds in response to any threat posed by the others (generally a second fleet himself).

If you and the Tsar prefer a more discrete alliance (so as not to alarm the rest of the board too early in the game), you can fake a war in the Black Sea, bouncing each other in Spring 1901. Turkey could even send A Smy-Arm, to "show" the Austrian that he really means business against Russia! You may, thus, be able to sweet-talk Austria into using Army Serbia to support your proposed move A Bul-Rum. Austria will see it as a way to keep you out of Greece and in his camp against Russia. The true unsheathing of the R/T blade can then emerge at your choosing, when the foe least expects it. As early as Fall 1901, you and the Tsar have a variety of options to shock the Austrian: you can support the Russian to Rumania (and watch the ArchDuke's eyes pop out), or you can convoy your Army Armenia to Rumania or Bulgaria via whoever is in Black Sea.

Here's a one nice option for you to consider in Spring 1901:

(Russia) F Sev-Rum; A Mos-Ukr; A War-Gal
(Turkey) F Ank-Bla; A Con-Bul; A Smy-Con

In the Fall of 1901, you then attack Rumania with Black/Bulgaria (try to get Austria to help you with Serbia). Russia's fleet is disbanded under this deadly "stab" and then *rebuilds his lost unit as an Army in the Win-*

ter! An extra Russian army is much more useful in the Balkans, and gives the Turk more reassurance about the future friendliness of his ally.

Diplomatically, you and your Tsarist ally can deceive the rest of the board long enough to get positioned against the expected Western counterattacks that are sure to come (and rest assured, any competent Western players will mobilize against an R/T, given its strength and potential). The Russo-Turkish alliance must "blitz the board" with many letters to prevent any Italian-Austrian marriages of convenience. Germany and England should also be dissuaded from attacking Russia if possible, so as to not dilute your knockout blow of Austria. Promise Italy that you'll give him Austrian centers in return for his opening a second front versus Austria. Of course that promise is a fib, but so what? We're not playing tiddly-winks here! Once you get rolling and Austria and/or Italy is weakened, write the successful Western powers even more frequently. Stress that the R/T is "only temporary," and that you're looking for "help" against the growing Russian monolith. Solicit their aid in keeping the Tsar in check. If you are indeed staying with your R/T alliance, this tactic delays any attacks against you as Turkey. But as *DIPLOMACY* is a "divide-and-conquer" game, you may actually find that you can make good use of one of Russia's other neighbors to help carve up your former ally. This gives you a quick influx of centers, a new ally (presumably already embroiled with his own foes in the West and thus not near you to stab), and the potential to expand even further with your Hordes of the Faithful!

If you cannot (or don't want to) reach an agreement with the Tsar, you might look at the possibility of an Austrian-Turkish pact. This option is less used than the R/T, although it offers nearly as many intriguing possibilities. The key to this alliance is that it allows for A/T action against both Russia and/or Italy, maximizing Turkish fleets and Austrian armies. Done well, you can keep Russia out of the Balkans (and out of your hair), as well as keeping Italy humble. A key to this option is incessant diplomacy with England and Germany. Remember the Chinese maxim, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend." Use this adage to entice Germany and/or England to lust after Russian territories; they will do so if they see Russia engaged elsewhere and unable to defend itself effectively against them.

Assuming standard opening Russia moves as described above, good Spring 1901 moves for an A/T could be:

(Austria) A Bud-Ser (or Rum); A Vie-Gal; F Tri-Alb
(Turkey) F Ank-Bla; A Con-Bul; A Smy-Arm

What does this accomplish? It forces Russia to cover Sevastopol in the fall by either leaving Fleet Black Sea in port, or using A Ukr to cover that home center. Either way, it keeps him away from the Balkans and/or Black Sea. In the following turn, you can then try something like:

(Austria) F Alb-Gre; A Ser S TURK A Bul-Rum; A Vie-Gal
(Turkey) A Arm-Sev; F Ank-Bla; A Con-Rum

Austria thus gains two (Serbia and Greece); Turkey gets at least one (likely Rumania), but has Bulgaria available as a "hip pocket" freebie in 1902 in the latter case. Turkey can build a second fleet to force Black Sea in 1902, and Austria can take Galicia in 1902 with help from your army in Rumania. (Austria should build at least one new army and possibly another fleet, to help prosecute the inevitable war with Italy.) With units in Galicia, Rumania, Black Sea and Armenia, doomed Sevastopol (and possibly Ukraine) should fall in 1902. If Russia devotes all his energies to defending against the A/T alliance, you'll eventually gain access to his territory while the English and/or Germans "nibble" him to death from behind. A Russia deprived of gains in the Balkans is a Russia ripe for an early game death—it behooves you to enlist as many anti-Russian crusaders as you possibly can. But at the very least, quick and decisive A/T land and sea operations into Galicia, Rumania and Black Sea/Armenia are required.

Like any good comedian will tell you, "Timing is Everything." The wise Turk constantly surveys the board, offering sound advice to his ally, and looking for the maximum gain at the minimum price for his country. Be humble with yourself, be smart versus your enemies, and write to everyone incessantly. The biggest factor in your favor is first impressions. The frequent negotiator is always looked upon more favorably than the *schmoe* who drops an intermittent postcard or speaks to another only when Turkey has a new neighbor.

In regard to the above, it's also recommended that you play a "tactical" game, worrying primarily about your growth and positioning for the next immediate one-to-three game years. To play Turkey with a "strategic" view (planning ahead for four or six game years) does a disservice to the strengths of your position. A sound tactical game with a good ally (and lots of clever negotiation) will gain you all the centers you'll need to lay a sound foundation for your run for supremacy in the late years.

Playing Turkey offers the gamer a myriad of possibilities for greatness. An A/T alliance works well when you lay out strict Demilitarized Zones (DMZs) and paths for expansion. The same applies for the R/T, with the extra advantage of no enemies to your rear or flank. And, as mentioned previously, an I/T, while not the best for later game years, works very well against Austria from 1901 through 1903. Turkey should always project itself as the friend of the country "over the next horizon", to keep in check his "current" ally and to dissuade any distant countries from mobilizing against Turkey.

With Turkey, I maintain you have control of the best country on the board for swift offensive action against any and all of your neighbors. You also own one of (if not the) most defensible countries on the map. Get yourself an ally (however temporary) and raise your battle standards high! Great things await the Sultan.

THAT RULE II

By Fred Davis

As I've mentioned to many folk, I merely "skimmed over" the rules for *DIPLOMACY* when new editions appeared in 1971, '76 and '83. After all, I knew them; hadn't I been playing since 1968. Besides, this is one of the simplest games on the market. So, like many players, I did not study the rulebook with a critical eye. It was not until I attended the first World DipCon (Birmingham, UK) in 1988 that I was brought up short by the dreadful "Draws Include All Survivors" (commonly, "DIAS") clause of Rule II. This proviso of "The Object of The Game" section has been enforced in very few North American games since my entry into the hobby, being ignored by most postal GMs (with a couple of notable exceptions) and tournament directors. Indeed, many so dislike this rule that they refuse to participate in any game where the DIAS clause is in use.

One of the beauties of the game of *DIPLOMACY* is that there are so many different ways to arrive at a victory or to craft a draw. I've seen a number of face-to-face matches where a player with but eleven or so Supply Centers was able to convince everyone else that he had won and to vote for a concession. To me, that's a *real* diplomat! Since most of us don't have the ten hours (or years) needed to take a game to a rulebook conclusion, I consider the negotiations for a concession win or a two- or three-way draw to be an integral part of the game's play. Indeed, this is the only practical approach in many tournament settings, if the organizer is to have any hopes of determining a champion after several rounds of play.

Several hobby writers worked with Allan Calhamer in the late 1960s to produce the 1971 edition for the defunct Games Research company. This was a vast improvement over the original (1961) rulebook, which had not anticipated the phenomenal development of postal play; yet they were unable to persuade Mr. Calhamer—despite some heated debates—to alter the wording of Rule II. I was disappointed that the hoary DIAS clause again appears in the new Avalon Hill 1992 edition of the rulebook, which has been improved in so many other ways. I've made an entry following the infamous section in my rulebook that reads, "Not used in postal/tournament play." Perhaps someday we will finally see Rule II revised to provide for a vote by participating players to conclude a game—with a provision that the current largest Power(s) must be included in any draw proposal. On that day, *DIPLOMACY* will truly be the perfect game.

STAGES

Thoughts on the MidGame and EndGame

By David Hood

Considering the amount of time and thought devoted to the MidGame of a typical DIPLOMACY match, I am surprised that there has been so little in the hobby literature dealing with this stage. Unlike the Opening Game and EndGame periods, the MidGame suffers from a studied neglect by hobby thinkers. Perhaps the following will change that unfortunate state of affairs.

It has become customary in the DIPLOMACY hobby to speak of strategy in terms of an "Opening", "Midgame" and an "EndGame". Admittedly, these arbitrary divisions originated in the world of Chess, and their application to Calhamer's classic may be somewhat arbitrary. Nevertheless, due to the nature of the board and the play of the game, these are some generalizations and conclusions that one can observe in each of these "stages" of play that are useful in formulating strategy.

Let's consider exactly what we mean by "MidGame". While commonly used by many authors, it is not so easy to pinpoint exactly what they mean by the term. The concept is fairly important, however. If the reader has played only a few games of DIPLOMACY thus far, each one is very distinct and generalizations on strategy are hard to come by. But, after a couple of dozen games, you will note that they do go through distinct phases, each of which has its own demands if you want to survive to the next. So, first, it is useful to have a look at a few of the ideas for defining beginning of the "MidGame":

1) "When the two main alliances begin a race with each other to destroy their respective enemy." This was first proposed by Gary Bruce in "Claw & Fang" (#69). To be fair, Mr. Bruce didn't present this as a definition, but simply as the thing that often kicks off the MidGame. Unfortunately, many games never go through such a stage, for only one dominant power or alliance rises out of the opening few turns. Gary's "definition" simply isn't universal.

2) When the "barren" zone (Piedmont/Tyrolia/Bohemia/Silesia/Prussia/Livonia) is first crossed in force. This is no doubt the oldest definition, and the one I've read bandied about most frequently. On the other hand, such an event can occur very early in a game, perhaps as early as the Spring 1901 and often by the Spring of 1902. On the other hand, if the east and west spheres are each dominated by a single power around the same time, this may never occur...or may occur only a season or two before the win is declared. Final analysis of this definition shows it to be unduly dependent upon the German alliance structure.

3) "The Spring after the first of the seven powers is reduced to two or fewer Supply Centers." This definition does have the advantage of being very specific, and it has been used in various articles to analyze performance in sample games. Again, however, this can occur very early—even as soon as Spring 1902. Thus, it

can come before strategies are fully developed, and might reflect only an isolated event such as an early NMR or very successful blitz by a triple alliance.

4) "When the opening alliances start to obstruct the progress of those successful in the opening game." This is Randolph Smyth's definition, a fairly flexible one that takes in the entire board. It emphasizes the changes in strategic thinking that must accompany the new phase for the leading players. On the other hand, it's a little hard to say exactly when this is occurring. Moreover, as with the first two above, it may never occur in a game. If one alliance has been unduly successful in the opening moves, it may simply continue to roll to victory unchecked for the rest of the game. Many triple alliances, such as the England/Germany/Turkey or France/Italy/Russia pacts, can go all the way to a three-way draw without obstruction or the players involved ever changing their emphasis.

In none of these satisfy you, let me propose two more:

5) The MidGame is the period between the Opening and the EndGame. No, no; I'm serious! Those two phases of the game are relatively easy to define. The Opening is when alliances are weak and fluid, when all the players are exploring their options and jockeying for position, and the board is sorting itself out into stronger and weaker powers. The EndGame can be said to be when the focus of the surviving players is directed to determining the outcome of the game, when the final decisions are made that will bring the game to a close in a draw or a victory. Thus, the MidGame is what falls between these two stages. Unfortunately, like the fourth definition, this one is somewhat vague, subject to varied interpretation, and probably only recognized in a specific game by hindsight.

6) This one is fairly complicated, but it is my favorite: A player is in the MidGame when his first victim has been crushed, and he has engaged his second victim; the game is in its MidGame stage when either two players, not allied, are both at their midgame or one player is engaged with his third victim. For example, if England and Germany have pushed France down to Spain and their attack on Russia is in full swing, while Italy/Russia/Turkey have stomped Austria out of existence and now Russia and Turkey have turned on Italy, we are at the MidGame. Or, suppose Austria and Russia have together knocked out Turkey, and Austria has just also stabbed Italy; when Austria and Russia attack Germany, we're at the MidGame stage, even if Italy has not yet been dispatched. The second or third victim does not have to be destroyed to define the MidGame, just that there is a serious war pursued by the attacker. And this must be an attack sparked by the primary power; thus, in the second example, if Germany attacked Austria, I'd say we were still in the Opening

Game, as Austria may be stymied at this point from making progress against Italy. This definition, then, attempts to look at whether the players have gone beyond the reasonable goals of the opening turns.

No matter how you define it, however, the MidGame is the time for each player to re-evaluate the strategy that has served him so well (or poorly) in the Opening stage. It is the period when relations with the non-neighboring powers become increasingly important. Alliances tend to be more stable, because the victims (often other alliances) are larger and the players can afford to devote a unit or two as protection against stabs by their erstwhile allies. Yet, often the MidGame will see a stab in one or more of the initial alliances, and possibly the formation of new alliances between powers on different sides of the board. It is, in sum, the time when you lay the foundation for the drama of your EndGame.

Such a distinction between the stages of the game is important, since it stresses the conclusion that the focus of the Midgame is on strategy, not negotiations nor tactics. Until this point in the play, the primary basis for your diplomatic interchanges has mostly had to do with the question of specific moves to make to take centers from another power. But now, during the MidGame, your negotiations will center upon broader notions of alliance structures and/or stabs. Tactical considerations still play a role in the discussions, but usually strategic concerns are foremost.

A reasonable question at this point might be why the focus of negotiation changes at all. Why don't the successful alliances just keep right on going after the fall of the first target? The answer is, of course, that some do. But then again, many do not. One partner stabs the other, usually just before the latter has had a chance to regroup from the initial campaign against the common enemy/target. As much as this may appear to be haphazard to the onlooker, there is really a recognizable reason for this MidGame bloodshed. Simply put, it is far easier from a tactical perspective to one's own "Heartland"—whether West or Balkan East—than it is to break into the opposing Heartland in a major way. Due to the insulation provided by the Tyrolia/Bohemia/Galicia and West Med/North Africa/Gulf of Lyon strips, the two Heartlands are very distinct. It is usually far easier to pick up, and hold, new centers in one's own than in the other one. And the easiest way to accomplish this is by stabbing the initial partner on one's side of the mapboard, sometimes with a non-aggression or active alliance with a member of the other successful pact in the other Heartland.

It is imperative, at this point, to stress that this observation is a general one. Individual situations will vary. In fact, one can only apply this principle strictly and completely to Germany, France and Austria. The other four

countries must be, to some extent, considered individually:

The MidGame situation is often quite different for the Tsar, mainly due to Russia's unique geographical location relative to the other powers. Instead of being clearly associated with one Heartland or the other, Russia is in the unfortunate position of straddling the map's primary stalemate line, and thus the boundaries between East and West. It is this central placement that leads to the high number of eliminations for Russia, as foreign units swarm over its territory in a mad rush to reach the other side of the stalemate line. Why is this important to remember for Russia's MidGame strategy? For the same reason it is a target—its proximity to each Heartland—a Russia that has survived to the MidGame is likely to have a foothold on both sides of the stalemate line. One of the main purposes of diplomacy at this stage of the game is to secure a firm alliance or position with which to speed over the line for a strong finish during the EndGame. Russia, in the MidGame, has already achieved this objective, so the result is a quick entry into her EndGame. A bunch of white units spanning the stalemate line is usually on their way to forcing a quick victory, or at least a two-way draw.

While Russia's ideal MidGame situation is just a quick transition to the EndGame, the Italian player often benefits from a longer MidGame development. This fact is, likewise, attributable to its geographic location on the *DIPLOMACY* map of Europe. Like Russia, Italy sits astride one portion of the primary stalemate line (in the Mediterranean); but whereas Russia is actually a part of each Heartland, Italy lies in neither. The reasons for this quirk should be obvious. Domination of the West must include either invading Russia (at St. Petersburg) or being allied with it. But domination of the Western heartland can certainly be done without ever having any contact with Italy whatsoever. Again, in the East, it is quite possible to control the Balkan "knot" of centers while at the same time having no contact with the Italian "boot". Therefore, since the pre-MidGame sees interest in the rapid subjugation of one of these areas by every other power, Italy is often in little danger during that time-frame and left free to pursue her own interests.

That, alas, is not at all true when the next stage comes. Italy sits astride the sea lanes linking the East and West Mediterranean, so a concerted push into the other Heartland by a naval power must necessarily be at the expense of the green fleets. As she tends to be a primary target during this period of the game, good play of Italy is dependent upon skillful diplomacy during the dangerous MidGame. Sometimes this can take the form of a non-aggression or protective pacts within one Heartland while at war in the other; sometimes it involves actively intervening in or defending against aggression from both directions at the same time. Due to this tendency to be spread thin during this stage, Italy is much more dependent on the other players and their forces in the MidGame than is Russia, which can occasionally strong-arm its way to a victory on its own.

At the corners, England and Turkey again constitute variations on the general theme of

the MidGame due to their unique position on the map. The very insularity that is their strength in the Opening becomes a pitfall now. Being so dreadfully far from the stalemate line makes a win by one of the corner powers less likely, since they usually have too far to fight for that 18th center. Unlike the other powers, however, just surviving into the MidGame virtually guarantees at least a strong survival for England or Turkey, and often a share of any draw. The key for these two powers in the swirl of MidGame diplomacy is to work towards an alliance with a power in the other Heartland to help get their units across the stalemate line. Tactically, this often involves charging across it and then working "backwards" from that position into one's own Heartland to pick up additional centers. This differs considerably from those other powers, which can afford to dominate their Heartland and consolidating their position before poking their nose across the line.

But, even with these specialized cases in mind, one can make the general observation that the MidGame demands a greater emphasis upon strategy than the negotiation-dominated Opening and tactics-dominated EndGame. Perhaps most demanding on the Italian, the MidGame play will be difficult for any player who tries to just steamroller his remaining opponents without proper consideration of long-term effects. (Perhaps only Russia has any chance of storming its way through the MidGame to a victory.) And, given the fact that it is during the MidGame that many a game is won or lost, I would urge that careful attention be paid to the unique characteristics and challenges of this stage.

In my experience, there are two kinds of *DIPLOMACY* players, no matter what else anyone else may tell you. There are "Tacticians", and there are "Talkers". Some of us are very good at negotiations; others are experts at the making and breaking of positions on the map-board. Rarely does the highest level of both abilities manifest themselves in the same individual. I, for instance, am a poor tactician...and so am not the best person to write about the EndGame. This stage of a match revolves around the epic struggle for victory, or to force a stalemate. Much of the action centers around the lines of spaces that stretch across the board from Spain to St. Petersburg. The struggle for them showcases the tactical abilities of those still involved in the game. Which is why, as a "Talker", I don't much like the EndGame. There aren't any negotiations!!

Well, not much anyway. fact is, there actually is some talk going on during this stage of the game, and understanding its importance is often crucial to your final finish. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this point is to list the common EndGame situations and touch upon how negotiations might affect each one.

First, there is the "Fair Fight". In this configuration, one power has become dominate in each of the East and West. The final turns consist of each of these trying to force their way across the mid-board stalemate line to gain the 18th center. An example might be a showdown between England and Turkey, who would be fighting over centers such as Munich and/or

Marseilles. Some of the most interesting elements of this situation concern the presence of the smaller powers still remaining in the middle. These three- or four-center nations can play the role of "kingmaker". This is the diplomatic element in this type of EndGame at its height. I have even seen that third player force himself into a three-way draw by skillful manipulation of the two behemoths.

Next, there is the "Not-So-Fair Fight", where we see an alliance in the process of overrunning the rest of the board. The residual power on the other side of the board often has no other choice but to die fighting. For public consumption, the goal of this sort of EndGame is a 17-17 split between the two members of the alliance. But there is often the temptation for one or the other to stab for a solo win. Intimations of this may give some bargaining leverage to a third party.

Third situation is the one I call "Australian Doubles". This features a two-power alliance on one end and a single large power that has dominated its Heartland on the other. If the latter has consolidated quickly enough, he may be able to force his way to victory over the combined weight of the other side. More often, though, the lone great power has trouble enough just trying to maintain a stalemate line of his own. Sometimes he is able to negotiate with one of the opposing powers and so engineer a stab, but only if his promises of a subsequent two-way draw are credible enough. Only a few top players are able to finesse a victory in such a situation.

Fourth, we have what is probably the most common EndGame situation, "Doubles". Two successful alliances face each other and fight over the stalemate line. Both are trying desperately to prevent the dreaded four-way draw. A stab on one or both sides of the line might avoid the unsatisfying "tie", but these usually have happened in the MidGame. And, if a stab does come, it often only transform the "Doubles" into one of the above situations...

Every experienced player has also witnessed at least a couple of games where triple alliances have formed in each Heartland. The MidGame began with the elimination of the odd-man out (usually poor Italy). Now, two triple alliances face each other across a rough stalemate line, waiting and maneuvering for the anticipated stab that will break the game open. For lack of a better term, I'll call this the "Bloody Mess". Everything—negotiations, tactics and strategy—gets so entangled in these games that both that I have seen ended up in very silly four- or five-way draws. [For a study of the triple-alliance strategy, see Mr. Berch's article which follows.]

There are many EndGames which I have studied which do not fit in any of these categories. In some, I have even noted that negotiation can play a major role. No doubt about one matter, though, if a player wishes to be successful, he must have an appreciation of all the nuances of the final stage of the play of a game of *DIPLOMACY*. However the above is a useful list to base a discussion of EndGame tactics upon. But I'm not the one to conduct it. I'll leave that to my fellows.

THE POWER AND THE GLORY

Triple Alliances in DIPLOMACY

By Mark L. Berch

DIPLOMACY is the game of alliances par excellence. Forming, maintaining, evaluating, controlling, and terminating alliances are at the core of the diplomat's craft, and the *DIP* player's primary path to victory. While other game designs feature alliances, none are as successful in giving them such a central role in how the game is won. And yet, for far too many players, "alliance" comes to mean "two-way". This narrow thinking drastically reduces a player's options. He may not have even considered one sort which might give him the best growth.

I think that part of this is because of the number of combinations involved. A French player, for example, has six two-way alliances to ponder, and one of these (France-Turkey) provides scant prospects for cooperative military action at gamestart. But he has 15 possible triple alliances! And all of them offer possibilities of joint military action right from the start. Indeed, over half of these provide two or three different paths that French action could take. Beyond that, there is such a welter of feasible triple alliances (35 in all) that we must strain to get a comprehensive view. How do they resemble, and differ, from each other? How can we make sense of them?

I propose that triple alliances fall into three basic sorts: "Closed", "Open" and "Disjointed". These each have different topologies and different dynamics. Let's look at each. (But first, a definition: "Two countries are neighbors if you can go from a home center of one to the home center of the other without passing *alongside* a home center of a third country." There is one exception I'll touch upon shortly.)

CLOSED: In a "closed" triple alliance, each country is the neighbor of the other two. In this sense, these alliances are symmetric. There are six of them: Austria/Germany/Russia (the "Central" alliance), Austria/Italy/Turkey ("Southern"), Russia/Austria/Turkey (the "Eastern" or "RAT"), England/France/Germany (the "Western"), England/Germany/Russia (the "Northern"), and Austria/Germany/Italy (the "Interior"). The sole exception to this strict definition is the last one, but I treat Germany and Italy as "neighbors". The two nations are close and, in this configuration, Trieste and Vienna are not hostile home centers.

As expected, these are the most popular triple alliances, and the ones most written about by *DIPLOMACY* thinkers. These are quite hard to disguise from other players in a game, since all feature the spectacle of three people all allying with two neighbors. They also feature reduced freedom of action. Players normally attack their neighbors—but now two of them are off-limits. For example, a Western Triple locks France into attacking Italy, and England must attack Russia. Germany, meanwhile, must either attack Russia, find an outside ally against Austria, or launch an awkward attack on Italy. This is perhaps the extreme

case, but most Closed triple alliances are so cramped that certain pairs cannot act jointly at the onset. Thus, a Northern Triple provides no coordinated English-Russian activity until late in the game; an Eastern may never see any Russian-Turkish cooperation. These triples are, in a sense, the least complete, the least fully realized.

But these boast some outstanding advantages too. The division of nearly all neutrals can be settled diplomatically, not militarily. For instance, in an Eastern Triple, there will be no debilitating scrap over Rumania or Greece. A certain level of stability comes from knowing that you are in the same sort of position as the other two members. On the other hand, there are three different ways that two players can gang up on the third, a fairly common mid-game occurrence for Closed triple alliances.

This is not to say that such alliances are *totally* symmetrical. Except for the Austria/Italy/Germany combination, these alliances have at least one country involved which has a board edge and at least one country without one. Those with a corner position (England and Turkey) involved will be somewhat safer, but will be more restricted in their expansion. Thus, in the Southern Triple, once the Turkish player gets his share of Russia, unless he can sneak into Scandinavia he faces the awkward task of arcing around Austria to get into Germany. Another asymmetry comes from the fact that one country of the triple often has to locate an ally outside the alliance. Thus, in an Austrian-Italian-German alliance, Italy will usually start the game by attacking Turkey or France, but not both, leaving Germany or Austria to look elsewhere for an ally against the remaining power.

These are not alliances for active diplomats because they are fairly claustrophobic. But they can still be very effective. One of the most ruthless is the underrated and little used Northern Triple. This divides the entire northern tier of neutrals from Sweden to Belgium. France is targeted in the west, and the Russian player must find an outside ally for an attack on Austria or Turkey. He might even act with Germany against Austria; but the most effective route to victory is to knock out Turkey first, ideally drawing the Austrian and/or Italian fleets east. In the second stage, Russia/Germany presses southward, while England sails her fleets into the Mediterranean. At the end, they all sit down for some Greek food.

OPEN: In an "open" triple, one country is neighbor to two allies but they are not neighbors to each other. There are 14 possible Open triple alliances. The player in the middle enjoys both a blessing, and a curse. He can frequently coordinate quickly with the countries on either "side", or both. Thus, Russia in an England/Russia/Turkey pact can attack Germany, Austria or both. He will not normally have to search outside the triple alliance for a friend. On the other

hand, only he is at risk of suddenly being squeezed by his two allies, so he faces the toughest internal diplomatic task. He must keep his allies happy. However, since only one of these gang-ups is readily feasible (the outside two against the middle country), Open triples tend to be a lot more stable than Closed ones.

Some new issues arise here which are seldom present in Closed triple alliances. Three of these Open triples—Italy/Russia/Turkey, England/France/Russia and England/France/Italy—pose a serious problem for the central power. After the dispatch of the first victim (Austria, Germany, and Germany respectively), the central power can be completely boxed in. Special provisions need to be made at the outset to avoid this dead end. For example, in an Italy/Russia/Turkey triple, Italian and Turkish fleets can form a joint armada for assaults on Iberia and the Mid-Atlantic spaces.

Another issue is that of the "blitz"—all three allies attacking one power. For a few, like England/France/Italy or France/Italy/Turkey, this is impossible. But in general, the Open triple is the ideal configuration for a blitz attack. For some, like Austria/Italy/Russia, it is not only an appealing prospect but may even be the impetus for forming the alliance in the first place. The allies must, however, consider whether other powers should be invited into the attack or, indeed, if they can be kept out (and ways to accomplish this). Thus, if an Austria/England/Germany pact decides to lynch Russia, the allies may want to promote an Italian-Turkish war rather than see Turkey grow on the spoils of their action. In two cases (France/Germany/Russia against England, and Austria/Italy/Russia against Turkey) this is not a worry.

The alliance members must also decide whether to run a second attack concurrent with the blitz. For instance, Austria/England/Germany could stomp Russia, even while England/Germany opens a second front against France at more or less the same time. Such circumstances may give the triple alliance some camouflage if another power can be persuaded to join the second attack. Thus, in this scenario, Italy joins in the attack on France. Or perhaps a France/Germany/Russia triple corners England and a side attack by Germany/Russia on Austria is developed (both Germany and Russia can spare an army for that by Spring 1902); the German and Russian players then recruit Italy and/or Turkey to join the latter.

A decision not to blitz a common neighbor usually arises when one partner wants to be able to ally with the "not-to-be-blitzed" country. If Germany/Russia/Turkey, say, decides not to blitz Austria, then Germany/Russia will likely attack England and leave Turkey to ally—temporarily—with the reprieved Austria against Italy. In the second stage of the game Austria will be attacked, but by then Turkey (having taken the Aegean, Ionian and Naples

spaces [and possibly Tunis]) will be in an excellent position to move on Austria across a broader front.

The alternative, then, is for two of the triple's powers (not all three) to attack while the third party is busy elsewhere. This sort of restraint sounds strange in *DIPLOMACY* I know, but in some cases it works well. In an Open triple with Germany and France, the Russian may find it prudent to let them take on England, while he concentrates all his initial energies in the south. He figures, of course, that he can pick up Norway any time.

DISJOINTED: In this form of alliance, two involved powers are neighbors but the third is neighbor to neither. There are 15 of these possible. Commonly, one power allies with two others on the far side of the board (e.g., Turkey allies with any two of the western powers). These are the most stable of triple alliances, and the most difficult for others to spot. The "odd" man in a Disjointed triple has a different problem to face than any other player. He can't be suddenly squeezed by his partners, but he must work vigorously to prevent the three-way from dwindling down to just an alliance between the two neighbors. His allegiance should be made to appear safe for both other parties, since they could be at odds, and the separated player must exploit this fact to strengthen his role in the alliance.

The possibility of a blitz attack exists here, but in a muted form. In only half of these 15 triple alliances is an early blitz even feasible. Moreover, four of these involve Germany attacking Austria or vice-versa, something these players are often reluctant to undertake early in the game. A fifth involves the blitz of Italy (by Austria/France/Turkey), and the question of who gets Tunis may undo the alliance right at the start. This leaves three other triples with a possible early-game blitz.

One is England/Germany/Italy pitted against France, a very attractive triple alliance. Italy, hoping that Austria will be busy fighting Russia or Turkey, plans to acquire Marseilles and Spain. England takes Brest and Portugal, and Germany nets Belgium and Paris. The triple then shifts its stance to take on the dominant eastern alliance. The other two possible configurations both involve a blitz of Russia by England and Turkey, with either Austria or Germany involved as the third partner. In the case of England/Germany/Turkey, they want to see an Austria-Italian war, which Turkey can perhaps instigate. Finally, England/Turkey/Austria may have an easier time keeping Germany busy and out of the Russian campaign on either side. Indeed, England may not even have to join the attack on France if Italy/Germany can be convinced to go to work in the west.

Another form of action by a Disjointed triple is for two non-neighbors to sandwich an enemy, with a side campaign conducted by the two neighbors. Of course, this means that one power will be involved in two conflicts. There is a tremendous amount of flexibility here though, and this is probably the most common form the Disjointed triple alliance takes. For example, in an England/Italy/Russia union, Italy and Russia squeeze Austria while England/Russia take on Germany. Alternatively, England could fight a

two-front war, with Italy versus France and with Russia versus Germany. Once the triple alliance sets the agenda, the members can likely recruit others to join in the separate attacks. Otherwise, the uninvolved powers will probably be propping up the besieged.

Which country is to be involved in two wars is a function of how aggressive the individual players happen to be, and what forces are available. In a France/Russia/Turkey alliance, for instance, Russia could be comfortable as part of both Russia/Turkey versus Austria and France/Russia versus England. But if the Turk instead wants to be involved in two wars, we have France/Turkey against Italy and Russia/Turkey against Austria. This is not a good prospect, for the Turk might not want to face both Italy and Austria at once.

The third, and most spectacular, option for action is for all three countries to be involved in two wars each, against three common enemy powers. I dub this the "Ring of Fire". Here is the triple alliance in its full glory! With one exception, only the Disjointed triple can pull this off. (In theory, Austria/Italy/Germany could do so as Austria/Germany versus Russia, Germany/Italy versus France, and Italy/Austria versus Turkey; but, as noted in earlier hobby writings, this puts an extreme burden on Italy's navy.) A good example of the "Ring of Fire" would be England/France/Turkey taking on, in pairs, Germany, Italy and Russia. Replacing England with Russia in this example would give France/Turkey versus Italy, Russia/Turkey attacking Austria, and France/Russia against Germany.

This is a highly aggressive style of play, and will require some rather belligerent 1901 moves and a willingness to take risks. Three-on-three odds do not seem very promising in *DIPLOMACY*. But, the alliance can improve these by: 1) gaining the element of surprise, especially through multiple 1901 stabs; 2) formenting a war between the victims; 3) recruiting the seventh power to join in (the England/France/Turkey example can see Austria join in any of the three proposed wars). This path is, in a sense, the exact opposite of a blitz, which targets all military power on one victim. He'll go down fast, but the other three players may be so horrified by this sudden turn at the hands of a blatant triple alliance that they immediately craft a counter-triple. This is especially true when the victim of the blitz is Austria or Germany. The result is often such that, while the original triple is stronger, it is not strong enough to overcome the new opposing triple before they can craft a stalemate line. In the "Ring of Fire", no one country is eliminated, but all three are (hopefully) weakened fairly early. Having the upper hand in all three wars may be enough to prevent the formation of an effective counter alliance—even if the seventh power tries to help them out. By contrast, in a blitz war, the triple alliance faces three aroused countries, none of which has been seriously damaged by events thus far.

I'd like to close with some general comments on triple alliances in *DIPLOMACY*. The ease of forming, operating and hiding triples is one of the many ways that face-to-face play differs from postal play. The face-to-face conferences

assures all parties that everyone is hearing the same message, something you can't do in postal *DIP*. The complexities of sorting out three different interests can be handled much more efficiently in such a conference. On the other hand, three powers huddled together is such a dead give-away in FTF *DIPLOMACY* that experienced players frequently avoid it. Instead, one person acts as a relay, with the usual risk of accidental or deliberate misinterpretation. Of course, once the triple is exposed, such subterfuge is dispensed with.

If you have a firm two-way alliance, keep alert for the possibility that your ally is actually operating a type of three-way. That is, he may be building two concurrent primary alliances. If so, it behooves you to contact the other power and explore an alliance with him as well.

The triple alliance approach can give you added flexibility once a campaign ends in victory. In such situations, if you have a two-way alliance, you have three choices: 1) stick with the alliance and select a second victim; 2) form a new alliance in order to tackle your former ally; 3) take him on all by yourself. The second two have obvious problems. The triple alliance will usually give you a fourth choice—viz, ally with one of your partners against the other. If the alliance is a Closed one by then, you'll have two such possibilities to negotiate.

Keep in mind that the biggest danger facing a triple alliance is an opposing quadruple. That may sound impossible to experienced *DIP* players, but they arise occasionally...and can stop the triple cold if the alarm is sounded early and heeded.

Once the triple has gained the upper hand, and it is unlikely that it can be prevented from sweeping the board, you must evaluate your own safety within the new world order. Your own strength and success must not blind you to the risk of being partitioned by your erstwhile allies. As a general rule, you will need to control all the English or all the Turkish home centers to even consider constructing a single-power stalemate line. Five triples have both England and Turkey involved, but for the remaining 30, one or both of these powers must be defeated. In most cases, the home centers will be held by two members of the triple, meaning that neither will be able to create such a line. You must also be alert to the possibility that one of your allies may stab *both* his partners in a sudden attempt to grab 18 centers without necessarily eliminating either.

By the same token, if a three-way draw does not appeal to you as an end to the game, keep your own eyes open for other possibilities. Here you want to secure as much of the board's "edge" as possible. You may also try to "loan" a piece or two to your intended victim, pieces which will later become "raiders" behind his line. You must explore any hard feelings that may have developed between your allies, especially if one has faced more opposition than the other. Keep in mind that your best opportunity for converting a triple alliance into a win may not be a direct stab, but simply taking efficient and immediate advantage of any war or skirmish that breaks out between the other two. Alternately, you may choose to shorten the

I'M GLAD YOU ASKED ...

Questions Novices Have Always Wanted Answers to When it Was Already Too Late

By Steve Langley

Q: What is a 'zine'?

A: "Zine" is short for "magazine", and is commonly used to refer to an amateur publication devoted primarily to the Play-by-Mail (PBM) gaming hobby and within that, specifically, the game of *DIPLOMACY*. For more information, see the *Zine Register* is the "Complete Handbook of Zines, Lingo and Services"; it lists and reviews every amateur magazine currently hosting a postal game.

Q: Say I capture Warsaw in the Spring and Moscow in the Fall with the same army. Do I get two builds?

A: No, in order to capture a Supply Center you have to occupy the province in the Fall of the year. In this case, you have only captured Moscow. But that's not bad for a beginner. Heck, that's pretty good even for an experienced player.

Q: What is a "self-bounce" and why would I want to do it?

A: The self-bounce is a tactic whereby you order two of your own units into the same province. The intention is to stop your enemy from a successful single-unit attack on any one of the three provinces. For instance, you have Army Ukraine and Army Livonia and you do not want the enemy Army Moscow to move west. An order of "A Ukr-War, A Lvn-War" bounces in Warsaw and at the same time prevents the unsupported army in Moscow from moving into the Ukraine, Warsaw or Livonia. The self-bounce is frequently used in the first year (and later) over a home center to leave it open for a build.

Q: What happens if I add an unwanted support to my enemy's move?

A: That depends. If the enemy was ordering (see the *DIPLOMACY* rulebook for a guide to abbreviations) "A Bur-Mar, F Spa (sc)-Mar" and you ordered "A Pie support F Spa (sc)-Mar", then, instead of the bounce in Marseilles to leave it open he would, with your support, end up with his Fleet Spain moving into Marseilles. On the other hand, if you have a unit in Berlin and your enemy orders "A Pru-Ber, A Sil support A Pru-Ber, F Bal support A Pru-Ber", your "A Kie support A Pru-Ber" would not stop his move, despite the rules that you cannot dislodge yourself nor can you successfully support a move to dislodge yourself. Your unwanted support would fail, in this case, but would not cause the enemy's supported move to fail.

Q: Why can't I dislodge one of my own units?

A: To keep you from retreating into open provinces. You can retreat into any open province *except* the one where you were being attacked from, following a dislodgment. It would be too easy for you to simply attack your own units in the Fall and then decide, after all the other units have been moved, where you wanted the self-dislodged unit to go to best serve your own purposes. Of course, there is no rule against being dislodged by an ally to take advantage of an optimum retreat. That's just clever *DIPLOMACY*.

Q: Can I support one of my ally's units into one of my provinces and so, in effect, dislodge myself?

A: No, you can neither dislodge yourself nor aid in your own dislodgment. The move would cut any support your attacked unit may have tried, though.

Q: If I order a move into a province where I ordered a unit to support another unit, will I cut my own support?

A: No, just as friendly troops cannot dislodge each other, neither will they disrupt supports.

Q: What is a "besieged garrison"?

A: A unit which is attacked by equal forces from more than one direction at once is a besieged (or beleaguered) garrison. Either attack alone would be enough to dislodge the unit, but the two attacks balance each other out so the net effect is that the *original* unit retains control of the province.

Q: Suppose I order "F Ion-Tun" and "F Ion-Gre" in the same set of orders? Which order will be obeyed?

A: Neither one. If you double-order a unit or order a unit illegally (such as "A Ruh-Ber") or ambiguously (such as "F Mat-Spa"), the result will be that the unit will act as if it were ordered to "Hold".

Q: What's wrong with "F Mat-Spa"?

A: Spain has two coasts bordering on the Mid-Atlantic space, and the fleet has to be sent to a specific coast for the order to succeed. Another common error is to write a build order stating "F St. Petersburg". Without the coastline designation, the order is ambiguous, and the unit won't be built.

Q: What about supports into provinces with split coasts? The rulebook says I have to be able to move to the province in order to support a move into, or any unit already in, the province.

A: The answer lies in the distinction between a "province" and a "coast of a province". To support a unit in or into a province, you only have to be able to move to the province—not to the specific coast it may occupy. For instance, "F Gas support F Mar-Spa (sc)" works, although "F Spa (sc) support F Bre-Gas" is impossible, since the Fleet Spain (South Coast) cannot go to Gascony, although Fleet Gascony can go to Spain.

Q: What is the "Coastal Crawl"?

A: On those provinces with coast lines, three have coastal designations: Spain, Bulgaria, and St. Petersburg. Two of those, Spain and Bulgaria, would seem to allow these types of moves: "F Spa (sc)-Por, F Por-Spa (nc)". This is a "coastal crawl" and it fails. Why? The simplest answer is because the rulebook says it fails; but more importantly, the balance of the game depends, in part, upon stalemate situations. The line at the Mid-Atlantic, and to a lesser degree at Bulgaria and Constantinople, is a stalemate line that frequently requires the wiles of diplomacy to bypass. If the coastal crawl were legal, the game could easily evolve into a mere set of tactics when diplomacy is not the goal.

Q: What is a "stalemate line"?

A: A stalemate line is any arrangement of mutual supports and holds among a group of units such that no possible moves from the other side of the line will dislodge any of the units in the stalemate line. For exam-

ple, let's say that you (Turkey) and your good ally (Austria) have a stalemate line containing 16 supply centers on the eastern side of the board. As long as you and your ally are faithful to each other, any action, stab, etc., must happen on the other side of your defensive line (say among the members of an England-France alliance that controls the other 18 units). England and France then have certain options: they can meekly agree to a four-way ATEF draw; one of them can stab the other; or they can bend every diplomatic effort to breaking up the AT alliance (and hence beating the stalemate line). This sort of contest of wills (and words) very often marks the final stage of a *DIPLOMACY* game.

Q: Say I have been dislodged from Serbia and there is no place to retreat. Say I also have a unit in Bulgaria. Can I retreat to allow my Army Serbia to retreat to Bulgaria?

A: Sorry, only dislodged units can retreat and if there is no place to retreat, the affected unit goes off the board.

Q: Do I have to retreat to an open province?

A: No, you can elect to retreat a unit off the board. This is frequently done to allow a unit of a different type to be built in a home center, or just to build in a home center to respond to moves made against the homeland.

Q: What is an "unwanted convoy"?

A: Not much anymore, and it never was very common to begin with. The latest rules make an unwanted convoy a fairly useless gesture. It once was used as a tactical method to block an enemy's move by ordering a convoy route for the enemy's coastal army movement, and then ensure that your own fleet "convoying" the army was dislodged.

Q: What is a "conditional order"?

A: In a postal game, to speed the play along a bit, frequently the previous season's retreats, winter adjustments, and Spring moves are all ordered together. Since these are really three individual events, it is possible to write the Winter adjustments conditional upon retreat results, and make the Spring moves conditional on both retreats and adjustments. Needless-to-say, these can be fairly convoluted, as they should cover all possibilities in what may be a complex situation.

Q: Can I write "A Bur-Mun" conditional on Germany moving "A Mun-Boh" and "A Bur Hold" conditional on Germany ordering "A Mun Hold"?

A: No, conditional orders must refer to the moves of a previous season. The orders above attempt to set conditions based on the moves of another player in the *same* season. No simultaneous conditions are allowed.

Q: What is "Press"?

A: Along with your moves in a PBM or PBEM game, you may send in public messages for publication for all other players to read. Most Press is meant to be funny (although some players conduct a fair amount of subtle diplomacy there). There are three types of Press: white, gray and black. "White Press" is datelined from your

own home provinces, or otherwise designated in such a way to make clear that the statements are coming from you. "Black Press" is datelined from anywhere on the board, and is often used in such a way as to make it appear that another player has written it. "Gray Press" allows press to be anonymous. Usually, before a game begins, the GamesMaster will establish the ground rules for Press for the duration of the game.

Q: What is a "standby"?

A: Since a PBM DIP game may take a couple of years to complete, some people may lose interest in the game and choose to drop out, or find that changes in their life make it impossible for them to continue to play. A "standby" is someone the GamesMaster (GM) calls to take over an abandoned position in the game. Usually, the standby is called to submit orders for a position which has gone "NMR" (No Moves Received) that season. If the current player returns for the turn, he continues in the game; if not, the standby takes over and the country has thus been unordered for only one season.

Q: Doesn't that change the game?

A: Yes, but it has been found that it is less disrupting to a game to change players than to leave a country with no player at all.

Q: What is "DIAS"?

A: The rulebook specifies that a drawn game (any game without a single winner) must include *all* the remaining players. That rule is referred to as "Draws Include All Survivors," or DIAS for short. Most PBM games, however, offer the opportunity for a voted draw without all the surviving players sharing in the result. Since all the remaining players have a veto over each such proposal, it is sort of a case of letting the players decide to stop playing to a foregone conclusion or not, as they choose. Two prominent 'zines that retain DIAS—the ultimate purist approach to the game of *DIPLOMACY*—are *Retaliation* (published by Dick Martin), and the 'zine that founded the whole postal *DIPLOMACY* hobby more than 25 years ago, *Graustark* (published ever since by John Boardman).

Q: What are "house rules"?

A: Normally, the 'zine carrying your game or the first mailing from your GM will carry the "rules" under which your match will be played. These touch upon organizational matters, by and large, beyond the scope of the rulebook and vary from game to postal game. They usually include, but are not limited to, such things as which set of published rules for *DIPLOMACY* will be used, deadlines, fees, what type of "Press" will be allowed, whether DIAS is enforced or how votes for a draw/concession will be cast and tabulated, how NMRs will be handled and other such weighty matters.

Q: Are *DIPLOMACY* variants offered for postal play?

A: Of course, as are a number of other multi-player games. Check the listings in the *Zine Register* if looking for such.

Q: How do I get into a game?

A: First, check out the announcement on Page 39 herein. Write the nearest "Contact Person". Then sample a few 'zines and look for game openings.

THE INVENTION OF DIPLOMACY

A Brief Background on the Design

By Allan B. Calhamer

As the big war drew to a close in 1945, I read an article on post-war planning in the magazine *LIFE*. This article reviewed the history of the Congress of Vienna in detail and the subsequent period to 1914, arguing that a world containing several "Great Powers" all roughly equal in strength would offer the best guarantee of peace, because whenever one or two of these powers acted aggressively the others would unite against them, thus causing them to back down by overwhelming threat before any armed conflict could break out. Regardless of whether such a plan would have worked or could have been brought about in the real world as was suggested by that author, the condition of multiple and flexible checks and balances obviously planted itself as a possible basis for a strategic game of some depth and color in my mind.

In the course of my involvement with a debating club in high school, I later encountered an argument against a unified world government—a hot topic of the late forties—which was that governments are kept in check by both internal and external factors, but that any world government would, by definition, have no external checks upon it; hence, it might be more likely to become tyrannical. Another debater and I attempted a game simulating the grand alliances of European history in the Eighteenth Century, but as we used only two players and did not find any way to simulate an independent third or fourth role, that effort ended in failure.

Meanwhile, several of us teenagers were regularly playing "Hearts", a familiar card game in which several players participate, each independent of the others. I observed that the game was best if all the other players played against the current leader. Thus the current lead would tend to change hands, giving more players a chance to lead and a chance to be the leader at the end of the pre-determined number of hands. Competition was further enhanced by our ruling that if two players tied for the lead at the end, *all* players shared equally in the tie. Thus, all the players who were hopelessly far behind still had incentive to try and bring about a tie between the leaders, thus increasing the competition instead of detracting from it. I noticed that players who did not understand all of this tended to play for second place, or simply to protect their own score, and thus would detract from the competitive aspect while usually also effectively eliminating their own chances of finishing first. It occurred to me that if negotiation were permitted, other players whose chances were diminished by this sub-optimal play would have a chance to inform the erring party and make a case for a more competitive approach. If this effort failed, then they could say that their opportunities were foreclosed, not merely by the aberrant play of another, but also by their own failure to persuade him of the error of his ways, which would then be an integral part of the contest itself.

From formal Chess, I borrowed the idea of a number of spaces, about 80 (as opposed to 64 squares) and the number of pieces (34 as opposed to 32). My pieces would move about only as Chess kings do, but the king is only an average chessman in mobility, and thus the chess board is equally saturated with force. Negotiation between players is thus much simpler than in most war games due to the small number of spaces, pieces and limited mobility. I think that any multi-player game should be as simple as possible, so long as the game itself is indeterminate and reasonably rich in strategic choices.

In 1952, I studied Nineteenth Century European history at Harvard under Professor Sidney B. Fay, whose book, *Origins of the World War*, detailed the specific diplomatic developments leading to World War I. These consisted primarily of two- or three-party arrangements, wholly or partly secret in nature, as well as similar contacts and projects which did not mature into formal alliances. (These arrangements were frequently almost as brief and pointed as those made verbally during games I have seen at DipCon!)

Around this time I also studied political geography under Professor Derwent Whittelsey. There I became reacquainted with the concept of "geopolitics" devised by Sir Halford MacKinder around 1904, which I had also recently encountered in an article, again in *LIFE*. The principle element of geopolitics seems to be the consideration of the effect upon the international power struggle by the particular geometric nature of the division of the surface of the earth, altogether specifically considered, into land and sea. Thus, my concept of a diplomatic contest emerged as a game in which land power and sea power are almost equally significant (whereas nearly all other wargames are primarily either land games or sea games). The decision whether to raise an army or a fleet is one of the most important decisions the player can make, and it is one of the most important indicators of the direction of future activity. It was around this time that I began to formalize what I wanted in my game.

DIPLOMACY is perhaps the first (or only) wargame played on the continental "scale", in which entire campaigns are only elements of the whole strategy. In designing the rules which would govern strategy and tactics, reference was made to the Napoleonic principle, "Unite to fight, separate to live." Separation is achieved first of all by requiring that there be only one piece in a space. Concentration is then arrived at by the use of "support" orders from different pieces which bear on the attacked province. Pieces farther from the crucial point are less likely to affect the struggle for it, but some of them may do so by cutting support. The use of supply centers causes further dispersion of forces and emphasizes the economic nature of objectives. It also makes the game primarily

one of maneuver rather than simple annihilation. This aspect of the game is reminiscent of the "indirect approach" espoused by Liddell-Hart, though I had not read his works at the time. Due to a host of factors, the design of the game lagged for a year as I turned to other concerns in my life.

Finally, the problem of organizing a seven-person game was not solved until I entered the formal study of law in 1953. I became aware that players who failed to meet their responsibilities toward the game should be made to suffer light penalties, such as the loss of a single move, so that they are encouraged to comply but are not usually wiped out by minor lapses. The game should be designed so that it can proceed despite poorly written orders and the like. The notion that a person may tell all the lies he wants, cross up people as he pleases, and so on (which makes some game players almost euphoric, and causes others to "shake like a leaf", as one new player put it) came about almost incidentally, simply because it was the most realistic situation in international affairs—and also far and away the most workable approach. To require that players adhere to any alliances would only result in a chivvying kind of negotiation, followed by the incorporation of the whole of contract law into the rulebook, as some erstwhile inventors of "variants" have since discovered for themselves.

The design of my game *DIPLOMACY* was completed in 1954 and has undergone relatively little change through all the publishing since. The major adjustments have concerned altering the map (see facing page for a reduced version of the original map) to make the countries more nearly equal and to give them a wider range of strategic choices. Convoying land units was made simpler, and minor complications eliminated by various later editions. These revisions mostly occurred during 1958, when a good group of friends and Operations Research staffers ran through many matches and offered some suggestions for improvement. In 1959, I had 500 sets manufactured with my own capital after all the major publishing companies (Milton Bradley, Parker Brothers, et. al.) rejected the design as too complex. Manufacture of the game was transferred to Games Research in 1960. Sales have increased in every single year since the game has been on the market. Postal play was pioneered in 1963 by Dr. John Boardman. Now games are conducted through amateur magazines, of which a few dozen are always in existence. With the collapse of Games Research, the rights were sold to various companies around the globe, and the game is now available in a dozen languages. Avalon Hill, which holds the US publication rights now, has printed quite a bit about the game and its play in their professional magazine, *The GENERAL*, and done much more to promote its play at tournaments across this continent. And now we even have a "World" DipCon!